

2020 Annual Report

Lucas Gardens School



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2020 is provided to the community of Lucas Gardens 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 school 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.

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Message from the principal

It is a privilege to be the principal of Lucas Gardens School, a dynamic student-centred school where we celebrate ability through high expectations.

2020 was a year of uncertainty and it had its challenges as we all went through a global pandemic.

Our students displayed resilience as they seamlessly moved from face to face learning to remote learning and then back to face to face learning. Staff continued to provide high quality teaching and learning tasks and families worked in close partnership with the school to ensure students and staff safety and well being was at the forefront.

I am honoured to share with you some of our 2020 school achievements which include:

- Putting effective COVID safe procedures in place to ensure students, staff and the community were safe, whilst students continued to learn at school or remotely.
- Engaging additional school learning support officers(SLSOs) specialising in behaviour and healthcare.
- Installing two shade covers funded by the state government and P&C.
- Delivering an EAL/D program to support students from backgrounds other than English.
- Developing wall displays in all classrooms displaying student communication, literacy and numeracy goals. This has been a show stopper, whereby other schools visited to witness exemplary teaching and learning.
- Our technology focus with the purchase of a 3D printer and robotic equipment kindly purchased from the donation made by St Patrick's College, Strathfield
- Purchasing whole school literacy resources including dual language books.
- Purchasing whole school numeracy resources and class packs.
- Upgrading our walkie talkies to a more reliable and suitable model.
- Purchasing resources for science, history and geography.
- Significant expenditure on new equipment for students due to the generosity of a private foundation.
- Purchasing and installing two new hammocks from P&C funds in 'Margaret's Playground'.
- An additional 9th class in 2020 was established and two more classes organised for 2021.
- Finalising our new 4-year Strategic improvement plan which was collaboratively developed with our school community

Thank you to all stakeholders who provided invaluable input throughout the year. It was truly a great team effort.

Jenny Zagas

Principal

School vision

At Lucas Gardens School we have high expectations and a shared commitment with our parents/carers to provide quality teaching and authentic learning. We aim to nurture, guide, inspire and challenge students, promoting individual wellbeing and future success.

School context

Lucas Gardens School provides educational programs for students with severe and moderate intellectual disabilities. Students range from 4 to 18 years of age. Our school has an exceptional staff with a wealth of knowledge and skills in special education, to support and enhance student learning outcomes. The school currently operates 9 classes with the potential to expand to 12 classes.

Lucas Gardens School has a diverse student population from a range of socio economic backgrounds with 61% being from language backgrounds other than English. The educational programs are delivered within the Department of Education guidelines.

The school also offers unique learning opportunities through programs including, water familiarisation/swimming in our hydro centre and school based physiotherapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy. Lucas Gardens School enjoys strong support from service organisations and the wider community, resulting in enhanced resources. Our priorities include quality curriculum implementation, best teaching practice as well as a strong focus on wellbeing and adding value to students' learning.

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 school plan and annual report.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine our school 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>

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2020 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Curriculum	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Assessment	Delivering
LEARNING: Reporting	Sustaining and Growing
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	Excelling
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

Strategic Direction 1

Quality Learning

Purpose

To develop and foster a quality learning environment that promotes high expectations in the teaching and learning experiences for both staff and students. This will be achieved through the development of scope and sequences in history, geography and science and the establishment of a whole school tracking system in English and mathematics, ensuring continuity and consistency to inform student progress.

Improvement Measures

By the end of the school planning cycle:

Attendance In professional Learning for >80% of teachers focussed on literacy and numeracy.

The implementation of a scope and sequence in history, geography and science

100% of students will have an individual skills and achievement tracking system in English and mathematics.

