

2020 Annual Report

Sydney Distance Education Primary School



4586

Introduction

The Annual Report for 2020 is provided to the community of Sydney Distance Education Primary 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.

School contact details

Sydney Distance Education Primary School

1 Collins Street

Surry Hills, 2010

www.syddisted-d.schools.nsw.edu.au

syddisted-d.school@det.nsw.edu.au

9207 6300

School vision

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.

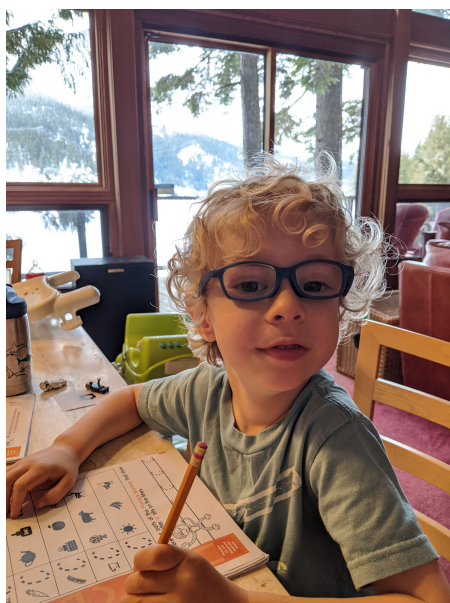
To continuously improve our learning materials, methods of delivery and reporting mechanisms to the benefit of all our families.

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 around Australia and throughout the world to provide challenging and engaging learning experiences. It is also a provider of high quality learning resources to other distance education schools within the state.



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	Excelling
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Excelling
LEARNING: Curriculum	Excelling
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Excelling
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	Excelling
LEADING: Educational leadership	Excelling
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School resources	Excelling
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Excelling

Strategic Direction 1

Teaching and Learning Management Systems

Purpose

To implement management systems that better support SDEPS students academically and administratively.

Improvement Measures

Increase the number of students submitting work and receiving feedback digitally via Canvas as the program gains wider acceptance.

Increase the timeliness of feedback provided to students that will be measured in hours and not days or weeks.

Increase the number of students receiving end-of-semester reports via Sentral with the goal of 100% of students.

Increase the accuracy and consistency of end-of-semester reports as teachers become more familiar with the features of the program.

Increase the number of staff trained and using Canvas and Sentral. It is expected that 100% of staff will be familiar with the basics of these two programs by the end of the year.

Increase the amount of learning materials modified to enable their use in Canvas. It is expected that at least 25% of our materials will be ready to be uploaded to Canvas by the end of the 2018.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Implement and refine the school's Learning Management System, Canvas, to better support students and staff.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
A Sci & Tech Y6 units developed and trialed in term-4. The key findings from the trial were -	0.4 - Technology Learning Facilitator \$3,657.50 (Canvas Subscription for School)

Process 2: Implement and refine the school's Student Information Management System, Sentral, to better support students and staff.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Sentral does not enter data on SAP (at time of trial). There are many modules in school finance that can be trialed and implemented as internal school system.	0.4 Admin support position \$7,255.78 (Sentral subscription)

Process 3: Integrate the school's Learning Management System and Student Information Management System.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
The use of Canvas and Sentral in school during 2018-20 were essential application for student learning and assessment/ reporting with possibility to refine and continue using in 2021 onward including - <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self Assessment Activities• Canvas Course Analytics• Interactive Digital Program• Grade book	Existing

Strategic Direction 2

Collaborative Teaching and Quality Student Learning

Purpose

To enhance student learning and achievement through collaboration between teachers. To provide effective feedback to students across all stages within improved time frames. To ensure consistent teacher judgement across stages and the school. To increase synchronous and asynchronous teaching opportunities for all students.

Improvement Measures

All teachers within stages collaborate to ensure consistent teacher feedback and assessment across their stage and the school.

Use PLAN2 to monitor literacy and numeracy development and identify strategies for improvement once the program has been rolled out to schools.

Increase the number of teaching resources for each stage for use in Canvas.

Decrease the amount of time teachers spend on administrative duties while increasing the amount of time teachers are engaged in teaching.

Maintain and/or improve NAPLAN results in years 3 and 5 over previous year's attainment.

Commence K-6 scope and sequence of English units.

Commence process to backwards-map all English units K-6 to facilitate inclusion of Learning Intentions/ Success Criterion.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Facilitate consistent teacher judgement across all stages and the school through regular stage and whole school meetings.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Across K-6, moderation was regularly conducted by teachers for all summative assessment tasks.</p> <p>The process in Junior School (JS), K-3, was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderation was conducted throughout a weekly basis• Teachers work in year groups with two teachers communicating and discussing students work, behaviour and support needs• Any information discussed was recorded on the Tracker or the communication tab within the trackers <p>In Senior School (SS), 4-6, the process was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moderation was conducted weekly - teachers collaborated to assess student work and establish guidelines for consistent teacher judgement• Teachers collaborated to assess a random sample of student work prior to providing assessment and feedback for summative assessment tasks to students• Teachers collaborated after completing the assessment and feedback process to clarify any 'High' or 'Basic' grades and ensure consistency in judgement• Moderation was documented on student trackers, with teacher initials used to identify where and when more than one teacher collaborated to assess and ensure consistency in judgement <p>The moderation process will continue to be refined into 2021 to ensure</p>	

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

consistent teacher judgement, standardised processes and ease of data collection.

