



Torrens Primary School

Annual School Board Report 2022



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This report supports the work being done in the ACT Education Directorate, as outlined in *Strategic Plan 2018-21: A Leading Learning Organisation*.

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Reporting to the community

Schools report to communities in range of ways, including through:

- Annual School Board Reports
- a (5-year) School Improvement Plan (formerly School Strategic Plan)
- annual Impact Reports
- newsletters
- other sources such as My School.

Summary of School Board activity

The Torrens school board met four times in 2022. During these meetings various aspects of the Torrens school policies, procedures, and strategies were discussed and progressed. A highlight of the board meetings was the in depth exploration, guided by Rachel Matthews, of the myriad of resilience and mental health activities conducted within the school to support Social and Emotional Learning, from class-based to individual programs designed to assist students in better mental health outcomes no matter their personal circumstances.

The year began with ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, requiring the community to maintain distance and support the school to actively limit the impacts of the virus throughout the first half of the year. The board expresses gratitude and appreciation for the tireless efforts of the Torrens staff, who continued to find creative and effective ways to support and educate our children with compassion and patience. There are not enough words to express our thanks for the effort and care you have shown throughout this extraordinary and challenging experience.

While restrictions continued, the school staff worked hard to ensure students had access to school camps and excursion opportunities. Highlights for students included overnight camps for years 3-6 and day excursions and incursions throughout the year for the whole school. This is something the care givers were all very grateful for, and the students thoroughly enjoyed.

National Simultaneous Storytime was celebrated in Pyjama Party style, as the teaching staff continued to show the community how creative they are to ensure students did not miss out on opportunities for learning and connection.

Years 4 and 5 students entertained and moved audiences at The Canberra Theatre in their Wakakirri piece “Lest We Forget”. This performance was awarded the National Story Award for excellence in performing arts and raising awareness about History. This is an amazing achievement and a great recognition of staff and students for their dedication and commitment.

The school community celebrated mid Term 2 when campus access restrictions eased, and families and friends could again connect on school grounds. The P&C dusted off the school disco ball and ordered in a shipment of glow sticks like it was 1999! Teachers were able to connect with parents and care givers, having face to face interviews to close out the term.

After an epic few years, and many excess classes covered, the teaching staff were offered pupil free days in Terms 3 and 4 to support planning and development to close 2022 and prepare for 2023. The School Board would like to thank the community for their overwhelming support for these days in ensuring staff had every opportunity to be prepared and provide the very best learning environment for the children of Torrens.

The school is in the process of working with the Woden cluster of schools (Farrer, Mawson and Torrens Primary) to write the Reconciliation Action Plan. There has been ongoing teacher learning to engage Indigenous students including professional development of reconciliation and raising awareness and positive action against racism.

This is but a snapshot of the many activities and events the Torrens community enjoyed throughout 2022, and 2023 is looking bigger and brighter!

I would like to thank the school board – parent representatives, Alison Burr and Jan Easter, and teacher representatives Sandi Lees and Chloe Muthukumaraswamy, and Ingrid Gaunt for her work as board secretariat, including her excellent administration of the school budget. Ingrid spent 26 years contributing to the Torrens community, and her retirement, while bittersweet, was a significant and memorable way to farewell 2022.

School Context

Torrens Primary School opened in 1968 and is located in the suburb of Torrens in central Canberra. The suburb is named after a former Governor of South Australia Sir Robert Torrens. Three preschools located in the suburbs of Pearce, Chifley and Torrens are attached to Torrens Primary School. Torrens has an enrolment of about 450 students - 64 students in the preschools and around 390 in the primary school. 160 students speak another language in addition to English.

The school's motto 'Teamwork and Tolerance' reflects the aims of the school to encourage a spirit of co-operation and community while fostering respect and understanding for all. The school aims to provide quality experiences that empower students to live in and contribute to a changing society.

Torrens Primary School is proud of the rich educational environment and rigorous programs provided for all students. Torrens Primary School strives to develop in students the ability to work as members of a team in cooperative learning environments and to appreciate the

worth of individual differences. The capacity to act as responsible, independent citizens who care about themselves and their environment is key.

