

Strategic Improvement Plan 2023-2026

Bates Drive School 5647



School vision and context

School vision statement

At Bates Drive School we provide exceptional learning opportunities for all students tailored to their individual needs and abilities. Students are encouraged to achieve success in their learning through engaging individual programs that are developed collaboratively with families, support staff and external service providers. We challenge our students to become as independent as possible in all areas of their life in order to successfully transition to future pathways.

School context

Bates Drive School, located in the Sutherland Shire of Sydney, is a school for specific purposes catering for students with a range of special needs. Our school accepts students from Kindergarten to Year 12 with a moderate to severe intellectual disability. Students may also present with physical disabilities, sensory impairments and challenging behaviours. Seventy seven percent of our students have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder in addition to their intellectual disability.

We have secure grounds with a range of specialised equipment including an enclosed heated pool, inground trampoline, liberty swing, a range of sensory swings and a sensory room.

The school currently enrolls students from the Sutherland Shire and St George region. The dedicated and experienced staff are committed to providing a safe and caring learning environment that:

- * Builds foundations for lifelong learning.
- * Recognises, values and celebrates differences.
- * Promotes a school that is free from racism, bullying and discrimination.

The school staff consists of 30 personnel comprising of the Principal, school executive, teachers, school learning support officers, casual teachers, administrative staff and a general assistant. The staff are a very dynamic team who work collaboratively to ensure that all students receive quality education in a quality environment. The school strongly supports the values of public education.

Through the situational analysis process and community engagement we have identified three broad areas for ongoing improvement. These areas are the use of data informed practice to build student communication skills, a planned approach to wellbeing practices and enhanced educational leadership to drive effective teaching practice.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To ensure programming and planning is based on effective assessment and use of data to ensure continual improvement in communication skills.

Improvement measures

Achieve by year: 2026

Increase the number of students making progress in communication as shown by SWANs and PLAN2 from 46% (baseline 2022) to a minimum of 54%.

Uplift = 8%

Achieve by year: 2026

Teacher programs and observations show that the teaching of core words for the full range of communication functions is sustained as an embedded practice across the school.

Achieve by year: 2026

All students to be showing progress in the range and/or form of communication functions they successfully engage in as shown by the modified communication matrix assessment.

Achieve by year: 2026

Move towards Excelling in the SEF theme of Data Use in Teaching.

Initiatives

Communication skills to ensure growth

Core Words

- A focus on core words will be embedded in all communication programs across the school, both on an individual and class basis. Evidence based strategies, including access to visual communication in the environment, enhanced communication partner skills and modelling will be implemented to ensure the core words focus is effective.
- Teaching and learning programs will be inclusive of all augmentative and alternative forms of communication however Language Acquisition through Motor Planning (LAMP) will be the preferred form that is implemented and modelled across all classrooms.
- All communication functions will be explicitly taught in a systematic manner, based on assessment data, to expand student communication from simple requesting.

Data informed practice

- Teachers will develop their skills in the analysis and use of assessment data across all stages of the teaching and learning cycle. In particular, individual student communication goals within Personalised Learning Plans will be developed, monitored, assessed and evaluated using a range of internal data sources.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Curriculum and Effective Classroom Practice

The school environment facilitates access to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) across all learning spaces. Classrooms are equipped with LAMP communication technology to provide consistent communication systems throughout the school.

All teaching and support staff are highly skilled in implementing evidence based strategies in their interactions with students to facilitate effective AAC learning.

Core words form the basis of all class communication programs and students are equipped with the vocabulary necessary to engage in the full range of communication functions.

Data Skills and Use

Teachers engage in regular data analysis and use student performance data to inform student learning goals, personalised learning plans and class teaching programs in the area of communication. They will apply a full range of strategies to determine teaching directions, monitor and assess student progress and achievement, as well as reflect on teaching effectiveness.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Questions: Are students making progress in communication?

Is student performance data being used to plan individual and class teaching programs?

Data: SWANs and PLAN2 school progress spreadsheet

Student data from modified communication matrix assessment

Personalised Learning Plans showing evidence of student performance data.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Class programs showing differentiation based on student assessment data.

Observations

Analysis: The progress monitoring process will be conducted twice each term during team meetings. Data sources will be reviewed and analysed each term to determine the impact made and future directions of the initiative.

Implications: The regular analysis of data will lead to the formulation of future directions. The plan will remain flexible and adapted as necessary as a result of the analysis process.

Strategic Direction 2: Planned approach to wellbeing

Purpose

To ensure practices are systematically planned and consistently applied across the whole school to support wellbeing and enable each student to connect, succeed and thrive.

Improvement measures

Achieve by year: 2026

Increase the number of students participating in community access and/or integration programs.

Total uplift 15% from 2022 baseline.

