Strategic Improvement Plan 2023-2026

NSW School of Languages 8588

School vision and context

School vision statement

To develop successful, thriving learners with a love of languages, intercultural understanding and skills for their future.

NSW School of Languages strives to lead the teaching and learning of languages through innovative quality language programs.

Our skilled and committed teachers work with the school community to ensure students reach their highest potential, broaden their global perspective and strengthen their connections with heritage and culture.

School context

NSW School of Languages is the only school of its type in NSW. It is the state's largest provider of languages education via flexible learning programs and serves students from the Hunter and Central Coast to Bulli and west to the schools of the Blue Mountains.

Students from government and non-government schools enrol in Years 9 to 12 as single course students if the language they wish to study is not provided in their home school and if their enrolment complies with Distance Education Revised Enrolment Procedures.

In addition, the school delivers English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) to Stage 6 students in regional and rural NSW whose schools are unable to offer a separate ESL course.

Over 2600 students complete online course work, attend weekly online speaking lessons and attend a face-to-face lesson day with their cohort each term at the school in Petersham. The school seeks to continuously improve the course materials and teacher skills for its students.

NSW School of Languages is an active member of a network of distance education schools in New South Wales and a network of government language schools around Australia. The school staff work with Languages educators in all government and non-government sectors, both secondary and tertiary. We develop and share interactive online courses incorporating the recently researched pedagogy and the most appropriate use of technology.

NSW School of Languages maintains relationships with several foreign consulates who support the school with cultural contributions and resource development. The school intends to develop further relationships with the wider language and cultural community.

The school's Base allocation is enhanced by Distance Education funding and voluntary contributions from the home schools for each student enrolment. An equity loading that is not based on student enrolments is provided for Low Level adjustment for disability.

The school has identified the following areas for development and future growth through a detailed situational analysis.

- Student growth and attainment
- Improving the impact of teaching practice
- School community collaboration and partnerships.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To maximise student learning outcomes and engagement, we will ensure students have access to high quality learning opportunities which support and inform personalised teaching and learning.

Improvement measures

Student wellbeing for learning
Achieve by year: 2026

The school has implemented evidence-based change to whole school practices, resulting in measurable improvements in wellbeing and engagement to support learning.

Maximise student learning and engagement
Achieve by year: 2026

All courses are systematically planned as part of a coherent program that has been collaboratively designed. Accommodations and adjustments are made to suit needs as they arise. Lesson planning references student information including progress and achievement data, curriculum requirements, and student feedback, and provides continuous improvement for all students, across the full range of abilities.

Initiatives

Student wellbeing for learning

A whole school approach to student wellbeing.

Collective whole-school strategies to embed student well being measures that support student learning.

- Review and update current processes and align improvement strategies with the Wellbeing Framework Self-Assessment.
- Embed the Wellbeing Framework into school culture through ongoing staff professional learning in effective wellbeing strategies.
- Implement teacher and student wellbeing initiatives.
- Introduce a whole school award system.

Maximise student learning and engagement

Engagement of students in learning.

Continue the implementation and optimising of all online courses.

- Use and refine the use of NSL Quality Assurance Practices for consistency across all courses
- Develop a suite of student reflection tools to advocate for student voice and gain feedback on online learning systems
- Improve the quality of assessment feedback provided to students.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

- The school has implemented evidence- based change to whole school practices, resulting in measurable improvements in well being and engagement to support learning
- The whole school community demonstrates aspirational expectations of learning progress and achievement for all students, and is committed to the pursuit of excellence
- Whole school practices facilitate measurable improvements in student engagement

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Questions

To what extent have we created a collective responsibility for student wellbeing beyond the traditional wellbeing team?

To what extent is individual student progress monitored and nurtured?

Data:

DEMs wellbeing referral data

DEMs student engagement data

School surveys, interviews and focus groups

Analysis: Analyse the data to determine the extent to which the purpose has been achieved. Analyse the data to monitor progress on the agreed improvement measures

Implications: What are our next steps? How do we ensure that student well being and engagement remains at the forefront of our practice?

Strategic Direction 2: Improving the impact of teaching practice

Purpose

To improve staff engagement, collaboration and well-being. Staff will evaluate their practice and adapt it through quality, high impact professional learning and the analysis and interpretation of data.

Improvement measures

Well being professional learning
Achieve by year: 2026

The school is focused on building individual and collective wellbeing through a climate of care and positivity. Staff nurture professional relationships with students which are safe, respectful, and supportive, and which help students to reach their full potential. Students have positive and respectful relationships with each other, their teachers, and the community.

Professional Learning
Achieve by year: 2026

Teaching staff demonstrate and share their expertise within their school and with other schools. All teachers have expert contemporary content knowledge and deploy effective teaching strategies. The school trials innovative practices and has processes in place to evaluate, refine and scale success.