The school's mission is to provide a purposeful productive and comprehensive education of the highest quality. Academic areas of focus include literacy and numeracy with special emphasis on explicit and guided teaching, inquiry units of work from P-6 with a school wide focus on quality teaching and learning. Specialist programs offered at Torrens include Japanese, leadership, wellbeing, library, Physical Education and cooking in our state-of-the-art kitchen.

Students at Torrens benefit from a broad variety of programs designed to promote pride and excellence such as, Positive Behaviours for Learning where students demonstrate they are safe, respectful learners, Instrumental Music Program brass bands in years 5 and 6, clubs, challenges and competitions, and leadership opportunities throughout the school such as Student Parliament, School Captains, Sports Captains, Zones of Regulation, and the Smith Family's Passport to Success transition to high school program. Notable inclusions to the activities offered at Torrens include the Student Wellbeing @ Torrens (SW@T) team providing extra support for students, staff and families within the community, and our approach to Cultural Integrity where we raise the profile of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Our preschools create and maintain a warm learning environment where staff, children and parents are engaged in developing cooperative relationships, and the abilities and skills of children to the fullest extent of their capabilities. The planned program introduces children to the world around them by learning through play, participation, exploration and experimentation.

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents, striving to ensure that all students are given every opportunity to achieve their full potential. We believe the partnership between school and home is extremely important to develop and foster high academic achievement and an enduring love of learning. Torrens Primary School enjoys strong community involvement and support in all aspects of school life.

Student Information

Student enrolment

In this reporting period there were a total of 425 students enrolled at this school.

Table: Student enrolment

Student type	Number of students
Gender - Male	196
Gender - Female	229
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	16
LBOTE*	160
Non-binary or other**	0

Source: ACT Education Directorate, Analytics and Evaluation Branch

*Language Background Other Than English

** If the number of non-binary students is less than six, or if gender is unknown, these are randomly assigned 'Male' or 'Female' and included in the counts.

Student attendance

The following table identifies the attendance rate of students by year level during this reporting period. Student attendance rate is the percentage of school days attended by students in each year level at the school. Student attendance is measured over two school terms; that is from the first day of the school year for students in term 1 to the last day of term 2.

Table: Attendance rates in percentages

Year level	Attendance rate
1	85.0
2	89.0
3	86.0
4	87.0
5	86.0
6	86.0

Source: ACT Education Directorate, Analytics and Evaluation Branch

Supporting attendance and managing non-attendance

ACT public schools support parents and careers to meet their legal responsibilities in relation to the compulsory education requirements of the *Education Act 2004*. The Education Directorate's *Education Participation (Enrolment and Attendance) Policy* describes its position with regard to supporting attendance and managing non-attendance. A suite of procedures supports the implementation of the policy. Please refer to <https://www.education.act.gov.au/> for further details.

Staff Information

Teacher qualifications

All teachers at this school meet the professional requirements for teaching in an ACT public school. The ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) specifies two main types of provision for teachers at different stages of their career, these are detailed below.

- **Full registration** is for teachers with experience working in a registered school in Australia or New Zealand who have been assessed as meeting the Proficient level of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.
- **Provisional registration** is for newly qualified teachers or teachers who do not have recent experience teaching in a school in Australia and New Zealand. Many teachers moving to Australia from another country apply for Provisional registration.

Workforce composition

Workforce composition for the current reporting period is provided in the following table. The data is taken from the school's verified August staffing report. For reporting purposes, it incorporates all school staff including preschools, staff absent for a period of less than four consecutive weeks and staff replacing staff absent for more than four consecutive weeks. It does not include casuals and staff absent for a period of four consecutive weeks or longer.

The Education Directorate is required to report Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff figures. As of June of the reporting period, 153 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff members were employed across the Directorate.

