

St George School Annual Report



2016



5527

Introduction

The Annual Report for 2016 is provided to the community of St George School as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

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Principal

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Message from the Principal

The year 2016 marked the second year of the school plan 2015 – 2017. During the year, the school worked towards consolidating projects indicated in the school plan.

It was a memorable year for a number of reasons. The most significant was the record number of students graduating with ten students completing Year 12 and moving to post school programs from 2017. It was a busy year for the graduates and their families with funding assessments for post school programs, decisions regarding post school providers and sites and transition meetings from NSW Health in transitioning from paediatric to adult services. There were many highlights for our graduates, the most significant of which was the Leavers Assembly in December and the Year 12 formal in October.

In 2016, St George School participated in an evaluation of performance against a framework developed by the NSW Department of Education: The School Excellence Framework. This framework sets 14 measures of performance for school self assessment. Every five years schools participate in an external validation process to validate the school's own self assessment. This process was launched in 2016 with over 200 schools in NSW participating in external validation including St George School. In August 2016, St George School was successful in its participation in the external validation process.

The programs and activities culminated at the end of the year with the school's participation in the Schools Spectacular, the school's concert and presentation day and the Leavers Assembly.

In 2016 the contract for the school operated bus runs moved from the school to the St George School P&C. The management of the school operated runs remains the responsibility of the school. The move was consistent with the practices and procedures of the Assisted School Travel Program..

In 2016, I continued to work in the role of Principal School Leadership for two days per week as part of a two year engagement. Ana Mowle relieved as principal for the two days. The expertise, flexibility and professionalism of Ana Mowle made this partnership very successful.

School background

School vision statement

'To empower students to become lifelong learners who are confident, emotionally and socially secure and able to communicate effectively so they can function in the community to the best of their ability.'

School context

St George School caters for students with severe and moderate physical disability from pre-school to Year 12. Students attend from Sydney's southern suburbs, St George area, the Eastern Suburbs and Inner West. St George School takes pride in delivering quality educational programs for our students. The school's motto 'Learning for Life' highlights the importance of personalising student learning to maximise opportunities for independence and an enhanced quality of life.

The majority of students have an additional disability to the physical disability including moderate/severe intellectual, autism, visual impairment and hearing impairment.

St George School shares a site with Moorefield Girls High School and James Cook Boys Technology High School. The physical environment of the school aims to support the comprehensive delivery of educational programs in a safe, age appropriate and attractive setting. The school is built on a level accessible area. In addition to the playground areas and classrooms, the school has a number of specialist areas which include the library, pool, sensory room, sensory theatre, connected classroom, hall, liberty swing and a sensory garden. The playgrounds, classrooms and specialist rooms address the wide range of needs of students at St George School.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

For schools participating in external validation processes:

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

In 2016, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework and participated in an external validation. The framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading. During the external validation process, an independent panel of peer principals considered our evidence and assessment of the school's progress, aligned with the standards articulated in the School Excellence Framework.

The results of this process indicated that in the Domain of Learning, the school's self assessment was consistent with the evidence presented in four elements and was validated using the School Excellence Framework. In the fifth element of Wellbeing the evidence presented indicated that the school was operating at the Excelling stage. In the domains of Teaching and Leading the school's self-assessment was consistent with the evidence presented and was validated using the School Excellence Framework.

In order to strengthen the current school plan, the school will use the evidence collected through the self-assessment process to reflect and where appropriate revise the existing milestones and products and practices. By using the School Excellence Framework Self-Assessment Survey the school will reflect upon their judgements to remain focused on continuous improvement.

The school intends to maintain its focus on analysing data to make informed judgements for future directions. One strategy the school intends to implement is to make the School Plan more visible so that it is part of the school way of being/thinking for teachers, SLSOs and the community.

The school leadership team intends to use ongoing assessment against the School Excellence Framework to inform future strategic directions (2018 –2021) for the school.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/school-excellence-framework>

Strategic Direction 1

Student Learning

Purpose

Student Learning: Students are engaged and successful in their learning, attain increasing independence and have a voice:

To provide a stimulating learning environment that has high expectations for all students, focuses on the abilities of students and promotes and celebrates student successes.

To share achievements and consolidate learning in the home environment through quality collaboration with families. To provide a learning environment that stimulates, extends and challenges learning and provides opportunities to practise skills and communication across settings and with a range of people.

To give students a voice through effective use of communication tools and strategies so that they are able to choose and direct their lives.

Overall summary of progress

There are three projects in Student Learning:

1. Promotion and celebration of ability
2. Learning across settings
3. Effective use of communication tools and strategies – students have a 'voice'.

The culture within school supported the promotion and celebration of ability. The goals were achieved with fortnightly awards, recognition of awards in the school's newsletter and presentation day at the end of the year. Students participated in mainstream activities such as the Koori Art Expressions, Operation Art, Schools Spectacular, the inter school Boccia competition and attendance at combined schools commemoration of Anzac Day in Hyde park.

Student profiles and personalised plans reflects the achievement and learning of all students. Handover information at the end of the year provides a summary of student achievements. The importance of giving positive feedback is recognised and is evident in the way staff communicate with the students and, at times, student to student.

Learning across settings is an important goal to consolidate learning and generalise learning to other settings. Support from families is positive but opportunities for learning in the home environment can vary. There are individual success stories. Families have demands and time constraints can impact on consolidation of learning at home.

