

Darling Heights State School

Queensland State School Reporting

2015 School Annual Report



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Principal's foreword

Introduction

Darling Heights State School has a diverse and culturally rich population catering for approximately 650 students who were born in 40 different countries, speaking 37 different languages. 320 of our students have identified that they are from other cultures, 275 children are born overseas. 307 are students who have English as a Second Language. Of these students, 70 have been given refugee status in Australia, 45 are on Protection Visas and 25 are in Australia on Women at Risk visas. 80 of the ESL students are at DHSS because they have a parent studying at the University of Southern Queensland. A further 69 students identify as having an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island background.

We are truly a multi-cultural school with tolerance, acceptance and understanding of others being features. Anyone visiting the school will see that we are working to:

- provide a happy, enjoyable and safe environment for our students
- encourage and maintain parental involvement in our school and the children's education
- communicate and engage with our whole community
- deliver the goals for education in the 21st century

At Darling Heights State School we provide a focus on developing children's potential as individuals while allowing them to understand and live in an interconnected world. We strive to

- help students develop into happy, responsible members of their community and
- help students understand and appreciate the interconnectedness of all people

The staff are the strength of the school. They are committed, believe in what they do and what they seek to achieve. They work exceptionally hard but enjoy the opportunity to work together and have fun while they work. The buzz about the school makes it feel like fun is happening all the time. This enthusiasm flows over to children who enjoy being at and learning in our school.

Parents are central to our school and we provide every opportunity for them to be part of what their children do. Parents drop off and pick up children from within the grounds, they participate in classroom activities, they can be parent helpers, they participate in special events and they attend and join in celebrations. All parents are treated equally and we work to make them feel welcome and respected.

Culture is most important to us and Culture doesn't "just happen." School staff have worked tirelessly to build a culture that promotes, features and demands:

- Acceptance
- Acceptance of Difference

- Tolerance
- Understanding
- Willingness
- Care and Compassion
- Welcomeness and
- a Culture that makes our school a friendly and safe place to be

This is achieved through Building Blocks which are key aspects that have been used to build our Culture and Practice. These Building Blocks have been our School's

- Motto
- Beliefs
- Values
- Teaching, in our case, The Darling Heights Pedagogical Framework

For 2016 and beyond, we will continue to work to provide a happy, enjoyable and safe environment for our students, encourage and maintain parental involvement in our school and their child's/children's education while communicating with our whole community.

School progress towards its goals in 2015

Our school achieved all it set out to do in 2015, especially with regards to its Curriculum Enhancement Agenda. Completion occurred with all elements of the Qld Curriculum Assessment & Reporting Framework (QCARF) agenda & we successfully completed Staff Professional Development, the collection and use of Data and the Reading Process.

Our EALD program continues to grow and has been extended to include 5 permanent teaching staff and additional support staff. The Unit had outgrown the rooms that they occupied in 2013 and approval was gained to refurbish and extend the Unit into the music room which was achieved as a new music building was approved. Building works were undertaken in 2014 with the goal to occupy in 2015 achieved.

The use of new classrooms has enhanced our ability to deliver quality programs to our children, not only for the classes using them but has freed up other spaces for programs such as Leveled Level Intervention and Support A Talker.

Future outlook

In 2016, we plan to implement a range of initiatives as described in our 2016 Annual Operation Plan. These foci are specifically about Curriculum & Teaching Practice, Leadership/School Capacity and Students/School/Community.

Initiatives are designed to :-

- Implement a School Wide Pedagogical Framework featuring "Explicit Teaching".
- Moving Literacy Forward—Embed Reading Comprehension strategies and processes.
- Commence STEM & Digital Technologies understanding using "Maker Space" as a driver.
- Enhance teacher Data & Analysis Skills to focus on precision & differentiation in teaching.
- Use PBL as the focus for skilling children about Respectful Relationships.
- Promote Professional Learning Team successes to enhance school practice.
- Feature the "Coaching and Feedback" processes across the school.
- Deliver, successfully, "Investing 4 Success" programs.
- Engage community through "Principal/Parent Forum".
- Implement the School/Community Engagement Officer.
- Continue and extend the Pre-Prep-Playgroup programs.

Our school at a glance

School Profile

Coeducational or single sex: Coeducational

Independent Public School: No

Year levels offered in 2015: Prep Year - Year 6

Student enrolments for this school:

	Total	Girls	Boys	Indigenous	Enrolment Continuity (Feb – Nov)
2013	633	310	323	65	87%
2014	630	303	327	56	90%
2015	650	330	320	59	91%

Student counts are based on the Census (August) enrolment collection.

*From 2015, data for all state high schools include Year 7 students. Prior to 2015, only state high schools offering Year 7 had these students included in their counts.

In 2015, there were no students enrolled in a Departmentally funded Pre-Prep Playgroup program.

We did however host Pre-Prep Playgroup programs for up to 60 students per week. These programs were school funded and were designed to engage our families before they start school. We were only able to host 2 programs per week and had waiting lists as they were very popular. These programs have been hugely successful and will continue in 2016.

