

2021 Annual Report

Cassilis Public School



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2021 is provided to the community of Cassilis 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 Strategic Improvement 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.

School contact details

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School vision

Our school vision is to develop resilient, creative and independent students in a safe and caring environment that supports their individual growth with a focus on literacy, numeracy and citizenship.

School context

Cassilis Public School is a small school located within the village of Cassilis, in the Upper Hunter area, 90 kilometres from our nearest regional centre. The school was established in 1875 and has always maintained strong community ties and a high profile in the local area.

A total of 10 students are enrolled in 2021 with students across most of the grades. School numbers, over the past five years, have remained relatively stable and we anticipate that this trend will continue in the future.

The school provides a dynamic and nurturing learning environment in which its students access high quality educational programs and a diverse range of opportunities. All students strive to achieve the school's core values of Be Respectful, Be Safe and Be a Learner.

The school fosters a culture of high expectations and high-quality personalised learning programs, supporting a range of diverse learners, for all students. The talented and caring teaching and support staff are committed to building positive relationships and an ethos of life-long learning. Collaborative and collegial practices contribute powerfully to a positive learning environment, where educational research, critical analysis and professional dialogue are highly valued within the school.

Cassilis Public School is part of the Mudgee Network and benefits from strong collaborations with the Mudgee Small Schools Network. The shared network target for Reading and Mathematics allows for increased understanding of evidence-based best practice, consistent teacher judgement and improved knowledge. Through this learning alliance, students are provided with valuable social and educational opportunities.

Cassilis Public School undertook a Situational Analysis in close consultation with our learning community including students, parents and P&C. As a result of this partnership, the school identified several focus areas for the next planning cycle. These include focuses on individualised learning support for every student and further development of teacher capacity in a small school setting.

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 Strategic Improvement Plan and annual report.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine our Strategic Improvement 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	2021 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Sustaining and Growing
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	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Delivering

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To improve student achievement, growth and performance in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing through dynamic and differentiated teaching and learning programs and quality, evidence-based teaching practices.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Differentiation
- Connect, Succeed, Thrive and Learn

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Professional learning: \$1,463.00 Socio-economic background: \$12,400.00 Location: \$2,000.00

Summary of progress

All staff improved their capacity to effectively differentiate in spelling and numeracy leading to higher quality personalised education programs for all students. At the beginning of Term 1, teachers reviewed data and identified spelling as a focus area for improvement in 2021. Mid-Term 1, both teachers completed professional learning to improve how students combine phonemic, morphemic, and whole-word instruction. Baseline data was captured. Best practice from professional learning completed in 2020 was embedded into early years teaching resulting in more effective writing. Teachers delivered updated teaching and learning programs and captured data to evaluate progress. Collaborative learning in numeracy modules built understanding and knowledge of starting strong and working with the big ideas to develop our mathematicians. There were improved practices in lesson planning, observation of learning behaviours and using resources to support teaching.

Enhancing student wellbeing was developed through a focus on identifying and utilising strengths that students see in themselves and each other. Teaching and learning programs focused on connecting learning for students to their interests and experiences which had some success in lesson engagement and understanding. Although all staff reflected and refined their skills, further work is needed to understand and support wellbeing. Student feedback on leadership opportunities revealed they enjoyed the experiences and, with assistance, completed their projects when they returned to school.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement	
Staff undertake professional learning in Literacy and Numeracy Progressions to effectively profile student learning.	All teaching staff undertook professional learning in the use of the Literacy and Numeracy Progressions with particular emphasis on phonics leading to more accurate goal setting for all students.	
A minimum of 50% of Year 3 and Year 5 students achieve in the top two bands in NAPLAN Reading (lower bound system negotiated network target). A minimum of 50% of Year 3 and Year 5 students achieve in the top two bands in NAPLAN Numeracy (lower bound system negotiated network target).	50% of Year 5 students achieved in the top two bands for reading and numeracy. We did not meet the 50% target for Year 3.	
Increased ability for staff to understand the function of student behaviour and respond appropriately.	Working with the Wellbeing Framework was delayed this year. All staff feedback indicated increased confidence and skills to manage student wellbeing and complex learning needs through collaboration with agencies	

