

Strategic Improvement Plan 2023-2026

Willoughby Girls High School 8159



School vision and context

School vision statement

We are the educators of young women who share a passion for learning. An inspired place of opportunity and discovery supported by a truly collaborative community. Fostering growth and curiosity we equip learners of diverse abilities with the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in a world of possibilities. Guided by integrity, curiosity and courage they will grow into creative and critical thinkers. They will be confident, capable and compassionate contributors to society. They are the innovators of our future.

School context

Founded in 1934, Willoughby Girls High School, located on Sydney's Lower North Shore, is recognised as a leader in girls' education and for our academic success. In 2023, 984 students are enrolled with approximately 55% of our students coming from a language background other than English. The school staffing entitlement in 2023 is 62 teaching staff and 13 non-teaching staff. The school executive is comprised of the Principal, two teaching Deputy Principals, ten substantive Head Teachers and an additional school funded Head Teacher in 2023.

As a proud local comprehensive school, we are committed to meeting the needs of every student through a strong focus on personal best and high expectations. We encourage students to engage in the broader opportunities that school life has to offer, including academic, sporting, leadership, creative arts and community endeavours.

The school is focused on strengthening relationships with our community. Targeted programs and initiatives provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to make a significant contribution to improve their world. We are fortunate to have an active and passionate P&C who provide financial support for resources and programs, including additional music and sporting opportunities for our students.

Student voice is valued in decision making with leadership opportunities available across all years. As a school, we are committed to building advocacy and a strong sense of belonging for every student in a safe and positive setting.

Evidence-based teaching practices are integral to the teaching and learning culture of the school. Our highly experienced staff are committed to ongoing whole school improvement.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

Our purpose is to ensure that every student makes meaningful and measurable learning progress in order to sustain and build upon our school's history of success. Through consistent whole-school approaches and ongoing monitoring of student growth data, we will support our students to achieve their learning goals.

Improvement measures

HSC achievement - top 2 bands

Achieve by year: 2023

HSC TOP 2 BANDS

The percentage of HSC course results in the top two bands to be moving towards the school's upper bound system-negotiated target of 76.2%.

Reading growth

Achieve by year: 2023

An increase in Check-in Assessment mean scaled score for reading in Year 8 for 2023 compared with Year 8 in 2022.

Numeracy growth

Achieve by year: 2023

An increase in Check-in Assessment mean scaled score for numeracy in Year 8 for 2023 compared with Year 8 in 2022.

Assessment and Reporting

Achieve by year: 2026

As measured by the School Excellence Framework, in the themes of 'Assessment - Whole school monitoring of student learning' and 'Reporting - Whole school reporting', the school is moving towards the school identified target of Excelling.

Initiatives

Literacy and Numeracy

All teachers understand and explicitly teach literacy and numeracy to students in all subject areas. Student progress towards literacy and numeracy goals is informed by analysis of internal and external achievement data.

- Embedding consistent understanding and use of literacy strategies to meet the reading needs of all students.
- Using consistent language and structure for academic writing strategies that supports all students to effectively communicate their understanding.
- Developing a sustained and consistent whole school numeracy framework to foster shared responsibility.

Assessment and Reporting

An integrated approach to quality teaching and assessment promoting learning excellence and responsive in meeting the needs of all students.

- Quality design of assessment tasks including use of differentiation to support diverse learners.
- Teaching and learning programs use formative assessment to shape instruction and promote responsive teaching.
- Student progress and achievement data is analysed and feedback from assessment informs teaching and learning. Student and school performance is analysed and reported to inform collective decisions about student learning.
- School wide staff and student use of feed-forward and feedback is improved to ensure measurable change in learning outcomes.
- Whole-school processes are developed to support teacher's consistent, evidence based judgement in assessment and reporting.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

All teachers understand and explicitly teach literacy and numeracy to students at all levels of achievement, in all subject areas, with success that can be measured by improved student progress and achievement data. Strategies implemented reflect research on best practice and include ongoing monitoring of success.

Assessment is used flexibly and responsively as an integral part of daily classroom instruction. Formative assessment is practised expertly by teachers. Feedback from students on their learning derived from assessments informs further teaching.

The school uses systematic and reliable assessment information and processes to evaluate student learning over time and implements changes in teaching that lead to measurable improvement. The school has processes in place to support teachers' consistent, evidence based judgement and moderation of assessments. Students' learning and courses of study are monitored longitudinally using internal and external data to ensure continued challenge and maximum learning.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Questions:

What has been the impact of a whole school approach to embedding literacy and numeracy strategies on student growth and attainment data?

Have we shown progress towards our targets in NAPLAN and HSC achievement?

To what extent is there consistent activity and process quality in literacy and numeracy instruction across the school?

What has been the impact of school wide approaches to assessment?

Data:

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Relevant teams and the Executive to collect and analyse:

- External student performance measures: NAPLAN, School Dashboard, Schools Online
- Teaching programs: evaluation of literacy and numeracy strategies
- Student work samples
- Classroom observations

Analysis:

Relevant teams, faculties and the Executive to create regular opportunities to analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and the extent to which improvement measures have been achieved.

