

# Mainsbridge School

## Annual Report



2017



5630

## Introduction

The Annual Report for **2017** is provided to the community of **Mainsbridge 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.

Nicole Katen

Relieving Principal

## School contact details

Mainsbridge School

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## School background

### School vision statement

***Providing exceptional and empowered special education, driving student learning through purposeful, self-reflective, holistic practice.***

### School context

Mainsbridge School is a Department of Education school, located in Liverpool, 36 kilometres south west of Sydney and is part of the Liverpool Network of schools. The school site is historic with the original 130 year old residence, housing the school's administration office. The Department of Education commenced using this site as a School for Specific Purposes (SSP) 51 years ago.

Our school caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 12 with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities and their associated needs. Students need to have a confirmed disability and are offered a place at Mainsbridge School following a placement panel process. Enrolment trends have remained consistent over the last 5 years with the average enrolment being 108 students across 17 classes.

Students live in the surrounding areas of Liverpool, Fairfield, Wattle Grove, Cabramatta, Macquarie Fields, Hoxton Park and Kemps Creek. Eighty-four percent access Assisted School Transport (AST).

High quality, data driven educational programs are provided for students based on the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA). The school has a curriculum focus incorporating the Australian Curriculum and strength in areas of alternative and augmentative communication (AAC) and the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and emerging technologies. In addition all students have a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP) that has been developed in collaboration with parents and carers.

Throughout the school, specialised spaces have been designed to cater for the specific learning needs of our students. These include a gross motor room, multisensory room, an iPad laboratory, music centre and a living skills room.

The school population consists of 80% English as an Additional Language Dialect (EAL/D) with the most common languages being Vietnamese and Arabic.

## Self-assessment and school achievement

### Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

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.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. 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.

### Learning

The delivery of high quality, individualised education programs is the basis of Mainsbridge School's achievement across the excellence framework. Our learning culture provides quality teaching, aimed at engaging students in learning that is comprehensive and supports cognitive, social, physical and emotional wellbeing. Curriculum planning is comprehensive across grades K–12. Teachers have thorough knowledge of their students and the teaching practices that best accommodate their individual needs. Innovative co-curricular planning and lesson delivery ensure that all students have access to all areas of curriculum at a level appropriate to their developmental level and physical capacity.

In 2017, teachers completed the delivery of the fourth cycle of the K–12 scope and sequence for Australian Curriculum. The cycle ensured a systematic approach to Personalised Learning Plans and classroom programs within an evidence based teaching model. Teachers regularly reviewed student learning and used this as evaluative feedback about the effectiveness of the specialised skills and practices used within their special education classrooms.

## Teaching

Teams of teachers worked to build collective capacity, to achieve improvement in individual student learning within classes and across school and community environments. This process involved teachers taking responsibility for their practice and adapting and changing their approach according to developing student needs and complex disabilities. Across stage collaboration ensured a comprehensive approach to shared knowledge of our special needs students. This allowed staff to share and increase expertise in managing teaching and learning for students requiring high levels of support for health and challenging behaviour.

Professional Learning targeting the needs of specialist educators remained a key focus. The executive team drew on their own and the expertise of other professionals, to deliver comprehensive sessions that enhanced teaching capacity and collaborative approaches to school development, classroom programming and management.

Within the Professional Development Planning cycle, teachers demonstrated a clear commitment to their ongoing knowledge and development of expertise in special education practice. They applied this to their daily work with students across K–12. Teachers aligned their own professional development to the school's goals to ensure the delivery of the highest quality special education possible.

## Leading

The leadership team fostered collaboration amongst the staff to ensure the achievement of the strategic directions set out in the school plan 2015–2017. Staff committed to the purpose of the plan and used evidence based approaches to reviewing and evaluating progress towards these shared improvement goals contained therein. Evidence showed clear progress in all strategic directions and the collaborative approach opened dialogue between all staff when approaching a new planning cycle.

The leadership team worked to expand its capacity as a group to fulfil the long term workforce, financial, policy and whole school planning into the future. The team consolidated programs such as CONNECT, that support the incorporation of parents and community in forward planning and current evaluative processes.

Our self–assessment process assisted the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/sef-evidence-guide>

## Strategic Direction 1

Relevant teaching to engage students for continuous learning.

### Purpose

#### Purpose:

Mainsbridge School's ethos embraces that special needs learning happens differently. Teaching approaches are driven by current data and specialist research, ensuring the most effective strategies are used to move students towards their maximum potential as functional members of their community.

