School context

St George School caters for students with severe and moderate physical disability from pre-school to Year 12. Students attend from Sydney’s southern suburbs, St George area, the Eastern Suburbs and Inner West. St George School takes pride in delivering quality educational programs for our students. The school’s motto ‘Learning for Life’ highlights the importance of personalizing student learning to maximise opportunities for independence and an enhanced quality of life.

In 2013 the school operated with an enrolment of fifty-eight students on average throughout the school year.

The majority of students have an additional disability to the physical disability including moderate/severe intellectual, autism, visual impairment and hearing impairment. Some students have multiple disabilities.

St George School, located in Kogarah, shares a site with Moorefield Girls High School and James Cook Boys Technology High School. The physical environment of the school aims to support the comprehensive delivery of educational programs in a safe, age appropriate and attractive setting. The school is built on a level accessible area. In addition to the playground areas and classrooms, the school has a number of specialist areas which include the library, pool, sensory room, connected classroom, hall, liberty swing and a sensory garden. Each class has an activity area for daily mealtimes and for living skills program and art activities. The playgrounds, classrooms and specialist rooms address the wide range of needs of students at St George School.

Principal’s message

The year 2013 marked the second year of our school’s three year plan with targets in Literacy & Numeracy, Technology and Partnerships.

The plan was developed through consultation with staff and members of the parent body. The plan took into account the NSW State Plan and the plans of the Department of Education and Communities.

The year 2013 was characterized by a number of initiatives. With Commonwealth funding, St George school successfully trialed a flexible model of staffing in two classes. The school was one of 229 in NSW to receive such funds. The flexible model of funding allowed for the release on one classroom teacher to undertake RFF (release from face to face teaching) and for two classes to combine with one teacher and four school learning support officers. This was a significant change in staffing and supported by the State governments initiative, Local Schools Local Decisions which aims to give principals greater autonomy in the running of school and to be responsive to local needs and local priorities.

As one of the 229 schools, St George School, moved over to LMBR which is a new way of managing student wellbeing, student management and school finances. LMBR stands for Learning Management and Business Reform. The LMBR was rolled out in term four 2013. The Student Wellbeing initiative provides a comprehensive management system of all aspects of student wellbeing including individualized programs and health care needs. The new school finance system provides for one statewide finance system and when integrated with the Student Management tool enables schools to manage all aspects of a school’s finances. The Student Management system organises and manages the many activities of individuals and groups of students.

In 2013, another initiative supported by Commonwealth funds, targeted special education. State governments were given funds to support the education of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. The Disability Standards for Education were developed in 2005 in response to the Disability Discrimination Act. A review of the Disability Standards for Education in 2010 indicated that nationally schools were not providing curriculum access to students with disabilities on the same basis as students without a disability in
mainstream classrooms. In NSW in 2012, the Department of Education and Communities introduced the Every Student Every School initiative to address the trend in the education of students with disabilities. Part of this Every Student Every School initiative was to provide special schools with funds to develop a product to assist students with disabilities in the regular class. This decision was based on the belief that special schools have high level of expertise in the education of students with disabilities. The initiative was titled SSPs as Centres of Expertise.

In 2013, St George School combined with four other special schools to develop a resource titled Building the capacity of schools to meet the needs of students with disabilities. The project provided the opportunity for teaching staff at St George School to work with colleagues from other schools (Bates Drive School, Cairnsfoot School, Wairoa School and Minerva School) on areas including student wellbeing, literacy and numeracy, technology for students with special needs, curriculum adjustments, behavior management and implementation of Life Skills outcomes. The initiative provided funds for extensive professional learning for staff in the use of technology in the classroom. The initiative also provided valuable networking opportunities across schools and the sharing of ideas, resources and units of work. Each group of teachers and executives across schools developed a module for the resource. The resource will be promoted in 2014.

From our school perspective we witnessed continued growth in learning and continued expansion of use of technology especially the growth of tablet technology in the classroom. At the end of 2013, each class had two ipads per class and an interactive whiteboard. School staff had received significant professional learning in the use of technology in teaching and learning.

In 2013, the multi-purpose room was converted into the school’s library and the former school library was modified to function as the school’s hall.

In 2013, St George School participated in and was recognized in two statewide arts initiatives: Koori Art Expressions and Operation Art. Our participation the Operation Art initiative was recognized by the selection of artworks in the Department of Education and Communities Calendar for 2014. October 2014 showcases the artwork of students in one of the secondary classes. The artworks which were developed as a result of our participation in the Koori Art Expressions initiative was recognized by an exhibition of the artworks at the Maritime Museum in November-December 2013.

St George School School continues to receive outstanding support from the community including St George Children with Disabilities Fund, NSW Police, Kogarah Lions, Masonic Care and in 2013 from St George Sutherland law Society and from the 2CH Bexley Ladies’ charity golf day, the Younger set and DFS in the Rocks.

Additionally regular volunteers continue to support the operation of programs at school including hydrotherapy, bike riding, class programs and excursions.

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

P & C message

The executive composition of the P&C was maintained in 2013 with myself as President, Fay Chiots as Treasurer and Melissa Scanlan as Secretary.

Meetings were held every term during the day on Thursdays.

The organization of the P&C proceeded as in previous years. School Council matters remained a permanent agenda item at meetings and provided the opportunity for the Principal to report on current policy and management aspects of the school.
The P&C continued to financially support the music therapy program in 2013. Additional support from the St George Children with Disabilities Fund was necessary to ensure that the program operated on a weekly basis.

The ‘Coffee & Chat’ meetings continued to be held during the day once a term and again provided the opportunity for parent support and networking. The Coffee & Chat also provided information for families by visiting guests and included a presentation by an ADHC social worker and a private therapist.

Our fundraising activities this year included the Mothers’ Day stall, Fathers’ Day stall and our annual Christmas hamper raffle. The generous support of families provided for many hamper prizes to be won. The monies raised from the Christmas raffle supported the purchase of Christmas gifts for the students. School uniform spray jackets embroidered with the school’s crest were purchased as gifts in 2013.

The year 2013 was a significant year for me and my family as it marked the graduation of my daughter, Georgia. We are embarking on a new post school venture from 2014.

The Annual General Meeting of the P&C to be held at the end of February 2014, will mark the end of my time as President. I have been very proud to have been a part of St George School and to have supported its operation and programs.

I wish the school, staff, students and families well in all future events and activities.

Kellie Wogas, President

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

In 2013, ten classes operated at St George School providing for an enrolment capacity of 60 students. Fifty eight students attended St George throughout the year.

At the beginning of the year, we welcomed two new students. One student commenced in the preschool class and commenced schooling for the first time. The other student transferred from a mainstream primary school and enrolled in Year 7.

At the end of the year three students in year 12 graduated and exited the school.

In 2013, all students at St George School had high support needs and a physical disability. Over 95% also had a diagnosed intellectual disability, 22% with additional vision impairment, 9% with additional hearing impairment and 3% with additional autism spectrum disorder.

There is a gender balance with 52% of students female and 48% male. Fifteen students representing 28% of student population are from language backgrounds other than English. Language backgrounds include Arabic, Cantonese, Croatian, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Macedonian, Mandarin, Polish, Samoan and Urdu.

At St George School every student’s placement is formally reviewed annually. Recommendations regarding continued placement or possible consideration of an alternative placement are made in consultation with families. The reviews held in August 2013 indicated that all students were appropriately placed and recommendations were made to continue placement.