Rubrics continue to be developed for resources, with a move towards digitising rubrics in Canvas into 2021 to help streamline marking for teachers.

Process 2: Implement and refine collaborative teaching in each stage to promote sharing of best practice in programming, assessment and feedback methods.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>The collaborative teaching model has been assessed as successfully implemented K-6 through annual staff surveys. Refinement and iterations on this model will continue year on year, however these adjustments will not significantly change how collaboration works for teaching staff.</p> <p>Due to the success of the collaborative teaching model, the Principal is expanding this model to school administrative staff in order to streamline the support and services they offer to ensure that the school is well situated to achieve new initiatives in support of the upcoming School Improvement Plan 2021-2024.</p>	

Process 3: Reduce the amount of time devoted to written feedback and to increase teacher - student interactions and general collaboration.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Data showing teacher time spent conducting synchronous teaching was collected and collated. Analysis will be done in early 2021 to inform decision making moving into the 2021-2024 SIP, where a focus on gauging student growth during synchronous teaching will be informed by the analysis of 2020 data.</p>	

Process 4: Write K-6 English units that utilise Visible Learning theory to map teaching to syllabus content, facilitate formative feedback and activate students in their learning (2020 onwards).

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Do the new K-6 English units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * explicitly teach students the skills required for summative assessment task (backwards-mapping)? Yes * enable students to receive effective formative feedback (success criteria)? Yes in theory but we will only be able to answer conclusively once the units are in use. * activate students in their learning (co-construction of success criteria)? Yes in theory but we will only be able to answer conclusively once the units are in use. * reduce the reliance for parents to teach the content (explicit teaching/co-construction of success criteria)? Yes in theory but we will only be able to answer conclusively once the units are in use. <p>No new units were programmed in 2020 so an in-depth evaluation of the success of the writing effort is not yet available. The following are further evaluation questions to be answered once the units are in use:</p>	<p>1.0 FTE teaching position as Learning Materials Writer</p> <p>0.4 Higher Duties position as Learning Materials Editor</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

* Did students know what they were learning and how to be successful(learning intention and success criteria)?

* Did students perform adequately in the assessment tasks (explicit teaching/backwards-mapping)?

* Could teachers confidently assess students against syllabus outcomes (success criteria)?

* Did students receive formative feedback from teachers or parents?

* Did parents feel adequately supported in giving formative feedback (co-construction of success criteria)?

All 48 Phonics units had been through final DTP. Four remaining videos filmed and in video editing process. Phonics units ready to be implemented with Kindergarten students from the beginning of Term 1 2021. Feedback and evaluation of units delayed until units have been implemented. Five Phonics information videos edited and ready to be implemented with the units. All units have corresponding sound videos to be used.

Five Year 2 English units written. No units desktop published.

Strategic Direction 3

Wellbeing

Purpose

To provide a supportive, positive and inclusive school environment that reflects a shared understanding and commitment to our core values: behave responsibly; care for others; expect the best; and respect yourself and others. To develop healthy, happy, productive and successful individuals at all levels.

Improvement Measures

Resilience program developed for all stages.

Wellbeing resources purchased / developed for all stages.

Individualised goal-setting and regular reviews for all students.

Extend wellness program to supervisors and school staff.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Develop units and online lessons on topics such as: resilience, tolerance, equity, religion, healthy living, mindfulness meditation, healthy lifestyles.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Whole school, Junior, Senior and one-to-one zooms on Wellbeing topics and Mindfulness Meditations for students were provided. Reflections and feedback from teachers, students and supervisors was collected and collated, to be actioned in 2021.</p> <p>Bounce Back units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7 additional Bounce Back Units completed, 1 for each year level• Learning of strategies for self-awareness and emotional regulation• Provide all 5 elements of the Wellbeing Framework to support student safety, wellbeing and learning outcomes <p>Evaluation of the efficacy and improvements to Bounce Back programs across Whole School is ongoing.</p>	<p>0.8 FTE teaching position as Learning Materials Writer - Term 1, 2020</p>

Process 2: Develop approaches to personalised goal-setting and review measures for all students regardless of abilities or circumstances.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>SDEPS purchased and participated in the ongoing professional development provided: Smiling Mind Education program</p> <p>Bounce Back units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage students and supervisors in measuring student success of learning intentions• Facilitate student goal setting in the social / emotional and wellbeing areas of development <p>• In 2020 there was collaboration with DE Wellbeing Network to share and review how best to support all students</p>	<p>\$1000 - Smiling Minds Wellbeing Program</p>

