

Sydney Distance Education Primary School Annual Report



2017



4586

Introduction

The Annual Report for the 2017 school year is a fair and accurate account of the operations and achievements of Sydney Distance Education Primary School (SDEPS). It provides a composite account of the progress this school has attained in the last twelve months. The school continues to grow and development with each new challenge it undertakes. The School Excellence Framework demonstrates that this school is operating at a very high standard. The school will continue to seek new opportunities and challenges as it continues its leadership in the distance education sphere.

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School background

School vision statement

To improve on our standing as the most innovative and academic Distance Education Primary School in NSW by carefully reflecting upon everything we do.

To provide unequalled support to our families while studying via distance education.

To provide our students with a comprehensive and complete range of educational experiences within a varied and global focus.

To continuously improve our learning materials, methods of delivery and reporting mechanisms to the benefit of all our families.

To ensure that all students studying via distance education are valued, supported and encouraged to achieve within a flexible, challenging and rewarding learning environment.

School context

Sydney Distance Education Primary School (SDEPS) is a distance education facility catering for K–6 students who are unable to attend their local school due to distance or circumstances. The vast majority of students enrolled at SDEPS are travelling within Australia or overseas. Therefore, the school's mobility rate is extremely high and enrolments generally reach 500 students or more during the year.

SDEPS has a long held reputation for high quality teaching practices and learning resources resulting in outstanding student outcomes including results in national assessments. The school uses innovative technologies to link with its many families throughout the world to provide challenging and engaging learning experiences. It is also a provider of learning resources to its sister distance education schools within the state.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This year, our school undertook self–assessment using the School Excellence Framework. 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.

SDEPS conducted its annual review using the School Excellence Framework tool. In the Learning Domain, the school believes it is excelling overall in: learning culture; wellbeing; and reporting. In curriculum; assessment; and performance measures, the school is sustaining and growing. In the Teaching Domain, the school indicates that it is sustaining and growing in: effective classroom practice; data skills and use; collaborative practice; learning and development; and professional standards. In the Leading Domain, the school is excelling in: educational leadership; school planning, implementation and reporting; school resources and in management practices and processes. Particular emphasis will be directed to the Teaching Domain, especially in the area of data collection and collaborative practices for 2018.

Our self–assessment process will assist the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the teaching and 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/sef–evidence–guide>

Strategic Direction 1

Strategic Direction 1: Teaching and Learning Resources

Purpose

To provide quality, engaging and scaffolded learning materials for all students across the Primary Distance Education Network.

To provide explicit and structured teaching and learning materials for all supervisors.

To provide professional teaching resources that enable teachers to appropriately support students and supervisors, and to assess and report against the outcomes and content points in the NSW curriculum.

Overall summary of progress

- In 2017, 110 units and videos, comprising ES1 and S1 Maths Project content, were written, edited and published.
- Updates and improvements continue for SDEPS resources ES1–S3 across all learning areas.
- Quality feedback continues to be gathered from SDEPS teachers, supervisors and students, as well as Primary DE partner schools, to help improve SDEPS resources.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved student outcomes in Mathematics and other learning areas.• Increased student engagement and attendance.• Improved teacher understanding of the NSW syllabus.• Revision of outcomes addressed in teaching and learning resources.• Development of a new student report template.	<p>SDEPS funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$10 000 miscellaneous, e.g. printing• \$115 000 Assistant Principal position• \$180 000 two teaching positions• \$55 000 SASS position for video editing and DTP• \$25 000 IT administrator support <p>DE Partner school contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20 teaching days from Dubbo SoDE• \$15 000 from Broken Hill/Hay SoTA• \$10 000 from Bourke/Walgett SoTA <p>Equity funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aboriginal background loading (\$2118) <p>Literacy and Numeracy Funding \$5045</p>	<p>Maintenance of Stage 2 and Stage 3 maths units is on-going. Numerous updates were made to existing units across all learning areas to ensure quality was maintained. Feedback continues to be gathered and used to improve and enhance existing units across all learning areas.</p> <p>Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 maths units and videos completed and in use. Early Stage 1 and Stage 1 maths units and videos shared with Primary DE Network schools.</p>

Next Steps

- Editing of Stage 1, Year 2 maths units and videos on-going, to be completed early 2018.
- Maintenance of Early Stage 1, Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3 units across all learning areas to continue in 2018.