Professional learning of staff in the use of technology to support communication was undertaken by teams in 2106. The aim was to target training specific to the needs of the students. As there is diversity of learning needs within each team, the expertise of some staff supported the learning needs of other staff members. Feedback from staff indicated that there was not consistency across the teams in achieving better outcomes for staff in the use of technology. The use of eye gaze technology was introduced in 2016.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years) | Progress achieved this year | Funds Expended (Resources) |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student profiles and personalised learning plans reflect increased learning, increased recognition of learning, increased independence in specific skills and increased communication skills..• Communications skills audit reflects enhanced communication strategies at school and at home.• Parent feedback indicates | <p>In 2016 St George School trialled the SWANS (Students with additional needs) assessment tool to support student assessment, data collection on student performance measures and programming. Feedback from teachers indicated that SWANs did not provide the detailed data required to assess and measure learning.</p> <p>Eye gaze was introduced to support assessment and access to learning. Use of eye was introductory.</p> | <p>Nil cost</p> <p>The university of Melbourne provided the trial of Swans at no cost to the school.</p> <p>Eye gaze bundle was purchased using schools.</p> <p>Therapy support and collaboration was supported</p> |

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years) | Progress achieved this year | Funds Expended (Resources) |
|---|--|---|
| attainment of skills in the home environment and effective communication and choice making at home. | Teachers worked with families and therapists in supporting communication and physical management strategies that are consistent across settings. Therapists provided support in the use of eye gaze for identified students. | by either ADHC funding or financed by families. |

Next Steps

St George school will continue the current strategies in the promotion and celebration of ability. In 2017, the use of SMART goals for each student will support an improved measurement of ability. The data gathered will provide a more authentic assessment of ability and learning progress..

Supporting learning across settings will be enhanced through structured support from allied professionals. Teachers will continue with communication with families and will support learning in the home environment recognising that opportunities vary within families.

Technology training in 2017 will be linked to each staff member's Performance and development Plans (PDPs). All PDPs are linked to learning in the classroom.

Opportunities for students to practise the use of eye gaze will be enhanced in 2017 through a successful grant application. Opportunities for professional learning in the use of eye gaze technology will also be enhanced.

Strategic Direction 2

Staff Learning

Purpose

Staff Learning: A high performing, collaborative staff with a deep understanding of quality teaching and learning and curriculum implementation for students with significant learning needs:

To enable class staff to work collaboratively to set learning priorities that challenge, are realistic, personalised and attainable and focus on the whole child including their emotional wellbeing.

To support teachers to implement the curriculum in accordance with the Disability Standards for Education 2005 through curriculum knowledge and skills in critical reflection, authentic assessment and evaluation of student learning.

To support increased student independence by guiding learning from acquisition to generalisation in other contexts.

Overall summary of progress

Two new themes for the sensory theatre further developed opportunities for emotional awareness and communication. The underwater theme of the *Rainbow Fish* literary text and the rainforest theme of *The Great Kapok Tree* literary text and the combination of the two themes in the text *Where the Forest Meets the Sea* provided the vehicle for engagement in learning and response to the values demonstrated in the texts. Teacher professional learning and collaborative planning supported the use of the sensory theatre. The implementation of the emotional literacy program continued in classes.

The five week critical reflection continued in 2016 with teacher and school learning support officers reflecting mid term and end of term on the priorities of learning and progress towards individual student learning outcomes..

The second year of the PDPs provided teachers with opportunities to reflect on the school plan, the needs of the students in their class and identify professional learning consistent with these areas. The second year of peer and supervisor teacher observation provide feedback to teacher. Further professional learning in PDPs, observation and feedback was undertaken. A scaffold to support the PDO process was introduced and used to facilitate mid year self reflection and end of year review.

All teachers trialled the use of SWANS as an assessment and programming tool and provided valuable feedback on the use of the tool at St George School. Teachers undertook brief professional learning in the use of SMART goals to gather data on student progress and measure learning.

Some teachers trialled the implementation of the new NSW Geography syllabus of the Australian curriculum and provided feedback to teachers in preparation for full implementation in 2017.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years) | Progress achieved this year | Funds Expended (Resources) |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High expectations of self and students reflected in the Performance and Development• Evidence of personalised authentic assessment• Evidence of regular reflection: class staff and in teams• Wellbeing audit and surveys gather impact and outcome data.• Data demonstrates generalisation of skills in other contexts and/or settings• Increased shared units of work in national syllabuses: | <p>Positive feedback from staff and students regarding the use of the sensory theatre.</p> <p>Establishment of white sensory room commenced in 2016.</p> <p>Culture of reflection established within class groups. Term calendar provided the prompts for period of reflection.</p> <p>Trial of researched assessment tool, SWANS, undertaken by all teachers and feedback provided.</p> <p>Some reports provided evidence of learning and assessment data.</p> <p>Trial of new Geography syllabus successfully</p> | <p>Geography resources purchased to support implementation of new syllabus.</p> |

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years) | Progress achieved this year | Funds Expended (Resources) |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High expectations of self and students reflected in the Performance and Development• Evidence of personalised authentic assessment• Evidence of regular reflection: class staff and in teams• Wellbeing audit and surveys gather impact and outcome data.• Data demonstrates generalisation of skills in other contexts and/or settings• Increased shared units of work in national syllabuses: | undertaken by two teachers. Resources placed on shared drive. | |

Next Steps

With the final year of the school plan in 2017, the key focus is on authentic assessment and evaluation. In 2017 teachers will set SMART goals for students in key areas such as communication (English) and social interaction (PDHPE). The establishment of SMART will support the gathering of data to measure learning, inform teacher practice and provide authentic evaluation and reporting on student outcomes.

In 2017 non teaching staff will develop PDPs linked to the school plan and vision of the school. The school learning support officers will identify goals consistent with the goals of the students in their classes and work with teachers collaboratively on meeting their own professional learning to enhance outcomes for students.

