



# 2023 Annual Report

The Childrens Hospital School

# THE HOSPITAL SCHOOL AT WESTMEAD

5751

# Introduction

The Annual Report for 2023 is provided to the community of The Childrens Hospital School as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the Strategic Improvement Plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

## School contact details

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## School vision

Our vision is to become the national benchmark for hospital school education, where students feel known, valued and cared for, through access to high quality, targeted personalised learning; and to continue building collaborative and productive partnerships with our stakeholders.

## School context

The Hospital School at The Children's Hospital at Westmead is the largest hospital school of the ten hospital schools in NSW. The specialist teaching and learning staff deliver targeted education programs that empower students in their learning, where they're at, through personalisation in both pedagogical delivery and curriculum content.

As a centre of expertise for the education of students with chronic illness, The Hospital School provides evidence-based proactive and future-focused education to develop academic motivation and resilience.

The Hospital School uses specialist knowledge to develop and apply neuroscience to education. We use evidence-based research from neurological findings to develop learning strategies which promote learning that is in alignment with the way the brain is naturally designed to learn. Our specialist teachers focus on providing opportunities for all students to become critical and creative thinkers, who are known, valued, and cared for. We achieve this through access to high quality, targeted personalised learning which is adjusted to meet the needs of all students.

The Hospital School provides education for students from K-12 and delivers content in either one of our four flexible and well-resourced learning spaces, by the students' bedside on the ward or by connected learning using telepresence technology.

Our unique setting accommodates patients and where needed, their siblings. Our students come from across NSW, other states, and overseas.

We implement the NSW NESA Curriculum incorporating The Australian Curriculum, with accommodations and adjustments for complex learners as required.

We have a strong focus on school improvement and attainment. Our strategic directions will guide our planning and accountability.

Strategic Direction 1: Student Growth and Attainment

Strategic Direction 2: Improved Transition Planning

Strategic Direction 3: Best Practice for Students with Chronic Illness

## Self-assessment and school achievement

This section of the annual report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The Framework is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our Strategic Improvement Plan and annual report.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine our Strategic Improvement Plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework: <https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability>

## Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment.

### Purpose

To use student progress and achievement data to drive teaching decisions and track continuous improvement over time.

### 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.

- Data skills and use in Literacy and Numeracy
- Assessment and reporting of student learning growth

### Resources allocated to this strategic direction

SSP supplementary funding  
AP Curriculum & Instruction  
QTSS release  
Professional learning  
Socio-economic background

### Summary of progress

In 2023, The Hospital School effectively used data to drive personalised learning and used feedback to clarify personal learning goals and achievements. In 2023 initiatives were based on having a whole school focus on improving whole numbers, reading and phonics. Staff participated in professional learning to investigate bias in teaching and learning practices which strengthened our knowledge of consistent teacher judgement and ensured consistency with census schools and built collaborative practice both within The Hospital School and census schools our students attend.

Supporting student growth in literacy and numeracy has been achieved through scheduled teacher observations and feedback which focussed on assessment practices, both formal and summative. This practice has built teacher capacity and strengthened the use of descriptive feedback to students and has enabled us to evaluate the success of our teaching practices. In Years 3-6, student growth has been successfully mapped to learning progressions and students have been involved in identifying their own learning goals and assessing their achievement.

Resources prevented all staff from undertaking all phases of the training in learning progressions in 2023, so focus was given to Primary staff to complete and embed it. All other teaching and learning staff will undertake the training in 2024. This evidence based approach will then be embedded across the other year groups. We will continue the focus on assessment being used to drive personalised learning mapped to the literacy and numeracy progressions.

### 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
All teachers will learn and practice using data to meet students' reading and numeracy needs as determined and evidenced by their individual education plan.	All teachers have learned and practiced using data to meet students' reading and numeracy needs.
All teachers will develop skills to assess students' growth against the literacy and numeracy progressions.	Teachers are continuing to develop their skills to assess students' growth against the literacy and numeracy progressions.

## Strategic Direction 2: Transition planning.

### Purpose

To create a strategic approach to collaborative transition processes that embeds shared responsibility with census schools that ensure continuity of student performance.

### 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.

- Personalised Learning Plan (PLP)
- Informed Transition Processes
- Differentiated Approach to Curriculum Delivery

### Resources allocated to this strategic direction

#### Staffing Methodology Review SSP supplementary funding

### Summary of progress

In 2023, our achievement was to deliver on administration systems being in place to record, store and share educational planning for our students both within our school and with their census school. Resources facilitated the development of a Transition Team, who operate within the Learning and Support Team and have facilitated timely sharing of educational information to inform transition back to census schools.

