

# The Ponds School Annual School Report 2013



The Ponds School  
*Believe Learn Achieve*

## School context

The Ponds School has doubled in size since 2012 (enrolment 50 students) an additional four classes were established at the start of 2013. All students have a moderate or severe intellectual disability. Many of the students have complex needs, arising from their additional disabilities including autism, physical and/or sensory disabilities (vision or hearing impairments).

The school is currently situated on a temporary site on the grounds of Riverstone High School and has 8 classes of Kindergarten to Year 3 aged students. The school will increase by another four classes in 2014 and is expected to move to its permanent purpose built school site in the suburb of The Ponds for the commencement of the 2015 school year.

## Principal's message

The Ponds SSP is committed to ensuring students learn in a dynamic environment where their individual needs are met.

We provide systematic and structured opportunities for students to work towards achieving their person centered planning goal. This goal is developed in collaboration with key stakeholders. All students work towards achieving indicators and outcomes in all Key Learning Areas from the NSW syllabus. All our teachers are experienced in differentiating the curriculum to suit students' individual learning needs.

The Ponds School is committed to providing 21<sup>st</sup> century learning opportunities and trialing programs that best meet it's students' abilities and needs. Examples of these programs include 4Blocks approach to literacy, Mobility Options Via Education (MOVE), Hanan and the use of appropriate and accessible technology.

We pride ourselves on a very invitational, productive, innovative and inclusive partnership with our school community.

2013 has seen an increase in the number of students and staff. Clay Starr successfully gained the position of Assistant Principal through merit selection. We also had two teachers and a SLSO gain positions through merit selection. A graduate recruit from the Special Education course was appointed and three SLSOs gained positions through the transfer process.

The whole school community combined to develop and design the school logo and motto. We are all very proud of the outcome.

Parent participation at monthly Parent Information meetings increased in the second half of the year.

Fundraising was at fever pitch with the goal of fundraising for a Variety Sunshine Coach coming to fruition late in the year.

Transition to school for our 2014 students was held in November and December and was highly successful.

Four additional demountables were sited during second semester for our 2014 intake.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

**Leonie Donaldson**

## School Fundraising Team

The Ponds School fundraising team had a highly successful year. With the increased enrolment and more parents keen to be involved in fundraising the aim for the year was to raise enough money to gain a Variety Club Sunshine coach/bus.

The fundraising team continued on from 2012 and gained more interested and enthusiastic parents. During the year the fundraising team held an Easter Raffle, a Mother's Day Raffle, a Bunnings BBQ, a Father's Day Stall and a Family Fun Night which included a Hamper Raffle. The parents and staff assisted with the Riverstone Lions Club BBQ at The Ponds Autumn Festival and the profits were donated to the school. The culmination of the fundraising efforts was the Bus The Night for Kids that was held at the Riverstone Schofields Memorial Club. Over one hundred and fifty tickets were sold. The night consisted of a live auction, silent auction, lucky door prizes, pick a balloon, a treasure chest, a major raffle and a celebrity performer. Many companies made generous donations which we are very grateful for. Over fifteen thousand dollars was raised on the night. Two companies became the corporate sponsors for our bus, Colquhouns and Laminex.

By the end of 2013 the fundraising team raised in total over \$50 000 and with the assistance of the Variety Club was able to order a Variety Club bus. The Ponds School first school bus will be delivered early 2014.

We are hoping that in 2014 a charity and/or a P&C will be formed.

During the year several parent information meetings were held. The most well attended were on the topics of sleep and behaviour.

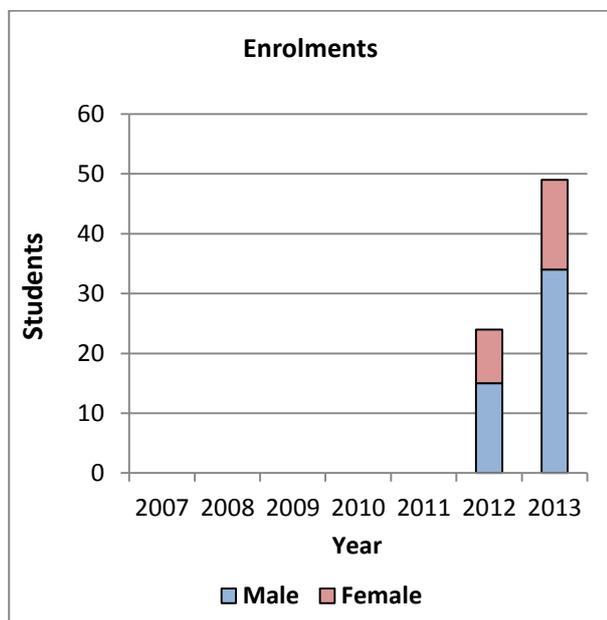
Parents also assisted at the school in the library and the administration area. Parents accompanied their children to numerous excursions and/or community access venues throughout the year.