Implications:

- Strategies and practices will be evaluated for efficacy in order to share and embed best practice across the school

Strategic Direction 2: Building collective efficacy

Purpose

Our purpose is to drive ongoing, schoolwide improvement in teaching practice and student results by facilitating professional dialogue and collaboration through teacher learning communities. Focused on key areas for improvement, SIP teams will trial and evaluate evidence-based pedagogies and methods in order to ensure quality teaching and learning in all classrooms.

Improvement measures

Effective Classroom Practice

Achieve by year: 2026

EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICE

As measured by the School Excellence Framework, in the theme of 'Effective Classroom Practice - Explicit Teaching and Feedback' the school will self-assess at excelling.

Learning and Development

Achieve by year: 2026

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

As measured by the School Excellence Framework, in the theme of 'Learning and Development - Collaborative Practice and Feedback and Expertise and Innovation' the school will self-assess at excelling.

Curriculum: Teaching and Learning

Achieve by year: 2026

TEACHING AND LEARNING

As measured by the School Excellence Framework, in the theme of 'Curriculum - Teaching and Learning' the school will self-assess at excelling.

Whole School Technology

Achieve by year: 2026

As measured by the School Excellence Framework in the themes of 'School Resources - Technology' and 'Learning and Development - Expertise and Innovation' the school

Initiatives

Teacher learning teams

Foster a culture of classroom best practice through all staff involvement in cross faculty teams working towards SIP initiatives:

- Designing an action learning cycle where teams plan their driving question, undertake professional learning, trial strategies in classroom practice, collect evidence of and evaluate impact on improved student outcomes.
- Staff will share the learning undertaken in their team at faculty and whole-school level to create a shared understanding of best practice to ensure quality teaching and learning in all classrooms.

Whole School Technology

A whole school technology focus that supports teaching and learning and administrative systems

- Improved effective classroom practice, utilising technology to further improve pedagogy and student outcomes using a blended approach to teaching.
- All administrative staff are expert users of available technology and systems to support students, parents/carers and teaching staff.

Critical and Reflective Thinking

Improve whole school use of strategies to promote student critical and reflective thinking by all teachers.

- Trialling and evaluating routines and strategies to increase student metacognitive skills in order to improve learning independence in classroom practice.
- Teaching and learning programs across the school are embedded with critical and reflective thinking practices to ensure that all students are able to generate and evaluate knowledge, clarify concepts and ideas, seek possibilities, consider alternatives and solve problems for the full range of learners including high potential and gifted students.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

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 routinely employ evidence-based effective teaching strategies. Effective methods are identified, promoted and modelled, and students' learning improvement is monitored, demonstrating growth.

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. This drives ongoing, schoolwide improvement in teaching practice and student results. The school trials innovative practices and has processes in place to evaluate, refine and scale success.

The leadership team maintains a focus on distributed instructional leadership to sustain a culture of effective, evidence-based teaching and ongoing improvement so that every student makes measurable learning progress and gaps in student achievement decrease.

Technology that supports learning is available and expertly integrated into lessons by teachers to enhance student learning. Administrative staff are expert users of available technology and systems.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Questions:

To what extent are all teachers actively engaged in collaborative teams that improve collective efficacy and classroom best practice?

What has been the impact of the implementation of teaching pedagogies on student learning and performance, and is this consistent across the school?

Data:

Teams, faculties and the Executive will engage with

Strategic Direction 2: Building collective efficacy

Improvement measures

the school will self-assess at excelling.

Initiatives

Universal Design for Learning

Whole school adoption of effective-based teaching methods such as Universal Design for Learning to optimise learning progress for all students across the full range of abilities .

- Trialling and evaluating strategies to improve and optimise teaching and learning for all students.
- Teaching and learning programs across the school are evaluated and refined using the principles of Universal Design for Learning to ensure that all learners can access and participate in meaningful, appropriately challenging and engaging learning.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

relevant data from sources including:

- External student performance measures: NAPLAN, School Dashboard, Schools Online
- Teaching programs: evidence of changes and refinements based on assessment and feedback
- Student work samples and assessment results
- Student surveys
- Classroom observations
- Sentral Meeting minutes and reporting from teams

Analysis:

All teams to engage in regular structured reflection to evaluate impact of initiatives and refine approach to team meeting and planning. Teams and faculties to collate and report on evidence of impact as part of the School Reporting process. Classroom observation opportunities to be organised through teams of PDP processes.

Implications:

- Strategies and practices will be evaluated for efficacy in order to share and embed best practice across the school
- Teams and structures to be refined and revised in response to evidence of impact
- All teachers to be supported to implement chosen strategies and practices to improve consistent best practice

Strategic Direction 3: Positive and productive partnerships

Purpose

Our purpose is to strengthen our school community partnerships in order to foster a culture of belonging, motivation and aspiration among all members. We will support students, teachers, parents and the wider community to thrive within and beyond the classroom.

