2024 Annual Report

Castle Hill Public School

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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2024 is provided to the community of Castle Hill Public School as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

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School background

School vision

At Castle Hill Public School, we strive to provide an inclusive and nurturing environment where a culture of high expectations supports our students' learning. We enhance the development of all students with strong focuses on student academic growth, wellbeing and the continual development of teacher capacity. All stakeholders work collaboratively to ensure that each student is known, valued and cared for.

School context

Castle Hill Public School officially opened in 1879 and is located in a vibrant, rapidly developing residential area in Sydney's north west. The increase of infrastructure and re-zoning is changing the nature of the local community. It is expected that student enrolments will increase markedly as new high-rise apartments become occupied.

The school is well supported by an active, diverse and multicultural community. The school has in excess of 80% of students with a Language Background other Than English (LBOTE) with Mandarin, Hindi, Korean, Cantonese, Persian, Urdu and Arabic the languages most highly represented. Five students identify as Aboriginal.

Castle Hill Public School has a tradition of academic excellence with high expectations embracing the whole child and their development through a comprehensive range of learning programs that feature the integration of technology and extra-curricular opportunities such as choirs, bands, dance and sporting groups, robotics classes and leadership programs. The school's expectations of 'respect', 'responsible' and 'aspire' embrace every facet of our students' learning life.

Through our situational analysis, we have identified three areas of focus that make up our Strategic Improvement Plan. This plan builds upon the work done over the life of the previous school plan (2018-2020) with respect to focuses on reading and numeracy and continually improving teacher capacity.

1. Student growth and attainment

Through data analysis, the school has identified a mixture of system-negotiated and school-based targets in the areas of reading and numeracy which aim to build upon the good work completed over recent years. A focus will be on the explicit teaching of reading comprehension strategies to assist our students to engage with texts. Teachers will engage with the evidence base provided by What Works Best: 2020 update. Whole-school processes for collecting and analysing student data will inform our teaching and the embedding of evidence-based strategies will improve the quality of instruction for our students.

2. Connect, Succeed, Thrive

Through data triangulation, it is evident that our implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) Tier 1 universal and classroom systems has been highly effective. Our implementation of Tier 2 systems will empower staff with specific interventions to support students who require more intensive supports. Through our increased focus on student attendance, we will aim to ensure that student absences do not impact on learning outcomes by implementing a range of strategies in working with families where student attendance is a concern.

3. Developing Teacher Capacity and Collaborative Practice

In previous years, our school has shifted the focus on professional learning and collaborative practice to the current state where both align with the achievement of improvement measures within the school plan. We aim to extend these practices to ensure that embedded and explicit systems that facilitate collaboration and feedback are in place to further develop teacher capacity and the sharing of professional knowledge between colleagues.

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/school-excellence

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2024 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Excelling
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Excelling
LEARNING: Curriculum	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Excelling
LEARNING: Student growth and performance	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Professional standards	Excelling
TEACHING: Learning and development	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Educational leadership	Excelling
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School resources	Excelling
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Excelling

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

In order to maximise student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy, we will ensure that our teaching practices are reflective of data analysis and are underpinned by evidence-informed strategies and embedded evaluative practice.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year School Excellence Plan and the achievement of school improvement measures.

- Personalised Learning
- Data Driven Practices

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

AP Curriculum & Instruction
Integration funding support
English language proficiency
Refugee Student Support
Low level adjustment for disability
Aboriginal background
New Arrivals Program
Per capita
Small group tuition (SGT)
Socio-economic background

Summary of progress

Significant financial resources were expended in our efforts to maximise student growth and attainment through the two initiatives titled 'Personalised Learning' and 'Data Driven Practices'. Funding was directed to employ teaching staff as follows:

- An Assistant Principal Curriculum and Instruction (APC&I) employed for an additional three days a week;
- Seven School Learning Support Officers (SLSO's) employed to support identified students in the classroom and playground; and
- Additional English as an Additional Language / Dialect (EALD) teachers that provided ongoing, regular support for identified students.

Initiative: Personalised Learning

Activity: Instructional Leadership

Two fulltime APC&Is provided opportunities for the observation of practice related to the teaching of reading and numeracy in every classroom, the provision of shoulder-to-shoulder differentiated support for all classroom teachers, data analysis that led to differentiated instruction and opportunities to deliver professional learning regarding evidence-based strategies for improved teaching pedagogy.

