



Lyons Early Childhood School Board Report 2013



Figure 1: Building strong relationships



Figure 2: Promoting child-centred learning

This report supports the work being done in the ACT Education and Training Directorate, as outlined in the Strategic Plan 2010-2013 “Everyone Matters”. It complies with reporting requirements detailed within the Education ACT 2004 and the National Education Agreement.



ACT
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The school website is www.lecs.act.edu.au

Inquiries about this publication should be directed to:

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Lyons ACT 2602

General Inquiries:

Telephone (02) 6205 5700

About our school

Introduction to School

In 2013 our school continued to experience significant growth across birth to 8 years. School-age class compositions included three preschool groups and four kindergarten to year 2 groups. The school population catchment area was comprised mainly of Woden/Weston Creek suburbs although we welcomed families from many areas across the A.C.T. Increased enrolments also resulted in increased teaching staff numbers across the school. A diverse range of both new educators and experienced teachers led the implementation of the school's play-based approach to learning and teaching.

Student Information

Student enrolment

In 2013 there were a total of 147 students enrolled at this school.

Table: 2013 Student Enrolment Breakdown

Group	Number of Students
Male	86
Female	61
Indigenous	1
LBOTE	40

Source: Performance and Planning

Student attendance

The following table identifies the attendance rate of students by year level during 2013. 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 one to the last day of term two.

Table: 2013 Attendance rates in Percentages

Year Level	Attendance Rate %
K	93.2
1	94.7
2	94.2

Source: Performance and Planning

The school ensures that children who arrive late to school are signed in by a parent/carer. Non-attendance through unexplained absences of more than two days is followed up by a telephone call from the school to parents.

Staff Information

Teacher qualifications

All teachers meet the professional requirements for teaching in an ACT public school.

The proportion of teaching staff with certificates/degrees/diplomas and a postgraduate qualification is shown below.

Table: 2013 Qualification of Teaching Staff in Percentages

Qualifications	% Teaching Staff
Certificate/Diploma/Degree	100
Postgraduate	27

Source: School Data

Workforce Composition

In 2013 the workforce composition of the school is highlighted in the following table.

Table: 2013 Workforce Composition Numbers

Role	Total
Administrative Service Officers	6
General Service Officers & Equivalent	1
School Leader A	1
School Leader B	1
Teachers	13
TOTAL	22

Source: Workforce Management

Note: This table includes pre-school staffing

There are no indigenous staff at this school.

Volunteers

During 2013 volunteers worked in the school for 300 hours.

School Review and Development

In 2013, the ACT Education and Training Directorates *Strategic Plan 2010-2013* provided the framework and strategic direction for the school's plan. This is supported by the *School*

Improvement in ACT Public Schools Directions 2010-2013 and the *School Improvement Framework* which are the overarching documents providing support to achieve high standards in student learning, innovation and best practice in ACT public schools.

All ACT public schools participate in a four year cycle of school review and development. Schools take part in a continuous cycle of review comprising annual self assessments against their school plans. In the fourth year schools undergo an external validation process. This process provides an independent and unbiased assessment of the schools progress towards achieving system and school priorities.

Lyons Early Childhood School was validated in 2013. A copy of the validation report can be found on the school website.

School Satisfaction

Schools continually use a range of data collection tools to gain an understanding of the satisfaction levels of their parents and carers, staff and students. In August/September 2013 the school undertook a survey to gain an understanding of school satisfaction at that time. Staff, parents and students from year 5, and above, with the exception of students in special schools, took part in an online survey.

Overall Satisfaction

In 2013, 87% of parents and carers, and 88% of staff at this school indicated they were satisfied or highly satisfied with the education provided by the school.

In 2013, 14 national parent survey items and 12 national student survey items were included in the surveys. These items were approved by the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) for use from 2013. The following tables show the percentage of parents and carers and students who agreed with each of the national items.