Strategic Direction 2

Strategic Direction 2: Technology for Teaching and Learning

Purpose

To provide a simple, interactive digital platform for students, teachers and supervisors to engage in their learning.

To provide online lessons to build student participation and engagement, provide better learning support and improve student outcomes, and to develop peer collaborative skills.

To share professional teaching resources amongst Primary Distance Education (DE) Network schools.

Overall summary of progress

- Trial of new Learning Management System (Google Classroom) to Stage 3 students was successful, based on student, teacher and supervisor feedback. Preparation of Google Classroom repository and staff and student training on track for whole school roll-out in 2018.
- Online lessons continued to be offered to our students on a regular basis. These included one-to-one lessons with a student's teacher, stage lessons where students learnt and sometimes collaborated together, and virtual excursions and lessons run by external providers. Lesson quality was monitored from surveys and training provided to teachers to improve the quality of these lessons. Several virtual excursions were undertaken with external providers, including the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney and the RSPCA, to increase the quality and engagement of online lessons.
- Maintained and added resources to the DE Repository to share among the Primary DE Network.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved engagement of students• Improved technology skills of students• Increase in peer collaboration based on number of collaborative tasks sent, and participation rates in these• Reduction in time taken to provide feedback in the teaching and learning cycle• Increased number of online lessons• Improved quality of live lessons.	<p>SDEPS funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$6909 subscriptions, hardware and technical services• 0.6 Assistant Principal position• 0.2 SASS position (also accounted for in Strategic Direction 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 69% of supervisors responded that their child had attended one or more online lessons in 2017.• 90% indicated these lessons had 'good' or better educational value for the student.• 81% of Stage 3 students used Google Classroom to return their schoolwork.• All school developed mathematics units uploaded and shared on DE Repository.

Next Steps

- Maintain and expand the use of online lessons to foster student collaboration, and student-teacher interaction.
- Support Google Classroom roll-out.
- Explore other Learning Management and Student Information systems.

Strategic Direction 3

Strategic Direction 3: Marketing and Promotion

Purpose

SDEPS provides innovative, quality distance education to students who are residents of NSW.

It is important that all eligible families are aware of SDEPS as an option to meet their learning needs and circumstances.

SDEPS is committed to actively promoting its services to New South Wales schools and communities.

We are constantly looking at ways to better connect, manage and share our achievements, while upholding our excellent reputation and standards.

Overall summary of progress

In 2017 SDEPS continued to provide innovative quality education to many students. The main goal of having a new website has been achieved. There is also a YouTube channel where school videos, school information and promotional videos, such as the school choir and Jump Rope for Heart, are showcased.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased SDEPS enrolment enquiries and student enrolmentsIncreased SDEPS promotional materials produced, and media articles publishedIncreasing student and family memberships and interactions using SDEPS Facebook groups and websiteIncreased marketing and promotions skills developed within SDEPS workforce	<p>SDEPS funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">\$3570 website hosting and updates\$1814 school bags\$576 staff name tags\$350 other promotional equipment/resources0.2 SASS position for maintenance of social media and website	<p>There was an increase in enquiries in Term 1 and Term 2, 2017.</p> <p>Promotional materials such as pens, Keep Cups, bags and folders were given out and teachers have name tags with the school logo.</p> <p>New school website was launched and content was added regularly. SDEPS YouTube channel promoted to students and families via links sent in emails and magazines.</p>

Next Steps

- New brochure to be designed.
- Social media will be monitored for discussions about Distance Education and raise awareness amongst staff of the issues discussed.
- Forums on website to promote school community interaction and more SDEPS videos released.