Achieve by year: 2026

An increase of 10% from baseline of the number of students making progress in gross motor, fine motor, play and leisure skills as shown by internal checklists.

Achieve by year: 2026

Explicit teaching of PBL expectations using differentiated teaching strategies based on student assessment data is sustained as an embedded practice across the school, as evidenced by programs and observations.

Achieve by year: 2026

Explicit teaching of Zones of Regulation concepts using differentiated teaching strategies based on student assessment data is sustained as an embedded practice across the school, as evidenced by programs and observations.

Achieve by year: 2026

Increase the number of students making progress in emotional understanding as shown by SWANs from 32% baseline to a minimum of 38%.

Total uplift of 8% from baseline.

Achieve by year: 2026

Initiatives

The Wellbeing Framework in an SSP

WELLBEING

Schools support wellbeing through practices that promote social, emotional, behavioural and intellectual engagement, and by fostering positive relationships across the school community (What Works Best in practice 2020).

Connect

- Increased opportunities to engage in integration and community access programs will be incorporated across the curriculum for all stages. Evidence based communication strategies will be implemented in real life and community contexts to enhance students participation in and connection with the community.
- A focus on the development of gross motor, fine motor, play and leisure skills will be embedded in both individual and class based PDHPE programs. A sensory based sport program will be implemented across the school to cater for student gross motor needs and support their participation in leisure programs across all environments.

Succeed

- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) programs and strategies will be implemented systematically across the school to provide students with the skills to successfully engage with learning. All PBL teaching and learning activities will be based on student performance data and cater to a wide range of communication levels.
- The Zones of Regulation program will be revised based on student performance data and embedded across the curriculum, to improve student emotional regulation.

Thrive

- Opportunities for student voice will be included in whole school programming. Evidence based

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Curriculum

The curriculum provision throughout the school provides opportunities for students to develop and strengthen their connection with peers, teachers, families and the community. Engaging in integration, sport, play, leisure and community based programs will enhance student's ability to succeed in life post-school.

Wellbeing

Expectations for behaviour are taught and applied explicitly, consistently and supportively across the school to ensure optimal conditions for learning.

A range of evidence based strategies are employed to gather holistic information about student wellbeing and learning needs, including student voice, which contribute to the shared collective responsibility for student learning and success.

Teachers undertake regular evaluation and revision of wellbeing programs based on a range of data sources and implement evidence-based change to whole school practices, resulting in measurable improvements in wellbeing and engagement to support learning.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: Are students connecting with others on an improved basis as a result of increased participation in integration, community access, gross motor, fine motor, play and leisure programs?

Data: Community access planners.

Integration program planning and evaluation.

Gross motor checklist school progress spreadsheet.

Analysis: The relevant project teams will review and analyse data once each term.

Strategic Direction 2: Planned approach to wellbeing

Improvement measures

The Accessible 'Let Me Have a Say' survey will be conducted annually with all students who are able to engage with yes/no questions successfully. The data obtained will contribute to the wide range of data sources used to tailor the direction of wellbeing programs.

Achieve by year: 2026

Modified photovoice and/or body mapping will be conducted with each student on an annual basis to elicit student voice and form part of comprehensive student profiles aimed to increase student engagement in learning.

Initiatives

strategies including the accessible survey and body mapping will be implemented as regular practice, with the data produced being used to tailor learning and wellbeing programs on an individual, class and whole school basis.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Implications: The results of the analysis process will be used to determine the future directions of the project. The progress monitoring process will be conducted twice each term to ensure the project remains on schedule.

Question: Are students making progress in their engagement in learning and emotional regulation as a result of explicit, systematic teaching of differentiated PBL and Zones of Regulation programs?

Data: Incident report data.

Zones of Regulation assessment school progress spreadsheet.

SWANs emotional understanding school progress spreadsheet.

PBL programs and observations.

Analysis: Each of the project teams will meet twice each term to participate in the progress monitoring process. At the final meeting each term the teams will thoroughly analyse the data to identify trends and areas of need.

Implications: The future directions of the project will be reviewed and updated following the analysis process each term.

Question: Are strategies to extract student voice increasing the effectiveness of wellbeing programs and student engagement in learning?

Data: SEF self assessment - Wellbeing element.

Incident report data.

Staff surveys.

Analysis: The student voice project team will undertake review and analysis of the data on an annual basis.

Implications: The plan will remain flexible and future directions will be updated annually based on results of the data analysis process.

Strategic Direction 3: Educational leadership to drive effective teaching practice

Purpose

To provide a culture of collaboration and continuous improvement in which teachers are supported by leaders to evaluate and improve their pedagogy.

Improvement measures

Achieve by year: 2026

Move towards Excellence in the SEF element of Educational Leadership and particularly the theme of Instructional Leadership.