Overall summary of progress

The use of the school developed pre-skills as well as the National Literacy and Numeracy Progressions have been implemented across the school to support the setting and tracking of individual goals in literacy and numeracy. The literacy and numeracy pre-skills documents have been shared with other schools. As at the end of 2020, scope and sequences are in place for science, history and geography guiding the organisation and delivery of teaching and learning within these curriculum areas. The delivery of teaching programs has been further enhanced through the development of resource boxes for these subjects.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: A whole-school approach towards the recording and monitoring of student learning and achievements in literacy and numeracy, will be established and sustained.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>A whole school pre-skills document was developed in line with the National Literacy and Numeracy Progressions to support the teaching and assessment of student achievement in literacy and numeracy for all students across K-12. This project has been extended to include a group of schools to make this accessible to a broader range of settings. The establishment of an online assessment tool in line with PLAN2 is still being considered. Internal data has reflected a growth in student attainment in the achievement of individual goals in communication, literacy and numeracy. Whole school systems of data collection, data walls and data analysis have been established and sustained. Data will be used to inform future practice and to continue to monitor students growth and achievements. Feedback on progress towards individual goals has been provided to students and parents in the form of certificates of achievement.</p> <p>A bank of resources was developed to support the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the whole school and professional learning was provided to staff in the areas of communication, literacy and numeracy. An EAL/D program was established to support the vocabulary development and comprehension skills of EAL/D learners and professional learning was provided to key staff to deliver the program. Bi-lingual books were purchased to support our EAL/D learners and home reading programs.</p>	<p>staff surveys</p> <p>PLSP data on communication goals and achievements</p> <p>Data on literacy and numeracy goals and achievements</p>

Process 2: Teaching and learning programs reflect teacher familiarisation across stages of the history, geography and science curriculum to ensure individual student progress.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>1. Collaboration and development of scope and sequence units of work with teachers using the new syllabuses- for science, history and geography from early stage 1 to stage 5/ 6</p> <p>2. Development and distribution of a document detailing the new Lucas Gardens scope and sequence for science, history and geography including links to outcomes, content, resources and assessment</p> <p>3. Development, organisation and familiarisation of scope and sequence programs, resources and assessments on our school drive for sharing with staff</p> <p>4. Development and resourcing of Scope and Sequence theme boxes in the teacher resource room to support new programs for Science areas and for Geography and History</p> <p>5. Surveys of feedbacks from staff re new scope and sequence documents and resources</p>	

Strategic Direction 2

Communication and Connections

Purpose

To engage the whole school community in a safe, respectful and enriching learning environment that promotes student wellbeing and prepares and empowers them for their future success. Through advanced modes of communication, parents and carers will be directly and regularly engaged in their child's progress and achievements.

Improvement Measures

To gather baseline data of the whole school community's knowledge of school's rules and expectations using Tiered Fidelity Inventory -TFI and demonstrate a minimum of 30% increase at the end of the 3 year cycle.

The behaviour management of all students will be supported through the use of a whole-school merit reward system and the consistent monitoring of student behaviour across all school settings.

By the end of the school planning cycle all parents/carers of students transitioning in and out of school will be provided with relevant information and orientation to support them in their next setting.

100% of the staff will be consistently and confidently using multi-modal forms of communication to inform parents/carers about their child's learning and wellbeing.

Overall summary of progress

There was a successful whole school Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) implementation. Within PBL there is a strong emphasis on positive school rules and using consistent language when providing feedback to students. The understanding of PBL is supported by the use of signage in key areas of the school, including the school carpark and MPS. Students are acknowledged for displaying appropriate behaviours using the PBL framework through weekly PBL awards.

To support the transition of students entering and exiting the school, staff developed information transition packs, to ensure that relevant information is provided to staff at key transition times.

The digital platform of Seesaw was used successfully for home schooling during COVID-19. This communication system provided opportunities for students to engage with learning activities set by their teachers and for parents/carers to support the learning of their child during this period of time, in addition to maintaining communication with their child's teacher.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: All members of the learning community participate in collaborative practices to ensure consistent implementation and evaluation of the school's PBL framework.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Positive Behaviour for Learning has been implemented across the school, with a Staff Handout created to ensure that all visitors and casual staff to the school are aware of the school rules and the positive language that is to be used when communicating with students. This includes information on supports for students with a range of disabilities, including a 3D Marlee mascot and 3D stars for students with vision impairments to ensure that they have access to the acknowledgement system.</p> <p>The implementation of the acknowledgement system, rewarding students for being Safe, Respectful Learners, has had a positive impact on student behaviour. This is evidenced by students receiving PBL awards (Marlee Awards) as well as class awards for improved behaviour.</p> <p>All staff are using the coloured stars on individual student award charts in the classroom to acknowledge and document positive behaviour. Behaviour on</p>	<p>Behaviour notification slip</p> <p>Velcro stars for each PBL rule (yellow, orange and green) for merit system</p> <p>Graphs displaying on student behaviours based on settings</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

the playground is communicated to classroom teachers who are then responsible for supporting students to place a star on their chart. Once 10 stars have been collected, across any expectations, the student receives a Marlee award. These are then acknowledged by staff during the weekly wellbeing meeting.

