

2020 Annual Report

Blaxland Public School



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2020 is provided to the community of Blaxland Public 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 vision

To provide the Blaxland Public School Learning Community with a bridge to learning through the provision of opportunities to:

- **be lifelong learners** who demonstrate a love of learning, take calculated risks, are in charge of their behaviour and learning and aim for personal bests. They are self-motivated, self-disciplined, reflective and can apply past knowledge to new situations.
- **experience happiness and joy**, where students are able to love and enjoy life, have positive self-esteem and humour and are enthusiastic, understanding, honest, friendly and kind.
- **be inclusive and interdependent** demonstrating consideration, trustworthiness, reliability, generosity, care, cooperation, collaboration and empathy. The students have the capacity to listen, lead and empower others, to be respectful, responsible and have initiative, integrity, tolerance and acceptance of difference.
- **think** in ways that are creative, innovative, flexible, critical, questioning, independent, metacognitive, hypothetical, problem solving and considerate of all options and opinions. Students have the capacity to take what is known to the partially known in order to increase learning.
- **be persistent and resilient** displaying ethical understanding, high expectations, patience, courage, persistence and perseverance. We manage impulsivity, strive for accuracy, precision and excellence.

School context

Blaxland Public School is committed to bridging the learning of students, parents, staff and the wider community through a culture of life long learning, happiness and joy, inclusivity and interdependence with persistence and resilience within the framework of a learning community. Thinking creatively and critically is encouraged and supported. Fundamental to this learning community are the partnerships we sustain and continue to develop along with the support networks currently in place. This includes the P&C, the schools of the Lower Blue Mountains' Learning Community, Rotary, Gateway Family Services, local businesses and industry.

High expectations that encourage risk taking, achievement and personal excellence are inherent in school culture. Individual strengths and the potential of each and every student are valued and programs are provided to enhance student welfare, self confidence and self esteem. Teaching and learning is responsive to student, teacher and community needs and interests where a wide range of experiences that encourage leadership and enjoyment of learning are provided.

125 students are enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6 across five classes. 12% of our students are from Aboriginal backgrounds.

The school received equity funding for 2020 that enabled the delivery of specialised programs and support such as:

- Aboriginal enrichment programs in learning and culture.
- additional School Learning Support Officers to boost student wellbeing and learning.
- socio-economic support.
- additional teaching and learning support for students identified with specific needs.
- additional learning support for students diagnosed with specific high level learning and wellbeing needs.

Self-assessment and school achievement

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 is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. 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.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our school plan and annual report.

Our self-assessment process will assist 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>

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2020 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Delivering
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Curriculum	Delivering
LEARNING: Assessment	Delivering
LEARNING: Reporting	Delivering
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Delivering
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Delivering
TEACHING: Professional standards	Delivering
TEACHING: Learning and development	Delivering
LEADING: Educational leadership	Delivering
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Delivering
LEADING: School resources	Delivering
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Delivering

Strategic Direction 1

Student Wellbeing

Purpose

Student wellbeing underpins student learning. Positive student wellbeing systems provide the required learning environment in which children develop a love of learning and evolve into life long learners who are increasingly in charge of their learning. Student wellbeing enhances self-esteem and provides the resilience and trust needed to allow them to be calculated risk-takers in a learning environment that they find intrinsically motivating and inspiring.

Improvement Measures

Improved transition programs designed to support new students and graduating students implemented.

Increase in student self-esteem, personal identity, social and emotional understandings and competencies evident in student surveys.

Quality evidence-based wellbeing practices are embedded in the school culture including positive behaviour for learning.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Whole school implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning designed to build the development of skills, strategies and consistent practices across the school with all students, staff and the community are to articulate and demonstrate Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be a Learner.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Blaxland PS continued with the implementation of the PBL program K-6. PBL Bands and badges were awarded to students for being Respectful, Safe Learners. After the review process, it was determined that school needs to recognise student achievement and behaviour with a strong focus on building positive connections and a strong sense of belonging to school. In 2021 a new recognition system linked to the learner tokens will be introduced across the school.	Learner bands and badges \$1000 School PBL Signage \$9601.46

Process 2: Professional development of school leaders in *PBL*. Opportunities for data analysis, systems revision and development.