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

Item	(%)
Teachers at this school expect my child to do his or her best.	84
Teachers at this school provide my child with useful feedback about his or her school work.	78
Teachers at this school treat students fairly.	84
This school is well maintained.	93
My child feels safe at this school.	93
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns.	89
Student behaviour is well managed at this school.	76
My child likes being at this school.	89
This school looks for ways to improve.	96
This school takes parents' opinions seriously.	80

Item (continued)	(%)
Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn.	84
My child is making good progress at this school.	89
My child's learning needs are being met at this school.	84
This school works with me to support my child's learning.	84

Source: 2013 School Satisfaction Surveys, August/September 2013

Table: Proportion of students in years 5 to 12 in agreement with each national opinion item

Item	(%)
My teachers expect me to do my best.	0
My teachers provide me with useful feedback about my school work.	0
Teachers at my school treat students fairly.	0
My school is well maintained.	0
I feel safe at my school.	0
I can talk to my teachers about my concerns.	0
Student behaviour is well managed at my school.	0
I like being at my school.	0
My school looks for ways to improve.	0
My school takes students' opinions seriously.	0
My teachers motivate me to learn.	0
My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things.	0

Source: 2013 School Satisfaction Surveys, August/September 2013

This information can be considered alongside information available on the *My School* website (<http://www.myschool.edu.au>).

These results as well as the continual review of school performance contributed to the evaluation of our school plan and the development of annual operating plans. The school plan is available on the school website at lecs.act.edu.au

Professional Learning

Professional learning priorities aligned with the school's 2013 priorities. These included pedagogy and assessment, relationship building (restorative practices) and curriculum.

All p-2 teachers participated in a professional learning day in April stand-down. We achieved an agreed outcome of developing a consistent school-wide model of observation. This included the development of an observation template for use as an assessment tool. Teachers have used it in varying capacities, including to assess students' reading, writing, speaking and listening skill development, and report on student progress. This data has been collated and used for analysis in team dialogue. Most significantly, observation data is

now used consistently to support and complement reading benchmark data and SENA results.

The external validation team noted the use of observation tools for analysing student data to develop comprehensive personalised learning plans for targeted intervention. Support within classrooms and one-on-one was also noted by the panel in student observation sheets.

Our work was validated during the external validation process which the school undertook in July 2013. The validation report highlighted the development of a strong professional learning team culture across the school.

In 2013 professional learning teams have focused on discussion, design, implementation and review of a balanced literacy and numeracy program and Investigations. The professional discussion cycle was expanded with the introduction of assessment weeks twice per term. At these times teachers participated in roundtable discussion and analysis of student data in literacy.

Learning and Assessment

Performance in literacy and numeracy

Early Years Assessment

Students in kindergarten undertake an on-entry assessment of their early reading and numeracy skills using the Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) program. Student results are reported against five performance bands at the end of semester one and two.

The following table shows the comparison of the school against the ACT on raw scores in reading and mathematics.

Table: Lyons Early Childhood School PIPS 2013 mean raw scores

Test Domain	School Start	School End	ACT Start	ACT End
Reading	53	110	51	126
Mathematics	39	52	39	54

Source: CEM Centre

In 2013 the PIPS start data indicates that mean raw scores for students in kindergarten at Lyons were equal to the ACT mean in Mathematics and above the ACT mean in Reading. The end of year data indicates that the mean raw scores in Reading and Mathematics were below the ACT mean.

In reading, 47 percent of kindergarten students made expected or above expected progress.

The leadership team has identified a need to progress continued targeted professional learning for all teachers. A particular focus on the teaching of reading and the implementation of a 'phonics in context' approach has been agreed as priorities for future development.

In mathematics, 70 percent of kindergarten students made expected or above expected progress. In 2014, the kindergarten to year 2 (k – 2) team will embed formative assessment into their teaching and learning programs.

In 2013, the tracking of achievement against Education and Training Directorate (ETD) reading benchmarks has shown improved student outcomes. 71 percent of the kindergarten cohort achieved at or above benchmark, 55% percent of the year one cohort achieved at or above benchmark, and 100 percent of the year two cohort achieved at or above benchmark. In 2014, through the implementation of formative assessment, English workshops and student engagement in self-selected quality literature, reading benchmark data will continue to identify ongoing student growth.

In mathematics, 86 percent of children in year one and two achieved at or above their year level.

Performance in other areas of the curriculum

In 2013 the school implemented the Australian curriculum (English, Mathematics, Science and History). The curriculum framework Every Chance to Learn was also used to plan, teach and report on other curriculum areas.

In technology, 94 percent of children in year one and two achieved at or above their year level.

In science, 92 percent of children in year one and two achieved at or above their year level.

In the arts, 94 percent of children in year one and two achieved at or above their year level.

In Health and Physical Education, 97 percent of children in year one and two achieved at or above their year level.

In history, 97 percent of children in year one and two achieved at or above their year level.