Staff have continued to complete behaviour notification slips to collect data on students' behaviours. Evaluating and making adjustments to enable students to participate in the playground has seen a significant reduction in the variety of inappropriate behaviours displayed in the playground.

Behaviour notification data is collated in a secure Google Doc by school executive. This has not been displayed on the PBL data wall as it was decided to focus primarily on positive behaviours, with students being acknowledged through their Marlee awards and Principal awards on display. PBL Class of the Week is also displayed on the wall, along with the weekly focus for PBL lessons.

PBL lessons are being implemented across the school, with specific PBL focus slides created to supplement class morning circle programs. Term 1 will focus on Be Safe, Term 2 is Be Respectful, Term 3 is Be a Learner and Term 4 is a consolidation of all PBL rules and expectations. Matrices for expectations across different areas of the school have been developed and are being updated, including creating a Notebook file to support students transitioning across the school.

Process 2: Establishment of a school transition coordinator to develop and implement a transition tool-kit and facilitate and make connections with pre and post school settings.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>The transition team created two transition packs to support students to seamlessly transition into their prerequisite placements. The pre-transition pack supports children to transition into Lucas Gardens School and the post-transition pack support students to transition into their preferred facility service placement in their local community on completion of high school. The transition packs include detailed information to support teachers of the planning and procedures that include flowcharts, checklists, orientation and handover documents, PowerPoint presentations to inform parents and carers and social story booklets to support the students' understanding of expectations. The transition packs also include, Department of Education mandatory information booklets and pamphlets. All the documentation was collaborated with the team to design, create and complete two comprehensive transition packs to support teachers, to inform and prepare parents, carers and students of the expectations into school and beyond school.</p>	<p>Completed pre-transition pack Completed post-transition pack</p>

Process 3: The consistent use of a high-tech form of communication with parents/carers by all teachers, in line with established guidelines and through continual professional development.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Seesaw was a very effective way to communicate with parents/carers and as a way to engage students in learning tasks when they were learning from home during COVID-19 restrictions. After students returned to school, some teachers continued to use it for students to complete activities in class, and some teachers continued using it as a form of communication with parents/carers.</p>	

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	<p>One temporary engagement established for QTSS one day a week for each executive to have half a day off class to support teachers.</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS) (\$16 007.00) 	<p>Staff received shoulder to shoulder support in curriculum delivery, Personalised learning and support plans and in class team teaching which resulted in staff capacity building and high impact professional learning.</p>
Socio-economic background	<p>Additional teacher and SLSO to replace staff</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic background (\$4 051.00) 	<p>Students participated in the Opera House artist in residence program however it was cancelled mid term due to Covid 19</p> <p>This subsidised program enabled the training of nominated staff members providing them with skills and knowledge</p> <p>Families were thankful of uniforms provided to them at no cost.</p>
LINK		<p>Our records show no LINK money was provided in 2020</p>
SAP	<p>Additional SLSO employed to support in the orientation stage and during the first 4 weeks of 2021</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAP (\$2 704.00) 	<p>Students transitioned into their educational setting smoothly with minimal anxiety and melt downs</p>
SSP supplementary funding	<p>5 days classroom teacher</p> <p>1 additional SLSO X5 days to support behaviour</p> <p>1 additional SLSO x5 days to support health care procedures</p> <p>Funding Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSP supplementary funding (\$254 110.00) 	<p>Pre-skills in literacy and numeracy developed and implemented in line with the progressions This was further shared with other school .</p> <p>Successfully implementation of the MOVE philosophy across all classes</p> <p>Decrease in behaviour incidences</p> <p>Staff unskilled in managing medical concerns supported by the additional SLSO</p> <p>Successful collaborative planning days whereby all staff shared skills and knowledge when supporting students learning needs.</p>

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Boys	18	18	22	29
Girls	16	23	24	25

Lucas Gardens School provides educational programs for students with high to moderate support needs aged four to eighteen years of age. Curriculum, instructional and environmental adjustments are made to support students' unique learning needs. All students are provided with a personalised learning and support plan to address their specific needs. Primary students access the NSW Education Standards Authority -Key learning Areas Syllabus and Secondary students access the Life Skills syllabus. In 2020 the school enrolled 54 students across nine classes K-12.