### The Fundraising Team

### Student information

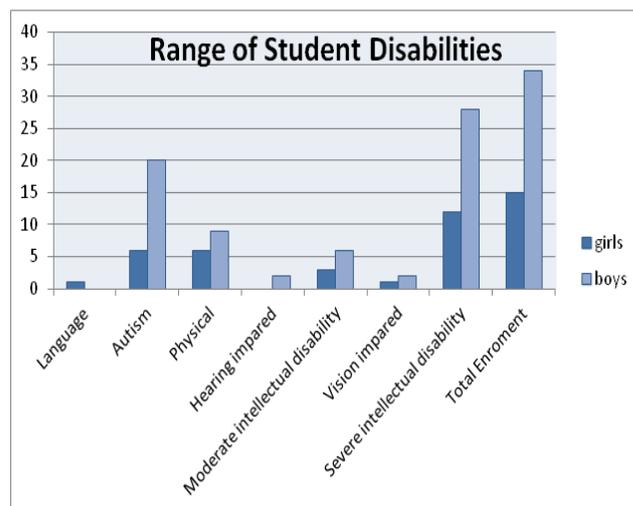
It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

### Student enrolment profile



### Student attendance profile

Student attendance continues to be high at 89%. Some contributing factors include; a larger number of students, students with complex medical conditions and a number of students taking extended leave to visit relatives overseas.



### Management of non-attendance

The school follows DEC and school procedures and seeks advice from parents regarding absences. The Home School Liaison officer (HSLO) is consulted on a regular basis.

### Workforce information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Additional staffing for 2013 included four School Learning Support Officers, three Classroom Teachers and an Assistant Principal. These positions were gained through a combination of merit selection, graduate recruitment and transfer.

All new staff came with a range of previous experience, appropriate skills and knowledge in educating students with disabilities and high support needs.

The number of staff will increase for the 2014 and 2015 school years. Staffing policies and procedures will be followed.

### Workforce composition

Position	Number
Principal	1.0
Assistant Principal(s)	2.0
Classroom Teacher(s)	6.0
Teacher Librarian	0.2
Student Support RFF	0.672
School Administrative & Support Staff	9.872
Total	19.844

The Ponds School has a very small Aboriginal student cohort. As yet the school does not have any Aboriginal staff.

## Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100%
Postgraduate	58%
NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation	35%

## Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Date of financial summary	30/11/2013
<b>Income</b>	\$
Balance brought forward	143337.81
Global funds	133747.05
Tied funds	123987.31
School & community sources	28629.47
Interest	5229.03
Trust receipts	58394.62
Canteen	0.00
Total income	493325.29
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	28235.66
Excursions	4926.00
Extracurricular dissections	19542.40
Library	2451.58
Training & development	2325.19
Tied funds	152882.59
Casual relief teachers	33321.43
Administration & office	25509.87
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	16788.98
Maintenance	12820.85
Trust accounts	24768.83
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	323573.38
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	169751.91

A full copy of the school's 2013 financial statement and further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

## School performance 2013

### Achievements

#### Academic

High expectations of all students is common place at The Ponds School. All staff are

committed to providing extensive access to targeted and well planned learning opportunities for a range of students with diverse and often complex learning needs. Each student has an Individualised Education Program (IEP), developed in collaboration with families and therapists, which works towards the achievement of person centred goals and outcomes from the K-6 Syllabus. During Term 3 an Amazing Achievers Award was introduced to be awarded to those students that have achieved their person centered goal. Parents were informed of their child's achievements and they were invited to attend assembly. These students were presented with an Amazing Achievers Award Ribbon during assembly. 14% of students gained an Amazing Achiever Award during the second half of 2013.

All students have an individual Literacy and Numeracy program as a result of their participation in both formal and informal assessments. The identified outcomes and critical skills from these programs, together with the K – 6 Syllabus, shape the class program and facilitate relevant and meaningful learning across all Key Learning Areas. 4% of students were achieving outcomes from the English and Mathematics Syllabus at stage level.

Achievement can be assessed in many ways. At The Ponds School we aim to use assessments that are appropriate to our students' stage and areas of development.

All Kindergarten students were assessed using the Best Start assessment. Supplementary resources were used to design individual literacy plans.

In 2013 no students were eligible for the NAPLAN tests, Record of Student Attainment (RoSA) or the Higher School Certificate (HSC).

Our Celebration Assembly formally recognizes students who have made great progress and gained skills in Key Learning Areas and significant programs. The recipients of these awards are:

English -Mace Feiloivao

Mathematics – Christian Touma

Human Society and It's Environments (HSIE)/Science – Shakira White

Creative Arts – Marinel Bagus

Physical Development Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) – Jacob Lavender

Technology – Vinny Villiam

Hydrotherapy – Karmonjot Singh

Positive Behaviour for Learning - Zain Chadhar

Community Spirit - Lachlan Lincoln

Premiers Sporting Challenge – Miata Jibba and James Panoncillo

Communication Award – James Di Salvia

Principals Award – Neil Ambardar

## Other achievements

## Significant programs and initiatives

### Aboriginal education



The Ponds School celebrated NAIDOC Day in 2013, with a celebration involving a number of activities for students, staff, family and friends.