Progress against School Priorities in 2013

Priority 1

IMPROVE THE OUTCOMES OF ALL STUDENTS

Targets

By the end of 2013:

- At least 80% of students show improved outcomes in English (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening)
- At least 80% of students show improved progress in Mathematics (Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, Statistics and Probability)

School improvement domain/s covered with this priority

Learning and Teaching, Leading and Managing, Community Engagement, Student Engagement

Progress

In 2013 the school worked on three strategies to support the achievement of this priority. These included:

- Strengthening pedagogy and assessment
- Promoting relationship building as a key feature of learning and teaching
- Ensuring a curriculum linked to the approved learning framework is implemented

In relation to the first strategy the school has engaged in a comprehensive professional learning program that has led to the incorporation of the Quality Teaching model into teacher planning. This program included three key elements:

1. Each teacher included, in planning for learning and teaching, two Quality Teaching elements to provide a focus for improving teaching practice. Each teacher reflected on their progress with these during professional conversations with the leadership team. In every case, observations and reflections demonstrate that teacher capacity has increased. Individual progress will inform continued work with each element in 2014.
2. Each teacher visited other schools and observed classroom teachers in action. They completed reflections on each visit by aligning observation records to the Quality Teaching dimensions. These were documented and used to frame professional learning conversations. This observation model will be expanded in 2014.
3. The school's literacy and numeracy coach implemented a coaching and mentoring program across k-2. After teacher feedback, the program was changed mid-year to target particular teachers who had requested specific support in literacy and numeracy areas. Those teachers reported satisfaction with this approach which will be extended into a 2014 teacher observation and feedback program for every teacher.

A school assessment and reporting schedule has been supported through the development of an on-line tracking system.

In 2014 the school will progress the external validation recommendation to expand the current use of individual data and personalised learning goals, to include common formative assessments that can be used to moderate and set team SMART goals across the school. Professional Learning around data collection, interpretation and analysis will be included in the next planning cycle.

In 2013, enrolment numbers have, for the first time, allowed for multi-age class and team teaching arrangements. The school has conducted a formal review of these structures.

Results will inform how we can progress team sharing and analysis of student learning data in 2014.

In relation to our second strategy to improve student outcomes, that of promoting relationship building as a key feature of learning and teaching, the validation process affirmed the development and ongoing review of a Relationships Policy as a significant achievement. This has supported the implementation of a Restorative Practices approach to student, staff and family support. The use of Circle Time within classrooms and the regular family support programs and parent leadership opportunities are also strengths of the school.

The validation panel noted that the quality of relationships across the school is a definite positive feature of the learning and teaching environment. There has been significant thought put into structuring opportunities for these to develop, between staff, staff and students, staff and parents and between parents and the wider community. In 2013 these included a more strategic use of staffing resources to support community development. Parent and staff feedback has identified that this change has made a significant positive impact on school community building. A well-established schedule of meetings at all levels has supported the cross-fertilisation of educator groups across birth to eight.

In relation to our third strategy: to ensure a curriculum linked to the approved learning framework is implemented, the school developed a successful and sustainable model for early childhood education that integrates the Early Years Learning Framework and a play-based child-centred approach with the Australian Curriculum and the Quality Teaching model. Assessing and reporting of preschool student performance at Lyons is now based on evidence from the EYLF.

This work was articulated as a strength in the external validation process. It has been evident in 2013 through all teachers consistently planning and using fortnightly Statements of Intent. This documentation, aligning student interests to outcomes of the EYLF, has been presented to parents who have taken the opportunity to provide feedback. As affirmed in the validation report, each element of literacy learning (listening, understanding, speaking, and communicating) have become evident in teachers' learning intentions documents.

The decision to link the language of the EYLF across P-2 planning practices has instigated an understanding of shared accountability for student learning across these years. The validation report noted that the school has worked hard to build a strong sense of belonging, utilising both the EYLF and the Australian Curriculum. Links are evident through multi-age class compositions, statements of intent, curriculum planning documentation and student progress reports, as well as the Being, Belonging, Becoming (BBB) Plans. Learning programs across the school include daily use of the indoor and outdoor areas. These are considered equally significant in providing a rich learning and teaching environment where explicit and open-ended learning experiences frame the child-centred approach that the

school promotes. In 2013 curriculum planning and implementation have included both these elements of the environment. Educators have worked to ensure the environments are aesthetically pleasing and reflect the children, families and educators who access the space.