The implementation of the Geography syllabus will be undertaken and all teachers will work collaboratively in teams to plan units of work. Units of work will be uploaded to the shared drive for whole school support.

In 2017 some teachers will provide input into the NESA consultation process for the new PDHPE syllabus.

Strategic Direction 3

Learning within and beyond the school

Purpose

Learning within and beyond the school: A collaborative stimulating learning community that promotes best practice in special education within and beyond the school:

To support the effective and sustainable operation of the school including a tracking system of student attainment and curriculum access through comprehensive documentation including policies and procedures.

To promote a collaborative culture where families and carers are informed and active partners in the education of students working at times with professionals and outside agencies who are creditable and accountable. To promote best practice in special education within and beyond the school to support the education of students with disabilities across schools through networking and engaging with local schools.

Overall summary of progress

The most significant achievement in 2016 in the area of policies and procedures was the school's participation in the external validation process. This provided the impetus to gather evidence against the 14 elements of the School Excellence Framework (SEF) and to engage with the SEF self assessment tool based on the evidence within the school. Teachers and particularly the leadership team developed a good understanding of what quality evidence looked like. Participation in the external validation was affirming for the school with positive feedback from the two external validators. The process provided a clear view of areas of need in working towards excellence in the school.

The process for the A–Z implementation Tool provided evidence to demonstrate adherence to child protection legislation with evidence of staff completion of mandatory training in the child protection update for 2016 and evidence of adherence to the Working with Children check for all visitors to the school. Many staff obtained the Working with Children check in preparation for meeting the mandatory requirement by March 2018.

Working collaboratively with families to support outcomes for students is embedded in the school culture. In 2016, with ten students graduating, families and school staff worked together for a successful transition. Collaborative planning included assessment at school with families for post school funding, visits to post school providers and working with NSW Health to support transition to adult health services. Introductory talks in the community on NDIS was promoted by the school to support family transition to NDIS in 2017.

In 2016, teachers worked collaboratively with teachers from two other special schools to develop a resource on communication for students who are non verbal or have limited verbal communication skills. The expertise of all teachers supported the development of the resource.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years) | Progress achieved this year | Funds Expended (Resources) |
|--|--|--|
| Operation of the school is based on clear, concise and transparent practices and procedures Culture of case management and collaborative practices is sustained through systemic changes (NDIS). 100% PLPs reflect the needs of the whole child: curriculum access, physical management needs, health care, manual handling practices and input from outside professionals. ESES resource feedback is positive plus number of hits on | Parents were supported in access to information on NDIS All PLPs are comprehensive and developed collaboratively with families. School gathered evidence and assessed school performance against the 14 elements of the School Excellence Framework. The ESES module on communication was developed collaboratively with two other special schools. | Nil cost ESES funds used to support teacher release for the development of the module on Communication. |

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years) | Progress achieved this year | Funds Expended (Resources) |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| the website. | <p>Parents were supported in access to information on NDIS</p> <p>All PLPs are comprehensive and developed collaboratively with families.</p> <p>School gathered evidence and assessed school performance against the 14 elements of the School Excellence Framework.</p> <p>The ESES module on communication was developed collaboratively with two other special schools.</p> | |

Next Steps

ESES module to be uploaded to the Can-Do website, an online resource for teachers of students with disabilities in mainstream classes.

Further presentations to families on NDIS. Presentation of NDIS from a parents' perspective to support family choices and decisions.

Working collaboratively with Assisted School Transport Officers (ATSOs) to support their role in transport of students to and from school. Professional learning for ATSOs in reading transport health care plans, administration of medication where required and how to respond in an emergency.

Establishment of procedures to identify and store evidence.

| Key Initiatives | Impact achieved this year | Resources (annual) |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Aboriginal background loading | Students supported to participate in the Schools Spectacular. Families and school support transportation to and from the rehearsals and performance venue. | Aboriginal background funding \$470.00. Funding from Aboriginal background loading used to purchase costumes. |
| Socio-economic background | Music program successfully implemented across the school during 2016. Staff and families supportive of continuation of program in 2017. Students demonstrated engagement, awareness of rhythm and development of skills in the production of music. | Socio-economic background funding of \$3,058.00. The Music program was primarily funded by the Good Guys Rockdale via the St George Children with Disabilities Fund. The school's contribution focused on the purchase of musical instruments. |

Student information

Student enrolment profile

| Students | Enrolments | | | |
|----------|------------|------|------|------|
| | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
| Boys | 27 | 31 | 30 | 33 |
| Girls | 30 | 27 | 27 | 26 |

In 2016, ten classes continued to operate at St George School providing for an enrolment capacity of 60 students. Fifty-nine students attended St George School in second semester and fifth–eight students in first semester.

At the beginning of the year, we welcomed four new students who successfully transitioned from early learning settings to school. In second semester we welcomed another student to the school who transferred from a support class in a mainstream school to St George School.

At the end of the year ten students in year 12 graduated and exited the school.

In 2016, all students at St George School had high support needs and a physical disability. Over 98% also had a diagnosed intellectual disability, 30% with additional vision impairment, 7% with additional hearing impairment and 3% with additional autism spectrum disorder.

In 2016, there was 56% male and 44% female students.. Fifteen students representing 25% of student population are from language backgrounds other than English. Language backgrounds include Arabic, Cantonese, Croatian, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Macedonian, Mandarin, Polish and Urdu.

At St George School every student's placement is formally reviewed annually. Recommendations regarding continued placement or possible consideration of an alternative placement are made in consultation with families. The reviews held in September 2016 indicated that all students were appropriately placed and recommendations were made to continue placement.

All students are eligible for special transport to and from school where families demonstrate that they are unable to provide transport for their child. The majority of students are transported using the NSW Department of Education's Assisted School Transport Program (ASTP). In 2016, only one student was transported to and from school by the family.