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal background loading (\$2 118.00) 	A Stage 2 Science unit and Stage 1 Geography and History unit were developed to reflect Aboriginal learning perspectives. Funds used for Strategic Direction 1: Teaching and Learning Resources.
English language proficiency	N/A	N/A
Low level adjustment for disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low level adjustment for disability (\$53 304.00) 	One teacher employed for 2 days per week as an Assistant Principal; involved with assisting teachers in improving students' participation and engagement in learning.
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS) (\$20 197.00) 	Measures were undertaken to improve consistent teacher judgement. A digital system for marking work against syllabus outcomes was created and is now being used for assessment and reporting purposes. Relief was provided for the creation of the system and for the training and ongoing support for users.
Socio-economic background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-economic background (\$8 760.00) 	All school fees are waived for Medical and Support Needs students.
Support for beginning teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for beginning teachers (\$4 063.00) 	Beginning Teachers have a reduced number of students in their classes to enable them to be coached by their Stage Coordinator.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2014	2015	2016	2017
Boys	96	114	139	92
Girls	109	128	151	110

Management of non-attendance

Enrolment guidelines at SDEPS state that enrolled students must be supervised to complete schoolwork, must return work regularly and satisfactorily engage in communication with the school. A student is assessed as in full attendance after a minimum of programmed schoolwork has been completed and received by the teacher. Supervisors are required to complete and return a Weekly Attendance Record and provide an explanation for absences. Supervisors are able to review the SDEPS Attendance and Participation Guidelines for Parents/Supervisors (2017) after enrolment. All aspects of attendance are monitored by teachers, including supervisor communication and student engagement in all areas of the curriculum, including online activities. The regular return of completed schoolwork is marked on a roll. Any concerns regarding attendance are discussed with executive staff. Documentation kept by teachers to indicate communication and engagement is checked twice a term by executive staff.

Non-attendance can be defined as four weeks of poor/nil participation in a student learning program, including poor/nil communication from the student and supervisor to the teacher. It is mandated at SDEPS that teachers pro-actively manage and document a student's attendance, as well as non-attendance. After four weeks, the stage coordinator, learning support team, school executive, principal and/or the School Education Office of the student's originating census school may become involved in the management of a student's non-attendance. Management techniques may include revising the program in consultation with the supervisor, contacting the student's emergency contacts and issuing a series of three warning notices. In consultation with the Learning and Wellbeing Officer, an application can be made to the Home or Aboriginal School Liaison Officer for possible action. Other actions may include notification via the Mandatory Reporting Tree and involvement of agencies such as the Child Wellbeing unit and/or Family and Community Services. Students with whom there is no further communication are listed on the Missing Students Register.

The SDEPS Attendance Policy can be found on the school website: www.sdeps.net

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	2
Head Teacher(s)	0
Classroom Teacher(s)	9.44
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Learning & Support Teacher(s)	0.4
Teacher Librarian	0.4
Teacher of ESL	0
School Counsellor	0
School Administration & Support Staff	4.89
Other Positions	0

*Full Time Equivalent

Teacher qualifications

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

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	100
Postgraduate degree	48

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

In 2017 staff at SDEPS were involved in a range of professional learning opportunities. Mandatory training was completed for Code of Conduct, Child Protection and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation. SDEPS staff completed mandatory training in anaphylaxis, e-emergency care and work health and safety. SDEPS revised all its procedures to ensure all staff meet these mandatory requirements. Some of these procedures, including the Child Protection and Student Wellbeing Policies, are available to view on our new school website.

As the department moves to the accreditation of all teachers by 2018, training in maintaining this accreditation was conducted. Previously only teachers who completed their teaching qualifications in 2004 or later were required to maintain their accreditation. The accreditation makeup of teaching staff at SDEPS is 43.5% are pre-2004 qualified teachers, 39% have achieved proficiency, and 17% teachers are at provisional level (yet to achieve proficiency). Two teachers achieved their proficiency accreditation in 2017.

As part of maintaining accreditation, all accredited teachers are required to attain 100 hours of professional development over a set time period to ensure teachers' knowledge and skills stay up to date. Some of the professional development courses SDEPS staff attended this year include: 'Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders', 'School Planning', 'ASPIRE leadership courses', 'Road Safety Education: Safer behaviours through PDHPE K-6' and 'MAPA – Managing Actual and Potential Aggression'. Total school expenditure on professional learning for teaching and non-teaching staff was \$4175.