All students are eligible for special transport to and from school where families demonstrate that they are unable to provide transport for their child. The majority of students are transported using the Department’s Assisted Student Transport scheme. In 2013, only 2 students were transported to and from school by families.

Student attendance profile

School attendance is strong with an average of 90%+ attendance. These figures are consistent with attendance data from previous years. Absences are related to health issues and there are a small number of students with high absences related to frail medical conditions and,
in some cases, subsequent hospitalisations. Students who are hospitalised attend the hospital school when able to do so.

Management of non-attendance

Parents or caregivers of children from Kindergarten through to Year 12 are responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day. This means all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age of 17 are legally required to attend school. Parents are responsible for explaining any absences within 7 days of the absence. Non attendance is managed at school through the Home School Liaison Program. Student absences and reasons for absences are noted daily in the class roll. The rolls are checked regularly by one of the Home School Liaison Officers based at the Arncliffe Office of the Department of Education and Communities.

Post-school destinations

Three students graduated from Year 12 in 2013 and were offered places in ADHC funded Community Participation programs. The families selected the service providers that were local and matched the needs of their child. One family selected Wesley Mission Disability Services at Roselands and the other family selected Eastern Respite and Recreation Day Program in the Eastern Suburbs. Families had the opportunity during the year to visit the locations.

During 2013 a formal assessment of the exiting students was undertaken at school on behalf of ADHC. The assessment process is to confirm eligibility for ADHC funding and to establish the recommended level of funding. In September 2013, the families were advised of the outcome of assessment and were asked to nominate the service of their choice. In term 4, a transition plan was developed to include visits to the specific site and visits at school from service personnel.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

In 2013, no student undertook vocational or trade training. This was in accordance with the nature and severity of the disabilities of the students in year 12.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

In 2013, the three graduating students completed their studies and attained the Higher School Certificate Life with Skills Outcomes. The three students were awarded a Higher School Certificate Testamur and Record of School Achievement.

Workforce information

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

St George School has ten classes and hence ten teaching positions. In addition, there is a 0.84 position for release of teaching staff from face to face teaching (RFF) and a 0.4 library teacher allocation. The RFF position provides for the release of every teacher for a day every three weeks with a maximum of 3 release days per term. It also provides for the release of executive staff for a day every three weeks.

In 2013, one of the teacher positions was filled by a 0.8 (four days per week) permanent part-time teacher and another temporary teacher for one day per week. The 0.84 RFF teacher allocation was used to release a teacher from class to undertake RFF and to support the implementation of flexible staffing in the composite class. In 2013, one of our long standing teachers retired at the end of the school year.

As a special school, School Administrative Support Staff (SASS) outnumber teaching staff. SASS staff include the office staff, the school learning support officers and the general assistants. A number of positions are filled by permanent part-time staff.

Visiting teachers support the programs at St George School. A school counselor based at another school attends for 1.5 days per week. Students with vision and hearing impairment
receive caseload support from specialist itinerant teachers, hearing and vision, on a weekly basis.

In 2013, the school owned three buses and employed four drivers to support excursions in the community and to transport students to and from school under the Assisted School Travel Program.

**Workforce composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>7.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor 0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>12.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>24.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Australian Education Regulation, 2013 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

In 2013, there were no Indigenous members of staff at St George School.

**Teacher qualifications**

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

In 2013, the NSW Institute of Teachers set the standards for performance of teachers in NSW. The Department of Education and Communities has a formal annual process whereby the performance of teachers, executives and principals are appraised. For teachers and executives this accountability process is aligned to the standards and elements of the NSW Institute of Teachers. Principal performance is appraised each term and performance is assessed against educational leadership capabilities and is linked directly to the School Plan and the attainment of targets identified in the School Plan.

National standards for teachers and leaders have been established and set by Australian Institute for Teaching and Leadership (AITSL). These standards were managed in NSW in 2013 by the NSW Institute of Teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma - Teachers</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financial summary**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>124334.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>153714.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>74469.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>232089.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>6129.59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>198349.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>789088.42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers and SLSOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance carried forward</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The balance brought forward at the commencement of 2013 was $124,334.56. A total of $73,264.18 of this amount was Commonwealth funds for two specific projects: flexible staffing implementation and the Every Student Every School resource development project. The total receipt in 2013 was $664,753.86. The total expenditure for the year was $682,253.40. The school purchased two, used buses during 2013 to replace two older vehicles for the Assisted School Transport program (AST). This was in response to a
requirement that, from 2014, no vehicle used for AST be more than 15 years from date of manufacture.

The school operates a second account which is a gift fund. This account enables the receipt of donations to the school and the issuing of tax deductible receipts. Monies received by the school from the operation of five bus runs under the AST program was also deposited in the gift fund.

In 2013, the balance brought forward from 2013 was $41,381.80. The total receipts during the year was $250,040.61 and the total payments for the year was $92,302.87 leaving a balance of $199,119.54. Part of the balance will be used to purchase two additional buses in 2014 to replace buses more than 15 years old.

A full copy of the school’s 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2013

The teaching programs at St George School are consistent with the Disability Standards for Education 2005 which gives students with disability the right to education and training opportunities on the same basis as students without a disability. Adjustments are made to the teaching programs to address the needs of individual students.

Students at St George School work towards the outcomes in the Board of Studies syllabuses. Students in Kindergarten to Year 6 follow the syllabuses in English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and Its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. Teachers select and use syllabus outcomes that best match the needs of each student.

Students in Years 7-10 undertake a pattern of study to meet the requirements set down by the NSW Board of Studies. Teachers select Life Skills outcomes from the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) appropriate to student needs. Similarly, students in years 11 – 12 undertake a pattern of study to meet the requirements for the Higher School Certificate and teachers select the appropriate Life Skills outcomes from the Key learning Areas.

An integrated curriculum is implemented to allow for a number of the KLAS to be addressed in class programs. A thematic approach supports the delivery of an integrated curriculum.

In a school with diverse needs and varying levels of impact of disability on learning, student performance is gauged on an individual basis. Students follow a personalized learning program where individual learning priorities are set collaboratively with families during the year and are reported on in the mid year and end of year reports and at the mid-year parent teacher meetings.

Planning for personalized learning also provides the opportunity to establish/review students’ health care plan, physical management issues and/or therapy recommendations.

Academic achievements

Staff deliver quality learning experiences that enable students to work towards personalised learning priorities and achieve outcomes from the NSW curriculum, K-6, 7-10 Life Skills and 11-12 Life Skills. There is ongoing evaluation of planning, implementation and assessment at meetings and a culture of sharing knowledge and resources.

The National Assessment Program, NAPLAN, provides families with results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in literacy and numeracy. As our students are exempt from NAPLAN, there is no NAPLAN data available.

Communication is a priority area for all students and it is embedded in learning experiences across all Key Learning Areas. Communication strategies such as the assistive technology tools, key word signing, gestures and visuals are used across the school.
In 2013, the primary team focused on two themes: Transport and Growing & Changing. Students gained basic knowledge about the concepts within the themes which were incorporated into curriculum areas such as Mathematics, English and Science and Technology.

**Literacy**

Enhanced literacy and numeracy skills is a current goal in the St George School Plan 2012 – 2014. Classes worked towards the attainment of targets for 2013.

