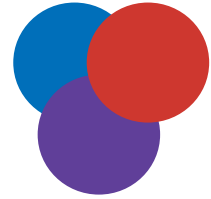


Royal North Shore Hospital School Annual Report



2015



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2015 is provided to the community of Royal North Shore Hospital 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.

Vanessa Murphy
Principal

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Message from the Principal

Royal North Shore Hospital School is a unique educational environment with a very transient and unpredictable enrolment. Students may be hospitalised due to illness, disease, accident, trauma, mental health issues or for medical procedures. Our school staff are part of a multidisciplinary team working closely with a range of health professionals, planning and monitoring the management of a child's hospital stay.

I am proud of the achievement of our students and the ongoing success of the strategies being implemented by the school to create engaging and meaningful experiences for our students. Our school's success is underpinned by three key elements that ensure quality teaching and learning programs for our students.

Firstly, we have a dedicated staff who collaborate to provide an inclusive, caring, supportive and positive environment where all students are nurtured and encouraged to participate in education. Secondly we create productive partnerships with parents and carers, health staff, home schools and the local community. Through these relationships we establish rapport and develop trust quickly to support engagement in learning. Thirdly, learning is strength based and personalised and therefore more meaningful whilst a child is in hospital. This enables quality individual learning programs to be planned and implemented so students can gain optimum educational and health outcomes.

In 2015 we created a new logo incorporating these elements *LEARNING, COLLABORATION, and PARTNERSHIPS*, represented by rings or circles (as if looking from above at a group; linking). The circles emphasize never ending care, there is flow through as they are attached. The green circle, representing the child, stands for life and renewal, harmony and balance. The other circles represent parents and carers, health and school staff (both RNSHS and census school). Red is for love, energy, courage and strength. Blue is for trust and calmness and orange stands for cheerfulness, warmth, good health and creativity. Teamwork, belonging, harmony, respect and cooperation all contribute to wellbeing, and are evident everyday to embrace the whole child.

Our ESES (Every School, Every Student) combined hospital schools project kept us very busy! Five hospital schools joined together – Bankstown, Illawarra, John Hunter, Liverpool and Royal North Shore – to produce three visual media presentations to:

- raise awareness of hospital schools,
- reduce student anxiety when requiring hospitalisation,
- enhance collaborative partnerships between parents, health staff, census schools and the wider community.



Filming took place at the Royal North Shore Hospital over several days and included a Muppet called Abigail who was visiting a hospital for the first time. A successful launch in November was held at Royal North Shore to screen the videos for the first time. It was a wonderful celebration of hospital schools and the role we play in continuing education for children. The three videos have been placed on a designated NSW Hospital Schools YouTube Channel with the link being available on Hospital School websites, our school iPads and emails. They are an important resource in supporting any child requiring hospitalisation.

We commit to maintaining education and a supportive and positive culture. Included in this are individualised learning programs which are developed in consultation with medical and health staff with careful consideration given to the emotional, psychological and social needs of students. Our commitment to these practices enables all students to have equal access to education and not be disadvantaged due to illness or injury.

Vanessa Murphy
Principal

School background

School vision statement

OUR VISION: Our caring and compassionate staff ensure a positive and engaging environment exists to support every student's wellbeing.

Royal North Shore Hospital school is committed to providing an inclusive, stimulating and supportive environment enabling students in exceptional circumstances to maintain educational continuity. Our school advocates for students and provides a conduit to the multidisciplinary team, census schools and community. We develop positive relationships to support engagement in learning, leading to successful outcomes and transitions. The wellbeing of our students is our highest priority.

School context

Royal North Shore Hospital School provides continuity of education for all students from Kindergarten to Year 12 who are patients at Royal North Shore Hospital. Our school offers Individual Learning Programs for our students who come from metropolitan and country areas, a range of cultural backgrounds and all sectors of schooling. Students remain enrolled at their census school whilst attending our hospital school.

Our staff play an active part in the multidisciplinary team, in working collaboratively with medical staff and allied health services, as well as in close liaison with home schools and family members/carers. This collaboration ensures optimum health and educational outcomes for our students.

Self-assessment and school achievements

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, our school achievements and the next steps to be pursued. 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.