Improvement measures

Attendance (>90%)

Achieve by year: 2023

ATTENDANCE:

Improvement in the percentage of students attending school more than 90% of the time to be above the school's lower bound system-negotiated target of 94.3%

Wellbeing

Achieve by year: 2023

WELLBEING

TTFM Wellbeing data (advocacy, belonging, expectations) improves to be at or above the school's lower bound system-negotiated target of 75.4%

Staff Success and Strengthening

Achieve by year: 2026

As measured by the School Excellence Framework, in the theme of 'Educational Leadership - Performance management and development' the school will self assess at excelling.

Student Mentoring and Leadership

Achieve by year: 2026

As measured by the School Excellence Framework, in the theme of 'Learning Culture - High Expectation' and 'Wellbeing - Caring for students' the school is moving towards the school-identified target of Excelling.

Cultural and Aboriginal Education

Achieve by year: 2026

Initiatives

Student Leadership and Engagement

The school provides a diverse range of opportunities to build the leadership capacity of students. Student achievement is supported by a strategic and planned approach to mentoring partnerships with teaching staff and external providers to support students to achieve their personal best.

- Build staff capacity to capture student voice and engagement.
- Develop strategies to enhance student connectedness within the school.

Cultural & Aboriginal Education

Progress towards the Reconciliation Action Plan is undertaken by all members of the school community.

- Staff commit and undertake action to improve the educational outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students so that they excel and achieve in every aspect of their education.
- All students are prepared for engagement and participation in Australian society.

Student Wellbeing

The Student Wellbeing Team have a strategic and planned approach to develop whole school wellbeing processes that support the wellbeing of all students so they can connect, succeed, thrive and learn. The school engages with parents/carers and external agencies and providers to support our students to achieve their personal best.

- Teaching and non-teaching staff implement whole-school processes that support the individual wellbeing needs of students.
- Self-identified learning goals for students are informed by analysis of internal and external student progress and achievement data. Progress towards goals is monitored through collection of quality, valid

Success criteria for this strategic direction

Planning for learning is informed by sound holistic information about each student's wellbeing and learning needs in consultation with parents/carers. The school has implemented evidence-based change to whole school practices, resulting in measurable improvements in wellbeing and engagement to support learning.

All staff contribute to a diverse and inclusive learning environment that benefits all students including those from language backgrounds other than English. Aboriginal cultural education is completed by all staff and all students are educated about Aboriginal Australia, as it's everybody's business.

Effective and inclusive partnerships between students, teaching staff and external providers allow the provision of leadership and mentoring opportunities, that lead to improved educational outcomes and broaden student's experience and readiness for future endeavours.

Whole school and/or inter-school relationships provide mentoring and coaching support to ensure the ongoing development and improvement of all teachers including beginning teachers and non-teaching staff. Leadership skills of teacher aspiring to promotion will be fostered resulting in staff applying for and being appointed to positions of promotion.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Questions:

To what extent are our wellbeing programs and structures improving student attendance, sense of belonging and advocacy?

Is there evidence that our school community feels more connected and cohesive as a result of our initiatives?

Are our structures helping to foster a culture of wellbeing that allows every member to thrive in and outside of the classroom?

Strategic Direction 3: Positive and productive partnerships

Improvement measures

The school's Reconciliation Action Plan is developed, implemented and reviewed in consultation with the Cammeray (Ryde) AECG and the school's Aboriginal students and families.

Initiatives

and reliable data.

Staff Success and Strengthening

Beginning teaching and non-teaching staff are provided mentoring, induction and professional development to foster a sense a belonging, a shared understanding of school culture and practice.

Staff at all stages of their career are provided opportunities to experience success within school, the local school network and across the Department of Education.

- Teaching staff develop effective instructional leadership, management skills and leadership attributes through professional learning, mentoring and performance development plans.
- Non-teaching staff are provided opportunities to build their knowledge, skills and expertise to deliver excelling administrative and support services to students, parents/carers and teaching staff.
- Aspiring leaders will be recognised and provided opportunities to develop their leadership capability.
- Professional learning will engage with evidence-based research to support collaborative performance development and efforts to continuously monitor improvement

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Are teaching and non-teaching staff provided with opportunities for professional growth and experiencing success in applying for or relieving in higher positions or taking on more responsibilities?

Data:

Teams, faculties and the Executive will engage with relevant data from sources including:

- External student performance measures: TTFM
- Sentral attendance and wellbeing data
- Student, parent and teacher surveys/focus groups
- Classroom observations of safe and supportive environments

Analysis:

Executive and Wellbeing team to engage in regular analysis of student attendance and wellbeing data to identify trends at whole school, cohort and individual student level. Regular evaluation of 'voice' surveys to proactively address issues and improve community connection.

Implications:

- Rigorous analysis of data to determine shifts in practice, policy and procedure in order to improve community connection and sense of belonging
- Individual student support practices to be evaluated and refined over time in response to data