Management of non-attendance

School attendance is strong with an average of 92% attendance. These figures are consistent with attendance data from previous years. Absences are related to health issues and there is a small number of students with high absences related to frail medical conditions and, in some cases, subsequent hospitalisations. Students who are hospitalised attend the hospital school when able to do so. In 2016, two students were unable to attend school due to frail and complex health needs and hospitalisations.

Parents or caregivers of children from Kindergarten through to Year 12 are responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day. All children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age of 17 are legally required to attend school. Parents are responsible for explaining any absences within 7 days of the absence. Non attendance is managed at school through the Home School Liaison Program. Student absences and reasons for absences are noted daily in the electronic marking of rolls. The rolls are checked regularly by Home School Liaison Officers based at the NSW Department of Education's office at Arncliffe.

Structure of classes

St George School is staffed according to a formula determined annually by the primary disability of the students. In 2016 the staffing provided for a maximum of six students per class with a teacher and school learning support officer per class.

In 2016 there were 59 students enrolled. The composition of seven classes was six students per class. One class with a vacancy had five students. Two other classes were combined to form a double class of one teacher and four school learning support officers. This double class had a composition of twelve students.

St George School caters for students from pre–school to year 12. To support the delivery of the curriculum, communication within the school and professional learning of staff, three teams operate: Primary, Middle and Secondary. Each team is supported by one of three Assistant Principals.

In 2016, the Primary Team consisted of 4 classes with 3 full–time and two part–time teachers and five school learning support officers. These classes catered for students from pre–school to Year 4

The Middle Team consisted of the double class and the regular sized class with three teachers and five school learning support officer positions. The classes catered for students from Year 5 to Year 9.

The Secondary Team consisted of three class with two full–time and two part–time teachers and one full–time and four part–time school learning support officers. The classes catered for students from Year 10 to Year 12..

Retention Year 10 to Year 12

Students with high support needs are able to access support for post school services after the year in which they turn 18 years of age. Hence, there is 100% retention Year 10 to Year 12.

Post-school destinations

| Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment | Year 10% | Year 11% | Year 12% |
|--|----------|----------|----------|
| Seeking Employment | | | |
| Employment | | | |
| TAFE entry | | | |
| University Entry | | | |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| Unknown | | | |

Ten students graduated from Year 12 in 2016 and were offered places in Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC) funded Community Participation programs. The families selected the service providers that were local and matched the needs of their child. Families had the opportunity during the year to visit the locations.

During 2016, a formal assessment of the exiting students was undertaken at school on behalf of ADHC. The assessment process confirmed the eligibility for ADHC funding and established the recommended level of funding. In September 2016, the families were advised of the outcome of assessment and were asked to nominate the service of their choice. In term 4, a transition plan was developed to include visits to the specific site and visits at school from post school service personnel.

The following service providers for adults with disabilities were selected by the families: Wesley Sylvania, Wesley Beverly Hills, Sunnyhaven Kogarah, Creativity Inc in the Eastern Suburbs., Norhtcott Roselands and the St George Sutherland Community College.

Year 12 vocational or trade training

The Community Participation post school programs funded by ADHC are social and recreational. None of the ten students, based on their individual assessment in 2016 were offered a Transition to Work program.

Year 12 attaining HSC or equivalent

In 2016, the ten graduating students completed their studies and attained the HigherSchool Certificate with Life Skills Outcomes. The ten students were awarded a Higher School Certificate Testamur and Record of School Achievement.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

| Position | FTE* |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Principal | 1.4 |
| Assistant Principal(s) | 3 |
| Classroom Teacher(s) | 7.84 |
| Teacher Librarian | 0.4 |
| School Administration & Support Staff | 11.82 |
| Other Positions | 0 |

*Full Time Equivalent

St George School has ten classes and hence ten teaching positions. In addition, there is a 0.84 position for release of teaching staff from face to face teaching (RFF) and a 0.4 library teacher allocation. The RFF position provides for the release of every teacher for a day every three weeks with a maximum of 3 release days per term. It also provides for the release of executive staff for a day every three weeks. The 0.4 library allocation allows for the release of a teacher position for one day per week for the school's library program. The balance of the allocation is used to support PLP meetings with families and the reporting and assessment processes.

The 0.84 RFF teacher allocation was used to release a teacher from class to undertake RFF and to support the implementation of flexible staffing in the double class. Of the ten teaching position one teacher is permanent part-time for four days per week and another teacher is permanent part-time for the fifth day.

As a special school, School Administrative Support Staff (SASS) outnumber teaching staff. SASS staff include the office staff, the school learning support officers and the general assistants. A number of positions are filled by permanent part-time staff.

Of the ten school learning support officer positions, one position is comprised of a permanent part-time, three days per week and a permanent part-time two days per week.

The school employs an additional school learning support officer position through funds from the school's

contract with Assisted School Travel Program (ASTP) to operate seven bus runs. This position is used to support the weekly swimming program.

Visiting teachers support the programs at St George School. A school counsellor based at another school attends 1 day per week. Students with vision and hearing impairment receive caseload support from specialist itinerant teachers, hearing and vision, on a weekly basis.

In 2016, the school owned five buses and employed six drivers to support excursions in the community and to transport students to and from school.

In 2016, the Principal continued to work in the role of Principal School Leadership for two days per week (0.4) and an Assistant principal relieved in the Principal role for two days per week.