By the end of the year, modelled and guided reading that was indicative of thorough planning and the use of explicit and research-based teaching strategies was included as a part of regular classroom practice. Equally, evidence of numeracy differentiation was evident. This was evidenced through lesson observations and teaching programs.

Activity: Additional support for students

Through the Learning Support Team (LST), we endeavour to provide a consistent approach to early identification of students requiring support, provide explicit teaching of evidence-based reading strategies via the LaST Program, work with teachers in the collaborative design of Individual Learning Plans, and provide SLSO support for identified students.

Teachers complete and implement a five-week school-based record of intervention prior to referring a student to the LST to ensure that a consistent approach is evident throughout the school.

In 2024, the Minilit Sage program was used as a remedial program for students who were not making targeted progress. This was to address gaps in students' phonemic awareness and to further support literacy improvement.

35 students accessed the Learning and Support Program. This program was accessed by students in Year 1 to Year 4. Each group was made up of three to four students and targeted phonemic awareness, segmenting, blending, handwriting, reading and comprehension.

Each student was assessed using the Wheldall Assessment of Reading Nonwords (WARN) and Wheldall Assessment of Reading Lists (WARL) assessment tool kit. Additionally, some students in Year 4 were assessed using the 'Sparkle' kit.

Students in Year 1 commenced the program knowing between 4-8 sounds. By the end of the year, 80% of students learnt all single sounds and at least 10 digraphs and 2 trigraphs. Students are able to recognise these in print and in context when reading. In 2025, these students will benefit from learning the remaining digraphs as well as applying them to their spelling and writing. Reading fluency and comprehension will continue to be areas of focus.

Students in Year 2 commenced the program knowing all their single sounds. The focus for this group involved applying the sounds in their writing. Additionally, 75% of students in this group learnt at least 23 digraphs and 2 trigraphs. Students are able to recognise these in print and in context when reading. In 2025, the area of focus for these students will be to apply spelling rules consistently in their writing, and to continue developing their reading fluency and comprehension.

Eleven students in Year 3 accessed the program with a targeted focus on being able to read and record digraphs. Students further developed their inferential skills through various comprehension activities. Furthermore, students were explicitly taught how to locate information in a text when responding to comprehension questions. In 2025, two students will benefit from continued practice reading and recording digraphs. Other students will benefit from continued practice applying digraphs where there are exceptions to the rule.

Students in Year 4 received targeted support with sentence structure, spelling, building vocabulary, reading fluency and reading comprehension.

The number of students from a Language Background Other Than English (LBOTE) enrolled at our school decreased slightly over the course of 2024. As of 1 June, 2024 there were 842 LBOTE students or 82.1% of our student population enrolled at our school. 85% of our LBOTE students were 'phased' on the English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) Learning Progressions, with the EAL/D program supporting 689 students through collaborative, in-class sessions. All classes (with the exception of one high performing class) received two or more in-class sessions each week. More than 75 students with higher English language learning needs received direct mode support (through withdrawal groups), for three to five sessions each week. In-class collaborative sessions were increased for some classes earlier in the year due to additional New Arrivals Program (NAP) funding. As school funding decreased, in-class support was reduced for one year group with the least need.

Twice yearly, student progress was monitored through the completion of the EAL/D Learning Progressions. Classroom teachers in consultation with EAL/D teachers, identified descriptors across each mode that students were demonstrating in reading and viewing, listening, speaking and writing, to ascertain a student's EAL/D phase. New LBOTE enrolments were screened by EAL/D teachers to assess their level of English language proficiency and appropriate provision made to accommodate them within the EAL/D program, either through in-class or direct modes of support. The online NAP application was used several times over the year to apply for funding, to ensure newly arrived LBOTE students arriving from overseas received English language support where appropriate. This application process continues to provide prompt processing of student data and regular updates to fund staffing allocations.

During 2024, EAL/D teachers were aligned to specific grade cohorts. This ensured student need within a cohort was closely monitored and well known. It also enabled more collaboration between the EAL/D teacher and classroom-based teachers on each grade, positively impacting on the quality of planning and achieved outcomes for EAL/D students. Regular checks ensured that all student EAL/D phase data was accurate and students with the highest need, received support. When progress of students did not met expectations, systems were in place to liaise with classroom teachers and access alternative support, through the LST and/or LaST programs.