### Overall summary of progress

Mainsbridge School maintained its focus on individualised communication systems for all students. The key focus within communication was to provide learning opportunities for the parent community to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in the delivery of augmentative communication systems used across home and school.

### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures<br>(to be achieved over 3 years)   | Funds Expended<br>(Resources)  | Progress achieved this year   |
|---|--|---|
| 100% of students will access individual communication programs across school and community settings.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of PECS information and learning session for parents to enhance communication at home.</li><li>• PECS workshops for parents were delivered during three on campus sessions.</li><li>• Survey data analysed to profile communication systems usage across age groups and locales.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$2500 Teacher relief</li><li>• \$2000 Teacher relief</li><li>• \$100 Consumables</li></ul> |
| Authentic levels of progress are evident through relevant student data management systems indicating 50% (or greater) of students initiating communication spontaneously. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Professional learning to upskill school leaders and data management team in the effective use of data management systems.</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$0 – Managed through TPL</li></ul>   |
| A reduction of 15% in critical and negative behaviours, increasing students' effective engagement in curriculum.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TPL for the finalisation of a whole school reward system based on PBL principles.</li><li>• PBL team develop and negotiate reward system in consultation with staff.</li></ul>   | \$0 – Run through professional learning schedule  |

### Next Steps

- In the 2018–2020 school plan, communication will be incorporated into the core business of curriculum planning as the key literacy focus. Teacher Professional Learning and parent training will continue to support student achievement in communication across student learning needs.
- Changing student needs require the introduction of new assistive technologies. This will include the development of staff knowledge and skills in assistive technology for communication. Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) will continue throughout K–12 reflecting high success rates with students across the school in the years 2015–2017.

## Strategic Direction 2

Community confidence, strategic support and quality relationships.

### Purpose

#### Purpose:

Mainsbridge School presents with a diversity of complex needs impacting on students and families. High levels of trust are required to manage students cooperatively and comprehensively. Collaborative implementation of personal learning plans provides students with optimal success and establishes strong home school bonds.

### Overall summary of progress

Mainsbridge School delivered phase two of the CONNECT program. The leadership team refined the sessions and learning experiences to better accommodate parents, using feedback gained in phase one. Phase two was well received and drew interest from new parents, most with language backgrounds other than English and those newly arrived to the country and school system. Parent participation in classrooms has become more consistent, as a result parents reported that they felt more informed and confident to participate in classroom based support.

### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures<br>(to be achieved over 3 years)                         | Funds Expended<br>(Resources)  | Progress achieved this year  |
|---|--|--|
| Increased parent participation by 75%.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CONNECT program phase two developed and scheduled.</li><li>• Phase two of CONNECT program implemented.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$6000 Teacher relief – preparation</li><li>• \$7500 Teacher relief – implementation</li><li>• \$2000 Incentive prize, catering, stationary.</li></ul> |
| Parents attend parent education programs regularly within the school setting. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Phase one CONNECT program parents participating in classrooms.</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$0 – managed within school schedules.</li></ul>   |

### Next Steps

- The CONNECT program will continue as part of the schools core programs for parent involvement. The success of phase one and two demonstrate the approach to be effective and valuable for all involved.
- Ongoing parent participation opportunities will be integrated into the new school plan within student wellbeing.

### Strategic Direction 3

Develop high performing staff and leaders

#### Purpose

##### Purpose:

Mainsbridge staff are privileged to be trusted with the education systems most vulnerable and complex students. Leaders are charged with the responsibility of ensuring high performance and accountability of staff. Staff recognise and work effectively towards refining and calibrating their practice.

#### Overall summary of progress

The leadership team worked collaboratively to develop a new school protocol for supervision of teachers across K–12. Supervisors worked with staff on the incorporation of the Australian Teaching Standards into staff Professional Development Plans (PDP). Staff aligned their professional learning with their PDP goals.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures<br>(to be achieved over 3 years)   | Funds Expended<br>(Resources)   | Progress achieved this year            |
|---|---|--|
| 100% of teachers and school leaders are aware of their current accreditation level and are actively engaged in a professional development plan. | • Create instructional rounds timetable for all teaching staff to provide support and mentoring within PDP process. | • \$1000 Teacher Professional Learning |

#### Next Steps

- As pre 2004 teachers enter into the accreditation process with their new scheme peers, PDP planning according to the Australian Teaching Standards will become the core business of the supervision cycle of all classroom staff.