The Primary classes included literacy programs on a daily basis. Stories that students worked on were based on the themes of transport and growing and changing. Stories included the *Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

The Middle Team focused on implementing a literacy program which included daily guided reading, developing an understanding of phonics and phonemic awareness and developing a sight word vocabulary. The students had the opportunity to experience different genres of written and spoken English including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and drama.

Students also had the opportunity to write their own stories and recounts of excursions, sharing these stories with the whole school community by publishing in the school newsletter.

The secondary team teachers took a team teaching approach to deliver literacy programs to enable the students to experience the different genres of written and spoken English.

The Secondary Literacy Club took place on a Tuesday afternoon with the teachers implementing the program to a different class each term to deliver a 6-8 week literacy program. The programs were catered to meet the individual learning needs within the class, working towards English syllabus outcomes identified in each student’s personalized learning plan. Each class enjoyed listening to, learning about and writing their own limericks, poetry, sensory stories and engaging in treasure hunts using QR Codes.

Aspects of the Four Blocks Literacy Program which focuses on guided reading, self-selected reading, word skills and writing were incorporated across some of the secondary classes.

The theme for Education Week in 2013 was *Our Stories*. The theme provided the opportunity to focus on a theme for literacy for the week. All classes participated in creating their own stories. One of the classes developed a movie based on the story about a day in the life of Secondary 1. Class teacher, Emilie Bell, assisted the students in writing their story and used iMovie, iMotion and Puppet Pals on the class ipad to create the movie. The story was forwarded to the Department of Education and Communities, was well received and subsequently placed on the Department’s website as one of the highlights of Education Week.

During Book Week, the school’s librarian, Leah Ponzio, coordinated a number of activities to promote reading and love of books. The week included a favourite character parade.

Highlights of the parade included Margaret as Teddy from the book, *Where’s My Teddy* by Jez Alborough and Angel-Rose Papapavlou as Blu from the movie, *Rio*.

During National Literacy and Numeracy Week, St George School, participated in the *Read for Australia* initiative. Teachers and students in schools across Australia participated in a mass simultaneous read of the *Read for Australia* selected book which was *Herman and Rosie* by Gus Gordon.
Numeracy

In 2013, development of Numeracy skills was a high priority consistent with the goals of the School Plan. Each team approached Numeracy from a collaboratively developed focus area.

Numeracy programs were implemented across all programs areas including Morning Group, Science, Music, Sport and Literacy.

During Education Week, the primary classes, as a team, performed a dance The Ants Go Marching to focus on the numeracy component.

In the Middle classes, students were assessed to identify current skills using the Holroyd/Mary Brookbank Assessment Tool which also provided information about future areas for development. The main focus was on developing and maintaining number and counting skills. Other topics included money in the Tuckshop Program, measurement and shapes and patterns. The Holroyd/Mary Brookbank program provided valuable resources which were adapted and modified to meet the individual needs of students.

The Secondary Team operated class numeracy programs in 2013. They covered the topics of numbers and counting, patterns, money, measurement, two and three dimensional shapes and mathematical language. Secondary 2 engaged actively with the mathematics integrated unit, Maths with the Mob, which explored Maths concepts in everyday language and situations. As well as stand-alone lessons, numeracy was targeted across a number of program areas such as, Morning Group, Food Technology, Science, Music, Community Access and Sport. Most of the secondary students completed the Best Start assessment in 2nd semester. This assessment provides information about current skills and future directions in numeracy.

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

Students in Years 11 and 12 undertake Life Skills Courses for the Preliminary and Higher School Certificate courses respectively. In 2013, six students undertook the Preliminary Course of the HSC and three students graduated having successfully completed the HSC Life Skills course.

Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

Since 2012, students who have completed Year 10 and who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate (HSC) will receive the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA). The RoSA is a cumulative credential that allows students to accumulate their academic results until they leave school. The RoSA records completed Stage 5 and Preliminary Stage 6 courses and grades. It is of specific use to students leaving school prior to the HSC. At St George School, all students work towards the completion of their HSC and receive a RoSA.

Other achievements

Arts

All students at St George School participate in creative arts programs. Students attend art classes in their classroom. Students’ art work cover a range of mixed media including painting, drawing, collage, photography and tablet technology art. The creation of art works by the students is complemented by appreciation of art work, consistent with the Visual Arts syllabus.

Class teacher, Caroline Cass, coordinated the entry of artworks for the Department of Education and Communities’ Calendar for 2014. One of the artworks submitted was selected for the month of October. This calendar will be displayed in many sites within all school in NSW.
The aim of the artwork was to undertake a self portrait and to include the portrait of a friend in the class. The artwork of four students was chosen. Pictured is Hayden McIvor’s work and his friend in the class, Gabby Nappa.

Music programs are incorporated into each class’ weekly timetable. Students participate in listening and performing activities that are age appropriate and provide opportunities to increase communication and social skills.

Music therapy lessons continued for all classes on a weekly basis. The music therapist uses a variety of instruments to engage students and support their participation in the appreciation of music and use of instruments. The music therapy sessions are interactive. Students play instruments, beat drums to rhythm, engage in craft activities, listen to songs and are assisted to sign words to some songs. In 2013, students listened to and interacted with such instruments as the didgeridoo, singing bowls, guitar and various African instruments. With assistance they strummed the guitar and rocked to the rhythm.

The students demonstrated their enjoyment of every music session by being settled, smiling and moving with the music.

In 2013, students across classes performed a musical item for delegates at the national special education conference. The conference was held at the Novotel in Brighton Le Sands. With the support of Josh Oshlack, music therapist, students performed one of the songs from music therapy classes. It was a wonderful experience for our students and for the delegates who came from across Australia and from overseas.

In 2013, students attended two Musica Viva performances. The first performance in term 2 was Makukuhan. Makukuhan presented Great Gamelans which is traditional Indonesian music and dance. They used traditional masked dance and instruments like the kendang, angklung and rebana to explore music from Bali and Java, with a focus on percussion and rhythm. The students actively participated in playing the percussion instruments with some students joining in the dancing. In term 4, Jacana presented “Sounds of the Australian Spirit”. Jacana used music to paint a picture of contemporary Australia. Using the piano, viola, clarinet and cello, the students explored the urban, coastal and outback landscapes of Australia. The students showed their enjoyment by smiling and moving to the music.

Drama programs are addressed in class programs and often integrated into literacy programs. Assembly time is used by classes to perform for the school. The use of the ipad enabled the video caption of drama activities. Some of the classes used the ipad and the iMovie app to create trailers and short films.

Drama programs culminated at the end of year concert with whole school participation in a ‘Cirque de St George’ performance for parents and community members. The Primary team presented a comical performance called ‘Clowning Around’, the Middle team presented, with support of Josh Oshlack, musician and music therapist, a dance titled ‘Gypsy Beat’ and the Secondary Team provided the finale with ‘Side Show Alley’.

The outcomes for students in performance are working together as a team, intensive communication opportunities, opportunities for individual performances, focused and purposeful art works for set design, set construction and costume.

Science

In the K-6 syllabus, Science and Technology is the learning area in which all students learn about the natural and made environments by investigating, by designing and making and by using technology.

The three teams at St George School managed their own worm farm as part of the school’s environmental program. Each class also managed their own recycling and composting program.

The Middle Team implemented a combined Science program in 2013. Each week, the two
classes combined to provide a program which focused on living things including mammals, reptiles, birds, fish and insects. All the students were very motivated as they had the opportunity to touch real animals – a rabbit, blue tongue lizard, budgerigars and insects. Students had the opportunity to classify the different animals and complete relevant worksheets. This program was supported by a visit to Oatley Park and the Australian Wildlife Park.