Achieve by year: 2026

Self and peer reflection on teaching practice using the What Works Best toolkit is conducted annually to inspire and monitor continuous teacher improvement.

Achieve by year: 2026

All students to have a formative assessment Learning Journal on Seesaw consisting of photographic evidence of their learning, tagged with details of their skill development.

Achieve by year: 2026

Move towards Excellence in the SEF element of Assessment and particularly the theme of Formative Assessment.

Achieve by year: 2026

Move towards Excellence in the SEF element of Data Skills and Use.

Achieve by year: 2026

Goal Attainment Scales to be used to measure student progress towards each of their Personalised Learning Goals each year. Progress to be measured using the Goal Attainment Scale twice each term from term 2..

Initiatives

What Works Best in an SSP

COLLABORATION

Effective collaboration requires teachers to recognise their own expertise and feel comfortable in offering it, whilst also being open to accepting the advice and feedback of others.

Instructional Leaders

- A model of distributed instructional leadership will be implemented by the executive team to provide all teachers with mentoring and coaching for their professional development. A culture of continuous improvement will be instilled through a focus on the What Works Best model and regular reflection on how the principles can be applied to best support the needs of students with significant disabilities.

Assessment

- Regularly provide students with opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do in relation to the learning intentions and success criteria.
- A school wide system of consistent formative assessment will be implemented, through the Seesaw app, to supplement the summative assessment processes embedded through the ongoing assessment project. In conjunction with the instructional leadership program, teachers will be empowered with the knowledge and skills required to apply a full range of assessment strategies to make valid, consistent judgements about student progress.

Use of data to inform practice

- Effective use of data helps teachers understand which students are progressing at an appropriate level in response to the teaching approaches in their classroom, and how they could best adjust their practice to drive improvement for all students in their class.
- Teachers will develop their skills in the collection and

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Learning Culture - High Expectations

The school sustains a culture of high expectations in which it is accepted and expected that all students can learn regardless of disability. The diverse needs of students are catered for through highly effective teaching methods based on research, and are successfully supported across all levels of the school.

Effective Classroom Practice - Explicit Teaching

A whole school approach ensures the most effective evidence-based teaching methods optimise learning progress for all students, across the full range of abilities. Teachers employ evidence-based effective teaching strategies. Effective methods are identified, promoted and modelled, and students' learning improvement is monitored, demonstrating growth.

Learning and Development - Collaborative Practice and Feedback

Teachers engage in ongoing collaborative reflection on their practice and are guided by instructional leaders in their implementation of evidence based strategies to maximise the effectiveness of their teaching.

The school uses embedded and explicit systems that facilitate professional dialogue, collaboration, classroom observation, the modelling of effective practice and the provision of specific and timely feedback between teachers.

Educational Leadership - Instructional Leadership

The leadership team maintains a model of distributed instructional leadership to effectively capitalise on the wide range of experience within the school and establish a professional learning community that is focused on continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

Assessment / Data Use and Skills - Data Use in Teaching

The full range of assessment strategies are successfully

Strategic Direction 3: Educational leadership to drive effective teaching practice

Initiatives

analysis of student performance data as well as its use to drive learning goals and effectively differentiate programs. Evidence based strategies such as Goal Attainment Scales will be implemented to ensure Personalised Learning Plan goals are developed, monitored, reported and evaluated based on valid, reliable and authentic data.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

applied by teachers - assessment for learning, assessment as learning and assessment of learning - in order to determine teaching directions, identify appropriate interventions and monitor progress.

The school regularly undertakes analysis and interpretation of student performance data at an individual, class and school level. This data is used to develop priorities and ensure all students make measurable progress and gaps in student learning are decreased.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: Has the instructional leadership program resulted in positive gains in teacher development and effective classroom practice?

Data: Classroom observation records.

What Works Best toolkit responses.

Analysis: The impact of the instructional leadership program will be determined through a thorough analysis of all project data on an annual basis.

Implications: The leadership team will base future directions for the program on the results of the analysis process. Activities and implementation strategies will be adapted where required.

Question:
Are effective assessment practices being implemented across the school?

Are all class and individual program plans based on the collection, analysis and application of student performance data?

Data: School assessment guidelines.
Student Seesaw Learning Journals.

Class and individual programs.

Class learning plans based on assessment data.

Strategic Direction 3: Educational leadership to drive effective teaching practice

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Personalised Learning Plans.

Goal Attainment Scale results.

School progress spreadsheet.

Analysis: The assessment project coordinator will lead the analysis of all data in collaboration with the leadership team. The results of the analysis will be used to determine future directions for the initiative.

Implications: The plan will be adapted as needed based on the future directions determined through the analysis process. A firm focus on student success will be maintained at all times.