| Key Initiatives   | Resources (annual)             | Impact achieved this year   |
|---|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Aboriginal background loading</b>                          | \$600                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resourcing and materials for the delivery of Aboriginal perspectives with curriculum K–12</li> </ul>   |
| <b>English language proficiency</b>                           | \$2000                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative implementation of EAL/D support utilising trained and highly skilled teachers across K–12</li> <li>• Program implemented within a weekly timetable for all early ESL phases. In class and withdrawal programs as required by learning needs and disability.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Low level adjustment for disability</b>                    | \$0                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Socio–economic background</b>                              | \$12000<br>\$8000              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Xenotech IT maintenance</li> <li>• Replaced and updated hardware</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Targeted student support for refugees and new arrivals</b> | \$2700 (rolled over into 2018) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NAP class group formed with establishment of 17 classes.</li> </ul>  |



## Student information

### Student enrolment profile

|          | Enrolments |      |      |      |
|----------|------------|------|------|------|
| Students | 2014       | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Boys     | 81         | 78   | 85   | 81   |
| Girls    | 32         | 29   | 26   | 26   |

### Post-school destinations

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

100% of year 12 students transitioned into Post School Placements within the local community.

### Year 12 attaining HSC or equivalent

12 Students achieved the award of a Higher School certificate in Life Skills.

## Workforce information

### Workforce composition

| Position                              | FTE*  |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Principal                             | 1     |
| Deputy Principal(s)                   | 1     |
| Assistant Principal(s)                | 4     |
| Head Teacher(s)                       | 0     |
| Classroom Teacher(s)                  | 13.52 |
| Teacher of Reading Recovery           | 0     |
| Learning & Support Teacher(s)         | 0     |
| Teacher Librarian                     | 0.6   |
| Teacher of ESL                        | 0     |
| School Counsellor                     | 0.6   |
| School Administration & Support Staff | 19.88 |
| Other Positions                       | 0     |

\*Full Time Equivalent

### 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             | 0          |

### Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Mainsbridge School maintained its comprehensive Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) Program throughout 2017. All staff participated in weekly hour long sessions presented by the executive team and other service agency professionals. All executive and teaching staff attended the Special Education Principals and Leaders Association (SEPLA) conference in term 3. All who attended found the key speakers and sessions highly beneficial to their professional practice and the networking time valuable for engaging in professional exchanges with other staff and leaders from Schools for Specific Purposes.

New Scheme teachers continued working toward maintaining their accreditation while teachers appointed prior to 2004 engaged in professional learning and Professional Development Planning incorporating the

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

### Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

|                                       | 2017 <b>Actual</b> (\$) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Opening Balance</b>                | 160,875                 |
| <b>Revenue</b>                        | 4,314,195               |
| Appropriation                         | 4,230,965               |
| Sale of Goods and Services            | 4,698                   |
| Grants and Contributions              | 76,509                  |
| Gain and Loss                         | 0                       |
| Other Revenue                         | 0                       |
| Investment Income                     | 2,023                   |
| <b>Expenses</b>                       | -4,156,247              |
| Recurrent Expenses                    | -4,156,247              |
| Employee Related                      | -3,901,179              |
| Operating Expenses                    | -255,068                |
| Capital Expenses                      | 0                       |
| Employee Related                      | 0                       |
| Operating Expenses                    | 0                       |
| <b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b> | 157,949                 |
| <b>Balance Carried Forward</b>        | 318,824                 |

An opening balance of \$160 875 is recorded in the SAP finance table.

The financial management processes and governance structures meet the financial policy requirements.

### Financial summary equity funding

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

|                       | 2017 <b>Actual</b> (\$) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Base Total</b>     | 676,050                 |
| Base Per Capita       | 32,717                  |
| Base Location         | 0                       |
| Other Base            | 643,333                 |
| <b>Equity Total</b>   | 153,047                 |
| Equity Aboriginal     | 652                     |
| Equity Socio economic | 128,198                 |
| Equity Language       | 24,198                  |
| Equity Disability     | 0                       |
| <b>Targeted Total</b> | 3,069,576               |
| <b>Other Total</b>    | 84,939                  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>    | 3,983,612               |

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

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.

### Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

In 2017, Mainsbridge School teaching staff were surveyed to evaluate the final cycle of the school's four year scope and sequence based on the NSW syllabi for The Australian Curriculum. The results showed an overwhelming trend that knowledge of curriculum requirements and planning confidence increased across teachers K–12. 100% of teachers expressed satisfaction with the document and planning cycle.