School development days were conducted throughout the year. Some highlights from these included creating video scripts for SDEPS developed mathematics units, using 'Growth Mindset' methods to give feedback, and developing our school plan for 2018-2020.

Financial information (for schools fully deployed to SAP/SALM)

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

	2017 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	372,582
Revenue	2,831,282
Appropriation	2,788,558
Sale of Goods and Services	22,659
Grants and Contributions	14,620
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	5,445
Expenses	-2,638,413
Recurrent Expenses	-2,638,413
Employee Related	-2,546,757
Operating Expenses	-91,656
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	192,868
Balance Carried Forward	565,450

Financial summary equity funding

The equity funding data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

	2017 Actual (\$)
Base Total	381,489
Base Per Capita	38,359
Base Location	0
Other Base	343,130
Equity Total	64,183
Equity Aboriginal	2,118
Equity Socio economic	8,760
Equity Language	0
Equity Disability	53,304
Targeted Total	0
Other Total	2,777,902
Grand Total	3,223,575

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.

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

School results in Spelling and Grammar & Punctuation reflected the high standard that our students are capable of achieving. In Year 3, 100% of our students were in the top two achievement bands for both Spelling and Grammar & Punctuation. In Year 5, 85% of our students were in the top two achievement bands for Spelling. These results show an improvement on 2016. Full results can be found on the My School website.

In Numeracy our students once again demonstrated excellent results. In Year 3, 77% of our students were in the top two achievement bands. In Year 5, 76% of our students were in the top two achievement bands. Overall, these results were better than those schools who are statistically similar to our school. Full results can be found on the My School website.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Click on the link <http://www.myschool.edu.au>, insert the school name in 'Find a school' and select GO to access the school

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Our school is committed to seeking the opinions of parents, students and teachers about our school. In 2017, we focused on the way instruction and feedback from teachers to students was provided.

Parent/carer/supervisor satisfaction

The 31 responses from supervisors were overwhelmingly positive about the instruction and feedback received from teachers. 100% of supervisors were satisfied with the engagement and progress of their student. The participation in various online lessons was 61% with all respondents finding the lessons engaging. Time differences presented as the biggest obstacle for joining online lessons. Comments from supervisors showed they valued feedback which provided students with strategies for improvement. Supervisors appreciated the strong support teachers gave to their students.

Student satisfaction

92% of student respondents valued receiving praise in feedback from their teacher. 100% of respondents felt pleased with their progress at SDEPS. 84% of students participating in online lessons enjoyed peer-to-peer interaction.

Teacher satisfaction

98% of teachers participated in one-to-one online lessons with their students. The majority of teachers indicated a desire for more streamlined marking systems to allow for more time to teach.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

SDEPS is situated on Eora Land, belonging to the traditional landowners, the Gadigal clan. In Term 4, teaching staff completed 'Module 3 – Connecting with Aboriginal Communities' run by the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group. During Term 2, the school celebrated NAIDOC Week through a whole school live lesson. Aboriginal perspectives were taught in all Stages and all Learning Areas.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

SDEPS prides itself on embracing all cultures. Our school is strengthened by our students and staff bringing a variety of cultures and nationalities to enhance our school ethos. All teachers have shown that they understand and meet the individual needs of their students and value their varied cultural, linguistic and social characteristics. SDEPS is committed to embedding multicultural education content across all Learning Areas.

Our school does not tolerate any form of racism. We promote tolerance and understanding to maintain school and community harmony. Students and staff participated in Harmony Day activities to foster their respect for all cultures and people. SDEPS has a trained Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) who is available to address any issues of racism that may occur.

Other school programs

SDEPS participated enthusiastically in the 2017 Jump Rope For Heart (JRFH) Challenge. The program was a whole school project to increase the fitness levels and wellbeing of students in the school community. JRFH is an exciting and non-competitive program which encourages children to become more active through skipping, learning new skills and raising funds for the Heart Foundation. The students in the school community raised over \$1770 for the Heart Foundation. The students sent in videos which have been compiled to form the 2017 JRFH video now on the school website and YouTube channel.

28 students completed the Premier's Reading Challenge in 2017, with four students receiving Gold certificates. This challenge encourages students to read a variety of quality literature, and provides the opportunity for students to read more widely.