Aboriginal students were enrolled in Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 6. Each classroom teacher was released to identify specific literacy, numeracy, social and cultural goals for their Aboriginal students through individual, school-based PLPs. Classroom teachers used the Personalised Learning Pathways (PLP) guidelines to support this process. PLPs were created and later reviewed in consultation with students and parents, throughout the year.

All families engaged in the PLP process during 2024, with consultation undertaken between classroom teachers, students and parents. Links to acknowledging culture included making connections to texts written by Aboriginal authors and/or illustrators, appreciating Aboriginal art and delivering 'Acknowledgment of Country' during school-based events. Social goals included attendance, friendship strategies and participation in extra-curricular activities, eg PSSA teams and band. Aboriginal students and their parents also provided feedback on the Aboriginal artwork proposed for our new school building.

The school has continued to utilise the support of the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO) to positively impact on and improve the attendance of our Aboriginal students where required.

We hope to continue to increase consultation and connection with families in the development of their child's PLP and involvement in wider school activities. A focus in 2025 is to continue to seek additional activities that enable Aboriginal students to strengthen their connection to their culture and ensure their learning and wellbeing needs are met, for example, through off-site learning opportunities or visiting artists.

Initiative: Data Driven Practices

Activity: Literacy

Teachers' reading programs were reflective of planning, clear identification of guided reading groups and were responsive to student performance levels.

Data from the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check was used to provide additional learning support for those students requiring it as well as shaping future teaching across the Year 1 classes.

Reading results for Year 6 students in the Semester 2 Check-in Assessment were slightly higher than those of similar schools. Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 student results in Term 4 were slightly below similar schools.

Activity: Numeracy

Grade number baseline targets were established against selected outcomes within the following sub-strands of the Number and Algebra strand:

Kindergarten: Whole Numbers, and Addition and Subtraction.

Stage 1: Whole Numbers, and Addition and Subtraction.

Stage 2: Whole Numbers, and Multiplication and Division.

Stage 3: Multiplication and Division, and Fractions and Decimals.

Teachers referred to these targets throughout the year, entering evidence of achievement into the Department's PLAN2 software package. This allowed teachers to utilise the data for their own differentiated teaching but also demonstrate student achievement over time.

Numeracy results for Year 6 students in the Semester 2 Check-in Assessment were well above similar schools. Year 3 and Year 5 student results were slightly above those of similar schools while Year 4 results were the same as of those of similar schools.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the School Excellence Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
Improved reading outcomes An increase in the Check-in Assessment mean scaled score for reading in Year 3 and 5 2024 compared with Year 3 and 5 in 2023.	The mean Check-in assessment scaled score for Year 3 and Year 5 reading fell slightly in comparison to those achieved in 2023. The Year 3 mean scaled score fell by 1.7%. The Year 5 mean scaled score fell by 0.9%. Both mean scaled scores were slightly below mean scaled scores of similar school groups.
Improved numeracy outcomes An increase in the Check-in Assessment mean scaled score for numeracy in Year 3 and 5 2024 compared with Year 3 and 5 in 2023.	The mean Check-in assessment scaled score for Year 3 and Year 5 numeracy fell slightly in comparison to those achieved in 2023. The Year 3 mean scaled score fell by 1.5%. The Year 5 mean scaled score fell by 1.6%. Both mean scaled scores were slightly above mean scaled scores of similar school groups.

Strategic Direction 2: Connect, Succeed, Thrive

Purpose

To ensure that every student is able to connect, succeed and thrive, there will be a planned approach to developing whole-school wellbeing processes that support high levels of wellbeing and attendance.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year School Excellence Plan and the achievement of school improvement measures.

- Planned approach to wellbeing
- Attendance

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Socio-economic background

Summary of progress

Activity: Positive Learning for Behaviour (PBL)

During the year, we have continued to enforce our PBL expectations across the school. We have further refined our existing classroom lessons in order to promote safe and respectful learning environments.