NAIDOC Day turned out to be a great success with the students and families rotating around stations to gain an insight of indigenous life with dream time stories, artwork using Aboriginal designs and bush tucker.

Students created a commemorative artwork as part of celebrations on the day by each student placing a handprint in paint on a canvas.

### Multicultural education

The Ponds School embeds the Multicultural and Anti-racism policy in all aspects of teaching and learning

In 2013 the school focused on building social capital through cultural awareness and cultural exchange to tap into the 48 % of families from non English speaking backgrounds that makes up our school community.

This was completed by:

- Consultation with parents for school planning and development of their child's individual education plans.
- The use of interpreters and notes in languages other than English.
- Ensuring quality inclusion of multicultural and anti-racism perspectives in school curriculum programs and school initiatives.
- Teaching programs that promote intercultural understanding.

The school has an active Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO).

### Transition to School

As a newly established school it is important to parents and staff that our students feel safe and happy in our learning environment. One way to ensure this is to encourage our new students to attend our Transition to School program which is run for a short session one day a week for four weeks at the end of the year.



During this time the new students interact with staff in the playground with activities that have been set up, then move on to participate in our Four Blocks Program which involves listening to a story and comment using a switch, symbols or

verbal answer on the purpose of the book. Students then move outside to have morning tea and complete art work relating to the story. We found this program to be very successful for students to get to know staff and our school. It has also helped staff establish the classes for the following year and enabled the transition to be smooth.

## School Programs

### Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA)

The Visual Arts program at The Ponds School during 2014 offered students an opportunity to experience a range of art making processes and mediums. Students began in Term 1 exploring colour and colour theory through mixing colour in a range of mediums including, water, shaving cream, paint and salt dough. Students created a variety of painting and mixed media artworks along this theme.

During Term 2 students, took part in a unit of work where they learnt about self-portraits. Students produced a number of artworks based on well-known artists' work such as Warhol, Miro and Picasso. Term 3 involved an extension to the unit on self-portraiture. Students created artworks on canvas relating to experiences or things they enjoyed such as dancing, feeding ducks, riding on the bus and favourite book characters. Students also commenced a unit on sculpture which continued throughout Term 4. As part of the unit on sculpture students explored a number of processes such as papier mache, assembly and construction. Some of the finished pieces are on display for students, staff and visitors to enjoy.



Student's artwork was displayed at Castle Towers Shopping Centre during Education Week, at the "Bus the Night for the Kids" fundraiser where selected artworks on canvas were also auctioned off as part of fundraising efforts and the end of year Family Fun Night.

Throughout Terms 3 & 4 The Ponds School was very lucky to obtain the services of Peter McDonald, Music Therapist training with The Nordoff Robbins Institute. Peter was able to work within all of our classes and also spend some time working individually with students. Many of our students are engaged by music and Peter was able to utilise this engagement to provide meaningful learning experiences for all. Our classroom teachers also utilised Peter's knowledge of music to adapt lessons where possible to incorporate music. Overall the experience was very positive for the students and we hope to continue with a Music Therapy program next year.

2013 saw the introduction of a dance program called Dance2BeFit to The Ponds School. This program has been used to provide extra support to classroom teachers in the area of dancing. A qualified dance instructor from the organisation attends the school each week and works with all the classes across the school. The students are taught some basic choreographed dance routines by the instructor and are provided with support to complete the routines. The Dance2BeFit lessons have been a real hit with all the students and is a program that we look forward to continuing in 2014.

### Special events

The Ponds School hosted various events this year to raise money for charity, our school bus and also to welcome the community into our school grounds. Our school celebrated Education Week by displaying art work at Castle Towers and having an open day at the school. Crazy Hair Day involved our students and staff raising money for cancer research by styling/colouring our hair whilst one of our staff members shaved her head to support the cause.



Throughout the year parents, family members and carers are welcomed into the school for special events such as Grandparents Day, Mother's Day, Family Fun Day and our big event which is Family Fun Night. This involves the students creating art works and baking food items to sell at stalls. We also had a jumping castle, sausage sizzle and a raffle to raise funds for our bus. Our students performed at the beginning of the night and then spent the evening enjoying the festivities with their parents.



### Integration

The integration program went ahead again this year following its success in 2012. One student from The Ponds School attended a session a week at Riverstone Primary School into the kindergarten class. During this session he enjoyed Mathematics and English lessons as well as learning social skills from the kindergarten students. Our student even attended an excursion to the farm with his fellow Riverstone Primary students. This all occurred with the support of a school learning support officer who

assisted him with walking to the school and throughout the daily activities.

### Community Access

During 2013 100% of students participated in Community Access. This was achieved by catering the community access to student needs. Students with High Support Needs attended Hydrotherapy and accessible playgrounds. 50% of students participated in an 8 week special needs gym program to C2K at Castle Hill RSL. Three classes participated in a road safety program which included walking in the local community. Sixteen students participated in an intensive learn to swim program at Riverstone pool. All students improved their water safety skills and 50% students improved their swimming ability. One class visited Nurragingy Reserve or Bernie Mullane on a weekly basis to learn to play on the playground equipment and use the water play equipment.