In 2016, there were no permanent indigenous members of staff at St George School. In first term, one of the regular casual teachers, from Gadigal land, provided casual relief across the school from preschool to Year 12. The casual relief teacher was then successful in her application for temporary work in tertiary education.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Teacher qualifications

| Qualifications | % of staff |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Undergraduate degree or diploma | 100 |
| Postgraduate degree | 60 |

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Each year schools are allocated funds for professional learning. With research supporting teacher quality being the single largest indicator for student success, St George School expended in excess of the funds received for professional learning. The school utilised school funds to provide for ongoing professional learning of the entire staff including school learning support officers and office staff.

Professional learning activities were linked to the school plan. The goals identified in the teacher Performance and Development Plans (PDPs) guided the focus for teacher professional learning.

In 2016, within the school, the professional learning schedule included weekly teacher meetings, five school development days, fortnightly full staff meetings, fortnightly technology meetings.

Technology professional learning sessions were team based focusing on priorities identified by the teams. The sessions included use of the app Garage Band,

use of Notebook software, managing photos on the ipad, use of communication apps, Boardmaker, Boardmaker online, use of eye gaze equipment and software.

Whole staff participated in compliance training which included mandatory annual child protection update, CPR training, anaphylaxis training face-to-face training, changes to Work, Health and Safety legislation, NSW Department of Education and Communities Code of Conduct training.

School Learning Support Officers attended health care procedures certification and recertification courses, where required. The certification course requires recertification after two years. School learning support officers attended a full day network meeting in July 2016 focusing on health and wellbeing.

Maintenance of accreditation with BOSTES (NESA) requires accredited teachers to complete 100 hours professional learning over a five year period including at least 50 hours of attendance at registered courses. In 2016, this requirement applied to three teachers.

In 2016, all teachers attended the annual state SEPLA (special education) teacher day conference. The other external courses attended in 2016 included computer coordinator days, Innovative Conference, mentoring workshop, technology workshops, traumatic head injury conference and integrating drama into sensory programs. Staff who attend external courses provided training at school for colleagues over a period of teacher professional learning sessions. Many teachers integrated this learning into their classroom practice. The professional learning integrating drama and sensory strategies refocused the use of the sensory room into a sensory theatre.

The weekly professional learning sessions for teachers included the following topics: review of PDP processes, observation, feedback, collaborative processes, literacy resources, Geography resources, English resources, History resources, report writing, feedback from mentoring conference, acquired brain injury conference feedback, SWANs program for student assessment and programming, visual arts curriculum day planning, external validation, evidence, SMART goals, SEPLA conference feedback, review of current documents from CESE *'What works best reflection guide'*, Geography and History curriculum review.

In 2016, St George School completed an additional module for a resource for mainstream teachers of students with disabilities

The librarian attended Teacher Librarian Network Meetings each term allowing all staff to keep current with new books and resources.

Financial information (for schools fully deployed to SAP/SALM)

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016.

| | 2016 Actual (\$) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Opening Balance | 406 468.65 |
| Revenue | 2 930 213.66 |
| (2a) Appropriation | 2 427 637.42 |
| (2b) Sale of Goods and Services | 226 743.99 |
| (2c) Grants and Contributions | 268 260.40 |
| (2e) Gain and Loss | 0.00 |
| (2f) Other Revenue | 0.00 |
| (2d) Investment Income | 7 571.85 |
| Expenses | -2 917 480.50 |
| Recurrent Expenses | -2 917 445.05 |
| (3a) Employee Related | -2 618 260.63 |
| (3b) Operating Expenses | -299 184.42 |
| Capital Expenses | -35.45 |
| (3c) Employee Related | 0.00 |
| (3d) Operating Expenses | -35.45 |
| SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR | 12 733.16 |
| Balance Carried Forward | 419 201.81 |

A full copy of the school's 2016 financial statement will be tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups (P&C).

The revenue received by the school includes the cost of salaries for teaching and non-teaching staff.

In 2016, the contract for operating seven bus runs under the Assisted School Transport Program (ASTP) moved from the school to the P&C. The amount of \$226, 743.99 for the sale of goods represents this transfer. The operation and management of the bus runs remains with the school and the Grants and Contributions includes the monies received by the P&C from ASTP and transferred as a donation to the school.

Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Financial summary equity funding

The equity funding data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

| | 2016 Actual (\$) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Base Total | 445 824.02 |
| Base Per Capita | 6 689.83 |
| Base Location | 0.00 |
| Other Base | 439 134.19 |
| Equity Total | 3 724.40 |
| Equity Aboriginal | 471.08 |
| Equity Socio economic | 3 253.31 |
| Equity Language | 0.00 |
| Equity Disability | 0.00 |
| Targeted Total | 1 810 753.24 |
| Other Total | 12 722.00 |
| Grand Total | 2 273 023.66 |

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance

School-based assessment

The teaching programs at St George School are consistent with the Disability Standards for Education 2005 which gives students with disability the right to education and training opportunities on the same basis as students without a disability. Adjustments are made to the teaching programs to address the needs of individual students.

In a school with diverse needs and varying levels of impact of disability on learning, student performance is gauged on an individual basis. Students follow a personalised learning program where individual learning priorities are set collaboratively with families during the year and are reported on in the mid year and end of year reports and at the mid-year parent teacher meetings.

Planning for personalised learning also provides the opportunity to establish/review students' healthcare plan, physical management issues and/or therapy recommendations.

Staff deliver quality learning experiences that enable students to work towards personalised learning priorities and achieve outcomes from the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) syllabuses K-6,

Years 7–10 Life Skills and Years 11–12 Life Skills. There is ongoing evaluation of planning, implementation and assessment at teacher meetings and a culture of sharing knowledge and resources.

The NSW English, Mathematics, Science and History syllabuses for the Australian curriculum were implemented in Years Kindergarten to Year 10. The implementation of the new Geography syllabus was optional in 2016 and was trialled in some classes.