Excellence in Learning

In the domain of Learning our efforts have been on wellbeing, connection, and learning. The strong performance of the school in creating and maintaining a respectful, supportive and inclusive culture has been a feature of our progress in 2015. The fundamental importance of wellbeing is to establish positive relationships built on trust, kindness, and respect. The results are evident in students wanting to participate in our school program despite being unwell. Parent feedback also reflects their child's engagement in learning and experiencing a more positive stay whilst in hospital. At Royal North Shore Hospital School we focus on personalised learning (Strategic Direction 1, School Plan 2015-2017). Due to the increasing complexity of student learning needs, Royal North Shore Hospital School staff create individual learning plans that are personalised and deliver quality educational outcomes. Attention to individual learning needs has been another component of our progress throughout the year. Our staff identify a learning intention, what skills, knowledge and understanding is required, and also what is the desired outcome. This process is reviewed throughout the day as determined by the child's capability and wellbeing, with parents often being involved in planning the learning directions. Supportive and collaborative relationships enhance engagement in learning, leading to successful transitions and outcomes.

Excellence in Teaching

Our main focus in the domain of Teaching has been on collaborative practice and enhancing our skills through professional learning. We focused on a range of evidence-based professional learning in 2015 to strengthen and deliver school learning priorities. Staff attended courses on mental health and wellbeing, anxiety disorders, resilience building strategies, creative arts, national curriculum, and communicating and engaging with your school community. As a result staff are reflecting and reviewing teaching practices and incorporating new technology with the students. Our self-assessment process will further assist the school to refine the strategic priorities in our School Plan leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students. Staff reflection and procedures ensure positive and respectful relationships are taking collective responsibility for student wellbeing and success.

Excellence in Leadership

In the domain of Leading, our priorities have been effective implementation of the school's strategic directions and practices to achieve educational priorities and ultimately improve educational opportunities for students in hospital. The school community are positive about educational provision, with parents and community members having opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities as well as providing constructive feedback on school practices and procedures. Physical learning spaces are used flexibly and a range of technology is available to students and staff. All staff are supported to develop skills for the successful operation of administrative systems. Strong links exist with the local community, census schools, other educational providers and other organisations to support the school's programs. Progressive leadership and management practices also prioritise building the capabilities of staff with 21st century technology to create a dynamic school learning culture.

Strategic Direction 1

Excellence in personalised learning

Purpose

To actively engage all students in meaningful and challenging learning experiences which are personalised and differentiated.

To promote students' intellectual, social, emotional development and wellbeing in challenging circumstances.

Overall summary of progress

In 2015 Royal North Shore Hospital School staff has strived to meet the individualised needs of our students. The new Department of Education 'Wellbeing Framework for Schools' highlights how an individual's wellbeing, that is, how you feel about yourself, is constantly changing. Wellbeing has a multi-dimensional nature, including the following domains:

- Cognitive wellbeing is related to achievement and *success and is important for gaining knowledge and experiencing positive learning*;
- Emotional wellbeing relates to our self-awareness *and how we regulate our emotions, our resilience*;
- Social wellbeing is our connectedness to others;
- Physical wellbeing, our feelings of safety and security, *enables positive health outcomes; and*
- *Spiritual wellbeing, relates to our sense of meaning and purpose, our beliefs and values.*

Our staff work in partnership with students and their parents/carers, and health staff to determine the best approach in looking after all aspects of their wellbeing. Ability to complete academic tasks is determined by the child's health. By giving our students choice in the activities in which they are interested and various opportunities to engage and learn, we are supporting their self-regulation and self-discipline, and through their achievements their wellbeing is enhanced.

Staff members collaborate to ensure consistency of Individual Learning Plan delivery, including strategies for differentiation and consistency of teacher judgement. Clear learning intentions are stated so the student and teacher know why they are engaged in a particular activity and what the outcome looks like.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures		Resources (annual)
Improvement measure (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	
Students are actively engaged in their learning experiences demonstrated through successful implementation of Individual Learning Plans	Students empowered and supported to direct their learning. Strengths based approach acknowledging and enhancing student interests – parental feedback confirming children have had a more positive time whilst in hospital. Review and adjustment of learning plans. Well-developed processes identify, address and monitor student learning needs.	\$6000 (global) \$200 (RAM)

Next steps

- Maintain positive delivery of service with continual review and evaluation of teaching practice in relation to the Wellbeing Framework
- Enhance visual literacy skills in students visiting hospital to assist in them becoming successful 21st century learners.
- Review of plans in relation to School Excellence framework, quality teaching and new curriculum

Strategic Direction 2

High quality innovative, resilient and collaborative staff

Purpose

To promote, build and sustain professional practice which enables staff to successfully address diverse learning and welfare needs of all students.