Staff understand the domains of the Wellbeing Framework for Schools.	and working side by side with their colleagues.
Increase the % of primary students achieving expected growth in NAPLAN Numeracy, to at least 50%. Increase the % of primary students achieving expected growth in NAPLAN Reading, to at least 50%.	50% of Year 5 students exceeded expected growth in all areas of NAPLAN.
Increase the proportion of students attending and actively engaged in learning to >80%. Communicate <i>Every Day Counts</i> initiative to parents and the importance of time not lost in learning.	Greater than 80% of students were engaged in learning each day. Communications through the weekly newsletter and parent meetings focused on the importance of attendance and lost time from learning.

Strategic Direction 2: High Quality Practice

Purpose

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers underpins individual teaching growth and embedded practice of mentoring and coaching all staff at their point of need.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Using systematic and reliable data information
- Building staff capacity

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Socio-economic background: \$4,000.00

Summary of progress

Teachers used an increased amount of reliable assessments to capture information about students. Professional discussions enhanced teachers' understanding of what skills students had attained and their next area of learning. The role of the Instructional Leader was used more effectively to provide mentoring to the first-year teacher. While strategies were developed to collect and map data, ensuring there is a baseline established. This enabled the teacher to more effectively capture progress over time. There were gaps in assessment data due to some students being absent when the assessments were administered or not engaging in them.

Performance and Development Plans displayed high impact professional learning being provided and linking to areas of need, especially in numeracy through the Starting Strong and Working with the Big Ideas initiatives. There was a positive impact with the enthusiasm and valuing the importance of teaching mathematics from the classroom teacher.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
Staff increase their understanding of the eight themes in <i>What works best</i> and reflection on their current practices identify areas for improvement.	The teaching principal worked with colleagues digging deeper into the eight themes. This learning was incorporated into the classroom teacher's Performance and Development Plan to assist in reaching professional goals.
Learning Intentions and Success Criteria are set using data from Literacy and Numeracy Progressions and school assessment data.	The explicit use of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria improved engagement and on-task behaviours in the classroom. Professional learning in mathematics and literacy provided rich examples to use as guides. Student feedback was positive as they were able to articulate how they had showed success in their learning. The process of creating Success Criteria with the students was enhanced. The ability to differentiate Success Criteria is a future focus area.
Staff regularly use data progress and achievement data to inform key decisions such as resourcing and implementation of new programs or initiates.	Opportunities to work collaboratively were useful in improving consistent judgement of progress. Rich assessment tasks were used more frequently to provide evidence of learning. Using the Literacy and Numeracy Progressions to assess work samples was improved, particularly in mathematics. With the small cohort of students, the process of effectively gathering and recording observations is an area of future focus.

Funding sources	Impact achieved this year
Integration funding support	Integration funding support (IFS) allocations support eligible students at Cassilis Public School in mainstream classes who require moderate to high
\$21,518.00	levels of adjustment.
	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • Other funded activities
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include: • Additional staffing to assist students with additional learning needs • Increased support for students regulation and curriculum achievement
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Students requiring support have had one-on-one support provided to target specific, identified needs.
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Collaboratively developed plans to support more specific areas and professional learning to increase consistency of teacher practice.
Socio-economic background	Socio-economic background equity loading is used to meet the additional
\$16,400.00	learning needs of students at Cassilis Public School who may be experiencing educational disadvantage as a result of their socio-economic background.
	 Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: Differentiation Connect, Succeed, Thrive and Learn Building staff capacity
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include: • Collaborative development of plans • Developing student leadership capacity • Building staff capacity in numeracy
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Great student leadership with confidence. Deeper staff knowledge to provide appropriate and targeted mathematics based on evidence collection. Collaborative Individual Education Program goals clearly identify each student's areas of strength and needs.
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Extra student leadership opportunities and student voice, both the collection and use of, to guide the next steps for learning and support school-wide decisions. Build on staff numeracy understanding and ensure strategies learned from modules are fully embedded.
Aboriginal background	Aboriginal background equity loading is used to meet the specific learning needs of Aboriginal students at Cassilis Public School. Funds under this
\$5,508.00	equity loading have been targeted to ensure that the performance of Aboriginal students in NSW public schools, across a broad range of key educational measures, improves to match or better those of the broader student population, while maintaining cultural identity.
	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • Other funded activities