Students in Years 7–10 undertake a pattern of study to meet the requirements set down by NESA. Teachers select Life Skills outcomes from the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) appropriate to student needs. Similarly, students in years 11 – 12 undertake a pattern of study to meet the requirements for the Higher School Certificate and teachers select the appropriate Life Skills outcomes from the Key Learning Areas.

Communication is a priority area for all students and it is embedded in learning experiences across all Key Learning Areas. Communication strategies such as the use of assistive technology tools, key word signing, gestures and visuals are used across the school.

NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program, NAPLAN, provides families with results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in literacy and numeracy. As our students are exempt from NAPLAN, there is no NAPLAN data available.

HSC

The performance of students in the HSC is reported in bands ranging from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest).

At St George School, students in Years 11 and 12 undertake Life Skills outcomes for the Preliminary and Higher School Certificate courses respectively. In 2016, four students undertook the Preliminary Course of the HSC and ten students graduated having successfully completed the HSC Life Skills course. The performance bands from Band 1 to Band 6 is not applicable to students undertaking Life Skills outcomes.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

Feedback from families is very positive. The P&C meetings held every term provide the opportunity to seek the views of parents and make decisions based on feedback. As St George School is a school for students with physical disabilities, the majority of whom have a severe disability, parents consistently seek the support of school staff to implement physical management strategies. School staff respond to parent feedback to support the whole child balancing their responsibilities as teachers to deliver learning programs. Managing time to cover all aspects of the students' program during the short school day is challenging. Volunteers and students on placement provide the additional personnel to address the physical management requests from families.

The positive feedback from families regarding the intensive swimming program prompted two intensive swimming programs in 2016.

Parents of students who participated in the Schools Spectacular were supportive and appreciative of their child's participation.

Feedback from families is regular through the daily communication book and through the PLP and reporting process. Parents are kept informed of school events and celebrations through regular newsletters, the school website and Facebook.

All staff participate in consultation processes. Staff support the implementation of the school plan and the executive monitor the progress of the plan through milestone development and monitoring. Team meetings, held weekly and led by the Assistant Principals, committee meetings, fortnightly full staff meetings provide opportunities for the staff to have input into the direction and operation of the school. The weekly staff bulletin keeps staff informed of events and operational issues.

Overall staff are positive and committed to the school's vision. The school learning support officers have input into the learning support through mid term and end of term class staff reflection. The feedback from the school learning support officers is valuable in working towards positive learning outcomes for the students.

Visitors and members of the community regularly provide positive comments about the commitment and dedication of the staff and the positivity within the school environment.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

St George School is committed to achieving outcomes in accordance with the NSW Department of Education's Aboriginal Education and Training policy.

The policy aims to provide for all students an increased knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal Australia through the inclusion of Aboriginal histories, cultures and languages in educational programs and an

acknowledgement that Aboriginal education and training is core business for all staff.

The national curriculum has identified the study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders histories and cultures as a cross curricula priority to include the three concepts of Country, People and Cultures.

At St George School, Aboriginal studies is embedded in cross curriculum content within units of work and through participation in specific initiatives such as the Koori Art Expressions. The Koori Art Expressions Program was introduced in 2009 as an initiative of the former Sydney Region of the department to educate all students about Aboriginal Australia. The program provided teacher professional learning on Aboriginal art, support for the development of an art program at school and the opportunity to exhibit student art works.

The theme for Koori Art Expressions in 2016 was *Songlines: The living narrative of our nation*. One of the Middle classes participated in the program and developed artworks consistent with the theme, titled *Different compass points, one destination*. The program culminated at the end of the year with the launch of the Koori Art Expressions exhibition at the Maritime Museum in November 2016. Our students' artworks were proudly displayed along with many other Sydney metropolitan primary and secondary schools.

In 2016, curriculum studies, celebration of events and acknowledgement of the Gadigal land on which the school stands were the key initiatives in Aboriginal education.

St George School continued to demonstrate respect for Aboriginal elders and land through preceding assemblies with Acknowledgement of Country.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

The department is committed to building a diverse and inclusive learning environment that benefits all students including those from language backgrounds other than English.

St George School is comprised of diverse nationalities. Our learning programs reflect respect for all cultures and commitment to inclusivity.

At St George School, multicultural education is embedded in curriculum content within units of work and through participation in specific initiatives. In 2016, on Harmony Day a special assembly was held during which the diverse cultures within each class was acknowledged. For our special Olympics Day held during the period of the Rio De Janeiro Olympics, each class chose a country which reflected the cultures of that class.

St George School accesses the interpreter service to support meetings with families and the telephone interpreter service to support communication, as required.

Other school programs

Arts

All students at St George School participate in creative arts programs. Students attend art classes in their classroom. Student art work covers a range of mixed media including painting, drawing, collage, photography and tablet technology art. The creation of art works by the students is complemented by appreciation of art work, consistent with the objectives of the Creative Arts syllabus.

In Term 2, students participated in a Creative Arts day focusing on each student creating their own 'Self Portrait'. The staff participated in some creative play prior to the **Art Day** with some practical hands-on activities to prepare the students for the day. The staff were well supported to ensure they felt confident to explore the world of portraiture. Every student created a self portrait on the day using a variety of different medium including paint, crayon, and various collage materials. Some students used technology to capture their image using the iPad and appropriate apps. The final results were outstanding and diverse. The portraits were proudly displayed in the foyer and received glowing comments from families, staff, visitors and the students themselves.

Music programs are incorporated into each class' weekly timetable. Students participate in listening and performing activities that are age appropriate and provide opportunities to increase communication and social skills.