Overall summary of progress

Professional learning is linked to the needs of students, teachers, schools and the context. Our school staff participated in a variety of professional learning targeted to school priorities as well as their professional needs. Literacy initiatives, mental health and wellbeing, anxiety disorders, and communicating and engaging with your school community and building capacity towards current educational reforms have been the focus areas in 2015 to achieve this strategic direction. Staff members actively share professional learning to identify the most effective strategies to either improve their performance and development and/or to implement in teaching and learning activities. All staff completed mandatory training, to comply with legislative requirements, to contribute to best practice.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures		Resources (annual)
All staff have developed and achieved authentic performance and development goals aligned with the school plan and key Department of Education reforms.	<p>Professional learning represents the strong link between the school's strategic directions, excellence framework and performance and development plans (PDP's).</p> <p>Staff attended conferences/courses and then evaluated effectiveness of PL and identified new practice when addressing student learning needs.</p> <p>Professional development included collaborative practice, strategies for highly anxious students, explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy, personalised learning and innovative technology.</p> <p>Team development sessions were completed to enhance collaboration and resilience. As a result team communication more professional and evident in processes.</p>	\$4900 (global)

Next steps

- Review practice and efficacy and develop data to reflect this in relation to Professional Teaching Standards and Quality Teaching Framework.
- Staff to actively engage in planning their own PL aligned with their PDP, to improve their knowledge and performance.
- Staff to engage in evidence based research and provide quality opportunities for professional discussion, and analyse and give feedback on the improvement of educational outcomes of students.

Strategic Direction 3

Strong, positive, respectful community partnerships

Purpose

To ensure that the health, wellbeing and educational outcomes of students are optimised within a multidisciplinary learning environment.

Overall summary of progress

In 2015 a community of hospital schools collaborated to increase the awareness of Hospital Schools, their role within hospitals and the Department of Education. Three short films were made for Corporate, Primary, and Secondary purposes. The project enhanced positive and respectful relationships across the school community through student, parent, staff and community engagement.

Raising the professional profile of the school within the Health Service and within the greater community was another focus. Effective collaboration and communication within our multidisciplinary team was often in the form of regular meetings to discuss the wellbeing of students and to revise and adjust the action plan. Increased student outcomes resulted from successful implementation of learning plans.

Royal North Shore Hospital School increased its inter-school partnerships with Chatswood High School through planning meetings for students being discharged from hospital and through employing the skills of the drama group for the hospital school DVD. Willoughby Primary School also provided professional development in the new curriculum for our staff members. We aim to sustain and build on these partnerships within our local schools community.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures		Resources (annual)
Increase in collaborative practices between all multidisciplinary partners and carers	<p>Created and distributed Royal North Shore Hospital School newsletter to clinic and health professionals ensuring strong integration of collaborative communication links.</p> <p>The school has productive relationships with schools in local community and outside agencies to improve educational opportunities for students.</p>	\$1500 (global)

Next steps

- Maintain and build on inter-school relationships to provide opportunities for the ongoing development of all staff, as well as providing shared experiences for students.
- Continue positive, respectful relationships that support engagement in learning and ensure the health, wellbeing and educational outcomes of every student.
- Creating new ways to promote the profile of the hospital school.

Key initiatives and other school focus areas

Key initiatives (annual)	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
Aboriginal background funding		n/a
English language proficiency funding		n/a
Targeted students support for refugees and new arrivals		n/a
Socio-economic funding An essential part of our school culture is to be inclusive and allow access and participation for all students. Modified equipment is at hand to allow access and programs are modified and adapted to learning needs.	As we have no prior knowledge of our students until their admission to hospital, we need to be ready and able to accommodate and include any student as soon as it is possible. To enable this, staff are always ready to liaise with parents and home schools so that relevant learning programs can be implemented. Resources and educational applications were purchased to allow access to education from their bedside.	\$ 1,152.00
Low level adjustment for disability funding		n/a
Support for beginning teachers		n/a
Other school focus areas	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
Other, including Early Action for Success		n/a

Mandatory and optional reporting requirements

Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students be consistent with privacy and personal information policies. Students who attend Royal North Shore Hospital School are inpatients of Royal North Shore Child and Adolescent Ward. The school also provides support for day patients receiving treatment including allergy challenges and for students referred from the Child and Youth Mental Health Service.

Student enrolment profile

In 2015 the school had a shared enrolment of 693 students. All students remain enrolled in their home school while attending our hospital school. There were 394 secondary students and 289 primary students, 340 total girls, 353 total boys.

School data revealed a high increase in mental health admissions since 2010. A significant number of students, 89 presented with mental health problems representing nearly 13% of our total student numbers. Of these, two were primary school age, 72 were high school girls and 16 were high school boys. 70 of these students were in Years 9, 10 and 11. There were 30 recurrent students.

Students were mainly from the Northern Sydney region and the Central Coast with a small but significant number from other metropolitan areas, country areas and overseas. Students came from a wide range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Student attendance profile

As a hospital school, days of attendance are a more significant measure than actual enrolments. The daily attendance of all students is recorded. There has been a steady increase in attendance days over the past few years. There were 1503 attendance days in 2015. Students' attendance varies depending on reason for hospitalisation, ongoing medical treatment and their state of health. The range of attendance in 2015 was from 1 day to 83 days.