Data to inform practices
Achieve by year: 2026

School staff collaborate with the school community to use student progress and achievement data to identify strategic priorities, and develop and implement plans for continuous improvement. Strategies implemented reflect research on best practice and include ongoing monitoring of success.

Initiatives

Targeted and focussed Professional Learning

Targeted and focused High Impact Professional Learning that is strategically planned based on evidence and research to meet the needs of the school context and the specific needs of the staff. Implement collaborative approaches and processes.

- Introduce Trauma-Informed Practice Professional Development and implement practices within the schools

- Curriculum planning, delivery, and assessment to effectively identify and meet the diverse learning needs of all their students (including HPGE)

- Implement evidence-based and innovative high-quality teaching and learning practices in distance education

Data to inform best practice

To use data for evaluation and strategic planning for improvements and future directions.

- Analyse lesson day data to design successful lesson day activities

- Design assessment evaluations to inform the teaching and learning cycle, which includes improvements to curriculum through optimisation of course materials, and to inform ongoing improvements in assessment practices.

- Improve processes developed to use HSC RAP data and internal assessment data to inform improvements in online pedagogy and assessment practices.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

- Professional Learning is differentiated and its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes is evaluated.

- Teachers use teaching and learning pedagogies and strategies which optimise learning progress for students and are a result of the targeted professional development initiatives.

- Teachers share best practice, knowledge and experience across the school and the Languages community

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question 1: Has PL been strategically planned?

Data:

- Staff and student surveys to identify current practices, e.g. using online lessons
- Teacher surveys
- Lesson observations
- Presentations of research findings
- Professional learning calendar, PDPs, attendance, and evaluation data

Analysis: Analyse the data to determine the extent to which the targeted PL has been successful.

Implications: Evaluations to inform future PL and continuous cycle of improvement.

Question 2: Is data being recorded and used to improve pedagogy and student outcomes?

Data:

- Teacher surveys to establish use of data to improve pedagogy
- Regular overview taken of available data

Analysis: Analyse systems to ensure data collection is

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Strategic Direction 2: Improving the impact of teaching practice

easy for teachers and systems are in place to help teachers analyse and use the data to inform their practice.

Implications: Systems may need to be adjusted or more professional learning on data use may be needed.

Strategic Direction 3: School community collaboration and partnerships

Purpose

To extend the reach of NSL and encourage mutually beneficial community and real-world partnerships, nurturing relationships and sharing expertise to build productive learning communities.

Improvement measures

Effective systems for collaboration
Achieve by year: 2026

The school evaluates its administrative systems and processes, ensuring that they are delivering anticipated benefits to the school community, and makes changes when required. The leadership team collects information about the school's administrative practices in order to ensure their effectiveness.

Authentic Learning Partnership
Achieve by year: 2026

The school is recognised as excellent and responsive by its community because it uses best practice to embed a culture of high expectations, and effectively caters for the range of equity issues in the school.

Initiatives

Effective systems for collaboration

Improve effective systems through a focus on refining current processes.

- Strategic transition to storage of all documents to TEAMs organised to meet the requirements of registration and accreditation
- Expand the use of DEMs (School Management Platform) as the source of all administrative and teaching and learning record keeping
- Integrate best practice eLearning principles and learning tools to increase the use of Canvas.

Authentic Learning Partnerships

Continue to work and strengthen relationships with all stakeholders

- Use of social media and newsletters for community engagement
- Offer mentoring and practicums to University partners
- Work with community groups to promote environmental and sustainability projects at the school

Success criteria for this strategic direction

- The school meets the requirements for Department of Education monitoring procedures
- The school evaluates its administrative systems and processes, ensuring that they are delivering anticipated benefits to the school community, and makes changes when required.
- The staff have a high level of confidence in the efficient use of Canvas.
- The school is recognised as excellent and responsive by the community because it uses best practice to embed a culture of high expectations

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question 1: Are school systems and processes improving staff work practices and improving staff wellbeing?

Data:

- Overview of processes and work practices throughout the school
- Staff Survey to identify 'pinch points'
- Tell Them From Me survey to measure improvement in staff wellbeing.

Analysis:

Identify which practices are personal, school and Departmental decisions and which can be modified and improved.

Implications:

Implement changes to improve workflow to improve staff wellbeing

Question 2: Is NSL engaging with the school and external community to enhance teacher expertise and student learning?

Data:

Strategic Direction 3: School community collaboration and partnerships

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

- Participation numbers for Parent/Carer and Supervisor events
- Number of teachers involved in external presentations
- Number of schools/teachers requesting resources or advice from NSL

Analysis:

Is the school seen as a lighthouse for Languages education? Is NSL tapping into available expertise within the community? Where are the gaps?

Implications:

NSL will need to develop deliberate and proactive steps to further enhance its reputation.