A new national science initiative was introduced into the school called Carbon Kids. In the previous year, St George was invited to join the program and it was slowly introduced across the school over the year. The staff received training on the program and a unit of work was developed to show how it could be implemented into each classroom. The staff took on the challenge. Many of the subject areas had an environment based subject matter that fitted into the school’s environment plan.

Students in the primary classes continued to use various modes of technology within the classroom. These modes of technology have been used primarily for communication as well as for the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Wireless switches were used on a regular basis to help students to actively participate in lessons.

The secondary Science syllabus builds upon the knowledge and skills of the K-6 syllabus.

Technology
Technology was used extensively in all classrooms to support access to teaching and learning.

In addition to assistive technology, mainstream equipment supported student access to learning and enhanced engagement in learning programs. Touch screen monitors, the interactive whiteboards and iPads were used in all classes.

In 2013, additional ipads were purchased so that each class had two ipads.

Students engaged in scaffolded learning tasks to use technology for individual learning needs ranging from beginning experiences learning to touch the iPad screen for cause and effect to using the iPad as a complete communication device.

Students made films using iMovie and iMotion, made books using Book Creator. The app Proloquo2go was implemented across the school as the communication app appropriate to the needs of our students.

Multi modal approaches to learning in the classroom and in all subjects that incorporated augmented and assistive technologies included the switch, iPads, classroom computers and the interactive white board.

In 2013, we implemented two key technology assessments. Teachers developed a technology learning profile for all students to ensure that learning using technology is meaningful and accessible. Teachers were guided by the SETT framework in the application of technology for student learning. This framework looks at the student, the environment, the learning task and the appropriate technology for best student learning.

In 2013 the Commonwealth funded Digital Education Revolution continued for Year 9 students. Using the funds flexibly, St George School purchased an ipad for class use in lieu of a notebook computer for each Year 9 student.

Use of the ipad in the classroom was enhanced by parent and family involvement. In some classes, student learning and experiences were filmed as feedback for families to see what their own child was achieving. Students who had their personal ipads were supported to bring in news from their lives outside school.

At St George School we have embraced technology as a learning and communication tool in all aspects of student lives as they become participants in 21st century technology options.

Sport
The Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PD/H/PE) Key Learning Area is an important program for all students at St George School. Outcomes in this area are achieved through a variety of programs to address the varying levels of need. Facilities to address the delivery of these programs include the indoor heated pool, playground, library, specialized equipment such as modified bikes and community facilities such as local parks, the bowling alley at Sylvania and the waters of Kogarah Bay and Sydney Harbour.

Sports programs support the development of gross and fine motor skills and students are encouraged to play these sports as independently as possible.

In 2013, the weekly sport program was comprised of three sessions per week, one for each team.

The Primary sports program was a team event. Sports played in 2013 were bowling, boccia, parachute, volleyball and table tennis. The Primary team included Dance as a sports option. Students learned and enjoyed various dances including ants go marching, damper stamper, sing-a-song- along, conga, round in a ring and the limbo. The students enjoyed performing and socializing with their class peers.

Middle Team implemented a sports program on a fortnightly basis. These sports included team sports which focused on developing skills such as throwing, catching and kicking. The sports included soccer, volley ball, boccia, bowling and Aussie Rules. Sports activities were adapted and modified to meet the individual needs of the students. The highlight of the year was the visit from a representative of the Swans Aussie Rules Football Club over a three week period. The students enjoyed further developing their ball skills and scoring goals during a team game.

A dance program was also implemented for students in the Middle classes on the alternate week. The students actively participated in variety of dances including bush dances, the limbo and the conga. One of the favourite activities was allowing the students to develop their own style of dancing to rap music.

Secondary sport was timetabled each Thursday morning. The secondary students were divided into 4 teams. Each week one team went to Southgate Lanes for community access and to play a game of bowling. This was a highlight of the sports program for the students. The other teams remained at school and participated in a range of modified sport activities. In 2013, the focus was on developing ball skills and the students played games to practise catching, throwing and kicking. Every third week the students participated in a dance program during sport. The students were assisted to join in a variety of dances including bush dances, the limbo, conga and freestyle dancing to contemporary dance music.

All students participated in weekly swimming program in the hydrotherapy pool. Parents, volunteers and an additional member of staff support this program.

In 2013 students from across different class groups participated in a boccia competition for the second year. The competition is specifically for students with disabilities. Students competed from other special school and from support classes in regular schools. With practice at school and the support of teachers, SLSOs and volunteers it was an enriching experience.
The classroom and playground is used by classes for important gross motor movements such as cycling, climbing, balancing, jumping and aerobic exercise movements. The students are able to develop gross motor skills and participate in activities aimed at developing balance, movement, posture, flexibility, muscle tone, muscle strength and general mobility.

St George School has a number of modified bikes which are used daily to support gross motor activities.

Gross motor activities target each student's individual needs and motor function. Therapy recommendations on physical management issues are integrated into class programs across KLAS.

Sailability as a sport was continued in 2013. Students from a number of classes enjoyed the experience and fun of sailing on Wednesday mornings at Kogarah Bay in second term with 1:1 support from volunteers and workers at Sailability. It was an enriching experience for our students from very experienced volunteer sailors.

Classes also had the opportunity to go sailing on Sydney Harbour. Sailors with Disabilities took groups of students on a yacht from Rushcutters Bay, under the Harbour Bridge and around Darling Harbour. Students and staff took turns steering the yacht.

The sailing excursions provided our students with an inclusive leisure activity. Both programs are volunteer based and participation by students at St George School ensures that we maintain our links with volunteer and community organization.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Assembly**

Assembly is a whole school event and in 2013 was held weekly on Thursday afternoons. Assembly parallels assemblies in mainstream schools with Acknowledgement to Country followed by the National Anthem to commence assembly. Assembly concludes with the St George School song. The program addresses skills in listening, speaking and socialisation.

Assembly becomes an opportune time for the whole school to celebrate achievement through assembly awards. Principal awards, sports awards, library awards, energy saver award and birthday recognition alternate with class presentation on a variety of current topics and values.

Each fortnight two classes work together to take responsibility for coordinating, hosting and presenting the assembly.

The year, 2013, started with a celebration of the Chinese New Year, The Year of the Snake. Australia Day was included for the first time in first term's assembly. International Women’s Day and St Patrick’s Day were recognized in our first term assemblies. The term finished with a special assembly to commemorate Anzac Day. For this assembly, each team presented an Anzac story. The Primary team told the true story of Sandra Archer’s great uncle. The Middle team read the story of the *Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels* on the Kokoda trail in New Guinea and the Secondary team read *My Grandad Marches on Anzac Day*. The secondary team also had true accounts of soldiers from the families of Caitlin Treadwell, Alissa Kelly and staff members Emilie Bell and Karl Hemsley.

The second term assemblies included themes that were topical such as International Nurses’ Day, Sorry Day, the Royal Family and the Winter Solstice. Sorry Day was held during NAIDOC week in June and supported our commitment to increasing knowledge and understanding of the histories, cultures and experiences of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia. The long weekend in June provided the opportunity to look at the celebration of the Queen’s birthday and the Royal Family. The winter solstice provided the opportunity to look at the implications of the shortest day of the year and the climates and difference in the north and southern hemispheres.
The assemblies in third term were topical and included National Tree Day, City to Surf, Kites for Kids and the Spring Equinox. The exception was a look at our police force. The role of the police in our community provided an opportunity to look at the range of functions from law maintenance and road safety to education in schools.