### Volunteers, visitors, practicum and work experience students

Continuing on from a great start in 2012, 2013 has been a busy year in regards to volunteers, visitors, practicum and work experience students.

The Ponds School is very fortunate to have a range of very willing and highly motivated parent and community volunteers that assist in classrooms, the library and administration areas. This support is very much appreciated by students and staff alike.

Throughout the year, some very motivated volunteers have become casual school learning support officers.

A partnership was formed with Riverstone High School Student Representative Council Members (SRC) to participate in peer tutoring on a weekly basis at our school. The High School students participated in an orientation program and were placed in specific classrooms. This program was mutually beneficial and is planned to continue in 2014.

The Ponds School has entered into an agreement with the University of Western Sydney Department of Medicine to host medical students for a two week pediatric rotation. The medical students spend time with several classes. Parents are given the opportunity to give permission to a medical student to complete a case study of their child. This program is sure to enhance future doctors knowledge of children with disabilities.

Several Independent high school students have volunteered their time to assist students in classrooms, cover books and produce resources. All volunteering is greatly appreciated.

The Ponds School staff have been mentors to a number of teachers and School Learning Support Officers in training during their practicum sessions. A team of teachers from Queanbeyan PS support unit visited our school for a day to learn more about students with high support needs. These opportunities for staff in training have led to very positive feedback.

## National partnerships and significant Commonwealth initiatives

### (ESES): Building Learning Partnerships through Collaborative Pathways

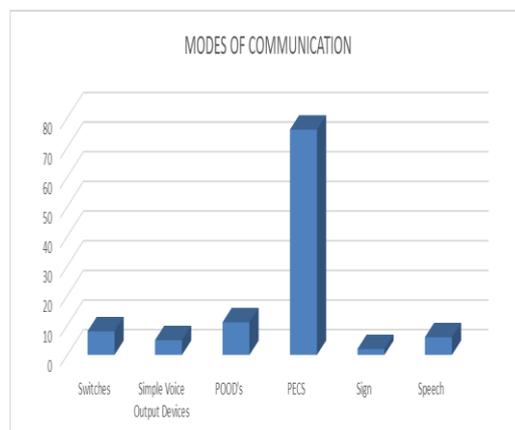
To increase student engagement and learning through the implementation of individual comprehensive communication systems and appropriate technology.

#### Outcomes from 2012–2014

- For all students to have a comprehensive communication system which enables autonomous communication across environments.
- For all students to access a range of appropriate technology to provide access to curriculum, facilitate differentiation and support student learning .

- Increased engagement of students within meaningful learning opportunities across the curriculum.
- Increased generalisation of skills across school, home and the community.

#### Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013

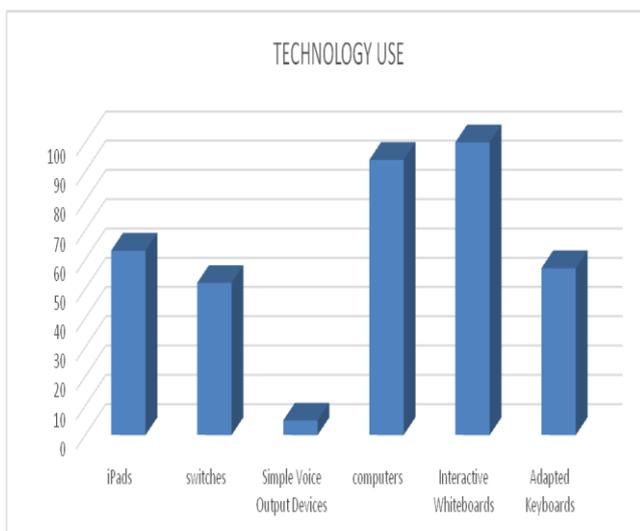
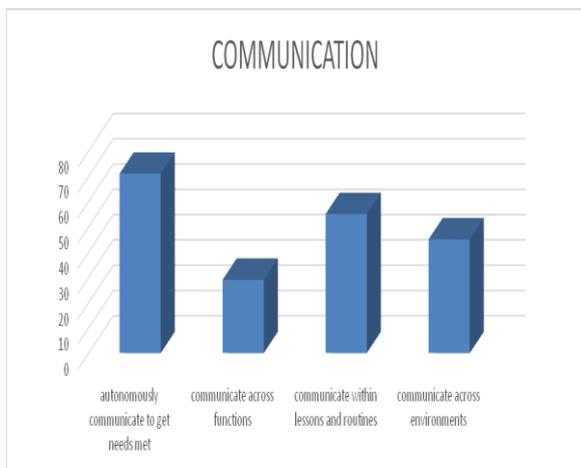


During 2013, a total of 6 classes were involved in the project. At the conclusion of the year, a survey was completed by all teachers, school learning support officers and therapists involved, aimed at collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Survey results were verified through observation of students within programs.