The feedback also demonstrated high levels of satisfaction by all staff with the planning, resourcing and delivery process. The results showed that apart from the syllabus documents themselves, internally developed support documents such as; the K–12 scope and sequence, Picture Exchange Communication System as Literacy framework, Social Skills scope, sequence and planning materials based on Positive Behaviour for Learning principals (PBL) and Whole School Sports Programming templates were accessed by all class teachers within their programming cycle.

Results also indicated a desire amongst staff for increased opportunities for collaborative planning.

*"Every Key Learning Area can be incorporated into a specific theme within the scope and sequence. I broke down the theme into workable topics for each week, I then focused the students' learning targeted at their individual needs around these weekly topics."*  
Classroom Teacher

*"The scope and sequence has provided a wide range of topics with good links to outcomes at each level."*  
Classroom Teacher

2017 saw the review of Individualised Communication Systems used by students throughout the school K–12. 100% of teachers used Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) as part of their daily communication practice within their classrooms. As PECS is such a widely accessed program across the school by students of all ages, the literacy and communication committee developed a series of parent information and learning sessions about using PECS, to promote communication within their home and family life. The sessions provided students, parents and teachers with a common mode of communication across home and school settings.

Parents attending the PECS learning sessions expressed high levels of appreciation for the skills learned. They demonstrated keen interest in developing PECS folders for use within their homes to support their children's communication skills and the generalisation of these into life outside school and into their community. *"What I liked best about the presentations was that I got a chance to practise the different phases and to see videos of how PECS is done in the classrooms."* Parent

## Policy requirements

### Aboriginal education

In 2017 the Gandangara Bush Tucker Garden was developed by all classes K–12. This special project was lead by a member of the executive team who forged ties with the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and elders of the Aboriginal community to assist in its planning and development. The garden not only incorporated native plants within the garden design but also a series of painted totems representing a variety of themes of indigenous culture. These were placed throughout the garden walk. Staff, students and the community experienced great satisfaction in the design and building process as well as an increased awareness of native plants and their traditional uses for the Aboriginal people.

### Multicultural and anti-racism education

Mainsbridge School families represent a wide variety of cultures and racial groups. Within K–12 curriculum planning, multicultural perspectives are imbedded and used to support cross cultural understanding and tolerance.

The school initiated a New Arrivals Program with the establishment of a new class at Mainsbridge School. This was funded by the Department of Education (DoE). An Arabic speaking School Learning Support Officer and Specialist Teacher were employed to provide these newly arrived students with much needed support as they transition into school. Our specialist EAL/D teachers and a member of the executive team attended the inservice for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) training for the recognition and support of students entering the country with potentially traumatic personal histories.

## Other school programs

### Life Skills in Action

Providing high school students opportunities to acquire and generalise daily functional life skills is an essential component of successful high school learning and is a prerequisite for post school placement. The content and learning provided within the Life Skills In Action Program promotes the highest level of functional independence for adolescent and young adult learners. The initiative developed from the desire of our high school teaching team to see their graduate students move successfully into post school settings with minimal transition stress. The wide variety of skills learned within classrooms need to be generalised into students' lives at home and within their community for successful post school transitions to take place.

The key features of the program for students are:

- Enhancing their sense of self and improving their capacity to manage challenging circumstances
- Developing caring and respectful relationships
- Participating in life long physical activity
- Safe living including travel training and water safety
- Leisure / social activities and interpersonal relationships
- Outdoor recreation including gardening, bushwalking, aquatic sport, outdoor eating etc.

The program structure is cyclic and gives all students opportunities to become involved in both active sports and recreational leisure activities. This programs' success has ensured its continuation in 2018.

### Exercise Physiology and Multidisciplinary Health Clinic

The school gym was utilised throughout 2017 for a variety of purposes. The most significant of these being the ongoing work of our Exercise Physiologist, who is conducting cardio fitness programs for our students on an individual and small group basis. The results indicate a very significant increase in student cardiovascular fitness levels and stamina. The

secondary results are increased student engagement in class. This program will be continued and will become a larger part of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy in future planning cycles.

The Multidisciplinary Health Clinic continued to provide opportunities for the school to provide targeted access to health care for students presenting with high priority needs, relating to health and behaviour. The process is well established and continues to have a lasting impact on participating families.

### **Primary Sports Program**

K–6 have grown the combined sports program comprehensively, incorporating effective fundamental movement skills development and sports and games learning for all students. Inclusive activities have been designed for all levels of motor ability and the students and staff alike have found the sessions highly motivating. Opportunities for physical fitness and development are delivered with communication embedded into the process at all levels. Students from Liverpool West PS joined the sessions providing wonderful peer interaction opportunities for all.