We continued a weekly data collection process that summarised the previous five school weeks to enable student identification for inclusion in Tier 2 interventions. Evidence-informed programs including social skills and resilience programs were implemented for students as a result of data analysis. 'Pabalo's Playground' was introduced to provide a strategic, system level approach to targeted students requiring additional support on the playground. This program was run by Year 6 mentors who supported key students in developing positive social skills which included initiating, building and maintaining friendships. Pabalo's Playground was accessed by eleven students twice a week.

During their visits, the students participated in a range of group activities aimed at working collaboratively with others. These activities allowed the students to further develop their communication skills. Conversation starters were modelled to students and opportunities were provided for them to follow these prompts.

Activity: Student Voice

Elected students in Years 2-6 served as class representatives in the school's Student Representative Council (SRC). Students were involved in decision-making initiatives within the school.

Students participated in the annual 'Tell Them From Me' survey with 69% of students reporting a positive sense of belonging and 94% reporting that they displayed positive behaviour at school.

Initiative: Attendance

Activity: Attendance

Throughout 2024, a range of strategies were implemented to ensure that student attendance was as high as possible. These strategies included daily monitoring of attendance for students of concern, information about attendance shared with families (including in community languages), meetings being held with parents to discuss and support them to improve their child's attendance, the inclusion of attendance goals for targeted students with awards aligned to our PBL system, school-based Attendance Improvement Plans, fortnightly monitoring of students with attendance of less than 80% with the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO), referral to the Home School Liaison Program (when necessary) and the collection of five weekly rolling analysis of student attendance data for students attending less than 85% of the time to monitor, target and improve student attendance. Results are summarised below.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the School Excellence Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
Attendance Staff have the knowledge and skills to implement the school's attendance monitoring systems and processes.	All teaching and administration staff have the knowledge and skills to implement the school's attendance monitoring systems and processes. This is evidenced by an attendance data completeness of 99.9%, and an attendance rate of 93.6%; well in excess of state averages, ahead of our principal network average and in line with SSSG schools.

Strategic Direction 3: Developing Teacher Capacity and Collaborative Practice

Purpose

In order to improve student learning outcomes and teacher capabilities, we will develop processes to ensure that all staff collaborate effectively to embed evidence-based explicit teaching practices into their pedagogy. This will be supported by staff engagement in high-impact professional learning that will facilitate the achievement of individual, team and whole-school goals.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year School Excellence Plan and the achievement of school improvement measures.

- High Impact Professional Learning

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

Professional learning
Beginning teacher support
QTSS release

Summary of progress

Initiative: High Impact Professional Learning

Activity: Differentiated Professional Learning

In 2024, over 75% of staff identified understanding, implementing and differentiating new English and/or mathematics curriculum as a Performance and Development Plan (PDP) goal. This was supported through targeted PL delivered by grade-based assistant principals and their allocated APC&I. Supporting student need (behaviour, disabilities, High Potential Gifted Education (HPGE) and/or EAL/D), reading and comprehension, numeracy, effective teaching strategies, leadership and integrating technology were additional areas identified as PDP goals by staff.

Teacher Interest Groups (TIGs) continued during Semester 2 2024, to cater for a diverse range of PDP goals and to build leading learners (teacher leaders). Teachers were again encouraged to nominate themselves to lead or co-lead an area they were confident with or felt they had expertise in. Over the course of Semester 2, nine topics were on offer, with teachers then nominating their 'TIGs' preference. Each group established intended learning goals which were then a guide for the group's facilitators to design the learning. TIGs professional learning occurred twice during Semester 2. Unlike in 2023, no TIGs topics were offered by an external facilitator.

TIGs topics included: Classroom management: creating and maintaining positive learning environments; Creating with Canva (offered twice); Diagnoses - how they impact learning and how to support; Excelling with Excel; Guided reading: investigating different formats; Guided reading: moving from decodables to natural texts; John Hattie's visible learning strategies; Integrating Microsoft applications and Teaching English language learners - a snippet of 'TELL'.

In evaluating this format, 89% of respondents in Term 3 and 83% of respondents in Term 4 indicated that this professional learning opportunity had contributed to them achieving or partially achieving one of their PDP goals. Teachers were asked to reflect on the PL, with 97% of respondents in Term 3 and 89% of respondents in Term 4 identifying that they had increased their knowledge in the topic/interest area. 86% in Term 3 and 89% in Term 4 also agreed or strongly agreed that they would be able to apply new strategies/skills to positively impact on their own teaching practice as a result of their participation in TIGs. 93% of staff were in favour of this style of professional learning being offered again in 2025.