Perceptions regarding the benefits of therapy being delivered within the classroom through the team teaching model included:

- an increased awareness of and ability to implement new strategies and methods for supporting a diverse range of learners within the classroom;
- belief that additional support was beneficial for teaching new skills during the acquisition stages of learning;
- an improved ability to assess and write goals for increasing communication competence;
- an improved ability to support the learning of students with sensory processing needs and anxiety within the classroom;
- spending the whole day with a class was not always the most efficient use of therapists time due to curriculum demands, special programs etc.; and

- the identification of the need to look more flexibly at supporting parents to develop the necessary skills in supporting their child's communication and behaviour with the home.



Analysis of survey results indicated:

- a wide variety of communication systems being used with varying results across the school and for individual students from year to year;
- students were communicating with a high level of autonomy, however this was often limited to requesting;
- students using PODD's, sign and speech were able to generalise communication between settings and people;
- students using PODD's and speech were able to communicate across functions;
- students whose parents received training were actively supporting the use of their child's communication system between

settings and assisting with its maintenance; and

- that a wide variety of book specific language was being taught through Guided Reading lessons and changed on a weekly basis. Students were unable to access this language outside of Guided Reading and therefore unable to generalise this outside of the classroom/lesson.

#### Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Partnership continued and refined with the Penrith ADHC team which provides 3 speech pathologists and 3 occupational therapists to the school within a flexible, team teaching model. In 2014 the goals of this program are:
  - to support The Ponds School in developing a consistent School-Wide Comprehensive Communication System to support student's expressive and receptive communication within Literacy lessons, transitions and routines (PODD, sign, iPad and speech);
  - to support teachers in the assessment of emerging and developing Literacy skills; and
  - to support teachers in the identification of alternate access methods for reading and writing.
- The involvement of staff, therapists and families in shared learning opportunities so that all stakeholders have the skills and knowledge to develop, use and maintain students communication systems and technology (e.g. 1 day PODD training, online participation in the Inclusive Learning Technologies Conference 2014).
- Providing training and support to families through modelling behaviour and communication strategies within class programs or via video modelling.
- The implementation of a Mentoring Program 1 day per week which supports teachers through Coaching and Team Teaching Opportunities.

- The use of a case management approach to support families of students with complex needs.
- Building capacity amongst other schools (SSP's and Units) through professional learning opportunities (technology for accessing curriculum) and networking opportunities.
- The inclusion of technology and Literacy resources on the school website.

## School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

### School Priority 1

#### Literacy: Developing the Emergent and Conventional Literacy skills of all students through a whole-school approach to Literacy instruction and assessment.

To improve Literacy Outcomes for students with complex learning and communication needs.

#### Outcomes from 2012–2014

- For all students to demonstrate achievement of individual learning objectives within their yearly report.
- For all students to participate in daily structured Literacy activities within the 4 Blocks model.
- For all staff to increase their skills and confidence in implementing the 4 Blocks Literacy program.

#### Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

During 2013, the 4 Blocks Literacy program was implemented across the school, with all students participating in structured Literacy lessons (including Guided Reading, Writing, Working with Words and Self-selected Reading) on a daily basis. Communication (talking and listening) programs were implemented at an individual level with skills being explicitly taught across curriculum areas and routines on a daily basis. All staff participated in a variety of professional development activities based on the 4 Blocks Literacy program; including workshops, mentoring, team teaching opportunities and participation in the school's 'Watching Others Teach' program.

As part of our school's 2013 evaluation of Literacy, student's Individual Education Program (I.E.P.) and Yearly reports were audited. The results indicated:

- 78% of students I.E.P. goals included Literacy based critical skills;
- 55% of students had a documented Individual Literacy Learning Plan in addition to their class program;
- 45% of students had a Communication Passport which documented their individualised means of communicating across functions;
- 57% of students demonstrated achievement of at least one critical skill within their yearly report;
- 48% of the critical skills achieved were reading skills;
- 37% of the critical skills achieved were writing skills; and
- 15% of the critical skills achieved were communication (talking and listening) skills.



Analysis of results and conclusions:

- Students demonstrated the largest growth in the area of reading. Within this area, a large number of these skills were identified as emergent book handling skills and comprehension skills.
- Many of the critical skills being achieved were explicitly stated and allowed for small incremental growth in Literacy skills to be demonstrated and recorded.

- Some assessment results indicated some possible inconsistencies in assessment amongst teachers.

#### **Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

- For all staff to engage in professional learning in the areas of Consistent Teacher Judgement through professional dialogue within collegial support teams, mentoring and the use of video evidence for joint assessment.
- For all class programs to have clearly documented individual objectives for students which identify the syllabus content being worked towards, the critical skills to be achieved within the unit and the student response required to demonstrate independent achievement. Teachers will be supported through collaborative programming, team teaching opportunities and the introduction of Quality Teaching Rounds.
- For a range of Literacy assessments to be trialled, including Best Start, PLAN, the Bridge, Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI), South Australian Spelling Test and Curriculum-based Assessments.
- For all staff to continue to engage in professional learning opportunities for implementation of the new K-10 syllabus through the 4 Blocks approach. Literacy areas to be targeted include phonemic awareness, phonics, writing and communication. Professional learning formats will include workshops, Action-Based Learning projects, Collegial Programming, Quality Teaching Rounds, joint assessment and evaluation and team teaching.
- A partnership between Sydney University, the University of North Carolina and The Ponds School will explore both evidence-based and research-based practices for teaching Literacy to students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities and students with complex learning and communication needs.