Structure of classes

Our school's unique setting allows for students to participate in school activities in our modern classroom if health permits, or individually at the bedside. In the schoolroom students have opportunities to socialise while learning, with positive impacts on their wellbeing. We provide educational services for all school age patients, K-12, from all sectors of schooling admitted to Royal North Shore Hospital.

Workforce information

Reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Workforce composition

Position	Number
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	
Assistant Principal(s)	
Head Teacher(s)	
Classroom Teacher(s)	1.252
Teacher of Reading Recovery	
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	
Teacher Librarian	0.084
Teacher of ESL	
School Counsellor – available on request	
School Administrative & Support Staff	1.7
Other positions	
Total	4.036

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

No members from Royal North Shore Hospital School are from an Indigenous background.

Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	50
Postgraduate degree	50

Financial information

Financial summary

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

Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Date of financial summary	30/11/2015
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	64,404.18
Global funds	43083.12
Tied funds	13202.96
School & community sources	0.00
Interest	1222.92
Trust receipts	36643.10
Canteen	0.00
Total income	<u>158556.28</u>
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	10231.74
Excursions	0.00
Extracurricular dissections	0.00
Library	1778.40
Training & development	14142.72
Tied funds	14471.53
Casual relief teachers	11568.24
Administration & office	33441.46
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	419.55
Maintenance	0.00
Trust accounts	36643.10
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	<u>122696.74</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>35859.54</u>

School performance

School-based assessment

Royal North Shore Hospital staff identifies individual needs of each student in collaboration with the student, parent, and health staff. School staff assess the capability of each child and develop positive relationships to determine individualized programs based on student interests and strengths.

NAPLAN

Royal North Shore Hospital does not receive data on student NAPLAN results as this information will be gathered by the students' census school.

However, Royal North Shore Hospital School supports students to complete NAPLAN testing by providing examination protocols whilst they are hospitalized.

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

Royal North Shore Hospital also supports HSC students to access exam conditions to complete HSC exams during their hospitalisation.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

"Thank you very much for making our stay wonderful and the best it can be under the circumstances. It makes things so much easier when you see kids in pain smile again"

"Such a great hospital school - made our three day visit not boring with things to do."

"You are wonderful! Tianna has loved the activities you have offered and the care you have shown. I cannot thank you enough, you have brightened up Tianna's five night stay in hospital so very much!"

"The RNSHS was very helpful in providing Year 12 chemistry and physics work which helped me keep up during my absence from school. Thank you."

"The support teacher was an absolute delight – she came to us very often with suggestions. She was patient, warm, and very kind. She made such a difference with our long day at the ward."

"Made her day in hospital less stressful, great activities.. a great program. Staff extremely helpful"

"It was a wonderful surprise. The teachers were so friendly and helpful. Thank you so much for sharing your time and making our stay pleasant"

"My daughter has been catered to her ability of school work while she has been unwell. This service has been the best thing for Phoebe to keep her occupied. There is nothing else we could have received to make this experience any better. Thank you so much."

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Liaison with Aboriginal students' home schools and parents allows us to ensure that an appropriate Personal Learning Plan (PLP) is implemented to support the students' needs. Consultation with the Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer occurs as needed. Aboriginal perspectives are taught across the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) and are designed to educate all students about Aboriginal history, culture and current Aboriginal Australia. School resources are regularly updated to better engage students and support effective teaching of Aboriginal content. NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week are actively promoted and celebrated.

Multicultural Education and Anti-racism

The school values a culture of inclusiveness and equity. The cultural diversity of our students and our entire school community is acknowledged, respected and celebrated through school practice, programs and resources. The positive message of Harmony Day is promoted with the entire community encouraged to celebrate and participate. Multicultural perspectives are taught across the KLAs. New resources supporting multicultural education continue to be acquired. The school has access to interpreters. English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) programs are put into place for students as needed and staff have undertaken professional learning in EAL/D teaching. A staff member has been trained as an Anti-Racism Contact Officer.

Other school programs

Achievements in the Arts programs

Earlier in the year our staff were engaged in a Creative Arts Workshop run by professional artist Patrick Houston. The aim of our workshop was to learn different techniques and strategies to be able to bring the best creative expression out of every student.

We strive always to continue education for students who are in hospital, and for some it may be in the form of art as they are not capable of formal studies during this time. We want students to be able to explore their creative talent with gentle guidance and produce quality products that they are proud of completing. Self-expression, belonging and being part of a group, and a boost in self-esteem are all important parts of this process.