Table: Workforce composition numbers

Staff employment category	TOTAL
Teaching Staff: Full Time Equivalent Permanent	26.33
Teaching Staff: Full Time Equivalent Temporary	2.80
Non Teaching Staff: Full Time Equivalent	10.26

Source: ACT Education Directorate, People and Performance Branch

School Review and Development

The ACT Education Directorate's Strategic Plan 2022-2025 provides the framework and strategic direction for School Improvement Plans (formerly School Strategic Plans). This is supported by the school performance and accountability framework '*People, Practice and Performance: School Improvement in Canberra Public Schools, A Framework for Performance and Accountability*'. Annually, system and school level data are used alongside the National School Improvement Tool to support targeted school improvement, high standards in student learning, innovation and best practice in ACT public schools.

Our school was reviewed in 2018. A copy of the Report of Review can be found on our school website.

School Satisfaction

Schools use a range of evidence to gain an understanding of the satisfaction levels of their parents and carers, staff, and students. Annually in August/ September ACT schools undertake a survey to gain an understanding of school satisfaction at that time. This information is collected from staff, parents and from 2020 students from year 4 and above (previously year 5 and above) through an online survey.

Overall Satisfaction

In this period of reporting, 83.9% of parents and carers, 97.7% of staff, and 73.0% of students at this school indicated they were satisfied with the education provided by the school.

Included in the survey were 16 staff, 14 parent, and 12 student items which are described as the national opinion items. These items were approved by the then Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) for use from 2015. The following tables show the percentage of parents and carers, students and staff who agreed with each of the national opinion items at this school.

A total of 43 staff responded to the survey. Please note that not all responders answered every question.

Table: Proportion of staff* in agreement with each national opinion item

National opinion item	
Teachers at this school expect students to do their best.	100
Teachers give useful feedback	95
Teachers at this school treat students fairly.	100
This school is well maintained.	93
Students feel safe at this school.	98
Students at this school can talk to their teachers about their concerns.	98
Parents at this school can talk to teachers about their concerns.	100
Student behaviour is well managed at this school.	91
Students like being at this school.	100
This school looks for ways to improve.	100
This school takes staff opinions seriously.	95
Teachers at this school motivate students to learn.	98
Students' learning needs are being met at this school.	95
This school works with parents to support students' learning.	100
Staff get quality feedback on their performance	81
Staff are well supported at this school.	95

Source: ACT Education Directorate, Analytics and Evaluation Branch

*Proportion of those who responded to each individual survey question

A total of 93 parents responded to the survey. Please note that not all responders answered every question.

Table: Proportion of parents and carers* in agreement with each national opinion item

National opinion item	
Teachers at this school expect my child to do his or her best.	82
Teachers give useful feedback	67
Teachers at this school treat students fairly.	81
This school is well maintained.	91
My child feels safe at this school.	95

I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns.	92
Student behaviour is well managed at this school.	72
My child likes being at this school.	92
This school looks for ways to improve.	65
This school takes parents' opinions seriously.	57
Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn.	82
My child is making good progress at this school.	78
My child's learning needs are being met at this school.	73
This school works with me to support my child's learning.	66

Source: ACT Education Directorate, Analytics and Evaluation Branch

*Proportion of those who responded to each individual survey question

A total of 148 students responded to the survey. Please note that not all responders answered every question.

Table: Proportion of students* in agreement with each national opinion item

National opinion item	
Student behaviour is well managed at my school.	48
I like being at my school.	67
My school looks for ways to improve.	71
Staff takes students' concerns seriously	64
My teachers motivate me to learn.	80
My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things.	73
My teachers expect me to do my best.	87
Teachers give useful feedback	69
Teachers at my school treat students fairly.	67
My school is well maintained.	64
I feel safe at this school	68
I can talk to my teachers about my concerns.	57

Source: ACT Education Directorate, Analytics and Evaluation Branch

*Proportion of those who responded to each individual survey question

Learning and Assessment

Performance in Literacy and Numeracy

Early years assessment

Students in kindergarten undertake an on-entry and on-exit assessment of their early reading and numeracy skills using the BASE program. Student results are reported against five performance bands at the end of semester 1 and 2. Below are the results for this school for the current reporting period.

Table: Torrens Primary School BASE 2022 mean raw scores

Agency	Reading start	Reading end	Numeracy start	Numeracy end
School	75	146	42	58
ACT	65	122	40	55

Source: ACT Education Directorate, Analytics and Evaluation Branch

NAPLAN

Students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in all ACT schools participate in the National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). This program assesses skills in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy.