## **School Priority 2**

### **Numeracy**

#### **Outcomes from 2012–2014**

Throughout 2013 all students at The Ponds School actively participated in Numeracy programs that were designed to be specific to their needs. The approach taken was to connect the students learning in Numeracy to their everyday needs. This empowered the students to utilise the knowledge gained on a daily basis.

#### **Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:**

- Each student has been able to show individual growth in Numeracy as evidenced by results in both the half-yearly and yearly reports.
- Quality teaching elements have been incorporated into both class programs and classroom delivery. This has been achieved through whole school professional learning about what constitutes quality teaching in Numeracy. A school wide Watching Others Teach (WOT) program also enabled teachers to see a variety of delivery methods.
- Best practice methods of both teaching and assessing Numeracy have been explored. This has enabled us to look at what programs out there best meet the needs of the students at The Ponds School.

#### **Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

- Continued professional learning on the effective implementation and embedding of the new Maths syllabus and the Numeracy Continuum into quality teaching and learning programs.
- Professional learning in identifying critical skills for teaching and assessing based on the content in the new Mathematics syllabus.
- Whole staff professional learning in exploring the new Mathematics syllabus. Collegiate support meetings to support teachers in effectively embedding the new curriculum and the Numeracy continuum into quality teaching and learning programs.

- Fortnightly Mathematics Committee meetings where staff participate in professional discussion on the content in the new syllabus and collaboratively write critical skills that are specific to the needs of our students.
- A variety of research based **Maths** assessments will be trialled throughout the year, such as Best Start, PLAN and the Mary Brooks bank assessment. Assessments will be chosen based on the needs of the individual learner and the context of our school.
- Implementation of a whole school mathematics assessment to guide future teaching and learning. An assessment that will highlight areas of student strengths and needs across all areas of mathematics ensuring honest reporting to parents.
- Following exploration of the research, development and implementation of a whole school mathematics assessment.



### School Priority 3

## Implement the NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum

### Outcomes from 2012–2014

Raise awareness and understanding of the NSW Syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum. All teachers will access and use the syllabuses to plan for a diverse range of learners.

### Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Raising staff awareness and understanding of the background to the NSW syllabuses for the Australian Curriculum.
- All teachers able to access and use the syllabus format to plan for a diverse range of learners by differentiating the curriculum with knowledge and skills to prepare for programming, teaching, assessing and reporting.
- Coordinating a plan of support for the introduction of the NSW Syllabus when the Australian Curriculum is implemented.
- Embedding Quality Teaching and Learning (QTL) elements in programs and delivery.
- PL logs reflect engagement in Syllabus implementation.
- School policies and action plans for implementation of new syllabuses are evident in Principal Assessment and Review Schedule (PARS) Executive Assessment and Review Schedule (EARS) and Teacher Assessment and Review Schedule (TARS).

### Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Building staff and community awareness of the NSW syllabus for the Australian Curriculum and understanding of the key similarities and differences with current NSW Syllabus
- Participating in curriculum leadership development and multi-modal PL to raise awareness of the changes in relation to special education
- Develop further understanding of the Quality Teacher and Learning (QTL) framework as relevant to the NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum
- Creating and uploading PL activities and evaluations through MyPL@EDU. These

courses will include; The Learner and The New Curriculum, Teaching for the New Curriculum, Your School and The New Syllabuses; English K- 10; Mathematics K-10; Science and Technology K- 10; History K-10; Programming, Teaching and Assessing, Programming Essentials: The ABCDE of Programming Success

- Accessing and engaging in state and regional leadership development modules and materials to support the implementation of the new syllabus
- Facilitate and adapt the e-syllabus format in preparation for implementation
- Update and write school policies to reflect the new syllabus implementation
- Foster collaboration through learning communities and networks.

## School Priority 4

### PDHPE (Personal Development, Health and Physical Education):

#### Developing Fundamental Movement Skills to enhance the health and wellbeing of students.

To increase the time spent participating in physical activity both whilst at school and in the community.

#### Outcomes from 2012–2014

- For all students to participate in the Premieres Sporting Challenge.
- For all students to participate in 2 hours per week of Physical Education / Gross Motor activities.
- For the MOVE (Mobility Opportunities Via Education) program to be implemented across the High Support Classes.
- For all students to have individual PE/Gross Motor goals identified within the class PDHPE program and linked to assessment and reporting.
- For students to increase their participation in physical activities within community settings.
- For students to increase their participation and engagement within the playground and therefore have reduced behaviour referrals.

