

2021 Annual Report

Thornton Public School



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2021 is provided to the community of Thornton 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.

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School vision

In partnership with our community, we are committed to providing a high performing and inclusive public school where every student is known, valued and cared for. Students learn in a safe and supportive environment, which develops respectful, responsible and resilient learners, underpinned by quality teaching and leadership practices.

Teachers work within a culture underpinned by data analysis and high expectations where professional learning is focused on continual improvement of teaching and learning. Instructional leadership drives effective evidence based practice leading to strong outcomes in literacy and numeracy for all students.

School context

Thornton Public School, situated North West of Newcastle in the lower Hunter, is set on 22 acres with large green spaces, playing fields and a stand of old growth forest cared for by community land-care initiatives. Our school is an inclusive primary school that caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 6 and currently has 770 students in 31 classes. Our 47 teachers cater for the individual educational, social and emotional needs of all students.

Our school has approximately 11% of students and 8% of staff members who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Our school has an established Junior Aboriginal Educational Consultative Committee that meets weekly to provide student voice in relation to key initiatives and building student leadership capacity. Cultural Groups, Personalised Learning Pathways and celebrations for significant events including NAIDOC, Reconciliation Week and Indigenous Literacy Day foster respectful relationships and a sense of belonging within an inclusive community. We value our partnership with the local AECG, with a number of staff attending meetings, one staff member being the elected secretary of the Maitland AECG and another staff member the elected Maitland representative of the Hunter AECG.

Within our student population, on average 12% of students come from families with one or more parents working for the Defence Force predominantly from Williamstown RAAF base. We have a significant Defence Housing community within our drawing area. Students from defence families typically attend a number of schools during their school life as a result of regular postings to other bases around the country. Students can also be impacted by parents being deployed overseas throughout the school year. The school employs a Defence School Mentor to assist children and families to integrate into our school and the community and provides a link to defence support services. The mentor also helps to organise commemorative events such as ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day.

Thornton PS has 5% of students with additional needs who receive funding support to enable them to access the best educational and social outcomes possible. We have established a wellbeing hub, sensory room and sensory playground to cater for students with additional support needs. There are currently no support classes housed within the school.

The school encourages students to meet high social and behavioural expectations of respect, responsibility and resilience. A well-being hub has been established, aimed at increasing relational capacities in staff and students. Staff and student connections are built on positive regard and positive emotion. Wellbeing hub staff teach social and emotional intelligence, build friendships and teamwork and develop stamina for attention and strategies for managing distraction. A non-teaching executive member provides regular check-ins with students in their classrooms and opportunities for those students to spend time as necessary in our sensory room. They provide predictable, consistent timetabled support and opportunities for mindful practice using the Berry Street Education Model.

Classroom and whole-school strategies are developed to promote well-being in an attempt to improve academic success. Individual well-being plans with a focus on physical and emotional regulation of the stress response and de-escalation are developed for both in school and classroom. These plans offer opportunities throughout the day for students to elect individualised time to both co-regulate and self-regulate emotions, reactivity and impulses.

The school has a *Transition Support Teacher - Early Years (TST-EY)* employed in partnership with the Gateway Learning Community of schools. The TST-EY is a pre-emptive, cross-sector position, engaged to work with staff and families across children's and community services and schools. The focus is on supporting optimal transitions through early identification and support of children and families with additional learning and support needs. The role initiates and leads contact with feeder children's and community services to foster positive partnerships with children and families in the 12-months prior-to-school entry, with an emphasis on all stakeholders "working together" to build capacity and create success for school. This key strategy has recently been recognised with grant funding through the Fair Education, Schools Plus projects, received a 2020 Secretary's Award for Excellence as an Outstanding School Initiative, and was acknowledged in a Parliamentary Mention, by Ms Sonia Hornery, in the form of a Community Recognition Statement.

The school is participating in the Bump It Up Strategy and is self-funding engagement in the Early Action for Success initiative, to support the NSW State Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan and the expectation that every student will

demonstrate growth. Staff are committed to ongoing professional learning and development that promote reflection on best practice, evidence-based teaching pedagogy while demonstrating life-long learning skills through commitment to improvement for students.

The school delivers strong programs in music, performing arts, sport and our Aerobics team won the National title in 2018 and 2019. We provide a challenging and creative environment where technology enhances student learning and an effective Bring Your Own Device Program is implemented.