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 3: Extend wellness program to supervisors and school staff.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<p>Leadership of the NSW DE Wellbeing Network was based at SDEPS. The network leader extended the NSW DE Wellbeing Network, building positive relationships and a place of support for colleagues.. There was collaboration with colleagues at SDEPS and the wider DE Community to present professional development and strategies to support students, supervisors, colleagues and community</p> <p>The network leader initiated the NSW DE Wellbeing magazine to extend wellness program to school staff across all DE centres in NSW. They also implemented Weekly Mindfulness Practices for SDEPS and NSW DE Wellbeing Network</p> <p>There was on-going collaboration with the Learning Support Team and supervisors to best support students and supervisors. This involved working with parents to adjust and modify student learning programs as necessary to accommodate student learning needs in enriching opportunities.</p>	\$5000 DE Wellbeing Network Funding

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	\$2730 Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal background loading (\$2 730.00) 	Teacher provided with release from face to face duties to continue to develop Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
Low level adjustment for disability	\$55561 Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level adjustment for disability (\$55 561.00) 	0.4 Learning and Support Coordinator role funded using the full amount. The purpose of this role was to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate the LST team • Coordinate Student Reviews • Coordinate NCCD at SDEPS
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	\$28121 Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS) (\$28 121.00) 	0.4 FTE Curriculum Writer employed to complete Phonics Program as outlined in SD2
Socio-economic background	\$5408 Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic background (\$5 408.00) 	Funds used to waive school fees for enrolments in specific categories to provide educational resources at no cost.
Support for beginning teachers	No funds provided Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for beginning teachers (\$0.00) 	No evaluation required

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Boys	92	127	97	104
Girls	110	99	80	67

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.



Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Deputy Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	2
Classroom Teacher(s)	11.56
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.4
Teacher Librarian	0.4
School Administration and Support Staff	4.93

*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.

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	940,288
Revenue	2,771,655
Appropriation	2,752,509
Sale of Goods and Services	11,500
Grants and contributions	5,723
Investment income	1,823
Other revenue	100
Expenses	-2,962,377
Employee related	-2,837,214
Operating expenses	-125,163
Surplus / deficit for the year	-190,722
Closing Balance	749,566

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	0
Equity Total	63,699
Equity - Aboriginal	2,730
Equity - Socio-economic	5,408
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	55,561
Base Total	340,438
Base - Per Capita	40,164
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	300,274
Other Total	2,228,670
Grand Total	2,632,807

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.

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.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to myschool.edu.au to access the school data.

2020 NAPLAN

As agreed by the Education Council, the National Assessment Program (or NAPLAN) did not proceed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This was 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.

The Education Council also agreed to defer the full transition to NAPLAN Online from 2021 to 2022 and the continuation of current NAPLAN governance arrangements through 2021.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Parent/caregiver Satisfaction

27 responses were received from the Parent/caregiver Survey, 2020. 100% of responses provided positive feedback of the enrolment process. Of these responses over 75% rated the enrolment process specifically as 'Welcoming', 'Efficient', 'Smooth' and 'Would recommend to others'.

44% of parents/caregivers found out about SDEPS using the internet, 19% through the Department of Education.

When asked how much time each day did their student(s) spend completing school work, 56% of parents/caregivers responded with 3 to 4 hours, with a further 34% responded with between 1 and 3 hours.

82% of parents/caregivers rated that SDEPS was beneficial to their student(s) learning and needs at all times with the remaining 18% of parents/caregivers stating that it was beneficial 'Sometimes'.

93% of parents/caregivers stated that they would 'Definitely' or 'Maybe' access Distance Education again in the future.

Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction surveys were received from students across all year levels. 94% of responses rated their experience at SDEPS as either 'Average', 'Above Average' or 'Exceptional'.

As in previous years, feedback and communication between teachers and students continues to be an area of focus. 100% of responses stated that they either 'Sometimes' or 'Always' understood and found feedback and communication from their teachers helpful.

When asked about the quality of learning materials they were offered, 70% of responses stated that instructions in learning materials were clear and easy to follow with 100% of responses claiming that they were appropriately challenged by the learning material.

When provided with the opportunity to provide personalised feedback in the survey, no one area stood out as requiring attention by SDEPS, however feedback relating to communication and interaction with peers has been highlighted as an area for SDEPS to target in the SIP 2021-2024 in order to help boost student 'Wellbeing'.

Teacher Satisfaction

Overall, feedback from SDEPS teaching and administration staff continue to rate working at the school at a very high level. Over 80% of responses rated that flexibility offered by SDEPS allowed them to do their best work, an important factor in 2020 with the amount of disruptions to day to day life that Covid-19 presented.

From the staff satisfaction survey, a focus on re-defining what it means to have a 'Good Culture' at SDEPS has been highlighted as an area to explore moving forwards. A request for increased opportunities for leadership positions was evident from the survey responses, and moving into 2021 SDEPS has provided 4 additional leadership positions for existing staff across a range of areas including Marketing and Promotions and Professional Development Coordination.

Overall, responses across all areas of the staff satisfaction survey were overwhelmingly positive, however SDEPS continues to consult with staff around ways to further improve across all areas of employment at the school. The leadership team sees consultation and communication with all staff as an essential part of SDEPS on-going 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.

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.