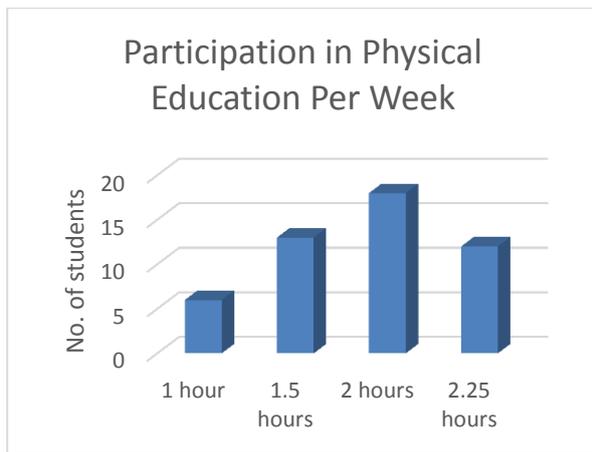


### Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

In 2013, The Ponds School was able to use one above establishment teacher to run a specialised PE program across the school for three days per week, through the implementation of a team teaching model utilizing the strengths and expertise of both the classroom teacher and specialist PE teacher. This program was highly inclusive and catered for the diverse learning needs of all students within the school.

An audit of timetables, PDHPE programs, reports, community access programs and awards provided rich data through which to evaluate the program's success and areas for further development in 2014. Data indicated:

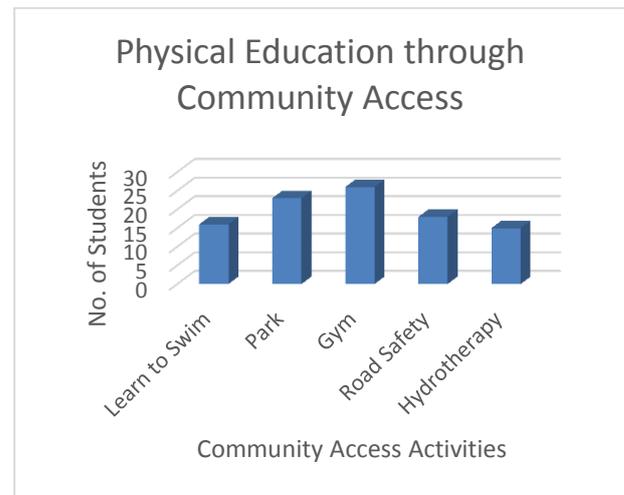
- 100% of students participated in and received a gold certificate for the Premier's Sporting Challenge.
- 100% of students participated in Physical Education activities within community settings.
- 61% of students participated in 2 hours or more of Physical Education per week.
- All 14 students with physical disabilities had MOVE related critical skills identified within their Individual Education Program and/or PE program which were actively taught and embedded across PE programs and routine activities. Six students were formally assessed and tracked using the 'Top Down Motor Milestone Test'.



#### Analysis of data:

- Classes embedding teaching of physical activity across other key programs, such as Play Skills and Road Safety, were able to increase the total time their students spent participating in physical activity.
- Students participated in a variety of physical activities within their weekly programs, including Gross Motor, walking, hydrotherapy and park visits. The variety of physical activity resulted in an increase in the amount of time students spent participating in Physical Education programs and also assisted with generalisation of skills between settings.
- By using a variety of community venues, students were able to participate in a range of physical activities that generalised skills from their weekly Gross Motor programs to a community setting.
- Staff training was a barrier to all students being formally assessed and entering into the MOVE program. Staff training in this program would also assist in achieving consistent teacher judgement when assessing mobility skills.
- A Fundamental Movement Skill assessment completed twice a year would assist with assessment, tracking and differentiation within class programs for students.
- Further observation within the playground environment is required to determine the level of engagement within physical activities and also to determine which activities students are engaging in and why. This information

would assist staff in increasing the range of appropriate options for students within the playground setting.



#### Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- A 2-day Basic Provider MOVE course will be run with William Rose School, involving all staff working with students with physical disabilities, parents and therapists.
- All students with physical disabilities will be assessed using the 'Top Down Motor Milestone Test'. To improve consistent teacher judgement in assessment, facilitate tracking of student skills and improve differentiation within class PE programs.
- A parent survey will be conducted to identify the physical activities students are currently participating in out of school along with those activities parents wish their child to be included in for the future. This information will allow staff to target the teaching of required Fundamental Movement Skills and provide further Community Access opportunities to allow explicit opportunities for teaching generalisation.
- A Fundamental Movement Skills Assessment tool will be sourced and implemented across students to improve consistent teacher judgement in assessment, facilitate tracking of student skills and improve differentiation within class PE programs.



## Professional learning

At the Ponds School Professional Learning enables us to: continually improve our pedagogy, ensure quality and consistency of practice, assist beginning teachers, build capacity and encourage lifelong learning.

During 2013, staff attended a range of Professional Learning opportunities. Staff attended mandatory training including; Code of Conduct, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Emergency Care, Anaphylaxis, Child Protection and Induction of new staff members (an eight week program).