The school's music program is supported by Josh Oshlack, visiting musician, and is delivered weekly to all classes throughout the year. The students use a variety of instruments to engage and support participation in the appreciation of music and use of instruments. The music sessions are interactive. Students play instruments, beat drums to rhythm, engage in craft activities, listen to songs and are assisted to sign words to some songs. The music program is generously funded by the Good Guys Rockdale via the St George Children with Disabilities Fund

In 2016, students attended a Musica Viva performance by a group of Japanese performers, Taikoz, who delighted our students with their dynamic and heart-stopping traditional Japanese music. The performance centred around the Taiko drums with the students having the opportunity to see, hear and feel the music with the vibrations, sounds and rhythm of the Japanese drums.

Drama programs are addressed in class programs and often integrated into literacy programs. The stimulating environment and props of the sensory theatre provided opportunities to immerse students into the world of literature and experience the content of the story through sound, visuals, touch and smell. Students explored the underwater world and the story *The Rainbow Fish* in first term. In Terms 2 and 3, students had the opportunity to look at a

Where the Forest Meets the Sea. In fourth term, activities centred around the festive season, exploring the symbols of Christmas including stars, baubles and angels.

The use of the iPad enabled the video caption of drama activities. Some of the classes used the iPad and the iMovie app to create trailers and short films.

Drama programs culminated at the end of year concert with whole school participation in the performance for parents and community members. With the theme, *St George Has Got Talent*, the classes provided a range of entertainment and performances. The Primary classes performed *Jitterbugs* and *Singing in the Rain*. The Middle team classes performed a song from the musical, *Aladdin* and showcased a clever, sleight of hand *Magic Show*. The Secondary classes performed a DJ Jam session using the Garage Band app and the finale of the concert was a modified contemporary dance from *Swan Lake*.

The outcomes for students in performance are working together as a team, intensive communication opportunities, opportunities for individual performances, focused and purposeful artworks for set design, set construction and costume. The most rewarding is the positive response from the audience as experienced at the end of term concert.

Science

The Science curriculum objectives are to develop knowledge and understanding of the Physical World, Earth and Space, Living World and Chemical World together with the development of values and attitudes and skills in working scientifically.

Classes implemented aspects of the curriculum covering topics such as the rainforest (Living World), Minibeasts (Living World), layers of the Earth (Earth and Space), weather and flooding (Physical World)

Sustainability is a cross curricula study and features in Science education. The three teams at St George School continue to manage their own worm farm as part of the school's environmental program. Each class also managed their own recycling and composting program.

The Primary classes studied Bush Christmas with an incursion by the Royal National Environment Education Centre.

Technology

At St George School, technology has been embraced as a learning and communication tool in all aspects of student lives as they become participants in 21st century living.

Technology was used extensively in all classrooms to support access to teaching and learning, facilitate communication across the day and enhance engagement in learning programs. Technology such as the Smartboard (Interactive Whiteboard), touch screen monitors, iPads and speech generating devices

enabled many students to increase their communication across the day and be used by staff across different settings and situations.

The use of the iPad to create books, take photos and video was an exciting way for teachers to capture the daily life of the class at school. Students engaged in scaffolded learning tasks to use tablet technology for individual learning needs. Student use of the iPad ranged from beginning experiences to touch the iPad screen for cause and effect to using the iPad as a personal communication system.

Eye gaze technology hardware and software was purchased in 2016 to support students with limited verbal communication and limited hand function. Eye gaze technology provides access to learning and communication using the eye to control the cursor on the screen. The software provided training and practice in the use of eye gaze to track, fixate and scan.

In 2016, fortnightly technology professional learning sessions continued for all staff.

Sport

The Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PD/H/PE) Key Learning Area is an important program for all students at St George School. Outcomes in this area achieved through a variety of programs to address the varying levels of need. Facilities to address the delivery of these programs include the indoor heated pool, playground, library, specialised equipment such as modified bikes and community facilities such as local parks, the bowling alley at Sylvania and the waters of Kogarah Bay and Sydney Harbour.

Sports programs support the development of gross and fine motor skills and students are encouraged to play these sports as independently as possible. Each team had a combined classes sports lesson weekly.

In 2016, the weekly sports program was comprised of three sessions per week, one for each team. The Primary Team were involved in a number of different sports including ten pin bowling, bocchia, target toss, bean bags into the hoop, catch the ball, softball and relay races. The Middle Team combined for both sports and dance classes. Students engaged and socialised with their peers in other classes. Students learnt a rock 'n roll and a country dance which mirrored the music program themes of different genres. Students developed skills in turn-taking, choice making and engagement. The activities encouraged the use of gross motor and fine motor skills. The Secondary team combined for a variety of sports including bowling at Sylvania, bocchia, relay races and limbo dance. Activities also addressed mathematics learning areas such as counting, measurement and time. Students communicated sports choices each week. The sport session finished with a 'Finished' song.

During the Rio Olympics of 2016, classes across the school focused on sport whether looking at the medal tally each day, visiting the host city via virtual reality or playing a range of Olympics sports during the weekly

sports sessions. St George School celebrated its own Olympics day commencing with the opening ceremony. Each class nominated a country to represent and proudly marched around the playground in the colours of their country with their anthem playing in the background. Following the official ceremony, the students participated in sport with each team choosing a specific Olympic sport to play. At the end of the day, classes came together for the medal ceremony with students from each class receiving a gold, silver or bronze medal. The Olympics day provided many learning and social opportunities for students throughout the day.

All students participated in weekly swimming program in the hydrotherapy pool. Parents, volunteers and an additional member of staff support this program. All students participated in intensive swimming which operated twice in 2016. All staff participated in a 2 hour hydrotherapy professional learning session delivered by an occupational therapist from the Cerebral Palsy Alliance.