Aboriginal background \$5,508.00	 Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include: Community consultation and engagement to support the development of cultural competency Staffing release to support development and implementation of Personalised Learning Plans The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Supported targeted students to build foundations in literacy and numeracy through the support of a School Learning and Support Officer. After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Continue to support academic and social development for Aboriginal students by delivering differentiated and personalised support. Enhance connections with local agencies and individuals who can increase understanding of culture.
Low level adjustment for disability \$14,019.00	Low level adjustment for disability equity loading provides support for students at Cassilis Public School in mainstream classes who have a disability or additional learning and support needs requiring an adjustment to their learning. Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • Other funded activities Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include: • Providing support for targeted students within the classroom through the employment of School Learning and Support Officers • Employment of School Learning and Support Officers to improve the development of students by implementing Speech and Occupational Therapist programs developed by specialists The allocation of this funding has resulted in: All students requiring adjustments for disability are effectively catered for and their learning is enhanced. After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: To continue to formally incorporate integration funding decision making into the learning and support team meeting agenda to ensure funding use is regularly reviewed. The use of integration funding will be used to specifically address each student's support needs.
Location \$2,000.00	 The location funding allocation is provided to Cassilis Public School to address school needs associated with remoteness and/or isolation. Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: Connect, Succeed, Thrive and Learn Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this operational funding include: Subsidising student excursions to enable all students to participate Incursion expenses Technology resources to increase student engagement The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Reducing the gap caused by location by making connections with other schools in larger centres. After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be:

Location \$2,000.00	To strenghten collaborative relationships with other schools, supporting the school to increase opportunities and experiences and overcome isolation for students.	
Literacy and numeracy \$1,365.00	The literacy and numeracy funding allocation is provided to address the literacy and numeracy learning needs of students at Cassilis Public School from Kindergarten to Year 6.	
	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • Other funded activities	
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include: • Online program subscriptions to support literacy and numeracy • Staff training and support in literacy and numeracy • Literacy and numeracy programs and resources, to support teaching, learning and assessment	
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Effective professional learning to improve knowledge of and how to effectively differentiate the English and Mathematics curriculums.	
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: An increase in the reading and number sense strategies for all students. Home reading and mathematics workshops for families to increase understanding and participation in the home reading program and increasing numeracy skills.	
QTSS release \$1,906.00	The quality teaching, successful students (QTSS) allocation is provided to improve teacher quality and enhance professional practice at Cassilis Public School.	
	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • Other funded activities	
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include: • Additional staffing to support staff collaboration in the implementation of high-quality curriculum	
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Additional time for students to be supported and taught literacy and numeracy in an infants and separate primary learning environment.	
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: To continue to enhance staff's capacity to regularly analyse student data in order to make adjustments to teaching and learning programs and activities.	
COVID ILSP \$8,849.98	The purpose of the COVID intensive learning support program is to deliver intensive small group tuition for students who have been disadvantaged by the move to remote and/or flexible learning and were identified by their school as most likely to benefit from additional support in 2021.	
	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • Other funded activities	
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include: • Employment of teachers/educators to deliver small group tuition	