In term 4, the assemblies covered World food day, Kindness Day, a presentation by the RSPCA on its role and Boxing Day. In 2013 we had three students from Denmark on a practicum for second semester. They presented a look at Denmark from their personal perspective: their home, family, city, food, music and customs.

Our final assembly for the year is the Leavers’ Assembly. In 2013, we said farewell to three graduates. The Assembly commenced with the announcement of the new captains for the following year and the handover of the captains’ badges to the newly elected captains. The Leavers’ assembly also provided the opportunity to farewell our families and to acknowledge the vital role and commitment that has accompanied their child’s progress throughout the years of schooling. In 2013, we also farewelled our teacher on the graduating class who retired.

**Aboriginal education**

The Department of Education and Communities’ Aboriginal Education policy aims to provide for all students an increased knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal Australia through the inclusion of Aboriginal histories, cultures and languages in educational programs. Aboriginal education and training is core business for all staff.

At St George School, Aboriginal studies is embedded in cross curriculum content within units of work and through participation in specific initiatives such as the Koori Art Expressions.

The Koori Art Expressions Program was introduced in 2009 as an initiative of Sydney Region of DEC to educate all students about Aboriginal Australia. The program provided teacher professional learning on aboriginal art, support for the development of an art program at school and the opportunity to exhibit student art works.

As in previous years, students at St George School researched and produced aboriginal art works which reflected a respect and understanding of Aboriginal art and culture. The collaborative artwork of students from Secondary 1 and Secondary 3 was exhibited at the Maritime Museum in Darling Harbour from November 2013 to February 2014. For the launch, Emilie Bell, class teacher made an informative video to accompany the artwork to demonstrate the process for the students in developing the artwork.

Respect for Aboriginal communities is reflected in the Acknowledgement to Country at the commencement of assembly every week. St George School is built on the Gadigal land of the Eora nation.

**Library**

St George School has a librarian allocation that enables the delivery of library lessons once per week. In 2013, all classes attended formal library lessons on Thursdays on a fortnightly basis. The librarian selected appropriate materials to address student needs appropriate to the age of students.

Students enjoyed listening to stories and having the opportunity to borrow books. The interactive whiteboard in the library enhanced opportunities for the students to actively participate in lessons.

A library award is presented fortnightly to two students for outstanding participation in library lessons.

The librarian is also responsible for the organisation of the library, the annual stocktake and replenishment of children’s books and resources.

The most significant aspect of library lessons during 2013 was the library itself which was relocated to the stand alone multi-purpose room.
The former library was converted to function as the school hall.

**Excursions**

All classes participated in excursions and community access programs. Excursions provide the opportunity to experience structured learning activities beyond the school environment. It supports functional literacy and numeracy programs and enhances opportunities to communicate and socialize within the local community.

The primary classes visited Sydney Aquarium, Taronga Zoo, the Tram Museum and a visit to the Royal National Park Environment Education Centre.

Primary 1 went on the first primary overnight excursion. During the September/October school holidays, Primary 1 went to Canberra. It was a wonderful experience for our youngest students in the school. They visited a farmyard nursery, a roller derby in action and lastly the Questacon Science show. It was a credit to the staff and families who raised money throughout the year to fund the excursion. The excursion was supported by volunteers.

The primary team has also had some incursions at the school. There were two incursions including the Easter Bilby story where students made some craft with clay, and also an environmental visit, where students learned about Australian animals.

The two classes of the Middle Team combined to go to a number of different excursions during 2013 including Oatley Park, Australian Wildlife Park, the House Ed program at the Sydney Opera House to see performances of *Swing Baby Swing* and *The Nutcracker*. Other Middle team excursions included Sailability at Kogarah Bay, Sailors with Disabilities on Sydney Harbour and the Museum of Contemporary Art.

The senior secondary class timetabled weekly excursions as part of their transition from school and community access programs. They visited Pole Depot on Mondays and went to Rockdale Plaza on Wednesdays. At Pole Depot the class joined a post school group and undertook activities at local sites which varied from week to week. The shopping program supported literacy and numeracy programs.

The senior class also visited the apple orchard at Darces Forest where the students picked their own apples off trees and learnt about irrigation and picking. They visited the National Park at Kurnell where they learnt about early Australian history.

Excursions by the other secondary classes included visits to the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Sir Joseph Banks Park, Sailing on Sydney Harbour, St Agnes Talent Show at Matraville, Sydney Aquarium and the Community Gardens at Rockdale.

**Integration Programs**

Integration programs provide opportunities for students at St George School to develop social and communication skills, to share learning with non-disabled students and to generalise skills in another setting.

In 2013, we continued the reverse integration programs operating with support from two local high schools, James Cook Boys Technology High School and Georges River College, Penshurst Campus. The students from the high schools visited on a weekly basis and participated in social, recreational and class programs.

Students from James Cook Boys Technology High School participated at lunchtime and joined in activities including ball games, cycling and rap dance demonstration. Students from Georges River College, Penshurst Campus, provided playground and classroom support.

In addition, the staff and students from Carlton South Public School welcomed the students from St George School at their Athletics Carnival day at Jubilee Oval. Our students enjoyed the day with races dedicated to include our students and with
the enthusiasm of the staff and students at Carlton South Public School.

Outcomes of integration programs for our students include social interaction with school age peers without disabilities. Incidental learning included enhanced opportunities for communication. The outcome for the visiting students is an awareness of disabilities and opportunities to broaden communication and citizenship skills.

**Volunteer programs**

St George School provides opportunities for individuals and groups to undertake community programs. A number of tertiary studies require the completion of specific hours of community support.

In 2013 tertiary students attended from St George TAFE, Loftus TAFE, Sydney University, Australian Catholic University and UTS.

St George School also hosted Year 11 students from local schools undertaking VET courses in Business Studies. A student from Carinya School undertook weekly work experience in 2013 and a student from James Cook Boys Technology High School completing his year 10 studies in an alternative educational setting at St George School in term 4.

To support the awareness of working with students with disabilities, Ana Mowle, Assistant Principal, presented an information session to groups of students at Georges River College Penshurst Campus on their volunteer day.

St George School also hosts student practicums throughout the year. Students attend from TAFE NSW and from universities. Tertiary studies of participating students range from certificates courses through to undergraduate degrees and post graduate studies. The length of practicums vary from a three day observation to a four week block. Students attend from disability TAFE courses, teacher undergraduate courses, nursing studies and special education studies.

**National partnerships and significant Commonwealth initiatives (participating schools only)**

In 2013 St George School was successful in its application to participate in the Empowering Local Schools National Partnership (ELSNP) program.

This is a Commonwealth Government initiative to empower participating schools to make decisions at a local level, supporting them to better respond to the needs of students and the school community and provide services designed to assist their students to achieve their best educational outcomes.

In 2013, St George School implemented a flexible model of staffing of two classes.

The challenge at St George School is maximising learning time for students given the need to meet the personal care and health care needs of students. Through the Empowering Local Schools initiative, St George School was able to trial whether a different model of staffing would demonstrate increased learning outcomes for students as a result of an increase in teacher time in the classroom.