In 2016, students from the secondary team competed for a spot in the school's boccia team which competed with students with disabilities from other special schools and from support classes in regular schools. The competition was held at Georges River College, Peakhurst Campus. Following the selection of players, the team practised at school with the support of teachers, SLSOs and volunteers. It was an enriching and rewarding experience for all members of the team.

The classroom and playground is used by classes for important gross motor movements such as cycling, climbing, balancing, jumping and aerobic exercise movements. The students are able to develop gross motor skills and participate in activities aimed at developing balance, movement, posture, flexibility, muscle tone, muscle strength and general mobility.

St George School has a number of modified bikes which are used daily to support gross motor activities. Gross motor activities target each student's individual needs and motor function. Therapy recommendations on physical management issues are integrated into class programs across KLAs.

Sailability as a sport was continued in 2016. Students from a number of classes enjoyed the experience and fun of sailing on Wednesday mornings at Kogarah Bay in second term with 1:1 support from volunteers and workers at Sailability. It was a fun and enriching experience for our students from very experienced volunteer sailors.

Classes also had the opportunity to go sailing on Sydney Harbour. Sailors with Disabilities took groups of students on a yacht from Rushcutters Bay, under the Harbour Bridge and around Darling Harbour. Students and staff took turns in steering the yacht.

The sailing excursions provided our students with inclusive leisure and sporting activities that would otherwise be difficult to access. Both sailing programs are volunteer based.

Assembly

Assembly is a whole school event and in 2016 was held fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons. Assembly parallels assemblies in mainstream schools with Acknowledgement of Country followed by the National Anthem to commence assembly. Assembly concludes with the St George School song. The program addresses skills in listening, speaking and socialisation.

Assembly becomes an opportune time for the whole school to celebrate achievement through assembly awards. Principal awards, sports awards, library awards, music awards and birthday recognition occur at each assembly.

In addition to the fortnightly award assemblies, special assemblies to honour specific events took place throughout the year: Harmony Day, Peace Day, Reconciliation, Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

Our final assembly for the year is the Leavers' Assembly. In 2016, we said farewell to ten graduates. The Assembly commenced with the announcement of the new captains and vice captains for the following year and the handover of the captains' badges to the newly elected captains. The Leavers' assembly also provided the opportunity to farewell our families and to acknowledge the vital role and commitment that has accompanied their child's progress throughout the years of schooling.

Library

St George School has a librarian allocation that enables the delivery of library lessons once per week. In 2016, all classes attended formal library lessons on Mondays on a fortnightly basis. The librarian selected appropriate materials to address student needs appropriate to the age of students. The library lesson followed a set routine: Library song *Gotta Keep Reading*, shared story, lesson activities and self-selection of a book to borrow. Students enjoyed listening to stories and having the opportunity to borrow books.

The librarian is responsible for the organisation of the library, the annual stocktake and replenishment of children's books and resources.

Education Week

In August 2016 we celebrated Education Week. The theme was *Our Stories*. The classes prepared stories for the day. There was a variety of stories to be told and the senior students showcased their story through movie making.

Excursions

All classes participated in excursions and community access programs. Excursions provide the opportunity to experience structured learning activities beyond the school environment. It supports functional literacy and numeracy programs and enhances opportunities to communicate and socialise within the local community.

The Primary Team were part of whole school outings

such as Sailability, sailing on the harbour with Sailors with Disabilities and the Easter Show. The classes also went to the Variety Club Christmas Party and attended a Mobile Petting Farm incursion. Other excursion venues included the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Art Gallery of NSW, train trip to Cronulla, teddy bears' picnic at the Royal National Park.

The highlight for students in Middle 1 was the overnight arts festival excursion with staff and students attending *Madame Tussaud's* wax museum during the day, the evening performance of *Aladdin* at the Capital Theatre followed by a sleepover at school and a BBQ breakfast the following morning.

The senior Secondary classes participated in a weekly shopping program as part of their *Work and Community* program. The focus was developing social and money skills with the use of ipads to facilitate choice making and communication. In addition, the senior secondary class participated in the Three Bridges Program which provided opportunities for the students to engage in a variety of activities with adult peers and practise social and communication skills in preparation for transition to post school options programs.

Links with other schools

Volunteer programs provide opportunities for students at St George School to develop social and communication skills, to share learning with non-disabled students and to generalise skills in another setting.

In 2016, we continued the reverse integration program with Georges River College (GRC), Penshurst Campus. The students from the high school visited on a weekly basis and participated in supporting the afternoon class programs. To support the success of this volunteer program with GRC Penshurst Girls, an executive from the school attended the high school's volunteer program day to provide insight into St George School and the opportunities for voluntary support.

Outcomes of integration programs for our students include social interaction with school age peers without disabilities. Incidental learning included enhanced opportunities for communication. The outcome for the visiting students is an awareness of disabilities and opportunities to broaden communication and citizenship skills.

Other volunteer programs and student practicums

St George School provides opportunities for individuals and groups to undertake community programs. A number of tertiary studies require the completion of specific hours of community support.

In 2016, tertiary students attended from St George TAFE, Loftus TAFE, Sydney University, Australian Catholic University, Sydney University, Macquarie University and UTS. Tertiary studies of participating students range from certificates courses through to undergraduate degrees and post graduate studies. The length of practicums varied from a three day

observation to a four week block placement. Students attend from disability TAFE courses, teacher undergraduate courses, nursing studies and post-graduate special education studies.

St George School also hosted Year 11 students from local schools undertaking VET courses in Business Studies.

St George School also hosted students undertaking physiotherapy studies at a university in Denmark. The two students attended for 6 weeks and supported the physical management programs across the school.