Teachers in Primary classes have been able to use the school wide scope and sequence to plan and implement high impact teaching and learning in numeracy, Literacy and science lessons. Through Executive staff analysing programs and observing the delivery of lessons, they have been able to measure the improvement in student growth and achievement.

Whilst teachers have been able to demonstrate school wide practices in using syllabus outcomes and metalanguage in both learning and wellbeing goals in individualised planning, in 2024 we will continue to work towards consistency in mapping sequences of learning for individual students both in classes and on wards.

### 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
Teachers will develop and document consistent school wide practices in planning for personalised learning and wellbeing.	Teachers have developed and documented consistent school wide practices in planning for personalised learning and wellbeing.
Practice in transition to include parents/carers and census schools within and beyond the NSW DoE will be built.	Practice in transition to include parents/carers and census schools within and beyond the NSW DoE has been built.
A scope and sequence for both K-6, and 7-10 with NSW curriculum content mapped for each stage and published.	Scope and sequences for K-6 and 7 -10 in Science, CAPA, PDHPE, History and Geography have been mapped and published in draft.

## Strategic Direction 3: Best practice for students with chronic illness.

### Purpose

To create a school community that is committed to implementing effective, explicit teaching through evidence based teaching strategies and a planned approach to well being and engagement.

### 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.

- Pedagogy - Expertise and Innovation
- Community Partnerships

### Resources allocated to this strategic direction

#### Professional learning

#### 6101 Consolidated Fund Carry Forward

### Summary of progress

In 2023, the school worked with an Artist in Residence to successfully complete 12 artworks which were then displayed in the 'Windows to Our World' gallery exhibition at The Childrens Hospital at Westmead. The artworks were also used to showcase student work in the annual school calender which was distributed to 350 stakeholders, community members, students and their families across NSW.

100% of staff participated in Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) professional learning with 40% of the staff also completing the specialist TIP training. The learning is evidenced in the built capacity of staff to make appropriate learning adjustments to support students. Staff also reported increased confidence in managing student behaviour in the classroom and this was evidenced in reduced volume of behaviour referrals to the Learning Support Team. Through professional learning and in school support, staff have supported an increase in students accessing the classrooms via telepresence as part of their transition plans. by the end of 2023, the fleet of telepresence robots were utilised for over 75% of the week.

In 2024 we will continue to develop our community partnerships to increase the participation of parents in school events. We will continue to build our pedagogical practices to meet student needs through further professional learning in the areas of technology for learning and trauma informed practice to embed the practices across the school consistently.

### 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
<b>Expertise and Innovation - Pedagogy</b> Staff attend professional learning on hybrid teaching using Telepresence Technology, Mind Brain Body Education science, 4C, and Trauma Informed Practice pedagogy to improve pedagogical practice.	All staff have attended Telepresence Technology and Trauma Informed Practice professional learning and have demonstrated improved pedagogical practice.  K-6 staff have undertaken professional learning in Mind Brain Body Education Science and 4C pedagogy.
<b>Community Partnerships</b> Participate in building, learning and educational activities specific for the redevelopment of The Children's Hospital School at the Westmead Health Precinct (Children's, Adult, and Private Hospitals) as coordinated by SCHN, NSW Health Infrastructure, and	Students and staff have participated in learning and educational activities specific to the redevelopment of The Childrens Hospital School.





Funding sources	Impact achieved this year
<p>Socio-economic background</p> <p>\$66,857.48</p>	<p>Socio-economic background equity loading is used to meet the additional learning needs of students at The Childrens Hospital 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>• Data skills and use in Literacy and Numeracy</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 DEAR program implementation.</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b> Student engagement in reading has increased.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> In 2024 the program will be expanded to include parents and community members . Parents will be trained to support reading at home.</p>
<p>Professional learning</p> <p>\$17,752.10</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 The Childrens Hospital 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>• Data skills and use in Literacy and Numeracy</li> <li>• Pedagogy - Expertise and Innovation</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> This initiative was on hold pending recruitment of specialist teacher.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> In 2024 the APCI will build collaborative partnerships with neighbouring schools and strengthen teaching practice.</p>
<p>QTSS release</p> <p>\$54,922.75</p>	<p>The quality teaching, successful students (QTSS) allocation is provided to improve teacher quality and enhance professional practice at The Childrens Hospital 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>• Data skills and use in Literacy and Numeracy</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>• additional staffing to support staff collaboration in the implementation of high-quality curriculum</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b> Teaching and learning staff had had the opportunity to work collaboratively across stages and classes/wards to ensure consistency in programming and practices as students transisiton through the settings and back into thier census schools.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> Data will be used to measure student growth and attainment and this will be</p>