NSW student attendance data in 2020 is not comparable to previous 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. 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.

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.

Post school destinations

Two students received their Higher School Certificate (Life Skills) and secured places in community participation programs in 2021. Due to COVID 19 pandemic the transition into their programs were limited.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification

During 2020, two students received their Higher School Certificate Life Skills and transitioned successfully to post school settings. All students remain at school until year 12.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	3
Classroom Teacher(s)	6.95
Teacher Librarian	0.4
School Administration and Support Staff	11.92

*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 2020, 3.7% of the Department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People.

Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2020 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.30%	6.30%
Teachers	3.30%	2.80%

Note 1 - The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014-17 introduced an aspirational target of 1.8% by 2021 for each of the sector's salary bands. If the aspirational target of 1.8% is achieved in salary bands not currently at or above 1.8%, the cumulative representation of Aboriginal employees in the sector is expected to reach 3.3%.

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.

In 2020, an additional School Development Day was included at the start of Term 2 to assist school leaders, teachers and support staff to focus on the wellbeing of students and continuity of education, such as online and remote learning.

All teaching, learning support officers and administration staff participated in a range of professional learning opportunities in 2020 funded by the Department of Education and school funds. Monies spent aligned with the school plan and professional learning goals.

Professional learning activities throughout the year included:

mandatory and compliance training- online via zoom

health care procedures online

Literacy and Numeracy progressions

unpacking the "What works best" document

Lyn Sharrett's work as outlined in her book "Clarity"

up skilling staff with technology due to learning from home

unpacking the four components of the School Excellence cycle.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2020 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	902,793
Revenue	3,233,310
Appropriation	2,958,310
Sale of Goods and Services	2,546
Grants and contributions	268,834
Investment income	3,619
Expenses	-3,339,089
Employee related	-2,820,644
Operating expenses	-518,445
Surplus / deficit for the year	-105,779
Closing Balance	797,013

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

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

	2020 Approved SBA (\$)
Targeted Total	17,292
Equity Total	20,701
Equity - Aboriginal	0
Equity - Socio-economic	4,366
Equity - Language	16,335
Equity - Disability	0
Base Total	2,424,834
Base - Per Capita	25,744
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	2,399,091
Other Total	381,432
Grand Total	2,844,259

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

During 2020, we sought feedback from the school community on aspects of school life that they consider we do well at Lucas Gardens School and areas that they thought we could focus on to drive our 2021-2024 Strategic Improvement plan :

Parent/carer / staff surveys and feedback indicate the following areas as perceived areas of strength within the school:

- strong teaching and learning focus
- catering for individual learning needs and making adjustments to support learning
- collaboration amongst staff including executive support to support student achievements
- school has excellent resources
- communication through newsletters
- strong communication between home and school
- high expectations across the school
- professionalism of staff
- facilitating external NDIS providers on site
- promoting student well being
- school is responsive to parent feedback
- literacy and numeracy programs across the school
- innovative robotics program

Focus area to drive our 2021-2024 strategic improvement plan

more hydrotherapy

- use of technology - more use of Seesaw
- information to support students and families as students become teenagers and coping with physical and emotional changes - a more comprehensive approach needed including parent/carer and external expert involvement where possible
- more opportunities for sporting activities
- a scope and sequence in the delivery of PDHPE
- community access programs
- more music programs
- increasing student independence
- further implementation around the Zones of Regulation to support all students to be able to use tools and strategies to avoid disengagement and promote readiness to learn
- transitioning from primary to secondary students would benefit from a structured program to support them in understanding their body and the physical and emotional changes that they go through at different stages of development.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal Education Policy

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.

All students continued to extend their knowledge of Aboriginal history and culture through experiences provided in the teaching and learning programs across the curriculum. The school recognises important annual events such as the anniversary of National Reconciliation and NAIDOC Week. With the support of the Canada Bay council and school's P&C the school established a Yarning circle to further enhance the student's understanding of the Aboriginal culture. This was further enriched by the visit of Aunty Coral who provided the school with additional information .

Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. Principals are responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. All schools have an Anti-Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers address the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. Principals are 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.

At Lucas Gardens School 62% of students have a language background other than English. Multicultural themed books were purchased for classroom teachers to use during teaching and learning sessions to support these students.

We celebrated Harmony Day as a whole school event which included music, art and craft activities, sports and students dressed in orange or traditional clothing.