

Mainsbridge School

Annual Report



2018



5630

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2018** 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.

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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 131 year old residence, housing the school's administration office. The Department of Education commenced using this site as a special school 52 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 109 students across 17 classes.

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

High quality data driven educational programs are provided for students based on 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 ICT and emerging technologies. In addition all students have a Personalised Learning Plan, (PLP) which 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 room and a living skills room.

The school population consists of 90% language background other than English (LBOTE) with the most common languages being Arabic and Vietnamese.

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

In order to demonstrate that all students are valued and cared for Mainsbridge School delivers highly differentiated individual programs for all students K–12. Our learning culture promotes the engagement of all students in comprehensive learning, utilising their individual communicative skills. Engagement of this sort promotes a sense of belonging within the school community and enhances cognitive, social, emotional and physical development for all. Classes entered into the second cycle of the four year cross curricular scope and sequence after a full review, and the implementation of the new NSW syllabi for Science, PDHPE and Life Skills stage 5/6 was highlighted in preparation for the upcoming mandatory implementation in 2019 and beyond.

Within Strategic Direction 2, the curriculum team developed a series of practical Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) options for use within community participation and across outdoor school environments. This ensured that student voices are heard in all school contexts. It also provided students with increased opportunities to engage with their local community and life beyond school.

Within Strategic Direction 1 the Behaviour Support Team and the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) Team merged to form the Learning Support Wellbeing Team. This holistic approach to knowing and caring for students underpins Mainsbridge Schools achievement within the Excellence Framework. The streamlined systemic approach allowed for

ease of access to information to support students within classrooms and for information sharing between teachers and interagency staff working together to achieve common learning and development goals.

Teaching

In 2018 a focus on collaborative planning was initiated across K–12. Planning days and collaborative opportunities between staff and supervisors driven by the improvement process saw an increase in collegial discussion and the sharing of expertise within all grades. K–12 teachers refocused on the individual communicative needs of the changing cohort. Professional Learning sessions focused on up skilling teacher knowledge and application of a variety of augmentative and alternative communication modes utilised by students across the school. Particular emphasis was given to previously unknown systems used for students with conditions not previously known within the student population.

Teachers engaged in strategic planning groups with increased levels of responsibility to corporately achieve whole school improvement goals. Across the school all teachers held responsibility for part of an improvement measure as negotiated collaboratively with their team leaders. The result of this was a notable increase in knowledge and ownership of improvement measures being developed and implemented across the school.

2018 also saw the implementation of a number of co-curricular projects across the school. The Bush Tucker Garden and Life Skills in Action projects exemplify the increase in teacher confidence to work collaboratively and innovatively to help students achieve their highest potential as learners and members of the school community.

Leading

All members of the 2018 Leadership Team participated in Growth Coaching International's Coaching Accreditation Program. This rigorous learning program allowed the team to develop effective skills for supporting staff development and initiating a direct culture shift toward continuous improvement that is self sustaining. Leaders initiated strategic growth coaching sessions with supervisees across the school demonstrating their commitment to expanding the capacity of staff towards professional growth that is self regulated. Leaders imbedded the principals within the Professional Development Planning Framework to ensure that staff had a clear understanding of how to assess their areas of development, how to set an achievable goal and how to evidence their work towards its achievement.

An initiative to increase the impact of leadership across the school included the expansion of the team. Expressions of interest were offered to all staff wishing to increase their leadership capacity. Three classroom teachers were appointed to non substantive leadership positions annexed by the existing executive team. This allowed for a greater distribution of essential managerial tasks and increased the scope for forward focused planning and development as Mainsbridge relocates to a purpose built setting within the next two years.

Strategic Direction 1

Effective wellbeing across the school community.

Purpose

Mainsbridge School values holistic education. Improved wellbeing of students, staff and community builds a strong foundation where quality teaching and learning optimises student achievement.

Overall summary of progress

Mainsbridge School focused on enhancing the quality of conversations within the school community to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The school leadership team successfully participated in Growth Coaching International's Coaching Accreditation Program by completing a 4-day course and follow up course work. This required the team to engage in face to face, phone and workplace coaching sessions. The leadership team is now equipped with a solid platform of practical skills, knowledge, models and tools for effective coaching of staff, students and the wider community in making a positive contribution to professional practice and impact on whole school improvement.

The school-wide focus on student wellbeing has been a priority in 2018 with the merging of the Behaviour Support Team and the Positive Behaviour for Learning Team into a Learning Support Wellbeing Team. The Wellbeing team ensured successful implementation of the Integrated Wellbeing Programs including the Cardio Clinic with an Exercise Physiologist, the Weight Management Clinic and the Multidiscipline Health Clinic. Selected staff completed Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) and Management of Actual and Potential Aggression (MAPA) training to build skills in managing students exhibiting challenging behaviours.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Increased collaborative planning amongst teachers driving and sustaining new programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$10500 – Growth Coaching Program• \$3500 – SLSO wages – Gym manual• \$500 – Teacher wage – Gym manual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership team completed 4-day Growth Coaching Accreditation Program with Growth Coaching International• Leadership team implement 8-step Growth Coaching Model in their daily conversations with staff• PDP planning according to Australian Teaching Standards with supervisors• Teachers enrolled in the iPlay professional learning online program• Collaborative development of a Gym manual – teachers, SLSO's and Exercise Physiologist
Decrease in the proportion of negative student incidents recorded in Sentral.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MAPA Training for staff• Staff collaborative programming for team teaching students with challenging behaviours

Next Steps

- Increase student participation in the "Get Moving" program (Cardio clinic) from targeted students attending in 2018 to whole class participation throughout the 2019 school year. This will improve student participation from approximately nine students in 2018, to 75 students in 2019.
- External review of Positive Behaviour for Learning by PBL mentor in mid term 1. Updating of action plan and roll out of improvement areas, including the use of consistent PBL language across the school setting by all staff.
- Selected staff professional development in 2019 on: Positive Behaviour for Learning and Management of Actual and Potential Aggression.
- Professional learning for all staff on Behavioural Psychology.

Strategic Direction 2

Driving quality teaching and learning to enable effective student communication.

Purpose

Mainsbridge School believes empowering students through individualised communication systems will develop independent and flexible learners. It is our priority to build student capacity to communicate functionally beyond their years at school and into the wider community.

Overall summary of progress

Mainsbridge School's key focus for 2018 within strategic direction 2 was to ensure that every student has an effective and fully functional communication system by upskilling staff in order to meet the communicative needs of every student. This involved establishing two focus groups, one with an emphasis on communication and other on assessment. The Communication Focus Group (CFG) for developing and implementing a professional learning module that supports opportunities for staff to refine and extend communication skills and delivery. The Assessment Group (AG) for developing an assessment and tracking system to provide information regarding student communication development.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Classroom staff demonstrate increased skills and confidence in implementing strategies to develop independent student communication. Increase student independent communication skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 teacher planning days \$2500• TPL –AAC Presentation \$600	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication Focus Group and Assessment Group established, defined its role• CFG and AG held planning day, finalised goals, and developed action plan for 2018• CFG inspected playgrounds and specialist learning areas and created visuals• CFG created visual list for community access programs (Life Skills in Action)• CFG collected data on staff training needs for various AAC• TPL on AAC held on staff professional development day Term 1• TPL booked on behaviour psychology for mid-term 1• AG evaluated current practice and developed a baseline, identified innovative practices surrounding assessment records and progressive reporting• Evaluative survey developed and distributed to classroom teachers• Interim student report – semester 2 2018 created as a word processed document with the conclusion of school's Sentral contract.

Next Steps

- Develop and implement a professional learning module incorporating the picture exchange communication system (PECS), communication apps such as Proloquo2go, Key Word Sign, Assistive Technology– eye gaze, switch access and behaviour psychology by outsourcing professionals to deliver
- Expand student communication opportunities within the school and the wider community by creating visual boards for playgrounds and special learning areas and implementing the use of PECS folders during the Life Skills in Action Program
- Investigating online platforms for tracking and reporting on student achievement to parents
- Developing a skills based assessment framework for communication K–12

Strategic Direction 3

Successful transition to new school site, focusing on innovation.

Purpose

Mainsbridge students find change incredibly challenging. Providing gradual, predictable and individualised transition strategies will ensure our students are supported and prepared for our new location of Warwick Farm.

Strategic planning for major transitions require a collaborative approach that involve the whole school community. Developing an identity in our new community involves establishing new relationships with neighbouring schools and community groups.

Driving a positive school culture focusing on new opportunities will impact greatly on successful student transitions. Well prepared, confident teachers demonstrating and managing collaborative, flexible learning spaces, new practices, programs and routines will be evident.

Overall summary of progress

Mainsbridge School's key focus for 2018 within strategic direction 3 was to prepare the school community for a successful transition to the new school site. This was supported by establishing two focus groups. First, a transition team (TT) to research and develop a successful transition plan focussing on individual student needs and safety. Second, a research team (RT) aimed at exploring and researching ideas and techniques in regards to innovative use of spaces, furniture and collaborative teaching. Resulting in the development and delivery of a professional learning module

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Increase the amount of teachers demonstrating collaborative teaching, utilising a future focused approach.		The teams attended a presentation on Innovative Learning Environments at Hayball, linking the approach on the use of new spaces and equipment.
Decrease in the proportion of negative student incidents recorded in Sentra/Well-Being.	\$5000. Casual teachers days.	Site visits of two newly built SSP's, Information was collected on daily programs utilising shared spaces, fixed playground equipment and furniture. This information was shared with the staff of Mainsbridge, along with photographs of significant areas and resources..

Next Steps

- Liaise with colleagues from SSP's and discuss their transition to new sites, including preparation and implementation of transition plans
- Liaise with architect company, Hayball, regarding philosophy on use of educational spaces
- Research articles for innovative and current practice
- Identify research regarding flexible learning spaces
- Collate information and develop a professional learning module on innovative use of flexible learning spaces relevant to special education

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	\$669	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal student welfare • Community participation program (Life Skills in Action) • Acquisition of Library resources for Aboriginal Education aligning to Cross Curriculum Priorities Australian Curriculum for NSW. • Purchased Aboriginal Resources from Education National PTY LTD
English language proficiency	\$41745	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Collaborative implementation of EAL/D support utilising trained and highly skilled teachers across K–12 • EAL/D Program implemented within a weekly timetable for all early ESL phases. In class and withdrawal programs as required by learning needs and disability.
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	\$26341	Mainsbridge School established its own music program this year. During semester one, eight classes from kindergarten to year seven participated. Students from year 8 to year 12 accessed the program in semester two. Each week, classes participated in half hour music lessons where they listened and responded to music, participated in singing, playing and moving activities and culminated in a sensational show.
Socio–economic background	\$20,823.00 – temporary teacher engagement \$12,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of mentoring, classroom support and school planning programs. • Xenontech –IT support
Support for beginning teachers	\$41000 (\$21000– temporary teacher engagement and \$20000 – casual relief)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of planned and targeted weekly relief from face to face teaching sessions with mentor and for documentation • At request professional learning targeting goals that were supportive of their Personal Development Plan.
Targeted student support for refugees and new arrivals	\$6431	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formed Newly Arrived students class • EAL/D students English language proficiency increased through use of additional staff to support the implementation of direct instruction and instant support to maximise communication opportunities.
Professional Learning	\$8900 – Fees \$1500– Accomodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PECS– Picture Exchange Communication System • Growth Coaching Program • ASEPA and SEPLA conference (executive team) • SEPLA conference

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Boys	78	85	81	78
Girls	29	26	26	30

In 2018, 100% of our Year 12 students successfully transitioned into Post School Placements within the local community.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Deputy Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	4
Classroom Teacher(s)	13.68
Teacher Librarian	0.6
School Counsellor	0.6
School Administration and Support Staff	21.56

*Full Time Equivalent

Aboriginal composition of your school's workforce is nil.

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

At Mainsbridge School professional learning is valued and recognised as a major contributing factor for improving the learning outcomes of students. Professional learning in 2018 was aligned with the school's three strategic directions hence the formation of strategic direction teams to reach set milestones

within each strategic direction.

The school's strategic direction teams were extensively involved in the development and delivery of their action plans through planning days at school. Team members attended professional learning externally based on their planning process.

Teaching and non-teaching staff successfully undertook ongoing professional learning on a weekly basis to develop skills, knowledge and understanding to improve their practice. These sessions were either delivered by the school leadership team or trained professionals from other service agencies.

Teachers and school learning support officers attended the Special Education Principals and Leaders Association (SEPLA) conference in Term 3. This provided them with the opportunity to build collegial networks and collaborate with professionals within Schools for Specific Purposes community.

In 2018, the leadership team:

- received accreditation in Growth Coaching Program by participating in an intensive four day workshop over two terms to develop their leadership capability.
- attended Australian Special Education Principals Association (ASEPA) and Special Education Principals and Leaders Association (SEPLA) conferences.

A targeted and structured mentoring program was implemented to support New Scheme teachers working towards attaining accreditation. Pre-2004 teachers were provided with relevant training and support to understand how the accreditation process works and to align their teaching and learning with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Professional learning sessions were allocated to support staff in the development and implementation of Personal Development Plans incorporating Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Staff also participated in workshops outside school to develop their practice based on their individual goals.

Teaching and non-teaching staff undertook the Department of Education mandatory staff training and development. Staff completed/updated their training to support students with medical conditions and complex health care needs and procedures.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018.

	2018 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	318,824
Revenue	4,883,593
Appropriation	4,761,527
Sale of Goods and Services	4,179
Grants and Contributions	89,100
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	26,652
Investment Income	2,135
Expenses	-4,543,127
Recurrent Expenses	-4,543,127
Employee Related	-4,319,076
Operating Expenses	-224,050
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	340,466
Balance Carried Forward	659,290

An opening balance of \$318,824 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.

	2018 Actual (\$)
Base Total	834,892
Base Per Capita	43,984
Base Location	0
Other Base	790,908
Equity Total	155,193
Equity Aboriginal	669
Equity Socio economic	112,778
Equity Language	41,745
Equity Disability	0
Targeted Total	3,208,228
Other Total	102,575
Grand Total	4,300,887

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

Parents

Mainsbridge School introduced its Parent Support Group Team (PSGT) this year, the team scheduled meetings at school which provided parents and carers an opportunity to spend time with other parents. These meetings provided them with mutually needed information and emotional support, creating a sense of community, understanding, a place to laugh and help each other. It was evident that parents and carers were able to talk openly with each other, which resulted in brainstorming for realistic and pragmatic solutions. The Parent Support Group Team provided an educational and therapeutic space for the parents/carers to help each other renew their spirit, determination and enthusiasm for life.

Mainsbridge School hosted events such as Art Exhibition, Education Week and Shine at the Show to showcase the unique art and talents of our students to parents and carers. Our community continue to express their appreciation and satisfaction by purchasing/donating items such as books and artworks on sale during these events.

To plan for successful transition of our school leavers into Post School Options, a bus tour was organised for parents to various service providers in order to view possible settings for their child at the end of year 12. Parent satisfaction was demonstrated with the

engagement of 98% of Year 11 students' parents commencing collaborative planning with school and transition support teacher in the 18 months preceding their child's exit for both NDIS planning and reviews. With 100% of parents attending transition support meetings hosted on the school premises and or with school staff at NDIS offices within their home region.

New procedures were established for therapy at school in 2018. The procedures were designed to establish a set of clear guidelines and expectations of therapy at Mainsbridge School. In line with Department of Education policy, the leadership team developed procedures and systems to ensure the success of the program. These included collaborative parent planning and initial request for therapy, goal setting and reviews, alignment of therapy goals with personal learning plans, strategic timetabling of daily therapists in the school, therapist induction programs and procedures for sustainability of the program. In 2018, forty one therapists engaged in the Therapy at School program supporting twenty nine students and their personal learning goals. Twelve out of the forty one therapists engaged but didn't fully participate in the program for reasons such as student goals being more suited to home therapy and expiry of funds.

Staff

Teachers across K–12, RFF, Library and EALD were surveyed in relation to their satisfaction with current student communication practices used within classrooms. Results found that an amalgam of gestural communicative practices were utilised by 88% of students along with a formalised AAC program. 82.35% of students utilised PECS within phases 1 to 6, 17.65% utilised Proloquo2go and 11.76% used AAC alternatives to these are prescribed by external therapists. On average in classes K–12, 53.3% of class groups used PECS as their key mode of communication while 46.67% did not. Results indicate the reasons behind not using PECS were linked primarily to physical disability restricting access to fulfilling the PECS process as well as communicative preferences of students.

This result opened up discussion of what alternatives to PECS staff need further Professional Development in, in order to engage 100% of students in a structured and effective individualised communication program including but not exclusive to PECS. The Curriculum planning team will follow up the results of the survey, specifically in relation to communication and tracking throughout the 2018–2020 planning cycle.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

The Gandangara Bush Tucker Garden project reached its completion in 2018 and has since provided our students with a additional learning area where students can explore a variety of bush tucker plants and artworks on the Aboriginal story poles. This project formed a major component of the high school's work experience program as it enables them to engage in

plant growth and care whilst developing their work skills. It is evident students are expressing appreciation and increasing awareness of the Aboriginal culture within their outdoor learning environment.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

In 2018 Mainsbridge School continued to expand opportunities to enable students and staff from all cultural backgrounds to connect and succeed in the learning and working environment, in order to build an inclusive and racism-free school community. The school recognised the cultural diversity of its community to help meet the educational and welfare needs of students and their families hence aiding in the planning of teaching and learning activities. A continued relationship with the Liverpool Migrant Resource Centre has proven beneficial with an increased enrolment of refugee students.

Throughout 2018 Mainsbridge School supported the diversity within our school community by incorporating cultural diversity into teaching and learning programs which included exploring and understanding celebrations and festivals of significance to students cultural groups. To further raise cultural awareness, the school held celebrations to observe events such as Harmony Day and NAIDOC week.