Staff attended training on the areas in The Ponds School Management plan and relevant programs which included; 4Blocks, Communicating with your School Community, Positive Behaviour for Learning, adobe connect, techy breakys, Blacktown Special Education Network meetings (once a term), Modules to introduce the new curriculum, PDD training, Australasian National Special Education Conference, iPad training, Music therapy, What Makes a Good School?, collaborative planning and programming, MOVE training, alternative and augmentative communication, literacy and numeracy plans and assessment.

As a new Principal I attended the Principal Induction Course, Western Sydney Regional Principals Conference, Blacktown Primary Principal Association meetings, Principal Professional Learning Program and the Blacktown Learning Community network meetings.

Throughout the year all staff took part in a range of professional learning opportunities that enhanced their skills and led to continuous improvement of student outcomes.

SLSO's completed courses relevant to their needs, including; Health Care Procedures and Administration of Prescribed Medication.

## Program evaluations Programming

### Background

- Working towards the implementation of the new syllabus – started with English and Maths
- The Ponds is a newly established school that is looking at evidence based practice, research based practice and action based research.
- The development of programming proformas and checklists appropriate to the needs of the students and teachers.
- During 2013 the teachers trialed collaborative programming.
- Teachers worked through the Professional Learning modules of the implementation of the new syllabus to build skills and knowledge by taking the Special Education strategies and embedding them with the new curriculum.
- Participation in the Principal Professional Learning Program (PPLP) - Differentiation of the Curriculum Project with six Schools for Specific Purposes (SSPs) in the area of Western Sydney.

### Findings and conclusions

- The benefits of collaborative programming include sharing strengths, building capacity, trying to lighten the load, sharing the development of programming and enhancing communication. This all had a positive flow on effect to student reports.
- Ongoing evaluation through collegial dialogue led to programming changes and improvements by ensuring adjustments and accommodations were made to suit individual student needs.
- Student goals became more meaningful and able to be achieved by individual students.
- Collaboratively designed programs, units of work designed using the conceptual method of programming focussed on differentiation for a very diverse range of students' abilities/disabilities.

- Proformas were developed and evaluated for weekly programming and checklists for teachers programs.
- Resource development was found to be extremely time consuming and was found not to build vocabulary. It was concluded that the use of Pragmatic Organisational Dynamic Displays (PODDs) will be trialled to ensure the vocabulary introduced would be consistently available over time.
- The content of the collegial support groups programming is the same but the resources for individual classes is different, in line with what works for particular classes.
- Through the Principal Professional Learning Program (PPLP) Differentiation of the Curriculum Project, The Ponds School has formed links with professor David Evans from Sydney University and Bree Jiminez from Greensborough, North Carolina University USA.

### **Future Directions**

- Programming proformas and checklists need to be streamlined.
- Using a range of evaluation tools that are appropriate to what is being evaluated. for example: Positive Minus and Interesting (PMI), above and below the line and what is important. Investigate and identify issues of time, language being used, evaluation proformas, refining the IEP proforma.
- Recognise the importance of timetabling collegiate support meetings into the Professional Learning schedule.
- Individual literacy goals included within programs rather than in individual literacy and numeracy plans.
- Ongoing partnership with Sydney University and Bree Jiminez from Greensborough, North Carolina University USA.
- Further learning in regards to the new syllabus in SSP settings and looking at across curriculum areas.
- Continue to program collegially for English and Mathematics. Begin to program collegially for Science.
- Developing programming on a weekly basis at the beginning of the year. The programming groups will be bigger in

2014 and students will have a more diverse range of needs.

- Provide a toolbox of resources vital for teachers to be able to program on a weekly basis.

### **New Targets for 2014**

#### **Technology**

**2014 targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- Setting up school wide iPad programs that are based on 'best practice' and linked directly to outcomes from the syllabus.
- Professional learning on effective implementation of iPads to support learning across all areas and specifically in regards to communication.
- Continued professional development in regards to all accessible technology devices and how to use them to provide all students with greater access to the curriculum.
- Development of a support network with the greater community, both parents and within the community of schools, that supports both student learning in the classroom and at home.
- Exploration of B.Y.O.D (Bring Your Own Device).

**Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Purchasing of a Mac Book Pro in order to support the use of the configurator program to manage iPads across the school. Purchasing new iPads in order to create a class set that can be utilised across the school. Volume purchasing to be implemented within the school and wider community to reduce the cost of apps.
- Further development of teaching and learning programs to effectively include and implement iPads and their apps to build on and reinforce student's

knowledge and skills. Ultimately creating 21 century learners.

- Development of programs that are specific to the use of iPads within specific Key Learning Areas. Presentation of these programs to staff within professional learning meetings.
- Use of Spectronics webinars to increase the professional knowledge and skills of staff in all areas of technology.
- Technology team members to use My PL to source appropriate courses on technology.
- Professional learning on AAC devices to be calendared.
- Creation of a community group that is specific to the use of technology and how it can be used to support students with special needs.

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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at:

<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/high-performance/annual-school-reports>

## About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

Leonie Donaldson – Principal

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Clay Starr – Assistant Principal

Renee Andrew – Assistant Principal

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