

Southern Cross Early Childhood School

Annual School Board Report 2020



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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

A significant achievement in 2020 was how successfully the School Board and the whole school community navigated the disruption of COVID-19. Throughout this unsteady time, the school continued to progress the key elements of the Action Plan that contributed to the targets in the School Improvement Plan. The targeted focus was to improve writing across the school.

The School Board enabled relevant and meaningful professional learning to occur in January 2020 for staff at Southern Cross Early Childhood School.

- Catherine Nash presented professional learning to strengthen understandings of the writing process and how to engage all children in this process.
- To support the school's play-based philosophy, staff also engaged in professional learning in week 0 with inquiry expert Kath Murdoch.
- The preschool team engaged in professional learning with Catharine Hydon in the Education Directorate's learning series called Spreading our Wings.

Ensuring the wellbeing of everyone in the community was also a high priority. Strong partnerships with West Belconnen Child and Family Centre and Belconnen Community Services were maintained through the Community Coordinator. The Community Coordinator maintained strong connections with families in our community. This was particularly important in 2020 so we could support our families through the challenging year.

Throughout 2020, the School Board worked alongside three Principals. The School Board was successful in ensuring stability across the school community throughout the changes in leadership. A substantive Principal was appointed in term 4 2020.

A major addition to the Outdoor Learning Environment was the planning, development and construction of Slide Mountain in the preschool learning space. The school officially opened Slide Mountain in term 4 2020. Previous Principal, Lyndall Read, officially opened Slide Mountain on Outdoor Learning Day.

The collaboration and partnership with Education and Care services at the school strengthened with the Anglicare Director asked to present an update on their Quality Improvement Plan and other significant happenings to the School Board, starting in 2021. In 2020, Southern Cross Early Childhood School leadership supported professional learning for Anglicare educators and leadership on the 10 Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy – Birth to 3 years, and Preschool. Shared use of this evidence-based framework will support continuity of learning across the school, from birth to 8 years. It will also provide staff across both Anglicare and the Education Directorate greater

opportunity to collaborate and build professional knowledge to support the learning of every child at Southern Cross Early Childhood School. This work strengthened the Community of Practice that contributes to the success of the 3 year old initiative at Southern Cross Early Childhood School.

School Context

Southern Cross Early Childhood School is situated in Scullin in the Belconnen region of the ACT. The school is built on the land of the Ngunnawal people. The contribution of the traditional owners of the land is acknowledged at all school functions and the school team are committed to improving their Cultural Integrity.

The school caters for children from birth to eight years. Together, the Education Directorate and Anglicare offer integrated services including education and care (offering a nature preschool program, long day care, before and after school care and vacation care), family support programs and preschool to year 2 education.

The operation of the school is informed by the Early Childhood Schools Framework, which at its centre has three core elements. They are:

- high quality learning
- integrated service delivery
- family support and participation.

The school, with the support of community partnerships, provides a number of programs for families including Stay and Play, parenting programs, information sessions and community breakfasts. The school ensures continuity for children in both their learning and relationships in their early years. The school provides a caring and nurturing environment for our young children to grow and develop into active, engaged and successful members of our community.

High quality early childhood education is offered through a focus on daily explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy, play-based learning that is aligned with curriculum, social and emotional learning, sustainability education, lunch time clubs, and the Arts, including the school choir.

The school works alongside Anglicare ACT to provide continuity for children as a key enabler to their success as they transition throughout the school. Our commitment is such that both components of the school, Anglicare ACT and the Education Directorate, have developed joint vision, mission and values for the school as a whole.

Student Information

Student enrolment

In this reporting period there were a total of 125 students enrolled at this school.

Table: Student enrolment

Student type	Number of students
Gender - Male	67

Gender - Female	58
Gender - Non-binary or other*	0
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	0
LBOTE**	45

Source: ACT Education Directorate, Analytics and Evaluation Branch

* 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.

** Language Background Other Than English

Student attendance

Due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 attendance data has not been published in the Annual School Board Report.

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, 135 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members were employed across the Directorate.

Table: Workforce composition numbers

Staff employment category	TOTAL
Teaching Staff: Full Time Equivalent Permanent	7.74
Teaching Staff: Full Time Equivalent Temporary	3.70
Non Teaching Staff: Full Time Equivalent	9.55

Source: ACT Education Directorate, People and Performance Branch

School Review and Development

The ACT Education Directorate's Strategic Plan 2018-2021 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. Our school will be reviewed again in 2023.