<p>QTSS release</p> <p>\$54,922.75</p>	<p>reported consistently on transition back of students to their census schools post treatment.</p>
<p>COVID ILSP</p> <p>\$55,540.08</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 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>• providing targeted, explicit instruction for student groups in literacy/numeracy - [focus area]</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b> Additional resources have enabled targeted explicit teaching in literacy and numeracy for twenty four identified students K-6 and two students who needed intervention only for literacy.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> Expand our practices across the school to identifying students K-10 who require intensive support, through Learning Support Team referrals and developing specific intensive programs of explicit teaching to support their learning in literacy and numeracy.</p>
<p>SSP supplementary funding</p> <p>\$408,577.50</p>	<p>These funds have been used to support improved outcomes and the achievements of staff and students at The Childrens Hospital 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>• Data skills and use in Literacy and Numeracy</li> <li>• Assessment and reporting of student learning growth</li> <li>• Personalised Learning Plan (PLP)</li> <li>• Informed Transition Processes</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>• employment of additional staff to support in the creation of high-quality teaching and learning programs</li> <li>• additional staffing to support the implementation of individual students' healthcare and Personalised Learning and Support Plans (PLSPs)</li> </ul> <p><b>The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:</b> The establishment of a Learning and Support/Transition team who liaise with stakeholder medical teams and census schools to facilitate successful transition into and out of The Hospital School and support teachers to deliver high quality personalised learning and support to maximise learning opportunities and maintain connection with education during extended stays in hospital.</p> <p><b>After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:</b> To build capacity in all staff to better utilise technology to be able to embed the processes and procedures developed in 2023 into school systems, for consistency, accountability and sustainability.</p>

## Attendance

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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

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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)	0.2
Classroom Teacher(s)	10.14
Teacher Librarian	0.2
School Counsellor	0.2
School Administration and Support Staff	6.02

\*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>	1,041,413.96
<b>Revenue</b>	2,899,845.87
Appropriation	2,895,641.99
Investment income	4,003.88
Other revenue	200.00
<b>Expenses</b>	-2,841,752.62
Employee related	-2,325,788.19
Operating expenses	-515,964.43
<b>Surplus / deficit for the year</b>	58,093.25
<b>Closing Balance</b>	1,099,507.21

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>	66,857
Equity - Aboriginal	0
Equity - Socio-economic	66,857
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	0
<b>Base Total</b>	1,925,830
Base - Per Capita	50,532
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	1,875,297
<b>Other Total</b>	708,236
<b>Grand Total</b>	2,700,924

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

Students at The Hospital School have conveyed feelings of safety, value, care, support, and empowerment. 76% of students reported positive peer relationships, while 86% felt supported in their educational journey. Furthermore, 86% stated receiving appropriate assistance to complete their work. When asked about their achievements in class, students expressed pride in various accomplishments, such as staying current with math chapters, reading more books, mastering linear equations, maintaining pace with the class despite challenges, and showing notable improvements in subjects like math and science.

All parents/caregivers have been given the opportunity to provide feedback to The Hospital School. The excellent outcome is that parents/caregivers say they are well-informed about our school and their child's progress. They feel welcome, can easily talk to their child's teacher, and find written information clear and easy to understand. Feedback indicates that The Hospital School provides a sense of normality for students during their hospital stay, with teachers offering encouragement and ensuring educational continuity for their children.

All teachers have been given the opportunity to complete the Tell Them From Me survey. In their responses, 100% of teachers report that they have the skills and confidence to meet the needs of students with disability or special needs. Throughout 2023, technology has played a significant role, as evidenced by 90% of teachers agreeing that in our school, digital technology is utilised to personalise student learning and connect students to learn beyond their physical environment. Teachers were also asked about administrative tasks that could be reduced, and based on their responses, The Hospital School has engaged a Community Liaison Officer who supports teachers in streamlining their workload.



# 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.

## 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.