Throughout the year, various staff attended professional learning externally and/or online, either offered by NSW DoE or other educational organisations. Examples of this professional learning included (but was not limited to) some executive staff being a part of network-based Communities of Practice (CoP) focusing on quality teaching and APC&Is attending 'Leadership Practice for improvement'. Other executive as well as administration staff attended Response and Recovery Exercise (RREX) training. EAL/D teachers were frequent attendees or co-leaders at EAL/D network meetings and three teachers attended Working Mathematically, led by APSMO. Attendance at externally based professional learning then provided teachers with the opportunity to share and present their new knowledge to their colleagues. Members of the school's Aboriginal Education Committee also participated in online professional learning focused on 'Planning your 2024 Aboriginal Education Strategy'.

In 2024, the Tell Them From Me teacher survey indicated that 65% of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that the professional learning opportunities that they undertook allowed them to work towards and / or achieve their professional learning goals as outlined in their PDPs.

Activity: Collaborative Learning

Teachers were released from class for a half day every three weeks to participate in collaborative learning sessions. Sessions included professional learning regarding new syllabus implementation, development of teaching and learning programs based upon data, entering data into PLAN 2, data analysis and professional dialogue focused on evidence-based teaching strategies. Teachers indicated via the Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey), that they were comfortable with collaborative practices in the school (teacher rating of collaborative practices across the school was above the norm for NSW government schools, based on TTFM data). Evidence of the impact of our collaborative learning sessions is reflected in the increased use of explicit literacy and numeracy teaching strategies as demonstrated through teacher programs and observations.

Funding sources	Impact achieved this year
Refugee Student Support $2,999.49	Refugee student support funding is provided to support students from refugee backgrounds who have been enrolled in an Australian school for less than three years. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • Personalised Learning **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:** • employment of additional staff for targeted student support **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Students recorded improvement in school-based benchmark measures. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** Continuing with SLSO support to address learning needs as identified through teacher observation, assessments and school-based data.
New Arrivals Program $175,618.00	The New Arrivals Program funding provides on arrival, intensive English tuition for eligible, newly arrived English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) students at the beginning and emerging phases of English language proficiency at Castle Hill Public School. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • Personalised Learning **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:** • employing a specialist teacher to provide intensive English language support focusing on language development to participate successfully in schooling **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** 92.9% of students progressing from the beginning phase to either the emerging, developing or consolidating phase. 45.2% of students progressing from emerging phase to either the developing phase or consolidating phase. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** Employment of further staff to provide increased levels of support for identified students.
Integration funding support $122,371.00	Integration funding support (IFS) allocations support eligible students at Castle Hill Public School in mainstream classes who require moderate to high levels of adjustment. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • Personalised Learning **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:** • additional staffing to assist students with additional learning needs • employment of staff to provide additional support for students who have high-level learning needs • staffing release for individual case conferences and development of Personalised Learning and Support Plans (PLSPs) **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Students making progress towards the achievement of stage-appropriate learning outcomes and where required, demonstrating greater appreciation of school expectations and increased social skills to further the development of positive interactions with peers in both the classroom and playground.