In this reporting period, 2.90 % of year 3 students and 0.00 % of year 5 students were exempt from testing based on nationally agreed criteria.

For reasons of statistical reliability, as well as to protect the privacy of students, results are not reported when the sample size is less than five.

The following table shows the mean scores achieved by students at this school compared to all other ACT public schools for this reporting period.

Table: NAPLAN Mean Scores

Test Domain	Year 3 School	Year 3 ACT	Year 5 School	Year 5 ACT
Reading	469	450	524	522
Writing	431	427	496	492
Spelling	430	420	514	510
Grammar & Punctuation	446	439	499	503
Numeracy	401	409	494	496

Financial Summary

The school has provided the Directorate with an end of year financial statement that was approved by the school board. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school. The following summary covers use of funds for operating costs and does not include expenditure in areas such as permanent salaries, buildings and major maintenance.

Table: Financial Summary

INCOME	January-December
Directorate Funding	334189.98

Contributions and Donations	20870.18
Subject Contributions	2417.00
Hire of Facilities	33583.75
External Revenue	0.00
Sale of Assets	800.00
Interest Received	12702.46
Other School Revenue	7606.51
TOTAL INCOME	412169.88
EXPENDITURE	
Utilities and General Overheads	104024.49
Security and Caretaking	1721.42
Maintenance	90246.56
Administration	20716.51
Staffing Expenditure	630.00
Communication	3630.93
Assets & Leases	68425.44
General Expenses	43524.22
Educational Resources	30368.64
Subject Consumables	15294.01
Directorate Funded Payments	14223.54
Other Payments	7944.61
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	400750.37
OPERATING RESULT	11419.51
Accumulated Funds	190935.50
BALANCE	202355.01

Voluntary Contributions

The funds listed were used to support the general operations of the school. The spending of voluntary contributions is in line with the approved budget for this reporting period.

As at December 2022:

- Voluntary contributions Income: \$9,984
- Library trust fund Income: \$9,002
- Building trust fund Income: \$11,485

Reserves

Name and Purpose	Amount	Expected Completion
AIR Conditioner Upgrade a. Reserve is to save funds to replace and upgrade heating/cooling units in every classroom b. There is a need to upgrade the schools power switchboard to comply with the new energy demands this will require.	\$60,000	Unknown. Target End 2023
Chifley Pre-School Upgrade a. Reserve is to save funds to upgrade the Chifley Pre-School Site and ensure it meets appropriate standards and educational needs.	\$200,000	Completed Jun-Sep 2023
Pre-School Furniture a. Upgrade pre-school furniture to across multiple (Three) sites to ensure compliance and safety along with meeting more modern educational demands.	\$24,000	Completed End 2023 for start 2024

<p>Electronic Signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Install Electronic Signage at Front of school to upgrade school facade and information accessibility to community. b. Removal of existing Signage, as it is a potential hazard. 	\$10,000	Completed Term 3, 2023
<p>Upgrade BSO area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reserve is to save funds to upgrade BSO work area b. Having access to appropriate facilities is essential to maintaining optimal running of school for both maintenance and OH&S needs. 	\$10,000	Unknown
<p>Junior Bathrooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Reserve is to save funds to upgrade junior toilet block b. Having access to appropriate facilities is essential to maintaining Health requirements for students. 	\$10,000	Unknown

Endorsement Page

Members of the School Board

Parent Representative(s): Alison Burr Jan Easter
Community Representative(s):
Teacher Representative(s): Sandi Lees Chloe
Muthukumaraswamy
Student Representative(s):

Board Chair: Lela Hopkins
Principal: Rachel Matthews

I approve the report, prepared in accordance with the provision of the ACT *Education Act 2004*, section 52.

2022 Board Chair Signature: Lela Hopkins Date: 01/ 05/ 2023

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the evidence and information reported in this Annual School Board Report represents an accurate record of the Board's operations during this reporting period.

Principal Signature: Mark Nicholson (Acting Principal) Date: 01/ 05/ 2023