We are committed to working with our community to meet their aspirations as identified in our Tell Them From Me data. The school works to embrace ties with the wider community and have developed a range of programs in partnership with and acknowledging community, cultural and individual student needs. We have an established partnership with Rotary who run the school canteen and also provide funding and support for school BBQs. Maitland Baptist Church are in partnership with TPS to provide Out Of School Hours care to Thornton families. We also have significant partnerships with local businesses who sponsor programs for music and transition to school programs. A Peace Garden has been established as part of our 100 year celebrations recognising the service of many of our families in the defence of our country and is sponsored by the Defence Force Australia.

Thornton Public School has a strong partnership with the University of Newcastle and connection to its Quality Teaching Academy. 51% of teachers have participated in the Quality Teaching Rounds, research, building reflective practices and driving improvement in teaching and learning through the QTA. All teachers engage with the Quality Teaching Model and the Assessment Practice Guide. A number of teachers have contributed to the development of the QTA and its research-based pedagogy. This has led to our school leadership team driving the QTR initiative across the Gateway Learning Community to build teacher collective efficacy, improve student outcomes and continuity of learning for all students at transition points. Working in close partnership with other schools in the Gateway Learning Community promotes a strong sense of wider community and supports the learning opportunities for students and staff.

Following a thorough situational analysis in 2020 we have identified areas of improvement to implement into our strategic improvement plan. The key areas for improvement have been determined as follows:

Collaboration - Time allocated into staff professional learning schedules to promote collaborative planning and build collective teacher efficacy.

Evidence-based practice - Integrate professional expertise with evidence-based research to improve quality teaching and learning. This integration of professional expertise will be consistently applied across K-6 and will target expected growth in Numeracy.

Effective use of data and assessment - There will be a focus on developing teacher capacity through professional learning to clearly understand how to analyse, interpret and extrapolate data. This process will collaboratively inform teaching practice and direct individualised student learning.

Wellbeing - There will be a continued focus on implementing evidence-based practices that promote the positive wellbeing of students and staff. We need to develop opportunities to establish student voice across K-6.

Leadership - The core aim of the leadership domain is to focus on implementing and maintaining a consistent and sustainable model of leadership across K-6 that supports a culture of high expectations. Thornton Public School will provide students with the opportunity to be part of a high performing and inclusive school that establishes and builds on genuine positive partnerships with the community.

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 and participated in an external validation. 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. Every four years, our school undergoes an external validation process.

During the external validation process, an independent panel consisting of a Principal School Leadership and a peer principal considered our evidence and assessment of our school's progress against the School Excellence Framework.

Our self-assessment and the external validation 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/school-excellence>

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2021 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Curriculum	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Delivering
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Professional standards	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Learning and development	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Educational leadership	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School resources	Excelling
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

Improve student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy through developing and sustaining whole school processes, which incorporate evidence-informed strategies and embed high expectations. High quality explicit teaching and learning is driven by the use of data-informed practice to attain and promote continuous student growth.

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.

- Numeracy
- Literacy

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Socio-economic background: \$150,424.00

QTSS release: \$136,896.00

Aboriginal background: \$70,000.00

English language proficiency: \$25,000.00

Literacy and numeracy: \$41,309.00

Literacy and numeracy intervention: \$47,090.00

Low level adjustment for disability: \$213,024.00

Summary of progress

Our focus for 2021 in Literacy and Numeracy, was to develop and sustain whole school processes for collecting and analysing data.

A comprehensive analysis of student progress and achievement data was used to identify areas of focus across the school and inform teaching practices. Both internal and external datasets were used to triangulate areas of need.

The evaluation of this data was regularly used to;

drive evidence-informed strategies that embed high expectations to attain and promote continuous student growth

prioritise teacher professional learning and school resourcing

develop internal systems and processes for students to co-construct learning goals based on point of need

Evidence based teaching practices including the use of reading conferences, explicit phonics lessons, number talks and CUBES were implemented school wide. The successful implementation of these practices was led and supported through the use of instructional leadership. The processes resulted in all staff having a consistent understanding of evidence-based instruction and assessment of reading and numeracy.

As a result there is engagement with ongoing research and evidence based practices. Teachers are developing a robust understanding of best practice across reading and numeracy.

Next year we will continue to embed evidence based teaching practices around reading and numeracy. We will continue to provide professional learning based on identified areas of need.

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
Sustain and grow the percentage of students performing in the top two NAPLAN bands in reading to be above the system negotiated target baseline.	2021 data indicates that 33.16% of students are in top 2 bands reading. This indicates progress towards our lower bound target.

Sustain and grow the percentage of students achieving expected growth in NAPLAN reading to be above the system negotiated target baseline.	<p>52.3% of students are at or above expected growth in reading in 2021.</p> <p>This indicates that progress has been made towards our lower bound target.</p>
Sustain and grow the percentage of students performing in the top two NAPLAN bands in numeracy to be above the system negotiated target baseline.	<p>2021 data indicates that 27.37% of students are in top 2 bands numeracy.</p> <p>This indicates the achievement of our lower bound target of 23.7%.</p>
The percentage of Year 3 and 5 Aboriginal students achieving in the top three bands in NAPLAN reading will increase.	<p>40.63% of Aboriginal students are in the top three bands in reading.</p> <p>This indicates we are working towards achieving our lower bound target.</p>
The percentage of Year 3 and 5 Aboriginal students achieving in the top three bands in NAPLAN numeracy will increase.	<p>40.63% of Aboriginal students are achieving in the top three bands in numeracy.</p> <p>This indicates we are exceeding our upper bound target of 36.27%.</p>
Sustain and grow the percentage of students achieving expected growth in NAPLAN numeracy to be above the system negotiated target baseline.	<p>63.33% of students are at or above expected growth in numeracy in 2021.</p> <p>This means that we have exceeded our upper bound target of 60.80%.</p>

Strategic Direction 2: Well-being & Collaboration

Purpose

Create and sustain a teaching and learning environment that promotes a proactive and positive approach to wellbeing in which every student is known, valued and cared for. Our shared vision is to support students to connect, succeed and thrive within a safe and supportive learning environment. Strong collaborative partnerships underpin all aspects of our school's operation and combine to produce effective citizens of the future.

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.

- Wellbeing and Engagement
- Strong collaborative practices
- Attendance Strategy

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Low level adjustment for disability: \$114,298.00

Socio-economic background: \$177,215.00

English language proficiency: \$12,764.00

Refugee Student Support: \$763.00

Summary of progress

Wellbeing and Engagement

Our focus for 2021 was on building the collective efficacy of the school community, showing evidence of strong, consistent, effective wellbeing systems and practices across the school leading to a positive impact on student and staff wellbeing. We also focussed on developing productive and collaborative partnerships through strengthened communication. By strengthening communication, it was intended that the school could use this strong communication connection with families to develop strong attendance patterns for all students.

One of the strategies involved revising and modifying some activities (due to ongoing pandemic measures), to suit the policies and procedures. Practices in wellbeing were flexible and fluid and were responsive to the needs of the students and the school community. The wellbeing team created a wellbeing website for students and their families to access during the home learning period, ensuring that the focus for 2021 was ongoing and leading to positive impact on student and staff wellbeing. School wide collaboration to initiate changes to Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) systems and practice was enacted with decisions made based on evidence and guided by the evaluation and review of existing practices at the school. This involved ensuring that the school community had a thorough understanding of the systems in place to support student wellbeing and the development of student learning plans (PLPs, IEPs, BMPs) through a process of collaboration between staff, students and parents. The school ensured that consistent and effective learning support structures from Pre K-Yr 6 were embedded through an overhaul of the current system. A continued whole school focus on embedding consistent and effective learning and support structures from Pre K-6 to ensure all students connect, succeed and thrive throughout their learning journey was paramount.

As a result, staff data showed that the culmination of consistent, clear understanding of PBL structures for staff, students and parents assisted in reducing the number of students referred to the LST for assistance in terms of behaviour support and a reduction in time spent in the Wellbeing Hub self-regulating. The impact of this has been more time spent in the classroom and less incidences of physical and verbal aggression (as evidenced in Sentral data). Both the staff and student PBL teams in collaboration with the executive team reflected on data regularly and were able to modify PBL lessons to incorporate different focus areas specific to current need. These small adjustments led to a decrease in negative behaviour in the focus area. Coaching and mentoring of individual students whilst attending the Hub for brain breaks of check ins gave students the opportunity to connect with staff, succeed in reflecting on their behaviour, and being able to return to their classroom ready to and learn. Sentral data reflected that students were visiting the Hub less often and for shorter periods of time as they build skills to reflect on and regulate their own behaviour choices.

In terms of wellbeing and engagement, next year our focus will support further improvement towards the school community having a total understanding of the wellbeing practices at the school and being connected to the learning of their child.

Strengthening Collaborative Practices

Our focus for 2021 was on reviewing communication practices and systems between the school, students, parents and carers and making changes to establish expectations and build productive partnerships that enhance student achievement and encompass teacher, student, parent and community voice. To review communication practices our school used pre and post Google forms to gather feedback for staff, students and parents about 3-way conferencing and changes to reports; attendance data for 3-way conferences and comparing this data to past parent interview data; auditing parent interaction with communication platforms; and using Google forms to gather feedback from staff and families about future suggestions for effective communication.

As a result of collecting samples of parent, student and teacher voice from Google forms and Sentral, our school was able to gather feedback from staff and families about future suggestions for effective communication. One of these suggestions led to investigating streamlining the use of SENTRAL as the main communication source.

In terms of collaborative partnerships and communication, next year our focus will be on building the capacity of any new staff to the school in the collaborative practices at the school and to continue to adapt to community and student voice. Attendance will continue to be a focus due to ongoing data collections showing a minimal increase in NAPLAN and other test results which will support further improvement towards wellbeing outcomes for students as well as learning outcomes to be addressed.

Attendance

Our focus for 2021 in terms of student attendance was to embed consistent systems and practices across the school leading to a positive uplift of attendance rates. We focussed on developing productive and collaborative partnerships through strengthened communication with parents and staff following up on student attendance regularly. One of the strategies engaged was revising the school's attendance policy to assist the school community in understanding the absence rates at school and its impact on learning. Another strategy was to develop student attendance plans through a process of collaboration between staff, students and parents. Teaching staff were upskilled on how to engage families in attendance matters and to monitor absences to improve attendance. The formation of an attendance team allowed for the monitoring of student attendance data in weekly/fortnightly intervals and identified students for system-negotiated targeted support. We implemented a trophy to be awarded to the class with the best attendance each week at both the K-2 and 3-6 assemblies. Students had regular discussions with their teacher about the importance of attendance at school and knew the phrase of being at school on time, every day by the first bell at 9 o'clock.

As a result of upskilling staff members on attendance rates, the renewed attendance policy and system-negotiated targets, our school continued to maintain its attendance rate to be relatively stable, despite COVID-19 having an obvious effect on attendance patterns within and across schools.

Next year, our focus will be on continuing to build on the consistent attendance systems and practices within the school to ensure that students are coming to school 'on time, every day, by nine'. It is intended that, should attendance rates be on the incline, students results will follow suit.

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
Building on Positive Behaviour for learning strategies through collaborative staff planning leading to clear consistent expectations of students and staff.	Staff and student survey data collected indicates a positive shift in understanding of PBL strategies across the school. Data collected from the Junior PBL team and a randomized survey of staff indicates clear, consistent expectations are clearly understood by staff and students and referred to frequently.
Individual well-being plans with a focus on physical and emotional regulation of the stress response and de-escalation are developed for students to elect individualised time to both co-regulate and self-regulate emotions, reactivity and impulses.	Data indicates that tier 3 level behaviours and mid-level behaviours have been reduced with the implementation of clear, consistent expectations and wellbeing plans introduced and being specifically designed for each individual student.
Students, parents and staff have a collective understanding of wellbeing practices at TPS so all students can connect, succeed, thrive and learn.	Survey data collected from parents indicated students and their families understand the wellbeing practices of the school.

Sustain and grow the percentage of students attending school 90% of time or more to be above the system negotiated target baseline.

Data indicates that, despite COVID-related illnesses and absences, the percentage of all students attending school was 93.03%.

The number of students attending greater than 90% of the time or more has decreased by 2.15% to 66.7%.

Strategic Direction 3: Leadership & Innovation

Purpose

Cultivate highly effective leadership to create a learning environment where every student has access to high-quality education. Deliver strategic leadership based on analysis, evaluation and monitoring to build efficacy, raise productivity and efficiency in teaching and learning. Research based innovative practices will underpin a culture where teaching practice is flexible, relevant and dynamic to ensure every student, teacher and leader strives for continuous improvement.

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.

- Leadership
- Innovation

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Socio-economic background: \$21,500.00

Professional learning: \$52,689.00

Summary of progress

The focus for 2021 at Thornton PS was on cultivating highly effective leadership in students, aspiring leaders and the executive team. Another key focus has been leadership development through the Principal Credentials and leading a School Improvement Leadership Challenge. This has had a layered and significant impact on teacher practice.

Significant work has been done building capacity of staff and leading improvement in the area of assessment and consistency in its creation and use. Using data to inform practice to guide professional learning in 2022. Success criteria, feedback and writing are a focus of the new LEED project which has led to the development of an action plan and implemented.

Thornton PS was validated through the External Validation process and we have identified areas for growth, developed and embedded improved assessment practices and improved teacher's professional standards through the accreditation panel.

As a result of student leadership initiatives there has been higher engagement of students in school business. Next year a focus will be to continue with SRC, building the capacity of our school leaders to be more independent in running meetings. Another key focus will be an executive member applying for the Principal Credentials and leading a SILC, which will have a layered and significant impact on teacher practice. There is still room for improvement in the area of assessment and consistency in its creation and use. Using data to inform practice will help guide professional learning in 2022. Success criteria, feedback and writing are a focus of the new LEED project which will be attached to an action plan and implemented.

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
In the area of Educational Leadership, the school is validated at Delivering, with themes within validated at Sustaining and Growing.	Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework shows the school currently performing at sustaining and growing in the element of Educational Leadership, demonstrating the school has exceeded the progress measure.
Increase the percentage of students reporting positive wellbeing that includes advocacy at school, sense of belonging and expectations of success by 3%	77.5% of students report positive wellbeing outcomes which has increased by 1.45% across the positive wellbeing measures, indicating progress towards the target.

<p>In the area of Learning and Development, the school is validated at Delivering, with themes within validated at Sustaining and Growing.</p>	<p>Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework shows the school currently performing at sustaining and growing in the element of Learning and Development, demonstrating the school has exceeded the progress measure .</p>
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Funding sources	Impact achieved this year
<p>Refugee Student Support</p> <p>\$763.00</p>	<p>Refugee student support funding is provided to support students from refugee backgrounds who have been enrolled in an Australian school for less than three years.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing and Engagement <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional staffing for targeted interventions to support student learning <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: A small number of students were given individualised support from our Learning and Support teachers to enable them to access the curriculum and increase their sense of belonging.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Implement professional development for staff around impact of trauma, learning and wellbeing needs of refugee students.</p>
<p>Integration funding support</p> <p>\$559,617.00</p>	<p>Integration funding support (IFS) allocations support eligible students at Thornton Public School in mainstream classes who require moderate to high levels of adjustment.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional SASS staffing to assist students with additional learning needs • teacher release to build capacity around behaviour intervention and curriculum adjustments • employment of School Learning Support Officers to provide additional support for students who have high-level learning needs • intensive learning and behaviour support for funded students <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Support for students requiring assistance with special needs in the mainstream. Interventionist's have provided individualised and small group support to students with identified support needs in literacy and numeracy. Additionally SLSO provide teacher assistance within the mainstream classroom to support the engagement and inclusion of students identified with additional support needs.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Continue to use IFS to support funded students to meet their academic, social and wellbeing needs.</p>
<p>Socio-economic background</p> <p>\$349,139.00</p>	<p>Socio-economic background equity loading is used to meet the additional learning needs of students at Thornton Public School who may be experiencing educational disadvantage as a result of their socio-economic background.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy • Literacy • Wellbeing and Engagement

<p>Socio-economic background</p> <p>\$349,139.00</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional staffing to employ Assistant Principal Wellbeing to provide support to identified students with additional needs. • employment of additional staffing 1.4 FTE to support Assistant Principal Curriculum & Instruction program implementation. • employment of additional staff to support Play Therapy program implementation. • employment of a Transition Support Teacher - Early Years to engage with external pre-school providers to support student engagement and transition to school. • staff release to implement school attendance strategy. <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in:</p> <p>The school self-funding Instructional Leaders (IL) to support the State Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan and the expectation that every student will demonstrate growth. The IL's work with individual teachers and deliver professional learning and development that promote reflection on best practice, evidence-based teaching pedagogy.</p> <p>Funds were utilised to enhance our attendance program aimed at improving all student's attendance. Two staff members were provided additional RFF to embed practices related to our Attendance Policy, monitor the amount of students arriving late and leaving early and work with our HSLO to develop strategies to increase the Attendance rate across the school for all students. Funds were again allocated to further develop and enhance our well-being hub. The hub was developed to increase relational capacities in staff and students. Wellbeing hub staff teach social and emotional intelligence, build friendships and teamwork, and develop stamina for attention and strategies for managing distraction.</p> <p>Funds were used to employ a non-teaching executive member who provides regular check-ins with students in their classrooms and opportunities for those students to spend time as necessary in our sensory room. They provide predictable, consistent timetabled support and opportunities for mindful practice using the Berry Street Education Model.</p> <p>Funds were also used to employ a Play Therapist who focuses on improving child wellbeing and behaviour, using a more developmentally appropriate method for young children. During play therapy, children can play out, literally and/or metaphorically, their inner and real-life experiences in a way that builds insight and capacity. This therapeutic process allows children to express, regulate, communicate, practice and master new skills as well as their emotional responses. Play therapy strongly relies on developing strong relationships with children in an environment where they feel safe and comfortable to express their emotions effectively. Alongside strong relationships, therapeutic play is used to assist in physical, psychological, and cognitive development. This provides a structured approach to help support children's problems/issues.</p> <p>The school has a Transition Support Teacher - Early Years (TST-EY) employed in partnership with the Gateway Learning Community of schools. The TST-EY is a pre-emptive, cross-sector position, engaged to work with staff and families across children's and community services and schools. The focus is on supporting optimal transitions through early identification and support of children and families with additional learning and support needs. The role initiates and leads contact with feeder children's and community services to foster positive partnerships with children and families in the 12-months prior-to-school entry, with an emphasis on all stakeholders "working together" to build capacity and create success for school.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be:</p> <p>The strategies implemented have demonstrated impact and improved attendance data, wellbeing data and literacy & numeracy data as measured through Check In Assessment and NAPLAN. These strategies will be maintained and refined in 2022 to enhance the strategies developed to meet our negotiated targets.</p>
<p>Aboriginal background</p>	<p>Aboriginal background equity loading is used to meet the specific learning</p>

<p>\$98,518.91</p>	<p>needs of Aboriginal students at Thornton Public School. Funds under this 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.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy • Literacy • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of specialist additional staff (LaST) to support Aboriginal students and implement the Quick Smart literacy and numeracy programs. • staffing release to support development and implementation of Personalised Learning Plans <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: The release from face to face teaching of an Aboriginal teacher from class to work as a Learning and Support Teacher with students using the Quick Smart Literacy and Numeracy programs leading to improved engagement and outcomes in literacy and numeracy for Aboriginal students. Additional release time was provided to teachers to develop personalised learning plans for Aboriginal students, and for the Learning and Support Teachers to deliver literacy and numeracy support programs. Our Junior Aboriginal Educational Consultative Committee met regularly to provide student voice in relation to key initiatives and building student leadership capacity. Cultural Groups, Personalised Learning Pathways and celebrations for significant events including NAIDOC, Reconciliation Week and Indigenous Literacy Day fostered respectful relationships and a sense of belonging within an inclusive community. We continue to partnership with the local AECG, with a number of staff attending meetings, one staff member being the elected secretary of the Maitland AECG and another staff member the elected Maitland representative of the Hunter AECG.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Continue to provide additional Learning & Support Teacher to implement Quick Smart Literacy and Numeracy programs. Build on the quality Junior AECG we have established and link with the Gateway Learning Community to enhance student voice opportunities across the learning community. Provide opportunities for staff to engage in quality professional learning in relation to Aboriginal pedagogy such as Aboriginal Histories and Culture PL, Turning Policy into Action PL and Connecting to Country.</p>
<p>English language proficiency</p> <p>\$37,764.00</p>	<p>English language proficiency equity loading provides support for students at all four phases of English language learning at Thornton Public School.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy • Literacy • Wellbeing and Engagement <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of additional staff to support delivery of targeted initiatives • additional teacher time to provide targeted support for EAL/D students and for development of programs • provide EAL/D Progression levelling PL to staff <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in:</p>

<p>English language proficiency</p> <p>\$37,764.00</p>	<p>A small number of students were given individualised support from our Learning and Support teachers. Teachers also received Professional Learning in understanding EAL/D Progressions and providing suitable learning adjustments within the classroom environment.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: This funding source will be significantly reduced by 85% in 2022 in line with the new department of education strategy to prioritise English Language Proficiency in high school aged new arrival students. Future funding will be used to establish consistent practices K-6 for supporting students learning English as an Additional Language.</p>
<p>Low level adjustment for disability</p> <p>\$327,322.00</p>	<p>Low level adjustment for disability equity loading provides support for students at Thornton Public School in mainstream classes who have a disability or additional learning and support needs requiring an adjustment to their learning.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Wellbeing and Engagement <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • engaging a learning and support teacher to work with individual students and in a case management role within the classroom/whole school setting • targeted students are provided with an evidence-based intervention Minilit and Macqlit to increase learning outcomes <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Three additional Interventionist teachers supporting students requiring assistance with special needs in the mainstream. Interventionist's provided individualised and small group support to students with identified support needs in literacy and numeracy leading to improved learning outcomes for targeted students.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Continue to use low level adjustment for disability funding to employ additional Learning and Support Teachers who support students to meet their academic, social and wellbeing needs.</p>
<p>Professional learning</p> <p>\$52,689.00</p>	<p>Professional learning funding is provided to enable all staff to engage in a cycle of continuous professional learning aligned with the requirement of the Professional Learning for Teachers and School Staff Policy at Thornton Public School.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Innovation <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Leaders unpack evidence-based approaches to teaching writing and explore modelled, interactive, guided and independent writing <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: All teachers engaged in professional learning in the following areas; What Works Best: In Practice, assessment, LEED, Quality Teaching Framework, Best practice in literacy and numeracy, Trauma Informed Practice, Consistent Teacher Judgement, staff wellbeing and PBL. Ten teachers participated in the Quality Teaching Rounds professional learning bringing the number of staff at Thornton PS who have engaged with QTR to twenty teachers. TPS staff led QTR across the Gateway Learning</p>

<p>Professional learning</p> <p>\$52,689.00</p>	<p>Community embedding Quality Teaching Rounds within our partner schools. As a result of this professional learning teachers are well equipped to provide explicit instruction, have engaged in collaborative practices and collective efficacy leading to enhanced capacity to drive improvement in student outcomes.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Embed and sustain Quality Teaching Rounds across the school and build on current partnership with University of Newcastle to lead implementation of QTR and collaborative practice across the GLC.</p>
<p>School support allocation (principal support)</p> <p>\$38,491.20</p>	<p>School support allocation funding is provided to support the principal at Thornton Public School with administrative duties and reduce the administrative workload.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of an additional School Administration Manager to support the Principal <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Additional School Administration Manager providing key support to the Principal in managing Work, Health & Safety, developing risk assessments, Asset Management and monitoring staff mandatory training to ensure compliance with key accountabilities.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Continue to use School Support Allocation funding to employ additional School Administration Manager to support the Principal with key management areas of the school. The employment of an additional School Administration Manager has supported the effective running of school business including Work, Health & Safety, developing risk assessments, Asset Management, monitoring staff mandatory training, event planning and project management.</p>
<p>Literacy and numeracy</p> <p>\$41,309.00</p>	<p>The literacy and numeracy funding allocation is provided to address the literacy and numeracy learning needs of students at Thornton Public School from Kindergarten to Year 6.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of Instructional Leader • targeted professional learning to improve literacy and numeracy <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Instructional Leaders developing and implementing our whole school strategy to embed quality evidence based teaching methods and enabling teachers to implement consistent practices K-6. Teachers have participated in quality professional learning including What Works Best, Quality Teaching Rounds and consistent teaching practices are evident in teaching and learning programs.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: This funding source will not be available in 2022 as it will be embedded in the new Assistant Principal Curriculum & Instruction strategy which will</p>

<p>Literacy and numeracy</p> <p>\$41,309.00</p>	<p>replace the current Instructional Leadership model.</p>
<p>QTSS release</p> <p>\$136,896.00</p>	<p>The quality teaching, successful students (QTSS) allocation is provided to improve teacher quality and enhance professional practice at Thornton Public School.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy • Literacy <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional staffing to support staff collaboration in the implementation of high-quality curriculum • assistant principals provided with additional release time to support classroom programs • implementation of instructional rounds to strengthen quality teaching practices <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in:</p> <p>Leadership time being provided to Assistant Principals to use their expertise to lead quality teaching including the planning, implementation and evaluation of effective teaching and learning within their stage. Collaboratively engaging teachers in coaching, instructional leadership and for mentoring early career teachers.</p> <p>Funds were also targeted for our aspiring leaders strategy and used to provide leadership time to stage coordinators to participate in mentoring and to work collaboratively with their Assistant Principal to create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments across their stage. Experienced teachers were also provided leadership time to lead key projects and initiatives to enhance quality teaching as part of our aspiring leaders strategy.</p> <p>Professional learning was targeted and its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes evaluated. There are explicit systems for collaboration and feedback to support a culture of high expectations, resulting in sustained and measureable whole school improvement. Thornton Public School has a strong partnership with the University of Newcastle and connection to its Quality Teaching Academy. 51% of teachers have participated in the Quality Teaching Rounds, research, building reflective practices and driving improvement in teaching and learning through the QTA. All teachers engage with the Quality Teaching Model and the Assessment Practice Guide. A number of teachers have contributed to the development of the QTA and its research-based pedagogy. This has led to our school leadership team driving the QTR initiative across the Gateway Learning Community to build teacher collective efficacy, improve student outcomes and continuity of learning for all students at transition points. Working in close partnership with other schools in the Gateway Learning Community promotes a strong sense of wider community and supports the learning opportunities for students and staff.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be:</p> <p>The strategies implemented have demonstrated impact and improved quality of teaching practice, collaborative practice, collective efficacy and literacy & numeracy data as measured through Check In Assessment and NAPLAN. These strategies will be maintained and refined in 2022 to enhance the strategies developed to meet our negotiated targets. Another eighteen teachers will be provided with the opportunity to engage in Quality Teaching Rounds and leadership capacity will be developed by enabling aspiring leaders who completed QTR in 2021 to provide professional development and lead the new cohort of teachers through this program.</p>
<p>Literacy and numeracy intervention</p>	<p>The literacy and numeracy intervention staffing allocation supports early literacy and numeracy intervention to students in Kindergarten to Year 2 at</p>

<p>\$47,090.00</p>	<p>Thornton Public School who may be at risk of not meeting minimum standards.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of additional LaST to address the identified needs for students who require additional support in literacy and numeracy <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Interventionist teachers employed to support students requiring assistance with special needs in the mainstream. Interventionist's provided individualised and small group support to students with identified support needs in literacy and numeracy leading to improved outcomes for these targeted students.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: This funding source will not be available in 2022 as it will be embedded in the new Assistant Principal Curriculum & Instruction strategy which will replace the current Instructional Leadership model.</p>
<p>COVID ILSP</p> <p>\$318,599.38</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other funded activities <p>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of teachers/educators to deliver small group tuition <p>The allocation of this funding has resulted in: Funding used to employ additional Learning and Support team staff to support students requiring assistance with learning after the impact of home learning due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Interventionist's provide individualised and small group support to students with identified support needs in literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students with this funding will be: Continue to use COVID ILSP funding to employ additional Learning and Support Teachers to support students whose learning have been impacted by COVID-19.</p>

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Boys	333	358	403	385
Girls	325	344	360	359

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
K	93.2	93	94.2	92.9
1	93.7	91.9	92.4	92.2
2	93.3	92	92.8	93.5
3	91.6	92.2	92.5	91
4	92.5	89.1	93.3	91
5	93	91.7	92.3	92
6	91.1	91	92.5	87.6
All Years	92.7	91.6	92.9	91.5
State DoE				
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021
K	93.8	93.1	92.4	92.8
1	93.4	92.7	91.7	92.7
2	93.5	93	92	92.6
3	93.6	93	92.1	92.7
4	93.4	92.9	92	92.5
5	93.2	92.8	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
Deputy Principal(s)	2
Assistant Principal(s)	4
Classroom Teacher(s)	28.87
Literacy and Numeracy Intervention	0.42
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	1.9
Teacher Librarian	1.2
School Administration and Support Staff	4.67

*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 information

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	87,583
Revenue	7,771,684
Appropriation	7,644,715
Sale of Goods and Services	7,124
Grants and contributions	119,503
Investment income	142
Other revenue	200
Expenses	-7,779,902
Employee related	-7,156,511
Operating expenses	-623,392
Surplus / deficit for the year	-8,218
Closing Balance	79,365

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.

	2021 SBAR Adjustments (\$)
Targeted Total	560,380
Equity Total	812,745
Equity - Aboriginal	98,519
Equity - Socio-economic	349,140
Equity - Language	37,764
Equity - Disability	327,322
Base Total	5,261,721
Base - Per Capita	188,092
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	5,073,628
Other Total	358,461
Grand Total	6,993,306

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

Parent / Caregivers

Surveys conducted by the school have indicated a supportive and caring attitude towards Thornton Public School. Internal datasets have indicated that our school community:

- have a positive attitude towards 3 way conferences occurring at the school;
- expressed they are extremely happy with transition programs available for students commencing Kindergarten;
- have described teachers at the school as 'Vibrant and very approachable'; and
- believes the school offers plenty of programs for interest and learning.

Staff

Thornton Public Schools participation in the 2021 People Matter survey indicated the following positive outcomes by our teaching staff:

- 100% of staff surveyed responded favourably to the statement 'There are people at work who care about me';
- 80% of staff surveyed responded favourably to the statement 'Senior managers model the values of my organisation'; and
- 75% of staff surveyed responded favourably to the statement 'My organisation respects individual differences (e.g. cultures, working styles, backgrounds, ideas)'.

Students

Thornton Public Schools participation in the 2021 Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey indicated the following positive outcomes by our students in Years 4 to 6:

- 82% of students surveyed feel they have friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices;
- 85% of students surveyed believe that schooling is useful in their everyday life and will have a strong bearing on their future; and
- 83% of students surveyed feel they try hard to succeed in their learning.

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 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.