Integration funding support $122,371.00	**After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** To adjust the use of integration funding in response to changing student needs to ensure that these needs are met. Continue to collect and analyse student data to ensure that students who require additional support, receive it.
Socio-economic background $20,849.34	Socio-economic background equity loading is used to meet the additional learning needs of students at Castle Hill Public School who may be experiencing educational disadvantage as a result of their socio-economic background. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • Planned approach to wellbeing • Data Driven Practices **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:** • resourcing to increase equitability of resources and services **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Semester 2 Check-in Assessment results, in comparison to statistically similar school groups (SSSG), were as follows: Year 3 reading was slightly lower and numeracy was slightly higher; Year 4 reading was slightly lower and numeracy was at the same level; Year 5 reading was slightly lower and numeracy was slightly higher; and Year 6 reading was slightly higher and numeracy was significantly higher; **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** To continue to support explicit teaching and research-based instructional strategies with quality resources that provide optimal learning experiences for all students.
Aboriginal background $4,525.46	Aboriginal background equity loading is used to meet the specific learning needs of Aboriginal students at Castle Hill Public School. Funds under this equity loading have been targeted to ensure that the performance of Aboriginal students in NSW public schools, across a broad range of key educational measures, improves to match or better those of the broader student population, while maintaining cultural identity. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • Personalised Learning **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:** • staffing release to support development and implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** All families engaged in the PLP process during 2024, with consultation undertaken between classroom teachers, students and parents. Links to acknowledging culture included making connections to texts written by Aboriginal authors and/or illustrators, appreciating Aboriginal art and delivering 'Acknowledgment of Country' during school-based events. Social goals included attendance, friendship strategies and participation in extra-curricular activities, eg PSSA teams and band. Aboriginal students also worked alongside key staff members to rewrite our school's 'Acknowledgement of Country', which many have proudly delivered at school-based events. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** To continue to support our Aboriginal students via the PLP process and

Aboriginal background $4,525.46	ensure that support is provided to allow the achievement of individual goals.
English language proficiency $682,046.37	English language proficiency equity loading provides support for students at all four phases of English language learning at Castle Hill Public School. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • Personalised Learning **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:** • employment of additional staff to support delivery of targeted initiatives • withdrawal lessons for small group (developing) and individual (emerging) support • additional staffing intensive support for students identified in beginning and emerging phases **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** 85% of our LBOTE students were 'phased' on the English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) Learning Progressions, with the EAL/D program supporting 689 students through collaborative, in-class sessions. Almost all classes received two or more in-class sessions each week. More than 75 students with higher English language learning needs received direct mode support (through withdrawal groups), for three to five sessions each week. In-class collaborative sessions were increased for some classes earlier in the year due to additional New Arrivals Program (NAP) funding. As school funding decreased, in-class support was reduced for one year group with the least need. Twice yearly, student progress was monitored through the completion of the EAL/D Learning Progressions. Classroom teachers in consultation with EAL/D teachers, identified descriptors across each mode that students were demonstrating in reading and viewing, listening, speaking and writing, to ascertain a student's EAL/D phase. New LBOTE enrolments were screened by EAL/D teachers to assess their level of English language proficiency and appropriate provision made to accommodate them within the EAL/D program, either through in-class or direct modes of support. The online NAP application was used several times over the year to apply for funding, to ensure newly arrived LBOTE students arriving from overseas received English language support where appropriate. This application process continues to provide prompt processing of student data and regular updates to fund staffing allocations. During 2024, EAL/D teachers were aligned to specific grade cohorts. This ensured student need within a cohort was closely monitored and well known. It also enabled more collaboration between the EAL/D teacher and classroom-based teachers on each grade, positively impacting on the quality of planning and achieved outcomes for EAL/D students. Regular checks ensured that all student EAL/D phase data was accurate and students with the highest need, received support. When progress of students did not met expectations, systems were in place to liaise with classroom teachers and access alternative support, through the LST and/or LaST programs. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** The EAL/D team will continue to utilise collaborative planning sessions and involvement in grade professional learning meetings to impact on modifications to teaching and learning programs to ensure the needs of all EAL/D learners are met. Screening of new LBOTE enrolments will continue to ensure that student EAL/D phase data is accurate and current. Regular data collection, analysis and review of student progress will continue within the EAL/D team.
Low level adjustment for disability $124,869.17	Low level adjustment for disability equity loading provides support for students at Castle Hill Public School in mainstream classes who have a disability or additional learning and support needs requiring an adjustment to