In 2013, two Primary classes merged forming a class with 12 students, one teacher and four school learning support officers. The model aimed to continue learning time for students during the school day when other students were out of the class for toileting and health care matters. It required organization of the schedules for the school learning support officers to ensure that staff were in the class supporting the teacher with teaching and learning and staff attended to the toileting and health care procedures.

Feedback from participating staff and informal feedback from families indicated that there was more learning time, greater dynamics and engagement in the classroom and enhanced opportunities for the development of socialisation skills. Students adjusted early and with ease to an increased number of adults working in the classroom.
The class commenced the year with 10 students and increased to 12 students during the year.

**School planning and evaluation 2012—2014**

**School evaluation processes**

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- Formal feedback from all staff through surveys, discussion at team meetings and at teacher meetings. Evaluation questions took the following format: Were our targets for 2013 realistic? Were they achieved? Were there other achievements that had not been previously identified?

- Establishment of Literacy Committee and Numeracy Committee to support the implementation of strategies in the school plan and to evaluate progress towards targets.

- Continuation of Technology Committee to include support for the implementation of strategies in the school plan and to evaluate progress towards targets.

- Report to the P&C at meetings each term on school matters including the school plan and discussion on matters raised.

- Teachers and SLSOs have enhanced expertise in supporting the physical management needs of students.

- St George School engages in positive relationships with local schools for mutual benefit and support of students with disabilities across settings.

- St George School networks with other special schools statewide and within the Region to deliver a national curriculum for students with moderate/severe disabilities.

- Medical personnel support schools in the management of complex health care procedures.

- Staff have enhanced appreciation and understanding of environmental education.

- Sustainability Education is embedded in class programs across the school.

- Staff and students take positive environmental actions within the school and community.

- St George School supports the implementation of National Partnerships to enhance learning outcomes for students with disabilities beyond St George School in accordance with Commonwealth guidelines and Regional processes.

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

- Target: *Therapy needs of students are reviewed and therapy intervention is sought in accordance with need.* Teachers work together with families to support the implementation of therapy recommendations. In 2013, a number of therapists from ADHC, Cerebral Palsy Alliance and private therapists supported student access OT, physiotherapy and speech therapy. The physiotherapist from ADHC supported a whole school approach to wheelchair maintenance, review of standing frames and walkers and assessment of appropriateness of modified bikes for individual students.
Most staff indicated that this target was realistic and was achieved.

- **Target:** Class teachers work collaboratively with therapists to deliver a class program that is inclusive of recommendations of therapists. Teachers reported a good two way support and communication. One teacher commented that teachers must let therapists know what is realistic for class programs to run efficiently. Therapy and physical management matters were included in the students’ class profiles and in their personalised learning plans.

- **Target:** Therapy clinics are implemented by therapy providers. Physiotherapists from ADHC ran wheelchair, standing frame and walker clinics. This target was dependent on approval from ADHC and was achieved through the commitment and dedication of one therapist and may not be replicated with change of therapy staff and/or ADHC policies.

- **Target:** Teaching staff become familiar with the new Phase 1 syllabuses of the national curriculum and plan for the implementation in 2014. This target was achieved through scheduled sessions in teacher professional learning sessions. The following institute registered courses were undertaken in 2013:
  - The learner and the new curriculum
  - Teaching for the new curriculum
  - English K-10
  - Mathematics K-10
  - Science and Technology K-6
  - Science 8-10
  - History K-10

- **Target:** Carbon Kids Program is implemented across the school. All classes implemented at least one unit of work from Carbon Kids to support implementation of environmental education. All units from Carbon Kids program required significant modification to support student access to learning.

- **Target:** Environmental Education is embedded into each team’s class programs. Each team was responsible for maintenance of a worm farm. All classes addressed environmental education including recycling and composting programs. Excursions to the Royal National Park Environment Education centre and incursions from the Centre occurred during the year. The environment officer from Rockdale Council provided a whole school presentation on environmental matters. Teachers attended the St George and Sutherland Environment Education network meetings each term.

- **Target:** St George School develops a product in collaboration with four other SSPs in accordance with the goals of the National Partnership program for students with disabilities – SSPs as Centres of Excellence. This was a major initiative in 2013. Teachers, executives and principals from four SSPs met regularly to share ideas and to develop a resource to support teachers of students with disabilities in mainstream classes. The project also allowed for significant teacher professional learning in technology

- **Target:** A flexible model of staffing for delivery of educational programs is trialled under the Empowering Local Schools Initiative. Flexible model was implemented. Two classes combined to make a composite class with one teacher and four school learning support officers.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014**

- Class teachers map therapy needs of student and liaise with families and therapists regarding therapy recommendations
• Student learning program include implementation of therapy recommendations where indicated
• Principal liaises with ADHC therapy providers regarding operation of therapy clinics at school such as wheelchair clinic, stander clinic, walkers and modified bikes
• Principal invites private therapists to present information on their services at Coffee & Chat meetings.
• Each team, Primary, Middle and Secondary plans for the implementation of the national curriculum and works together in the development of units of work: Primary for English and Middle and Secondary plan for English, Mathematics, Science and History.
• Teams share resources and successes at teacher meetings.
• Environmental Education is embedded into each team’s class programs
• Mathematics day is held in first term to support implementation of the new Mathematics syllabus and to showcase achievements.
• St George school continues to work with 4 other SSPs to develop a product to support the goals of the National Partnership program for students with disabilities (Every Student Every School – SSPs as Centres of Excellence.
• Teachers continue to receive intensive professional learning in the area of communication and technology to support classroom practice and the goals ESES – SSPs as centres of excellence
• Composite class operates for a second year in Primary 2.
• Evaluation of flexible model of staffing is supported by evaluation from class staff and by feedback from families.

• Literacy and numeracy programs operate across the school on a daily basis.
• All students access literacy and numeracy programs daily.
• Literacy and numeracy resources are developed and available for staff to access.
• Teaching staff have enhanced skills in the implementation and evaluation of literacy and numeracy programs as a result of ongoing professional learning and support.
• Students have enhanced literacy and numeracy skills.
• Literacy and numeracy resources are available for staff to access including electronic/e-resources.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
• Target: Teams maintain a team literacy and numeracy plan in 2013.
The Secondary team ran literacy groups and covered poetry, limericks, sensory books and use of the ipad for literacy.
The Middle team focused on literacy in Science.
The Primary team ran literacy groups in the afternoons.
Numeracy plan was developed but was not consistently implemented across the teams. In the primary team numeracy was more class based.
• Target: Literacy and numeracy is included in daily lessons.
Literacy was implemented daily across KLAS in all classes. In a number of classes numeracy was embedded in the daily Morning Circle program e.g. how many students at school today and how many away. Numeracy was implemented in some but not all on a daily basis.
• Target: Implementation of the 4 Blocks program across the school is supported by professional learning.
Training in the Four Blocks literacy program for students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities was
undertaken at teacher professional learning sessions and most classes followed up training with implementation of the parts of the program in the classroom. The program was adapted to meet the needs of the students in each class.

- **Target:** Teacher meetings include sharing of successful literacy and numeracy programs.

There was a strong focus on sharing resources at teacher meetings. The shared drive on the server was the repository of shared work. Teachers provided colleagues with examples of achievements in literacy and numeracy.

- **Target:** Literacy committee is established to support the professional learning of teachers in measurement of literacy gains, writing programs, development of effective student yes/no feedback and the demonstration of available literacy resources.