Opportunities for staff consultation and development of the procedures.

Opportunities for parents and caregivers to be consulted and informed.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
All teachers were trained and successfully enter data on student behaviour using the SENTRAL data base. All students were taught focused PBL lessons in each term.	

Process 3: Whole School involvement in the Cancer Council NSW Sun smart project trialling new teaching resources and devising a school wide plan

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
All students and staff actively demonstrate the awareness and importance of being safe in the sun. 100% of students wear a school hat when outside. 100% of staff wear follow sun smart policy.	

Next Steps

In 2021, the School Improvement Plan's Strategic Direction 3 will focus on High Expectations Culture. Our student and parent survey data from Tell them from Me has indicated that our school needs to develop the students sense of belonging. The school will continue to review the student welfare and discipline policies to ensure that school processes are fair and consistent meeting the needs of all students K-6. The school will continue to consult and collaborate with the school community in meeting the needs of all students.

Strategic Direction 2

Quality Teaching and Learning

Purpose

Quality teaching and learning is at the core of school excellence. Quality teaching and learning is based on high expectations, explicit teaching and effective feedback. Quality teaching practices are designed to meet the diverse needs of all students through a differentiated curriculum that is responsive, relevant, and reflective. Education is in a time of great change and schools need to constantly critique and trial evidence-based innovative and creative pedagogies.

Improvement Measures

Increase the proportion of students in the top two NAPLAN bands by 12% in Reading and Numeracy by 2019.

100% of identified middle band performing students (BIU) have Individual Learning Plans developed.

100% of teachers develop Performance and Development Plans that incorporate the school focus and are linked to the Australian Professional Teaching Standards.

Innovative and creative pedagogies designed to enhance student learning and engagement will be trialled such as visible learning, robotics, coding and film-making etc.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Professional development will include a deeper understanding of success criteria, explicit teaching, effective feedback, use of data, innovative and creative teaching strategies.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Quality Teaching Coordinator worked shoulder to shoulder with the K-2 staff in implementing evidence based practices with a strong focus on number and creating texts. All K-2 staff are beginning to use learning intentions and success criteria and is evident in the classrooms. All staff participated in PL using Learning Progressions and teachers entered and tracked student data using ALAN. 100% of teaching PDP's incorporated the school focus on data skills and use.	Quality Teaching Coordinator \$44 000

Process 2: Strengthening systems and protocols for teachers to collect and analyse data on student learning to differentiate practice.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
In 2020, all K-2 staff implemented Daily Number Talks, TEN time and Morning Routines each day. The Quality Teaching Coordinator worked alongside the K-2 staff in the development of these evidence based practices to ensure that teachers implemented differentiated learning experiences to target student need. Teacher data collection systems are now in place.	

Process 3: Staff engage in professional development designed to deepen their understanding of the Literacy and Numeracy progressions including the use of PLAN2.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
All staff participated in PL using Learning Progressions and teachers entered and tracked student data using ALAN.	PL budget \$2000

Next Steps

As part of the 2021-2024 School Improvement Plan, the school will implement the following strategic directions to improve student achievement and quality teaching using evidence informed practices. Projects that the school will be involved in include: Visible Learning, Blue Mountains Data Wall project and Spirals of Inquiry.