School Satisfaction

Schools use a range 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, 91% of parents and carers and 94% of staff 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.

Note: The overall response rate for parents and carers in ACT public schools was negatively impacted by COVID-19, dropping from 31% in 2019 to 23% in 2020.

A total of 18 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	
Parents at this school can talk to teachers about their concerns.	94
Staff are well supported at this school.	89
Staff get quality feedback on their performance.	72
Student behaviour is well managed at this school.	83
Students at this school can talk to their teachers about their concerns.	94
Students feel safe at this school.	94
Students like being at this school.	89
Students' learning needs are being met at this school.	83
Teachers at this school expect students to do their best.	94
Teachers at this school motivate students to learn.	94
Teachers at this school treat students fairly.	94
Teachers give useful feedback.	89
Teachers give useful feedback.	89
This school is well maintained.	89
This school looks for ways to improve.	94
This school takes staff opinions seriously.	94
This school works with parents to support students' learning.	94

Source: ACT Education Directorate, Analytics and Evaluation Branch

*Proportion of those who responded to each individual survey question

A total of 56 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	
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns.	98
My child feels safe at this school.	88
My child is making good progress at this school.	86
My child likes being at this school.	91
My child's learning needs are being met at this school.	86
Student behaviour is well managed at this school.	75
Teachers at this school expect my child to do his or her best.	95
Teachers at this school give useful feedback.	83
Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn.	91
Teachers at this school treat students fairly.	93
This school is well maintained.	93

This school looks for ways to improve.	95
This school takes parents' opinions seriously.	86
This school works with me to support my child's learning.	95

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.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, analysis of BASE data for 2020 has been delayed. Analysis will be provided to schools in 2021. Please speak with the school should you require further information.

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.

*Note: There are no NAPLAN results for 2020, with the assessments not being conducted due to the impacts of COVID-19.

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.

INCOME	January-June	July-December	January-December
Self-management funds	114911.13	139418.55	254329.68
Voluntary contributions	7640.00	0.00	7640.00
Contributions & donations	-64.93	70.00	5.07
Subject contributions	7385.00	0.00	7385.00
External income (including community use)	2012.90	4798.92	6811.82
Proceeds from sale of assets	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank Interest	1934.96	1716.65	3651.61
TOTAL INCOME	133819.06	146004.12	279823.18
EXPENDITURE			
Utilities and general overheads	74001.80	40166.09	114167.89
Cleaning	5985.27	1635.30	7620.57
Security	226.33	0.00	226.33
Maintenance	12903.00	61859.54	74762.54
Administration	18481.45	4964.62	23446.07
Staffing	0.00	2214.85	2214.85
Communication	3038.64	3111.56	6150.20
Assets	6824.00	21749.31	28573.31
Leases	0.00	0.00	0.00
General office expenditure	6993.14	11983.77	18976.91
Educational	9985.01	10869.31	20854.32
Subject consumables	2741.80	289.79	3031.59
Other Payments	0.00	59.46	59.46
Directorate Funded Payments	0.00	6769.29	6769.29
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	141180.44	165672.89	306853.33
OPERATING RESULT	-7361.38	-19668.77	-27030.15
Actual Accumulated Funds (31.12.20)	211365.54	211300.61	211300.61
Outstanding commitments (minus)	-7452.78	0.00	0.00
BALANCE	203912.76	211300.61	211300.61

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.

Reserves

Name and Purpose	Amount	Expected Completion
Affiliated Schools Program	50,000	2021
Painting & Floor Coverings	20,000	2021
IT Equipment	17,000	2020

Endorsement Page

Members of the School Board

Parent Representative(s):	Jasja van den Bos	Natasha Janssen	
Community Representative(s):	Trish Wilks		
Teacher Representative(s):	Lisa Ryan	Sarah Hornby	
Student Representative(s):			
Board Chair:	Robert Day		
Principal:	Kelly Booker		

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

2020 Board Chair Signature:	Robert Day	Date:	18 / 07 / 2021
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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:	Kelly Booker	Date:	12 / 07 / 2021
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