Low level adjustment for disability $124,869.17	their learning. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • Personalised Learning **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include:** • providing support for targeted students within the classroom through the employment of School Learning and Support Officers **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** We endeavour to provide a consistent approach to early identification of students requiring support, provide explicit teaching of evidence-based reading strategies via the LaST program, work with teachers in the collaborative design of Individual Learning Plans, and provide SLSO support for identified students. Teachers complete and implement a five-week school-based record of intervention prior to referring a student to the LST to ensure that a consistent approach is evident throughout the school. In 2024, the Minilit Sage program was used as a remedial program for students who were not making targeted progress. This was to address gaps in students' phonemic awareness and to further support literacy growth. SLSO support continues to be provided for identified students both in the classroom and playground to cater for individual needs. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** We will continue to employ SLSO's to support the varying needs of our students and provide funding for an additional Learning Support teacher.
Professional learning $66,227.40	Professional learning funding is provided to enable all staff to engage in a cycle of continuous professional learning aligned with the requirement of the Professional learning for teachers and school staff procedures at Castle Hill Public School. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • High Impact Professional Learning **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:** • teacher relief for staff engaging in professional learning • course costs for staff undertaking recognised courses • other methods of learning designed to improve student outcomes. **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Early career teachers obtaining 'Accreditation at Proficient Teacher' status. Teachers utilising their knowledge to implement an increased range of evidence-based strategies. Tell Them From Me teacher survey indicated that 65% of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that the professional learning opportunities that they undertook allowed them to work towards and / or achieve their professional learning goals as outlined in their PDPs. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** Teachers will continue to develop their professional knowledge to cater for all learning needs within their classrooms.
QTSS release $227,106.25	The quality teaching, successful students (QTSS) allocation is provided to improve teacher quality and enhance professional practice at Castle Hill Public School. **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students**

QTSS release $227,106.25	**enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • High Impact Professional Learning **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:** • staffing release to align professional learning to the Strategic Improvement Plan and develop the capacity of staff **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Professional learning regarding new syllabus implementation, development of teaching and learning programs based upon data, entering data into PLAN 2, data analysis and professional dialogue focused on evidence-based teaching strategies were undertaken. Evidence of the impact of our collaborative learning sessions is reflected in the increased use of explicit literacy and numeracy teaching strategies as demonstrated through teacher programs and observations. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** To continue to ensure that teaching practices are evidence-based and differentiated learning sequences for students are based upon the collection of data. This includes the increased use of PLAN2 to record student achievement in reading and numeracy.
Small group tuition (SGT) $13,023.00	These funds have been used to support improved outcomes and the achievements of staff and students at Castle Hill Public School **Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the School Excellence Plan including:** • Personalised Learning **Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:** • providing targeted, explicit instruction for student groups in numeracy **The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact:** Small group tutoring was offered to 21 students in Year 3 in mathematics. Developing and building upon place value skills was the primary area of focus. This included: developing numeral recognition; recording numerals; ordering and regrouping according to place value; partitioning numbers; and developing an understanding of the part-whole model. At the commencement of the targeted support, 65% of students were partially demonstrating an understanding of zero in place value notation when reading numerals that include internal zeros. By the end of the program, 85% of students consolidated this skill. In Term 4, the focus of support shifted to additive strategies with students further developing their understanding of counting on and bridging to 10 to solve addition problems. Each group accessed support 3 times a week for 30-minute sessions. All data was updated and recorded on PLAN2 every three weeks. **After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be:** To continue the implementation of numeracy small group tuition using data sources to firstly identify students for inclusion in the program and then to identify their specific needs.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2021	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**
Boys	571	540	546	511
Girls	563	563	549	510

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**
K	94.3	89.2	92.5	92.6
1	94.7	89.2	92.0	91.7
2	94.7	90.6	92.7	93.0
3	96.2	89.7	93.2	93.2
4	95.3	90.2	93.6	93.2
5	95.9	89.3	93.2	93.0
6	93.4	89.2	92.5	92.4
All Years	94.9	89.7	92.9	92.8
State DoE				
Year	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**
K	92.8	87.9	91.1	91.0
1	92.7	87.4	90.5	90.2
2	92.6	87.8	90.8	90.3
3	92.7	87.6	90.9	90.3
4	92.5	87.4	90.6	90.1
5	92.1	87.2	90.3	89.6
6	91.5	86.3	89.8	89.1
All Years	92.4	87.4	90.6	90.0

Attendance

Attendance data is based on Semester 1. Data is suppressed at grade-level if there were 5 or less students at the school in the specific grade. Schools with 5 or less total enrolments will have all their attendance data suppressed.

Attendance figures from 2021 were calculated differently to align with the third edition of ACARA's National Standards for Student Attendance Data and Reporting. Changes include treating partial absences over 120 minutes as a half day absence (instead of their actual value, calculated as a proportion of a nominal 6-hour day) and covers all weeks during Semester 1. Prior to 2021, the final week of Term 2 was excluded.