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Low level adjustment for disability	<p>SLSO's employed to work with targeted students working on independent programs and with small groups.</p> <p>Funding Sources: * Integration funding \$263 920</p>	<p>SLSO's worked alongside classroom teachers and learning support teacher to facilitate targeted individual support programs for students in literacy, numeracy and social emotional wellbeing programs to enable students access to the curriculum at school resulting in increased achievement of outcomes for these targeted students. The SLSO's implemented sensory programs, emotional regulation programs and social skills programs with targeted students resulting in students building a bank of skills and strategies to use when they are faced with challenges in learning or peer relationships in the classroom or playground.</p>
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	<p>QTSS funding was used to employ Quality Teaching Coordinator to work shoulder to shoulder with staff focusing using evidence based practices and data skills and use.</p> <p>Funding Sources: * Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS) \$22 752</p>	<p>Quality Teaching Coordinator built the capacity of teaching staff in the area of daily number talks, morning routines and Targeted Early Numeracy strategies as evident in teaching learning programs, daily observations and student data.</p>
Socio-economic background	<p>Maths online subscription for all students: \$ 2000</p> <p>Writing Legends subscriptions: \$1000</p> <p>Classroom resources for TEN time \$1000</p> <p>Student Assistance: \$2000</p> <p>Home Readers: \$2000</p> <p>Funding Source: Socio economic \$8 884</p>	<p>The use of these funds enabled our students access to new music, sport and playground resources. All staff were able to use the resources in their teaching and learning programs across the school.</p>

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Boys	62	61	73	62
Girls	66	52	57	57

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2017	2018	2019	2020
K	94.5	93.2	95.2	95.7
1	91.9	92.9	90.6	95.9
2	95.2	92.3	91.8	90.9
3	94.7	90	90.7	92.2
4	90.4	93.8	94.6	95.2
5	91	89.6	93.1	94.5
6	91.9	90.1	91	95.7
All Years	93	91.9	92.4	94.3
State DoE				
Year	2017	2018	2019	2020
K	94.4	93.8	93.1	92.4
1	93.8	93.4	92.7	91.7
2	94	93.5	93	92
3	94.1	93.6	93	92.1
4	93.9	93.4	92.9	92
5	93.8	93.2	92.8	92
6	93.3	92.5	92.1	91.8
All Years	93.9	93.4	92.8	92

NSW student attendance data in 2020 is not comparable to previous years due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSW Government encouraged students to learn from home, where possible, for a seven week period from 24 March to 22 May. During this period, schools monitored engagement with learning to determine whether students were marked present. This changed the attendance measure. There was also some evidence of varied marking practices as schools adjusted to the learning from home period, with some schools recording higher attendance rates while others recording markedly lower rates.

Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school has a big impact on longer term outcomes for children and young people. When a child is not at school they miss important opportunities to learn, build friendships and develop their skills through play. Regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between schools and parents. By working together we can have a positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

Our teachers promote and monitor regular attendance at school and all our schools have effective measures in place to record attendance and follow up student absences promptly. They are guided by the School Attendance policy which details the management of non-attendance.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	1
Classroom Teacher(s)	4.62
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.4
Teacher Librarian	0.2
School Administration and Support Staff	1.71

*Full Time Equivalent

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce composition

The Department actively supports the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees through the use of identified positions, and scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2020, 3.7% of the Department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People.

Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2020 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.30%	6.30%
Teachers	3.30%	2.80%

Note 1 - The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014-17 introduced an aspirational target of 1.8% by 2021 for each of the sector's salary bands. If the aspirational target of 1.8% is achieved in salary bands not currently at or above 1.8%, the cumulative representation of Aboriginal employees in the sector is expected to reach 3.3%.

Note 2 - Representation of diversity groups are calculated as the estimated number of staff in each group divided by the total number of staff. These statistics have been weighted to estimate the representation of diversity groups in the workforce, where diversity survey response rates were less than 100 per cent. The total number of staff is based on a headcount of permanent and temporary employees.

Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority, and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working With Children Check clearance.

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice. Professional learning includes five student-free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and/or system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non-teaching staff in line with school and Departmental priorities.

In 2020, an additional School Development Day was included at the start of Term 2 to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, such as online and remote learning.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2020 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	125,155
Revenue	1,713,436
Appropriation	1,654,567
Sale of Goods and Services	11,309
Grants and contributions	47,092
Investment income	367
Other revenue	100
Expenses	-1,776,840
Employee related	-1,543,031
Operating expenses	-233,809
Surplus / deficit for the year	-63,405
Closing Balance	61,750

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.

Financial summary - Equity loadings

The equity loading data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' line item of the financial summary above.