The Literacy Committee was established and met each term in 2013. The committee covered critical areas such as uniform yes/no responses, viewing of video footage of the 4 Blocks program, the availability of literacy resources for loan, the reintroduction of the former DEAR program to operate every Monday afternoon, liaison with book suppliers for library resources for student borrowing and suggestion to showcase literacy in the classroom as part of Education Week display. In fourth term, the Committee looked at the literacy resources on the shared drive and identified the need to categorise the resources to support ready access to appropriate resources. It was agreed that professional learning for teachers on the Carol Musselwhite series on literacy for students with multiple disabilities remain on the agenda for 2014. The committee promoted training for all staff in in the Prloquo2go app to support communication for students at school, home and in the community.

- **Target:** Numeracy committee is established to support the professional learning of teachers and to enhance access to appropriate numeracy and mathematics resources and to support measurement of numeracy gains.

The Numeracy Committee was established and met in three terms in 2013. Role of the committee was to support implementation of strategies in the school plan. The committee covered areas such as team focus areas for numeracy lessons, age appropriateness of numeracy resources e.g. functional skills in the community for senior students, matching of resources to student needs, development of tactile numeracy resources for students with vision impairment. In second semester, the committee promoted authentic assessment of numeracy skills using programs such as SENA and the Holroyd/Mary Brooksbank numeracy resource.

- **Target:** Teacher meetings include feedback from the literacy and numeracy committees.

The literacy and numeracy committees were established to assist in the implementation of strategies in the school plan. Feedback on the committee meetings was provided to all staff at fortnightly full staff meetings. The weekly teacher professional learning sessions provided the opportunity for teachers to receive information to support literacy and numeracy in the classroom.

- **Target:** Teachers contribute to the literacy and numeracy resources on the shared drive including worksheets.

Feedback from teachers regarding use of literacy and numeracy resources in the classroom was scheduled in the weekly teacher professional learning sessions.
Teachers were expected to load resources onto the shared to increase the available resources in the school. The actual contribution by each teacher was not formally undertaken.

- **Target:** *Teachers implement effective teaching strategies to support literacy/numeracy gains.*

Teachers used a variety of strategies in the classroom ranging from use of specific tools and a multi-modal approach to support access and engagement of students to the integration of literacy and numeracy activities in a number of KLAs.

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

- Teams maintain a team literacy and numeracy plan in 2014
- Literacy and numeracy is included in daily lessons
- Units of work based on the national curriculum include literacy and numeracy components
- Teacher meetings include sharing of successful literacy and numeracy programs
- Teachers contribute to the literacy and numeracy resources on the shared drive including worksheets
- Teacher meeting agenda to include section on *Uploaded on staff share this week*
- Literacy committee supports the implementation of the targets for 2014.
- Numeracy committee supports the implementation of the targets for 2014.
- Numeracy committee plans for the Mathematics Day in first term.
- Teachers implement effective teaching strategies to support literacy/numeracy gains
- Professional learning on Proloquo2go continues for all staff.
- Information on the MaryBrooksbank/Holroyd Literacy assessment to be shared with teaching staff upon its availability
- Teacher professional learning focus on cross curricular literacy skills acquisition
- Trial of commercial literacy resources to assess suitability for students with severe intellectual disability e.g. Sunshine Books, oxford owl, Starfall.

**School priority 3**

**Technology**

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

- Technology hardware and software are fully utilised in the classroom.
- Students have enhanced independence in the use of technology.
- Technology is accessed to support the individualisation of student learning.
- Teachers use the SETT framework to match technology to student needs.
- Staff maintain currency in the use of technology for teaching and learning
- Units of work using specific software programs are available and accessible for all staff.

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

- **Target:** *Teacher professional learning includes overview of SETT framework.*

The SETT framework guides teachers in matching technology to the needs of students. It stands for Students, Environment, Task and Tools. Training was provided for teachers in first term. Feedback from teachers indicates that learning in the use of the framework needs to be consolidated with further professional learning in 2014.

- **Target:** *Teachers develop a technology profile for students in their class.*

Technology profiles were developed for most students in 2013 and became part of the handover information at the end of the year. The technology profile identifies and individualises the tools and programs that support learning.
• Target: Classroom technology resources are utilized and appropriate to the needs of the students in the class.
Teachers trial students on available resources. The resources for the classrooms included IWB, ipads, class PC, touch screen monitors and smaller devices such as switches, step by step, wireless switches, powerlinks, switch adapted mouse.
• Target: Teacher professional learning occurs 2-3 times per term and includes showcase of use of technology in the classroom.
Teachers developed enhanced skills in the use of technology in the classroom through collegial support and sharing. Teams collaborated and provided mentoring to other team members who were less familiar with technology. The expectation to showcase was applicable to all teachers.
• Target: Whole school technology professional occurs weekly for two terms and fortnightly for two terms.
Meetings were scheduled in each term’s calendar. Focus for technology training was developed and included use of available software at the school and the effective use of apps on the ipad. All staff, teachers and school learning support officers participated in technology professional learning sessions.
• Target: Whole school professional learning occurs in smaller groups and follows format of exposition demonstration and opportunities for practice.
Effective teaching strategies were used to support development of expertise of all staff. The smaller groups gave time for staff to work together, share ideas and provide mentoring support.
• Target: Whole school professional learning will include mentor support.

The range of expertise in the use of technology in the classroom is broad. Mentor support assisted less experienced and less confident staff to develop the expertise appropriate to the needs of the students in the class. Mentoring support occurred in the smaller groups in the scheduled whole school technology training sessions. At times, executives used release time to assist staff.
• Target: Whole school professional learning will have expectation of product/s which will be shared with colleagues.
Staff benefited from the sharing sessions. These sessions occurred at the end of each term and allowed staff working in the smaller groups to showcase their use of technology in the classroom.
• Target: Whole school professional learning will focus on use of tablet technology in the classroom.
As tablet technology became increasingly useful as a tool in the classroom, the focus on the use of apps that were suitable for students with moderate/severe disabilities was explored in whole school professional learning. The apps that were reviewed were considered suitable for literacy, numeracy, music, cause and effect, visual arts and English. Accessibility options and settings were also covered during professional learning sessions.
• Target: Class teachers will include technology at home and where appropriate liaise with families to set up home school learning.
Some home/school learning has occurred mostly sharing photos for news and photos to support class programs. In some cases some families have supported the use of Proloquo2go app.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
• Teachers use handover information to support the development of a technology profile for each student
• Teachers develop a technology profile for each student in their class
• Classroom technology resources are utilized and appropriate to the needs of the students in the class
• Teacher professional learning in technology is enhanced by attendance at workshops and/or conferences.
• Teacher professional learning in the area of technology occurs 2-3 times per term and includes showcase of use of technology in the classroom
• Whole school technology professional occurs weekly for two terms and fortnightly for two terms
• Whole school professional learning occurs in smaller groups and follows format of exposition, demonstration and opportunities for practice
• Whole school professional learning in technology will include mentor support
• Whole school professional learning will have expectation of product/s which will be shared with colleagues
• Whole school professional learning will focus on use of tablet technology in the classroom
• Class teachers will include technology at home and where appropriate liaise with families to set up home school learning
• Technology initiatives will be shared with teaching staff at teacher meetings

Professional learning

Each year schools are allocated funds for teacher professional learning. The policy and funds recognise that schools are the best place for teachers to develop effective professional practice.