Furthermore, the department implemented an automated attendance feed (AAF) system in Semester 1 2021. AAF transfers data automatically from third-party attendance management systems to the department's centralised data warehouse every night. The AAF significantly improved data quality in 2021, which has affected data comparability with previous years.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2021, COVID-19 continued to affect student attendance. Analysis of attendance codes showed a change in the structure of absence reasons in 2021.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2022, student attendance was impacted by a range of factors:

- Families evacuating and relocating due to NSW floods
- Sick students staying at home until a negative COVID-19 test was returned
- Household members testing positive to COVID-19
- The easing of COVID-19 border controls at the beginning of 2022 which allowed families to travel inter-state and overseas.

While there were no lockdowns or learning from home periods in Semester 1 2023/2024, there was still a high prevalence of sick attendance codes as students were encouraged to stay home if they were even slightly unwell. Advice for families was still in place, recommending students and staff to stay home when sick and only returning to school when they were symptom free. (See https://education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/covid-19/advice-for-families for advice).

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)	2
Assistant Principal(s)	7.4
Classroom Teacher(s)	36.03
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.7
Teacher Librarian	1.6
Teacher EAL/D	4.6
School Administration and Support Staff	6.07

*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, prioritised permanent employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers, scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2024, 2.3% of the department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People.

Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark[1]	2024 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation[2]
School Support	3.30%	3.30%
Teachers	3.30%	3.40%

Note 1: The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025 takes a career pathway approach in that it sets an ambitious target of 3% Aboriginal employment at each non-executive grade of the public sector by 2025.

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 six 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.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with department policy requirements.

	2024 **Actual** ($)
Opening Balance	1,120,169.17
Revenue	10,194,781.16
Appropriation	9,683,050.95
Sale of Goods and Services	22,082.05
Grants and contributions	444,109.60
Investment income	39,049.56
Other revenue	6,489.00
Expenses	-10,267,544.48
Employee related	-9,475,274.12
Operating expenses	-792,270.36
Surplus / deficit for the year	-72,763.32
Closing Balance	1,047,405.85

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.

	2024 **SBAR Adjustments** ($)
Targeted Total	104,125
Equity Total	832,290
Equity - Aboriginal	4,525
Equity - Socio-economic	20,849
Equity - Language	682,046
Equity - Disability	124,869
Base Total	7,272,614
Base - Per Capita	188,090
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	7,084,524
Other Total	883,538
Grand Total	9,092,568

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

The National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

From 2023, student achievement in NAPLAN is reported against 4 levels of proficiency (https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/results-and-reports/proficiency-level-descriptions). These measure student progress against challenging yet reasonable expectations based on the Australian curriculum. They replace the previous numerical NAPLAN bands and national minimum standards.

In addition to the shift to proficiency standards, the NAPLAN testing window moved up from May to March and the scale was reset. As such, NAPLAN scaled scores from 2023 and onwards cannot be compared to NAPLAN results prior to 2023.

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.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year, schools are required to seek the opinions of students, teachers and parents about the school. This year, students in Years 4-6, teachers and parents were asked to complete the relevant 'Tell Them From Me' surveys.

Highlights from each of the surveys are included below:

Students:

96% of girls and 91% of boys surveyed felt that they displayed positive behaviour at school.

64% of girls and 75% of boys surveyed felt that they were valued and accepted by their peers and by others at school.

Staff:

Of the eight drivers of student learning (leadership, collaboration, learning culture, data informs practice, teaching strategies, technology, inclusive school and parent involvement), our staff considered that the school's inclusiveness (7.9), teaching strategies (7.9), learning culture (7.9) collaborative practices (7.7) and data-informed practice (7.7) were particular strengths on a ten-point scale.

Parents:

Of the seven survey measures contained in the parent survey (parents feel welcome, parents are informed, parents support learning at home, school supports learning, school supports positive behaviour, safety at school and inclusive school), our parents felt that supporting positive behaviour (7.8), safety at school (7.4), making parents feel welcome (7.3), school supports learning (7.2) and inclusive school (7.0) were particular strengths on a ten-point scale.

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

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers are responsible for addressing the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. The Principal is 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.