	2020 Approved SBA (\$)
Targeted Total	263,920
Equity Total	85,208
Equity - Aboriginal	17,363
Equity - Socio-economic	8,884
Equity - Language	590
Equity - Disability	58,371
Base Total	1,089,098
Base - Per Capita	31,266
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	1,057,832
Other Total	49,935
Grand Total	1,488,161

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.

School performance - NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to myschool.edu.au to access the school data.

2020 NAPLAN

As agreed by the Education Council, the National Assessment Program (or NAPLAN) did not proceed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, such as online and remote learning.

The Education Council also agreed to defer the full transition to NAPLAN Online from 2021 to 2022 and the continuation of current NAPLAN governance arrangements through 2021.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Teacher Satisfaction

Over the last few years we have had intermittent focus on themes from the CESE publication 'What works best' (WWB). Specifically, we have had a whole school focus on explicit teaching and feedback. While we have had this focus, our results have not reflected the evidence base. As a result we would like to build on this initial work and have a renewed focus on the consistency and process quality with which the themes are implemented. To help establish staff perceptions in relation to current WWB practices, staff were surveyed. Notable results are recorded here:

Most teachers (>90%) strongly agreed that they:

- had positive relationships with their students
- are good at keeping students motivated, engaged and focused
- provide feedback to students

Leading improvement, innovation and change: Moving forward we want a shared approach to school improvement across the school with a focus on embedding evaluative practices to draw upon relevant and reliable data to make evidence-informed decisions about teaching and learning. The school executive will play a key role in scaling these practices across the school. To inform the school improvement agenda staff were surveyed and focus groups were conducted. A summary of the findings is recorded here:

Staff believe that they can improve and that drawing on literature and research can be beneficial to teaching practice. However, finding relevant and reliable research and translating it into tangible teaching strategies is time consuming and difficult to evaluate. Teachers feel that they have the capacity and willingness to collaborate but competing priorities often impact on the opportunities to do this with the depth and specificity to make this meaningful. They indicated that the school has a positive collaborative climate but a reoccurring theme was that the climate would be improved through establishing transparent systematic processes for collecting and reflecting on student learning data.

Teacher Satisfaction: Moving forward in 2021-2024, there will be a strong professional learning focus for all staff using evidence based teaching practices and data informed practices to improve student learning. The school will also start a three year PL focus on visible learning with a strong focus on learning intentions and success criteria in all K-6 classrooms.

Parent Satisfaction

In 2020, the school offered the Tell them from Me survey to the school community for the first time. The data collected indicated the following from 23 responses.

- 87% of parents surveyed indicated that the school's physical environment is welcoming.
- 67% of parents surveyed stated that the school provides enough home learning resources in mathematics.
- 78% of parents indicated that they are able to help their children with mathematics.
- 83% of parents surveyed indicated that parent teacher interviews were an extremely useful way of communication.
- 91% of parents surveyed preferred an email form the teacher as a useful method of communication.

Parent satisfaction: Moving forward in 2021-2024, the school will work closely with the school community to increase the amount of parents responding to the surveys and further refine the methods of communication with parents.

Student Satisfaction

In 2020, the students in Years 4, 5 and 6 participated in the Tell them from Me Survey for the first time after we returned to school after the Remote Learning from Home period due to the COVID 19 pandemic. The data collected indicated the following:

- 64% of the students surveyed demonstrated a positive sense of belonging to the school.
- 93% of the students surveyed believed that schooling is useful in everyday life and for the future.
- 66% of the students surveyed were interested and motivated to learn.

Student Satisfaction: Moving forward in 2021-2024 School Improvement Plan, we will revise the current student recognition system.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal Education Policy

The responsibility for enacting the Aboriginal Education Policy rests with all Departmental staff. The policy should underpin and inform planning, teaching practice and approaches to educational leadership in all educational settings.

Evidence of effective implementation of the policy included:

- Establishing, building and strengthening relationships with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal people and communities.
- Providing, in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, education which promotes quality teaching, is engaging, and is culturally appropriate and relevant.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.
- Implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways for all Aboriginal students in a school culture of high expectations.

Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. Principals are responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. All schools have an Anti-Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers address the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. Principals are responsible for ensuring that school policies, programs and practices respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school community, and provide opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes.