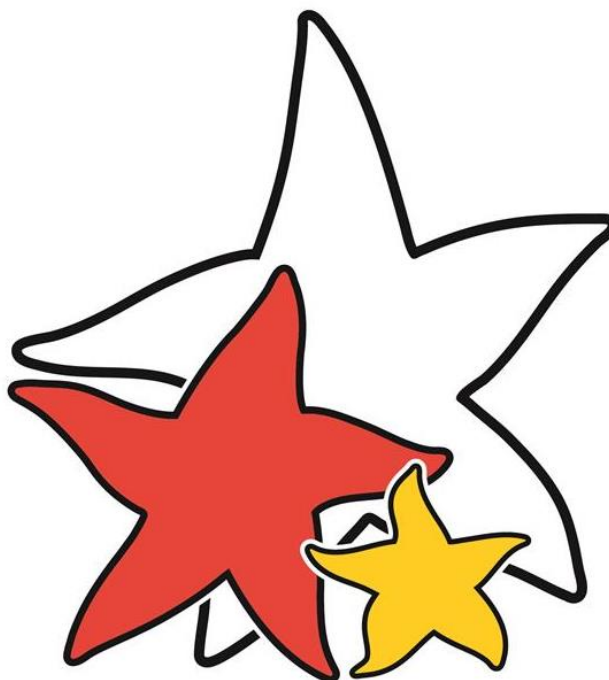


# 2023 Annual Report

## Newcastle Junior School



**NEWCASTLE SCHOOL**  
A Community of Schools

Potential | Determination | Achievement  
**Newcastle Junior School**

5704

# Introduction

The Annual Report for 2023 is provided to the community of Newcastle Junior 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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## Message from the principal

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In 2023 Newcastle Junior School was led by Relieving Principal Mandy Carter with myself stepping into the Newcastle School Principal role. Mandy and her executive team did an exceptional job as evidenced by the successful External Validation process independently carried out during term 3 and the positive responses parents provided in the 'Tell Them From Me' survey.

As Principal of Newcastle Junior School I am proud of the achievements of all our students and the ongoing success of the strategies being implemented. Our staff are to be commended for their ongoing ability to create high quality learning experiences that maximise student engagement. All student success is celebrated and its success reflects the quality teaching, evidence based learning programs and collaboration with the broader school community.

Next year our school will expand to nine classes bringing with it new staff, students and families into our community. The new year will continue to see Newcastle Junior School work with all parents, health professionals and the wider community to provide a safe and welcoming learning environment that maximises the opportunity for all students to reach their potential.

Graham Finch

Principal

## School vision

Newcastle School's vision is to 'create lifelong opportunities', enhancing the development of each student's academic, social and emotional development through innovative practice and empowering students to be successful life-long learners and valued members of society.

We take pride in all students being known, valued and cared for. At Newcastle School we believe all students can achieve their personal best in a culture of high expectations. We promote student success by catering for each child's learning needs in a safe learning environment. Our collective aim is to have all students achieving at their personal best. Newcastle School values the well-being of both students and staff and provides a supportive and safe space for all.

At Newcastle Junior School we strive to create lifelong opportunities by enhancing the development of each student's academic, social and emotional development. Through innovative and informed practice, we empower students to become independent and successful life-long learners who are active and valued members of society. Newcastle Junior School is an inclusive educational setting that values cultural diversity and acknowledges the link between our land and the Nations First Peoples. We take pride in all students being known, valued and cared for and celebrate all successes.

## School context

Newcastle School has 124 students (K-12) and 39 permanent Teacher positions that include 4 Principal positions (Lead Principal and 3 site Principals), 8 Assistant Principals and 27 Teacher positions. All teaching staff meet the requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. Additionally the school has 27 School Learning and Support Officers and 3 School Administration Managers.

All students are involved in quality transition education programs, with a clear focus on quality of life outcomes. The school collaboratively negotiates individual learning plans with families, Allied Health and Wellbeing professionals for each student.

Staff aim to provide students with the skills, knowledge and values necessary for success. The school works closely with families and stakeholders to discover and develop the potential of every student in a safe, engaging environment.

Newcastle School is located across 3 sites.

**Newcastle Junior School** (Hillsborough) Pre-School to Year 4 guiding students through transition from early childhood to primary years.

**Newcastle Middle School** (Christo Rd Waratah) Year 5 to Year 8 guiding students through early adolescent years.

**Newcastle Senior School** (Harriett St Waratah) Year 9 to Year 12 programs to prepare students for post-school life.

In 2023, Junior School had 54 enrolments over eight classes. Each class has a Special Education Teacher and a School Learning Support Officer. The school's Family Occupation and Education index is high but steady at 139. Over one third of our students were either born overseas or have parents born outside of Australia. In recent years we have seen increasing numbers of students with South- East Asian, Middle Eastern and African backgrounds enrolling at Newcastle Junior School. Ten percent of our students identify as Aboriginal and Newcastle Junior School is proud to be a member of the local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG).

We are committed to ongoing student improvement in literacy and numeracy. To further the staffs' ability to respond to students needs, our school will refine the use of internal data sources to inform better planning leading to increased attainment of outcomes. Staff are committed to enhancing student wellbeing and school culture. Personalised Learning and Support Plans and Positive Behaviour for Learning will be reviewed regularly across the school with adjustments made as required to reflect the needs of students. Parents and Carers will be actively invited to share in school life and their children's learning opportunities. Staff will continue to work closely with families and community support agencies to identify and develop the potential of every student, providing tailored support through the transition from early childhood to the primary years.

## 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	2023 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Excelling
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Excelling
LEARNING: Curriculum	Excelling
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Excelling
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Sustaining and Growing
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	Excelling
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School resources	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

## Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

### Purpose

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To ensure all students have a strong foundation in literacy, communication and numeracy, enabling confidence in their ability to learn and adapt. We will continually challenge them to learn and improve.

### Initiatives

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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.

- Student growth and achievement
- Assessment and data

### Resources allocated to this strategic direction

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**Socio-economic background**

**Professional learning**

**Literacy and numeracy**

### Summary of progress

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#### Student Growth and Achievement

Curriculum reform and implementation, Jolly phonics, whole school data collection and data informed practices were the key focus areas of Strategic Direction One in 2023. To measure success and achievement in these areas we engaged in formal discussions with staff, completed lesson observations of professional practice and reviewed data collected by staff. Staff engaged in high impact professional learning opportunities to ensure they were confident in navigating the new syllabus documents for English and Maths. Working in stage based groups, APs led the development of syllabus checklists to assist teachers in covering key content and to align with the whole school learning scope and sequence. With the appointment of an APCI in term 3, 2023, they was able to review scope and sequences and lead professional discussions around what was working and what needed to be changed, refined and adapted to better suit our student cohort. In semester 2, staff trialed a modified scope and sequence and program reflections demonstrated the effectiveness of the change in achieving student growth.

The Jolly Phonics program continued to be a whole school literacy initiative to explicitly teach phonics and reading skills. This year as an executive, we reviewed the effectiveness of the program through formal surveys of staff, stage based discussions and reviewing of assessment and data collected over the year. While we could see the benefits of the program in student growth and achievement, there were many external factors that impacted the overall measurement of the programs success. This includes disruption to staffing and changes in staffing, health of students impacting attendance, attendance and behaviour of individual students to produce accurate work samples. In 2023, staff developed high quality resources to support the program implementation in classrooms and work samples and photographic evidence saw students engaged in learning and building foundational phonemic skills. The program will continue to be embedded into whole school teaching and learning practices in 2024.

#### Assessment and Data

In semester 2, staff engaged in initial training for the Passport for Learning tool. Led by our APCI and NJS Executive team, we unpacked the tool, explored and trialed the recording platform in PLAN2 and discussed how and why it would be useful in collecting data to inform report writing and future ILP development. Staff completed baseline assessments for each student across all the domains. It was evident through staff feedback that staff felt this tool was more appropriate in providing accurate accounts of students progress and achievement. A simple data wall was developed to reflect information collected from initial assessment. Further work in this area will be a priority in 2024 and beyond to establish this tool as our primary whole school assessment and will align with our community of schools.

The Executive worked together to unpack NJS report writing systems and reviewed report samples from 2022 and highlighted areas that needed development. The quality of work samples was inconsistent and we identified the need to provide guidance, training and support in annotating work samples and using this information to consistently inform report writing. A new template was developed and introduced to staff to support work sample collection and workshops were led by the executive in correctly annotating these samples. This overall saw an improvement in Semester two reports 2023, where reports were informed by data and practices were consistent across the school. In 2024, we will

continue to reflect and adjust expectations and provide guidance as needed with the introduction of Passport for Learning as our primary assessment tool.

### **Progress towards achieving improvement measures**

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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.

<b>Annual progress measure</b>	<b>Progress towards achievement</b>
60% of students achieve improvement in expected outcomes in literacy, numeracy and communication as outlined in their Personalised learning and support plans determined by assessment data.	75% of students achieved their expected outcomes in Literacy, numeracy and communications as evidenced in Semester two reports reflecting on PLSP's. The 25% of students not reaching expected outcomes were impacted by either attendance, behaviour, sensory or health care concerns.
80% of staff will use student assessment data to write SMART ILP targets and track progress effectively.  Assessments (all classes in each school site) have been completed in New Metrics for the first stage of the assessments in Student Agency, Communication, Collaboration and Character.	100% of staff used assessment data to inform their report writing. Data formed through Passport for Learning, anecdotal notes based on observations, work samples and monitoring checklists were used by all staff in tracking student progress as evidenced in Semester two reports 2023.  We did not engage with the New Metrics program in 2023 as it was deemed unsuitable for our student cohort.

### Purpose

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To ensure all students connect, succeed and thrive using a planned approach to develop whole school wellbeing processes.

### Initiatives

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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.

- Student wellbeing
- Positive behaviours

### Resources allocated to this strategic direction

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#### SSP supplementary funding Socio-economic background

### Summary of progress

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#### Student Wellbeing

Throughout 2023, engagement in School Bytes and Step By Step Behaviour Intervention Training were the focus areas for Student Wellbeing in Strategic Direction Two. The SAM participated in School Bytes training and facilitated an instructional demonstration for the executive staff at NJS. The executive team then provided professional learning during stage meetings to up-skill their cohort in documenting attendance, communication, wellbeing concerns and behaviour incidents. The staff utilised School Bytes throughout the year to record and collate data for multiple purposes throughout 2023.

In Term two, four staff members (Jemma Holten, Zoe Sullivan, Caitlin Shoulders, Margaret Haren) attended a two day Professional Learning session through Step by Step Behaviour Intervention Training with Newcastle Middle School and Newcastle Senior School. The Professional Learning provided strategies to observe and analyse behaviour in order to identify potential triggers and preemptive strategies when dealing with complex behaviours for diverse learners. The three sites were able to share knowledge, ideas and experiences through this training and form positive relationships between sites as well as develop their knowledge of behaviour management. Informal feedback taken on both Professional Learning Days was positive from staff and some strategies have been integrated into classrooms. We are anticipating follow up from Step by Step to provide further training for a larger staff group within the school.

#### Positive Behaviours

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) and The Zones of Regulation were the two initiatives to increase positive behaviour, self-regulation skills and student engagement throughout 2023. An executive staff member collaborated with the executive team at Newcastle Middle School to create a consistent scope and sequence for all staff to implement specific, catered lessons to teach students PBL language and positive behaviour strategies. Resources such as awards, posters, Prowise files, video social stories and language posters were created by the PBL Team to enhance student engagement and learning. Multiple PBL rewards days were organised, including farm animal petting zoo and a visit from a local fire truck, to promote positive behaviour and reward students for their efforts. A yearly program was created linking the PBL scope and sequence with our school PDHPE scope and sequence allowing content to be taught simultaneously. From 2024, PBL and PDHPE will be taught intertwined as a single program.

The Zones of Regulation program was adapted by an executive team member at the commencement of 2023 to accommodate the complex learners of NJS. A Zones group were established on site and discussed the needs of our students and types of resources that would be beneficial for both staff and students. Professional Learning was facilitated by an executive staff member for all staff to discuss the implementation of the program. Staff were provided with a scope and sequence to guide them through the implementation phase of the program, as well as resources for their classroom. A parent information session was held on site by the executive team to provide families with the information and strategies used at school to create consistency between school and home. The program is currently in its implementation phase and will be revised and 'where to next?' will be discussed by the Zones team.

### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

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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
Focus groups are established to address the Wellbeing needs of all to improve student Wellbeing and engagement to support learning.	During 2023, focus groups were created to discuss the implementation and creation of resources for PBL and The Zones of Regulation. Both focus groups discussed the needs of the students across the school and efficient ways we can implement PBL and Zones to cater for our diverse learners.
Staff begin to implement effective strategies to improve student behaviour via classroom management practices that reflect explicit teaching of school values and expectations.	<p>Staff implemented the Zones of Regulation program in Term 2 of 2023. The main strategy focused upon is the 'Stop, Think, Choose' strategy that is being used school wide and has been implemented in multiple student ILPs.</p> <p>Staff implemented PBL language and expectations throughout 2023 and will be teaching explicit skillll during PDH lessons from the beginning of 2024.</p>



## Strategic Direction 3: Engaging the community to enhance student learning

### Purpose

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To ensure that our staff and school community have high expectations of our students as learners by working collaboratively, utilising strengths, knowledge and skills to improve student learning.

### Initiatives

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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.

- Community engagement
- Collaboration

### Resources allocated to this strategic direction

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Aboriginal background

Professional learning

QTSS release

Location

Socio-economic background

### Summary of progress

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#### Community Engagement

Throughout the year Newcastle Junior School celebrated Harmony Day, Reconciliation Day and NAIDOC week where students engaged in cultural activities. Our school community was invited to attend whole school events and celebrations such as Mother's and Father's Day, sport carnivals, the annual Easter parade and Book week. They were also invited to attend special school events: Presentation Day, Year Four Graduation and a Personal Learning Pathways celebration, acknowledging the achievements of students throughout the year. Through increasing in the number of community events in 2023, there was an increase in parent and the community engagement and participation. All students engaged in cultural learning experiences by participating in class-based activities and visiting community groups, that increased their understanding of the significance of these special days. Students who identify as Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islanders also participated weekly in a program designed to engage them in activities connecting them to their culture and identities. In 2024 there is an increase in the percentage of students who were born overseas, speak a different language at home and identify as Aboriginal. Staff will continue to celebrate the diversity of cultures within the school community through engagement and celebrations in 2024.

Newcastle Junior Schools Aboriginal Education team met at various times throughout the year to ensure the Aboriginal Education policy was implemented within all classrooms. The team was a part of the RAP review process and contributed to student PLP's and special events throughout the year. All staff completed professional learning connecting to country, visiting local sites and developed their own Aboriginal resources to use within the classroom with students. The AECG was consulted regularly to ensure authentic community consultation was undertaken. In 2024 the Aboriginal Education team will continue to consult with the AECG and local community in order to develop stronger connections with current and new families and the wider community.

#### Peer Program

In conjunction with Newcastle Middle School and Newcastle Senior School, a Peer Program was continued in 2023. This program provided an opportunity for staff across the three sites, involving both teaching and non-teaching personnel, to shadow a colleague from their chosen school for the day. That staff member would then host the same colleague at their school at a later date. The programs main aim was to provide staff with a greater understanding of the other sites and build a sense of belonging to Newcastle School as a whole. Only two teachers were able to participate in the program as there were significant issues relating to staffing for this program to be effective. Staff that were able to visit the sites enjoyed their experiences and gained knowledge about programs run and shared ideas that could be integrated at Newcastle Junior School. Although those that took part reported the benefits of participating in such an initiative, continuation of the program will be reviewed by executive for 2024.

### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

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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
60% of staff will participate in the peer program and a whole school staff development opportunity will be organised by the Newcastle School Collaborative Practice team.	Only 2 staff participated in the across site peer program. Program severely impacted by inability to staff release time for visits across sites to occur. The staff that were able to participate enjoyed the experience and found benefits in the shared experience.
School policies and practices reflect agreed vision and values. Systems to promote values of high expectations and improved student outcomes in all areas of learning are in place.	Through the process of External Validation the schools on-balance judgement for the element of 'Community Engagement' in 2023 is Sustaining and Growing.

Funding sources	Impact achieved this year
<p>Professional learning</p> <p>\$18,933.79</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 Newcastle Junior School.</p> <p><b>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student growth and achievement</li> <li>• Assessment and data</li> <li>• Community engagement</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teacher relief for staff engaging in professional learning</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b> Professional Learning has resulted in enhanced staff capacity to deliver content in based on the new curriculum.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> Future funding will be used to continue to support staff to implement and monitor student growth and attainment using data informed practices. Newcastle Junior School will continue to assess student growth using P4L in addition to the learning progressions.</p>
<p>Socio-economic background</p> <p>\$49,777.83</p>	<p>Socio-economic background equity loading is used to meet the additional learning needs of students at Newcastle Junior School who may be experiencing educational disadvantage as a result of their socio-economic background.</p> <p><b>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student growth and achievement</li> <li>• Student wellbeing</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment of additional staff to support [name] program implementation.</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b> The employment of two additional SLSO's to support students' health, hygiene, wellbeing and learning has resulted in less disruption to the school day and increased student engagement. This led to teachers abeing more focused on explicit teaching and the collection and analysis of data to identify strategies to manage behaviour and reduce negative incidents.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> Newcastle Junior School will continue to support teaching and learning by providing additional support for health, wellbeing, behaviour and learning in classrooms and playgrounds.</p>
<p>Aboriginal background</p> <p>\$6,152.20</p>	<p>Aboriginal background equity loading is used to meet the specific learning needs of Aboriginal students at Newcastle Junior 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><b>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement</li> </ul>

<p>Aboriginal background</p> <p>\$6,152.20</p>	<p><b>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community consultation and engagement to support the development of cultural competency</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b> Students have gained a greater understanding of Aboriginal culture by participating in authentic learning activities. Student engagement in cultural education has significantly improved due to high quality lesson content.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> NJS will continue to refine how Cultural goals are designed and embedded in ILP's for Aboriginal students and school community Yarn ups will continue to occur to ensure continuous collaboration.</p>
<p>Location</p> <p>\$647.00</p>	<p>The location funding allocation is provided to Newcastle Junior School to address school needs associated with remoteness and/or isolation.</p> <p><b>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this operational funding include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• subsidising student excursions to enable all students to participate</li> <li>• incursion expenses</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b> This resulted in families and students becoming familiar with the cultures represented within our school while engaging in activities that reflected their own cultural background.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> Future funds will ensure culturally appropriate activities and lessons are implemented towards the best possible outcomes for our culturally diverse students cohort</p>
<p>QTSS release</p> <p>\$31,249.15</p>	<p>The quality teaching, successful students (QTSS) allocation is provided to improve teacher quality and enhance professional practice at Newcastle Junior School.</p> <p><b>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement</li> <li>• Collaboration</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assistant principals provided with additional release time to support classroom programs</li> <li>• additional teaching staff to implement quality teaching initiatives</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b> The upskilling of staff has resulted in an increase in our ability to provide our diverse student cohort with tailored, culturally appropriate lessons and learning spaces</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> Future funding will be used to continue to support staff to implement and monitor student growth, assess functional skills and support development in culturally rich learning environments.</p>
<p>COVID ILSP</p> <p>\$23,009.98</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</p>

<p>COVID ILSP</p> <p>\$23,009.98</p>	<p>school as most likely to benefit from additional support in 2023.</p> <p><b>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other funded activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employing staff to provide online tuition to student groups in literacy/numeracy - [focus area]</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b>  Student literacy and communication skills improved that allowed for an increase in appropriate responses with other adults and peers. . Increased participation rates in small group directed lessons was recorded across the school with the impact being recorded both in and out of music lessons.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b>  Music has provided an opportunity for all students to be fully engaged at individual levels. The program will be continued next year with a focus on student engagement.</p>
<p>SSP supplementary funding</p> <p>\$291,986.01</p>	<p>These funds have been used to support improved outcomes and the achievements of staff and students at Newcastle Junior School</p> <p><b>Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student wellbeing</li> </ul> <p><b>Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this site specific funding include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• executive release to ensure all students benefit from high quality teaching and learning practices that best meet the full range of their individual needs.</li> <li>• release time to engage staff in professional learning. / release time for staff to supervise excursions</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b>  Executive staff members have mentored staff to build capacity in data collection in the areas of curriculum and wellbeing programs. These programs have resulted in increased student engagement and a reduction of negative behavioural outbreaks. Extra SLSO support has assisted in classroom on task behaviours and less disruption to class routines.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b>  Future funds will continue to be utilised in this area to ensure consistency across the whole school. Improved data skills will be used to strengthen practice in the new essential for living assessment tool to increasing student engagement.</p>

# Student information

## Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2020	2021	2022	2023
Boys	43	37	35	37
Girls	13	16	14	17

In 2023 Newcastle Junior School's attendance rate was 79%. This is below the attendance rate of similar schools across the state which sit at 82%. The major contributing factor to the attendance rate is the high number of student with complex health needs. 2024 will see Newcastle Junior School focus on attendance rates and embed strategies to increase student attendance.

## Attendance

NSW student attendance data in 2020 is not comparable to other 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 from 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 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.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2022, student attendance was impacted by a range of factors:

- \* Families evacuating and relocating due to NSW floods
- \* Sick students staying at home until a negative COVID-19 test was returned
- \* Household members testing positive to COVID-19
- \* The easing of COVID-19 border controls at the beginning of 2022 which allowed families to travel inter-state and overseas.

While there were no lockdowns or learning from home periods in Semester 1 2023, there was still a high prevalence of sick attendance codes as students were encouraged to stay home if they were even slightly unwell. Advice for families were still in place, recommending students and staff to stay home when sick and only returning to school when they were symptom free. (See <https://education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/covid-19/advice-for-families> for advice).

## Management of non-attendance

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

positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

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

# Workforce information

## Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	4.2
Classroom Teacher(s)	7.27
Teacher Librarian	0.2
School Administration and Support Staff	10.42

\*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 2023, 2.5% of the department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school workforce composition

Staff type	Benchmark <sup>1</sup>	2023 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation <sup>2</sup>
School Support	3.00%	3.60%
Teachers	3.00%	3.40%

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 2023 to 31 December 2023. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with department policy requirements.

	2023 Actual (\$)
<b>Opening Balance</b>	169,996.31
<b>Revenue</b>	3,504,097.23
Appropriation	3,478,124.78
Sale of Goods and Services	13,616.45
Grants and contributions	6,479.34
Investment income	5,776.66
Other revenue	100.00
<b>Expenses</b>	-3,215,791.21
Employee related	-2,824,027.03
Operating expenses	-391,764.18
<b>Surplus / deficit for the year</b>	288,306.02
<b>Closing Balance</b>	458,302.33

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

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

	2023 <b>SBAR Adjustments</b> (\$)
<b>Targeted Total</b>	0
<b>Equity Total</b>	55,930
Equity - Aboriginal	6,152
Equity - Socio-economic	49,778
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	0
<b>Base Total</b>	2,392,302
Base - Per Capita	27,858
Base - Location	647
Base - Other	2,363,797
<b>Other Total</b>	755,859
<b>Grand Total</b>	3,204,091

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.

## Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

**Student Satisfaction :** Due to the complexity of our student cohort at Newcastle Junior School, we are unable to collect sufficient formalised data through the Tell Them From Me survey. The tool is not easily accessible and does not provide differentiation to be able to be inclusive of our student's opinions. Newcastle Junior School measures student satisfaction through informal daily interactions and consultation with students, families/carers and external support agencies.

**Parent/Carer Satisfaction:** Newcastle Junior School collects a variety of data to ensure parents, carers and the wider school community are satisfied with our school . The "Tell them from me" parent survey indicate that the school has positive relationships with parents who feel that welcomed at the school. Parents indicated that they felt listened to by teachers and could easily communicate with the Principal. Parents also identified that they felt informed and that their children are safe at school. . In 2024 we will continue to foster strong collaborative relationships with parents and the wider school community.

**Teacher Satisfaction:** Teacher satisfaction was primarily measured through informal interactions, general staff morale and the Tell The From Me Survey. In line with previous years the Survey results showed the need to continue development in formal data collection and what to do with the data once it was collected. This was an identified area for development moving forward in our 2024 School Improvement Plan. To support this the school investigating the use of the Literacy and Numeracy Precursors and the Passport for Learning tool. Overall, Teachers felt supported by the Leadership team and their skills in dealing with parents. Staff and school executive beleive the survey data does not give an overall solid account of teacher opinion because the areas of questioning are not specific to our complex setting.

# Policy requirements

## Aboriginal Education Policy

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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.

## Aboriginal Education - School statement

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In 2023 Newcastle Junior School commenced a new program called Deadly Juniors. Deadly Juniors is a program aimed at immersing our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in cultural activities throughout the year. Activities provide opportunities for our students to celebrate their cultural heritage and identities. Similar programs now run at the other two Newcastle school sites providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families across our network to come together and celebrate their culture. These opportunities further strengthen the ties between the 3 Newcastle SSP's and greatly support student transition.

## Anti-Racism Policy

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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

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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.