School plan 2015 – 2017

The Ponds School 5765

Connecting and empowering the school community

Leading innovative, differentiated teaching and learning

Creating highly skilled, confident and resilient leaders

School vision statement

The Ponds School provides quality individualised and meaningful education in a safe and caring environment. The Ponds School supports families, encourages independence and assists students to become valued members of the community now and in the future

School context

The Ponds School was established in 2012 at a temporary site on the grounds of Riverstone High School with 24 students in 4 classes there have been extensive changes

The Ponds School is a newly built School for Specific Purposes located in The Ponds. The school has an enrolment of 99 students ranging from K-6 and will eventually be K-12. All students have a moderate or severe intellectual disability. Many of our students have complex needs such as: autism, challenging behaviours, physical disabilities and health care needs. Each student has an Individual Education Program (IEP) developed in collaboration with families and therapists and other key stakeholders, which works towards the achievement of person centred goals and outcomes from the K-6 syllabus. The Ponds is a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) school and has established a Learning Support and Wellbeing team. All members of staff are committed to the Quality Teaching Framework and work collaboratively to deliver individualised and meaningful education in a safe and caring environment. The Ponds School supports families, encourages independence and assists students to become valued members of the community now and in the future.

Currently, the school is at capacity with 16 classes. At the beginning of 2015 – 9 new staff (4 School Learning Support Officers, 3 teachers, 1 Assistant Principal and 1 Deputy Principal) were appointed. The school staffing will be stable into the future.

Students travel to school from a wide geographical area. Due to the diverse geographical areas that our school community call home, building strong relationships with our school community is a priority. 2016 will be the first year The Ponds School will have High School aged students.
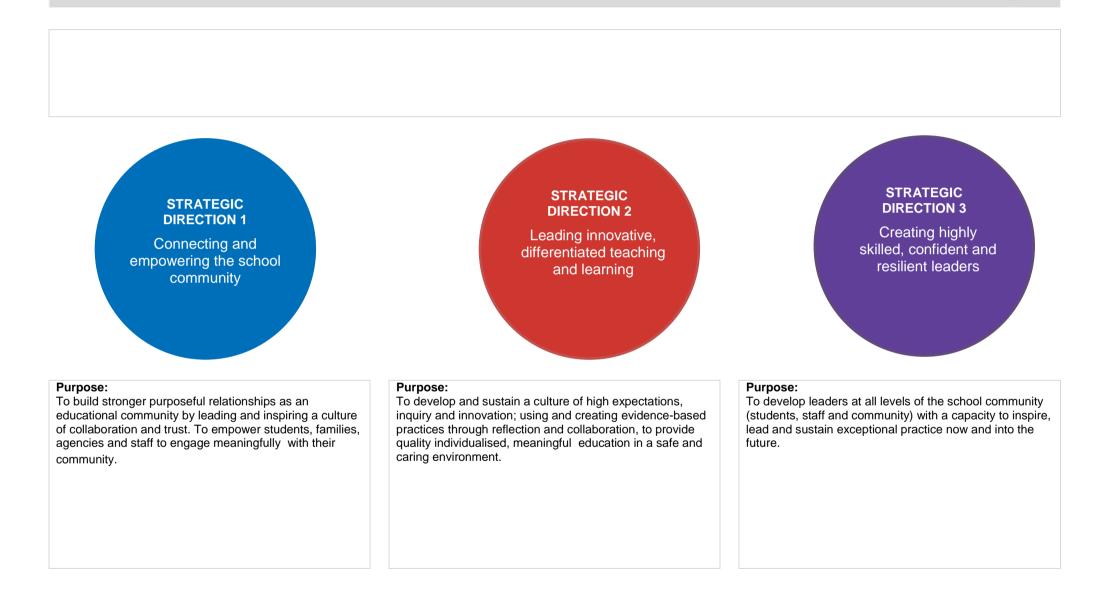
School planning process

A range of planning processes and strategies were implemented which incorporated the whole school community within the School Planning Process. The Ponds School Principal along with Principals from the other five SSP schools in the North West and Western Suburbs of Sydney met with a representative from the DEC High Performance Unit throughout 2014 to discuss the 2015-2017 School Plan and work through the modules.
 The Principals were able to provide feedback in regards to the modules before they were put on the High Performance page. The network held a Professional Learning evening and involved the executive teams from the SSPs. This ensured that the executive from each school had a clear vision of what the new school plan would need to encompass. During term 4, The Ponds School held staff meetings to discuss What's important? Where are we now? Where do we want to be? We also held a whole school staff meeting and discussed what to keep, remove, change and add.

Two surveys were distributed to all parents at the end of 2014. The first, was seeking information in regards to communication. There was a 69% return rate. The other survey topic was School Evaluation and Planning. This survey had a return rate of 31%. The Ponds School executive chaired a parent focus group and gained data on the following statements:

- Things my child has participated in at school.
- Things I am pleased about.
- Things my child has learnt at school.
- Things I am concerned about.
- What should the school do next?