The school places a focus on the introduction of sustainable practices. Children are encouraged to 'stop and think' before they put things in the bin to ensure recycling and composting is effective. Family members have been actively involved in the school's 'Green Team' which is focusing on sustainability across the school.

The outdoor learning space continues to be a priority for planning for effective learning and teaching. Additions in 2013 have included the installation of new shade structures, dirt patches (linked to literacy and numeracy planning), water tanks and garden beds (linked to the teaching of sustainability) and a bicycle track (linked to the development and implementation of a road safety program). These have challenged educators to rethink how they can use the space to promote rich learning.

In 2014 the outdoor environment will continue to be a priority for development and a significant area for inclusion in the school's Quality Improvement Plan (preschool).

The effectiveness of this work resulted in:

- 100% of students showed improved outcomes in English (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening)
- 100% of students showed improved progress in Mathematics (Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, Statistics and Probability)

Preschool Unit- Quality Improvement

The National Quality Framework which has been agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) has put in place a new National Quality Standard to ensure high quality and consistent early childhood education and care across Australia. The National Quality Standard assists the school in identifying preschool unit strengths, and areas that require improvement. The school has identified the following preschool unit strengths using the National Quality Standard. Areas for improvement will be identified in the School's Operating Plan

Education program and practice

Planning for the preschool program at Lyons is informed by the Early Years Learning Framework and individual interests of children. This year the preschool teachers have worked to ensure they capture the child's voice throughout their documentation and that families can contribute to curriculum planning. A significant focus for the team has been on developing skills in documenting children's learning and making their learning visible. Educators have been challenged to reflect on their fortnightly Statements of Intent and use these reflections to inform future planning. Families have been encouraged to contribute to

the preschool program through class reflection journals, Statements of Intent and assisting within the learning spaces.

Children with individual needs are supported to participate within the program through the use of visual aids, additional educators within the space and collaboration with external agencies. Individual children with additional needs have a BBB Plan in place to ensure outcomes are set to meet individual needs. These plans are reviewed on a regular basis and are developed in consultation with the family.

Children's health and safety

Educators support and actively promote health and safety within the preschool environment. Families are encouraged to offer 'healthy choices' for meals including fruit and vegetables for shared fruit time. Educators model healthy eating and regularly discuss foods and elements of healthy bodies. All educators are aware of individual needs and action plans are displayed around the learning space. Training has been provided for educators to be able to respond in an emergency situation. A qualified first aid officer is onsite at all times.

Throughout the day children are encouraged to be independent with their self-help skills and are supported to maintain good hygiene practices. Educators provide assistance when required. Visual cues are placed around the environment as an additional support for children.

Relationships with children

Relationships are at the core of our philosophy. Educators at Lyons work with children, families, colleagues and the wider community to develop effective and genuine relationships. Children are supported to feel secure in the environment and shape their own learning. Many opportunities are provided for collaborative learning and sharing learning with others. Educators are active participants in children's play and use a variety of communication strategies throughout the day to engage all children.

Children in preschool are introduced to our Relationships Policy from the beginning of the year. They are responsible for developing a list of 'ok' and 'not ok' choices and, with support, they implement the steps outlined in the policy to regulate and manage their own behaviours.

This year preschool educators have focused on using 'personal positives' and encourage the children to use this language with each other. The children are able to articulate what they like about other members of the group and acknowledge the contribution each person makes to the group.

Staffing arrangements

The school continues to ensure we meet the minimum staffing requirements for preschool by all staff having an Early Childhood qualification. To ensure consistency for children,

release and break times are covered by regular, consistent educators who also hold Early Childhood qualifications. We also ensure relief staff hold the appropriate qualification.

Educators work to ensure they develop relationships with every member of the team to achieve quality outcomes for children and implement best practice. Weekly team meetings are held to allow educators to share ideas, reflect on and be challenged about their practice, program for the outdoors and be supported as a team. New educators have been provided with mentoring from a member of the school leadership team. This process has allowed them to become familiar with the expectations of the school's program, challenged their way of thinking and doing, provided them with a sounding board for ideas and ensured they work towards the priorities of the school.

During 2013 the Preschool educators have also developed strong relationships with the wider school team including staff from the child care component. They have attended regular preschool to year 2 meetings, combined preschool meetings with Woden Community Service staff, and whole school (birth to eight) staff meetings.