St George School received a grant tied to the professional learning of teachers. The school expended the grant. In addition, the school utilised funds from the global budget to provide for ongoing professional learning of the entire staff including school learning support officers and office staff. Professional learning activities were linked to the three goals of the school management plan.

Accreditation with the standards of the NSW Institute of teachers indicate that teachers are required to complete 100 hours professional learning over a five year period including at least 50 hours of attendance at Institute registered courses. This requirement applies to ‘new scheme teachers’ of which St George School had three in 2013.

All staff who attended external courses provided training at school for colleagues.

In 2013, within the school, the professional learning schedule included weekly teacher meetings, five staff development days, fortnightly full staff meetings, fortnightly technology meetings in terms one and four and weekly technology meetings in terms two and three.

Whole staff participated in mandatory annual child protection update, CPR training and accreditation, changes to Work, Health and Safety legislation presentation, NSW Department of Education and Communities Code of Conduct training. In 2013, it was mandatory for all staff working in schools to complete anaphylaxis and emergency care training. This training was undertaken in February 2013. The anaphylaxis certificate is valid for two year and recertification is due in first term 2015. Staff at St George School also participated in online epilepsy management training.

School Learning Support Officers attended health care procedures certification and recertification courses, where required. The certification course requires recertification after two years.

The external courses attended in 2012 included Musica Viva workshops, computer coordinator days, state special education conference, technology workshops, autism training, ipad apps for students with disabilities.
In 2013, the special education conference was a national conference with delegates and presenters from across Australia. All teaching staff had the opportunity to attend for at least one of the three days of the conference.

Three teachers attended the AGOSCI Conference in Sydney in May. This four day conference focused on the use of augmentative and alternative communication to enhance learning for all students in special education settings. Many of the innovative and new ideas were shared with all staff over a period of teacher professional development sessions and many teachers have now integrated this learning into their classroom practice.

The librarian attended Teacher Librarian Network Meetings each term allowing all staff to keep up-to-date with new books and resources.

To support our environmental education program across the school, a number of teachers attended St George and Sutherland Environment Network meetings held each term.

All teachers participated in the development of a resource for students with an intellectual disability. Although the focus for participation was not on professional learning, collegial sharing of ideas and strategies provided a rich learning experience.

In 2013, St George School combined with four other special schools for two staff development days. Topics covered included numeracy for students with an intellectual disability, diet and nutrition and presentation from the Board of Studies in preparation for the national curriculum.

At the end of the year the combined professional learning for teachers from the four schools was delivered by Spectronics and focused on Advanced Communication strategies using the ipad apps.

Spectronics also delivered training on Proloquo2go over two days at St George School for four special schools. The training repeated on the second day allowed for all teaching staff at St George school to be trained in the use of this app which is an app for communication across settings and can be adapted to individual needs. Training of all staff ensured that learning to communicate using the app continue from year to the next with change of staff.

**Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Parent opinions were sought in relation to the end of year school report and the school’s year book. There was overwhelming positive support for the format of the school reports. The reports included learning experiences and the KLAS addressed within each program in addition to student progress in KLAS and their own personalized learning goals.

In 2013, the school produced the third St George Yearbook. Again, the Yearbook was received well by all families.

School staff met weekly in teams to discuss matters relating to teaching and learning and to provide input into whole school issues. Staff met weekly with technology alternating with whole school matters such as feedback from committees, reports from other teams and whole school administration and organization issues. The format of the meetings provides opportunity for whole staff consultation and input. In addition it is expected that all staff are members of one or more committees.

In third term staff are consulted on their choice of class the following year. Consideration is given to staff requests and attempts are made to provide first or second choice.

Staff were asked to indicate whether they were willing to participate in the flexible model of staffing which was intended to continue for a second year as part of the ELSNP program. Teacher and school learning support officers feedback their willingness to participate.
A social committee exists to support staff welfare and each team including the administration team take responsibility for a term to coordinate social events. Over the course of a year, all staff have the opportunity to contribute to staff welfare.

In fourth term the targets for the year in the school plan are evaluated and all staff participate in the evaluation process. Evaluation of the school plan is addressed for families in the P&C meeting in fourth term.

A principal report is delivered at P&C meetings held each term and provide the opportunity to receive feedback and suggestions from families.

An email received from the parent of a child in the composite trial class indicate demonstrates acceptance of the model:

I'm sure you get many emails from parents (well im hoping you do) saying how wonderful St George School is and how thankful they are that their child is attending. I am definitely one of those parents!! xx was lucky to have a large support of teachers this year, they have all shown the love and support towards xx that we show her at home and I'm grateful for that. Your staff are just wonderful from the girls in the office, to her own teachers and other teaching staff to you. We are so lucky ....

Other feedback from families indicate concern regarding the lack of therapists at the school. While we work collaboratively with therapists, the Department of Education and Communities does not employ therapists in schools. The importance of physical management issues is recognized and addressed in each child’s personalised learning plan.

School organisation and consultation processes are in keeping with staff preferences and contribute to staff satisfaction.

Program evaluations

Background

The year 2013 presented a number of challenges for staff at St George School including the development of a resource for teachers of students with an intellectual disability in mainstream schools and the move from an OASIS system of operation in the school office to a new financial and student management program. The year also saw changes in preparation for the implementation of the national curriculum from 2014.

The development of the teaching resource provided the opportunity for teaching staff to look at as number of program areas and to evaluate those programs in relation to the implementation of similar programs in other schools.

The reporting and assessment process and, in particular, the mid year reporting process was evaluated by teachers

Findings and conclusions

Learning is linked to the syllabus documents and progress is measured by attainment of syllabus outcomes. Assessment remains a challenge for teachers of students with severe levels of disabilities.

Planning in first term supports the identification of learning priorities. This process is initially undertaken collaboratively with families. In second term, teachers report against individual learning priorities using a personalized reporting scale: beginning, occasional, frequent and independent.

Where a student is identified at the beginning stage, the student has some existing prior knowledge and and/or necessary pre skills for the task. The student is beginning to participate in a task with maximum class staff assistance. The student uses skills and knowledge in a particular setting.

Where a student is identified at the occasional stage, the student understands information, concept and/or can perform skill. The student often relies on physical or verbal assistance when participating in a task. The student has begun to demonstrate skills in selected, familiar settings.

Where a student is identified at the frequent stage, the student relies on partial prompts to
complete a task. The student can regularly perform the skill or demonstrate knowledge. The student uses the skills or knowledge in a variety of familiar settings and situations.

Where a student is identified at the independent stage, the student can complete a task independently, without assistance. The student maintains the skill or knowledge over time. The student generalises the skill or knowledge to new settings, people or materials.

The process of identifying syllabus outcomes appropriate to the needs of the students and using a personalized reporting scale was deemed appropriate for students at St George School and informative to families. The report also provided information regarding effort and future directions. Parents are provided with a copy of the learning experiences of the class which describes class programs, syllabus outcomes linked to the program and the learning experiences.

The mid-year report is accompanied by parent teacher interviews. In 2013 teacher comments were omitted from the mid-year report. Any comments were delivered directly to families during the parent teacher interviews.

Assessment of tasks is often based on observations, anecdotal information and subjective conclusions. Feedback from teachers indicates that authentic assessment based on evidence is required.

Future directions
Use of authentic assessment tasks and evidence of learning is to form the basis of reporting to families. Some teachers have indicated an intent to trial digital portfolios for the reporting process. Future directions in assessment and reporting aims to attain data and measure progress against a continuum of learning.

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

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