COVID ILSP \$8,849.98	The allocation of this funding has resulted in: All students receiving instructions within small groups with multiple opportunities to receive feedback to master their skills in literacy and numeracy.
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: To continue the implementation of literacy and numeracy small group tuition using data sources to identify specific student need. The school learning and support processes have been revised and will now involve regular monitoring of students as they transition back into classrooms. Providing additional in-class support for some students to continue to meet their personal learning goals will also be a priority.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

	Enrolments			
Students	2018	2019	2020	2021
Boys	4	6	7	6
Girls	4	3	2	4

Student attendance profile

	School			
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
К	91.4	100	88.5	88.8
1		97.9	88	94.5
2	90.3	100	95.2	
3	97.3	96.5	89.2	92.9
4	76.4	99	88.3	89.2
5	94.2		54.5	88.6
6	96	96.4	42.6	86.1
All Years	91.4	98.1	79	89.8
	State DoE			
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
К	93.8	93.1	92.4	92.8
1		92.7	91.7	92.7
2	93.5	93	92	
3	93.6	93	92.1	92.7
4	93.4	92.9	92	92.5
5	93.2		92	92.1
6	92.5	92.1	91.8	91.5
All Years	93.4	92.8	92	92.4

Attendance

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 2020. 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.

Attendance figures in 2021 were calculated differently to align with the third edition of ACARA's National Standards for Student Attendance Data and Reporting. Changes include treating partial absences over 120 minutes as a half day absence (instead of their actual value, calculated as a proportion of a nominal 6-hour day) and covers all weeks during Semester 1. Prior to 2021, the final week of Term 2 was excluded.

Furthermore, the Department implemented an automated attendance feed (AAF) system in Semester 1 2021. AAF transfers data automatically from third-party attendance management systems to the Department's centralised data warehouse every night. The AAF has significantly improved data quality in 2021, which has affected data comparability with previous years.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2021, COVID-19 continued to affect student attendance. Analysis of attendance codes showed a change in the structure of absence reasons in 2021.

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
Classroom Teacher(s)	0.14
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	
Teacher Librarian	
School Administration and Support Staff	1

*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 2021, 4.3% of the Department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People.

Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2021 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.30%	4.40%
Teachers	3.30%	3.20%

Note 1 - The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025 takes a career pathway approach in that it sets an ambitious target of 3% Aboriginal employment at each non-executive grade of the public sector by 2025.

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.

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2021 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	40,136
Revenue	465,322
Appropriation	455,307
Sale of Goods and Services	22
Grants and contributions	9,936
Investment income	56
Expenses	-442,331
Employee related	-406,788
Operating expenses	-35,543
Surplus / deficit for the year	22,991
Closing Balance	63,127

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.

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

	2021 SBAR Adjustments (\$)
Targeted Total	22,055
Equity Total	41,589
Equity - Aboriginal	5,508
Equity - Socio-economic	22,850
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	13,231
Base Total	319,160
Base - Per Capita	2,219
Base - Location	8,463
Base - Other	308,478
Other Total	29,309
Grand Total	412,113

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.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Cassilis PS achieves strong community support and involves the whole-school community in school decision-making. Parents have been heavily involved in school programs to support student learning.

Cassilis PS has an active Parents' and Citizens' Association. This organisation supports and contributes to the effective running of the school. P&C meetings continued to run during 2021 via Zoom and face to face.

Throughout 2021, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school, about learning from home, learning at school and the delivery of packages.

Their responses are presented below:

- * School community felt well informed and supported during Covid-19 restrictions;
- * Students adapted positively to the many changes and restrictions due to Covid-19;

* Parent and students indicated learning programs sent home during Covid-19 and staff dedication were of a high standard;

* Solid parent and community support. Parent concerns, when raised were addressed; and

* Effective learning programs, a caring and dedicated staff, and positive levels of staff morale.

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

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers are responsible for addressing the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. The Principal is 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.