Preschool staff have accessed a wide range of professional learning in 2013 including network and cluster quality practice sharing sessions.

Leadership and service management

The Preschool educators are supported on a daily basis by members of the school leadership team. New members of the team have received induction to the school and specifically the preschool environment. The leadership team has ensured the directorate requirements for contract and probation teachers have been fulfilled through termly reflections on teacher performance and practice.

The preschool team leader holds Early Childhood qualifications and works directly with the team on a daily basis to ensure quality practice and implementation of the School Philosophy. Team members are encouraged to critically reflect on their own practice and understand where this fits within the wider priorities of the school.

New educators undertake a welcome and orientation program. During 2013 this included discussions on expectations, policies and procedures as well as programming and planning for preschool children. Feedback from this year's preschool educators has shown they feel well supported by the leadership team and are empowered to run the program in a way that works for them and fits with the philosophy.

Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

This year families have been included in all aspects of the preschool program. From enrolment, families are encouraged to contribute to the program in any way they can. This includes contributing to curriculum decision making by adding to the fortnightly Statement of Intent and adding to the class reflection journals.

In 2013, families have shared their own cultures with the children by being in learning spaces and cooking, sharing significant events and sharing home languages with the children.

During the year the preschool children have connected with the wider community through their community project of welcoming elderly community members into the school to share their learning with them. They have also made connections with Malkara School and the children from Woden Community Service Daycare.

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.

Professional learning

The average expenditure at the school level per fulltime equivalent teacher on professional learning was \$ 170.00

Voluntary contributions

This school received \$9755.00 in voluntary contributions in 2013. These funds were used to support the general operations of the school. The spending of voluntary contributions is in line with the approved budget for 2013.

Reserves

Name and purpose	Amount	Expected Completion
Outdoor Environment	\$8,289	December 2014
Ulverstone Street Site	\$20,000	December 2014

Financial Summary	
31-Dec-13	
INCOME	
Self management funds	236271.4
Voluntary contributions	9755
Contributions & donations	3061.65
Subject contributions	6491.11
External income (including community use)	37411.18
Proceeds from sale of assets	
Bank Interest	3623.04
TOTAL INCOME	296613.3
EXPENDITURE	
Utilities and general overheads	91214.13
Cleaning	46008.24
Security	405.6
Maintenance	21430.93
Mandatory Maintenance	
Administration	11445.56
Staffing	228.5
Communication	10648.03
Assets	21910.76
Leases	
General office expenditure	26593.18
Educational	29855.85
Subject consumables	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	259740.8
OPERATING RESULT	36872.55
Actual Accumulated Funds	28074.56
Outstanding commitments (m	11389.35
BALANCE	53557.76

Endorsement Page

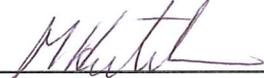
I declare that the Lyons Early Childhood School Board has operated in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 2004 including the following sections.

- 39 (4) The school board must give effect to the chief executive's directions.
- 44 (2) The chief executive must end the appointment of a member of the school board of a public school, other than the principal of the school if-
- The member is absent from 3 consecutive meetings of the board without reasonable excuse or leave given by the board or
 - Contravenes section 49 (disclosure of interests by members of school boards) without reasonable excuse.
- 46 The members of the school board of a public school must, whenever is necessary, nominate a member of the board as a member of any selection panel established by the chief executive to make recommendations to the chief executive about the appointment of the principal to the school.
- 47 (2) However, the school board must meet at least four times a year.
- 48 (10) The school board must keep minutes of its meeting.
- 49 Disclosure of interests by members of school boards.
- 49 (3) The disclosure must be reported in the school board's minutes and, unless the board otherwise decides, the member (The first member) must not-
- be present when the board considers the issue or
 - take part in any decision of the board on the issue.
- 49 (5) Within 14 days after the end of each financial year, the chairperson of the school board must give the chief executive a statement of any disclosure of interest under this section in relation to the school board during the financial year.

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

Parent Representative: Matthew Barker, Amanda Walsh
Community Representative Sue Packer
Teacher Representative Michelle Standingford, Maria Fuenzalida
Board Chair: Ruth Richards
Principal: Mary Hutchinson

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the data and information reported in this Annual School Board Report represents an accurate record of the school's operations this year.

Principal Signature:  **Date:** 7/3/14

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

Board Chair Signature:  **Date:** 7/3/14