All information that was gained has been used within the School Plan 2015-2017. Time during the Leadership meetings has been spent developing the school plan and the executive had a School Plan planning day to work through each strategic direction.

Information in regards to the School Plan will be communicated with the whole school community via Newsletters, the school website, the school Facebook page and discussed at staff meetings and Parent Information Meetings.

School strategic directions 2015 - 2017

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1

Connecting and empowering the school community

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2

Leading innovative, differentiated teaching and learning

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3

Creating highly skilled, confident and resilient leaders

Purpose:
To build stronger purposeful relationships as an educational community by leading and inspiring a culture of collaboration and trust. To empower students, families, agencies and staff to engage meaningfully with their community.

Purpose:
To develop and sustain a culture of high expectations, inquiry and innovation; using and creating evidence-based practices through reflection and collaboration, to provide quality individualised, meaningful education in a safe and caring environment.

Purpose:
To develop leaders at all levels of the school community (students, staff and community) with a capacity to inspire, lead and sustain exceptional practice now and into the future.

Strategic Direction 1: Connecting and empowering the school community

Purpose

Why do we need this particular strategic direction and why is it important?

To build stronger purposeful relationships as an educational community by leading and inspiring a culture of collaboration and trust. To empower students, families, agencies and staff to engage meaningfully with their community.

Improvement Measures

- ❖ An increased percentage of all students/ families connected with appropriate services and their community.

- ❖ Entire school staff actively engaged within their professional community.

People

How do we develop the capabilities of our people to bring about transformation?

Students:
Access services appropriate to their needs.
Sustain engagement with agencies.

Staff:
- facilitate a climate of trust and build strong relationships to support the individual needs of families and students.
-be active members of the school based team to actively support this strategic direction.
- provide parents with meaningful information on services within the community.

Parents/Carers:
- engage in management and decision making
- are partners in learning.
Families access their community.

Community Partners:
Making it Happen- for children with disabilities, a school based charity.
Government and non government agencies and universities.
Special Education Principals and Leaders Association (SEPLA)
Blacktown Learning Community
Norwest Community of Schools
Blacktown Special Education Network

Leaders:
Promote the connecting and empowering of the community
Network with agencies
Support the development of trust.
Promote collaboration.

Processes

How do we do it and how will we know?

Investigate and build a relationship with relevant services within our community.
Regular meetings with the school community to provide information.
Building purposeful relationships with the school community by promoting extracurricular activities, special events.
Foster school programs that engage students meaningfully with their community.
Strong open communication.
All staff are actively involved in a school based team.
Ensuring all school teams have a connection with the community.
Staff are able to provide parents with meaningful information about services within the community.
Professional Learning for staff on the IEP process, NDIS, Disability standards and how to foster relationships with families.

Evaluation Plan
Survey staff on their confidence with supporting parents/caregivers.
Measure increase in participation within each students community.
Measure the increase in parent engagement in management and decision making as partners in learning.

Products and Practices

What is achieved and how do we measure?

- ❖ An increased percentage of students/ families connected with appropriate services and their community.
- ❖ Entire school staff actively engaged within their professional community.

Product:
Students and families showing that they trust and are connected with the school community and their wider community through survey results and anecdotal evidence.
Number of families that engage with the school.
Information available to parents regarding appropriate services they can access in the community.
Data base of support agencies.

Product:
Staff aware of a range of services within the community.
Feedback measures to ensure satisfaction levels have increased.

What are our newly embedded practices and how are they integrated and in sync with our purpose?

Practice:
Regular collaborative engagement and trust between all key stakeholders in planning, implementing and reviewing student programs.

Practice:
Staff seek out and develop collaborative relationships within their professional community to improve practice and find services that are appropriate to individual student needs.

Practice:
Programs reflect the skills students require to have active meaningful ongoing engagement within their community.

Strategic Direction 2: Leading innovative, differentiated teaching and learning

Purpose

Why do we need this particular strategic direction and why is it important?

To develop and sustain a culture of high expectations, inquiry and innovation; using and creating evidence-based practices through reflection and collaboration, to provide quality individualised, meaningful education in a safe and caring environment.

Improvement Measures

- ❖ An increased percentage of all students achieving IEP goals.
- ❖ All school staff collaborating to implement meaningful individualised programs.
- ❖ An increased percentage of staff using evidence-based practices.

People

How do we develop the capabilities of our people to bring about transformation?

Students:
Master core subjects.
Think deeply and critically and make relevant connections.

Staff:
-develop the knowledge and skills to differentiate the new curriculum.
-differentiate programs to suit the individual needs of students.
-collaboratively program to develop, implement and evaluate quality programs.
 -develop innovative, quality and meaningful class programs and professional learning plans.

Parents/Carers:
Provided with knowledge to actively engage in the development and planning of IEP goals.
Partners in learning.
Empowered to contribute in meaningful ways.

Community Partners:
Ongoing development of the Individual Education Program (IEP) process.
Involving therapists and key stakeholders within the IEP process.
Creating partnerships and networks to implement the new curriculum

Leaders:
Creating leaders at all levels.
Creating opportunities for team teaching and collaboration.

Processes

How do we do it and how will we know?
Staff are knowledgeable and confident in collaboratively planning, implementing and evaluating using the new curriculum K-6 and 7-12.
Staff use inquiry based learning and innovative practices.
Regular relevant professional learning.
Focus on evidence based practice for numeracy.
Focus on communication and all students having a voice across all settings.
Quality IEP meetings that lead to setting meaningful and achievable goals.
Welfare and wellbeing are a high priority for all.
Sustaining innovation through reflection and continuous collaboration.

Evaluation Plan
Collect data on students achieving IEP goals.
Increased use of evidence based practices by staff.
Evaluate innovative practices.
Measure increase of parent engagement in the development and planning of IEP goals.

Products and Practices

What is achieved and how do we measure?
- ❖ An increased percentage of all students achieving IEP goals
- ❖ All school staff collaborating to implement meaningful individualised programs.
- ❖ An increased percentage of staff using evidence-based practices.

Product:
Policies, processes and procedures on best practice for creating relevant and meaningful IEPs.
Increase parent participation and engagement in the IEP process.
All Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the Performance Development Framework.

Product:
Parent survey on the quality of IEPs, innovation and quality teaching and learning.
Data extracted to show increased number of students achieving IEP goals and/or gaining skills when using evidence based practices.

What are our newly embedded practices and how are they integrated and in sync with our purpose?

Practice:
IEPs reflect the individuality of students' current and future needs.

Practice:
Teacher practice, programs and professional learning illustrating innovation and differentiated teaching and learning.

Practice:
Teachers identify appropriate professional development targets to embed in their performance development plan.

Strategic Direction 3: Creating highly skilled, confident and resilient leaders

Purpose

Why do we need this particular strategic direction and why is it important?

To develop leaders at all levels of the school community (students, staff and community) with a capacity to inspire, lead and sustain exceptional practice now and into the future.

Improvement Measures

- ❖ An increased number of teachers report that they feel more confident, resilient and have gained skills to take on leadership roles and responsibilities.

- ❖ Increased number of teachers gaining accreditation at Highly Accomplished and Lead.

- ❖ An increased percentage of students taking on leadership roles and additional responsibilities.

- ❖ An increased percentage of parents take on advocacy roles for their child.

People

How do we develop the capabilities of our people to bring about transformation?

Students:
- become confident by gaining relevant skills.
- take on leadership roles and responsibilities.

Staff:
-become critical, creative thinkers, lifelong learners, risk takers and evidence seekers.

Parents/Carers
-become critical, creative thinkers, lifelong learners, risk takers and evidence seekers.

Community partners:
Share knowledge and information with school and parents.
Create and maintain support networks

Leaders:
- critical, creative thinkers, lifelong learners, risk takers and evidence seekers.
-empower others using these skills and abilities.

Processes

How do we do it and how will we know?
Teachers volunteer to become part of the critical friend program and self select a critical friend and a project from their professional learning plan goals, concluding with a presentation, product or practice to share.
Staff participate in wellbeing PL.
Mentors assist with the accreditation process.
Collegiate support teams meet weekly and analyse the day to day aspects of teaching and learning, programs, reports, evaluations, assessments and quality teaching rounds.
Staff enrol and participate in regular and relevant professional learning in line with DEC mandatory training, school plan related and in line with the Performance Development Framework.
Ensure effective and continuous school improvement linked to the School Excellence Framework.

Evaluation Plan
Collect data on leadership capabilities, staff strengths and the achievement of staff professional learning goals.
Teachers gain and maintain accreditation.
Parents advocate for their child.
Students advocate for themselves.

Products and Practices

What is achieved and how do we measure?
- ❖ An increased number of teachers report that they feel more confident, resilient and have gained skills to take on leadership roles and responsibilities.
- ❖ Increased number of teachers gaining accreditation at Highly Accomplished and Lead.
- ❖ An increased percentage of students taking on leadership roles and additional responsibilities.
- ❖ An increased percentage of parents take on advocacy roles for their child.

Product:
Teachers Performance Development Plans
Product:
Increased number of teachers working towards accreditation at Highly Accomplished and Lead.
Product:
Parents collaboratively involved as advocates in planning for their child with school and other agencies.
What are our newly embedded practices and how are they integrated and in sync with our purpose?

Practice:
Staff identify and practice in relevant and meaningful professional development to increase skills and become confident leaders.
Practice:
Weekly collegiate support team meetings focus on developing leadership skills at the classroom level and provide opportunities for teams to develop goals for promoting student leadership.