Characteristics of the student body:

Darling Heights is a State School located in the south-western quadrant of Toowoomba. It is situated very close to the University of Southern Queensland with a 2015 maximum enrolment of 680 Primary students, 98 of those being in the Prep Year. 48 of our students were enrolled in our Special Education Facility. In all, this school offered a comprehensive education from Prep through to Year 6 in a co-educational setting which featured 26 co-educational classes.

In terms of Boys and Girls, our student body is balanced. In 2015, we had a slightly greater number of boys enrolled in Years 5 and 6 with a higher percentage of girls to boys in Years 1 and 2. During any year, our enrolment from Day 8 can grow up to 10%. We receive a number of student enrolments, many international, from parents who are studying at the University of Southern Queensland. USQ does not commence lectures until late February and we also gain enrolment from those commencing study in Semester 2.

Of our students,

- 320 have identified that they are from other cultures,
- 275 children indicating they are born overseas.
- 307 are students who have English as a Second Language. Of these students, 70 have been given refugee status in Australia.
- 80 of the ESL students were at DHSS because they had a parent studying at USQ

Average class sizes.

Phase	Average Class Size		
	2013	2014	2015
Prep – Year 3	23	25	23
Year 4 – Year 7 Primary	26	26	27
Year 7 Secondary – Year 10			
Year 11 – Year 12			

*From 2015, data for all state high schools include Year 7 students. Prior to 2015, only state high schools offering Year 7 had these students included in their counts.

School Disciplinary Absences

Disciplinary Absences	Count of Incidents		
	2013	2014*	2015**
Short Suspensions - 1 to 5 days	10	0	5
Long Suspensions - 6 to 20 days	3	0	1
Exclusions	0	0	0
Cancellations of Enrolment	0	0	0

* Caution should be used when comparing post 2013 SDA data as amendments to EGPA disciplinary provisions and changes in methodology created time series breaks in 2014 and 2015.

**From 2015, Exclusion represents principal decisions to exclude rather than recommendations for exclusion. From 2015 where a principal decided not to exclude, a small number of recommendations for exclusions have been counted as a long suspension. Exclusions, Cancellations and Long & Charge Suspensions may be upheld or set aside through an appeals process.

Curriculum delivery

Our approach to curriculum delivery

The school is divided into three Sub-Schools supported by specialist departments in order to best serve the diverse needs of students. All Sub-Schools offer Core Literacy and Numeracy blocks with specialised options programs to enhance learning at the various levels. The Junior and Intermediate areas offer departmental reading programs. We run a fledgling program to encourage higher achieving students in the school. This includes extension literacy groups in the Junior School, an enrichment program in the Intermediate School and extension modules in the Senior School as well as extra-curricular offerings as teacher time allows.

The school's Music Specialist teaches classes from Infant to Senior School. Opportunities exist for students to participate in Choir, Stage and Concert Bands, Eisteddfod, Song Festival and numerous public performances. An Instrumental Music Teacher provides weekly lessons for woodwind, brass and percussion.

In general, our learning framework consists of our curriculum framework with its core learnings across the Key Learning Areas providing the knowledge and skills essential for all students. Our Whole School Literacy Plan provides the core for a developmental reading, oral and written literacy program across all the year levels which is aimed at meeting individual student needs.

Our whole school ICT for Learning Agreement sets out the school's direction for the use of technologies, including computers.

Extra curricula activities

Children in the Preparatory Year to Year Three participate in day excursions to venues such as Amaroo Environmental Field Studies Centre at Kleinton and Jondaryan Woolshed.

Year 5 and 6 students undertake trips that alternate between the Sunshine Coast and Canberra.

Our school offers children from Year 4 and above, the opportunity to be in School Choirs, Concert and Stage Bands operated through the Instrumental Music Program.

Year 3 and Year 4 children participate in an Intra-School sporting program on a Thursday Afternoon and all students in Years 5 and 6 can participate in an inter-school's sporting program on a Friday afternoon.

Our Chess Club has allowed children to show their talents on the Regional stage with individuals and School Teams participating in Toowoomba and Darling Downs Tournaments.

Homework and Learning Clubs operate in various areas of the school.

How Information and Communication Technologies are used to improve learning

Computer labs are established in the Library, Intermediate Area and Senior Area. Each classroom has two or three computers. Each computer is connected to a server and the Internet. An Internet User Agreement Form is sought from parents before children have access. Students frequently use computers to enhance their learning.

All classrooms now have Interactive Whiteboards installed as a result of several programs from which we sourced funding in previous years. Staff are quickly becoming proficient with the use of this exceptional technology and ongoing PD and training in the use of Interactive Whiteboards is ensuring teachers are gaining proficiency.

All teachers have been provided with an I-Pad and Professional Development on the opportunities this technology provides teaching and learning in our classrooms.

Technology is now seen as a tool to assist learning and is used as such.

An extensive infrastructure and cabling upgrade was completed in 2014 which has ensured greater speed and access to our students as they use the equipment we have.

Staff discussions are now focusing on how we can better cater for the "STEM initiatives.

Social Climate

In terms of the "Social Climate" of Darling Heights State School, one needs look at the support provided to parents and children alike. A Guidance Officer, Speech Language Pathologist, ESL Advisory Teachers and a Chaplain are all part of the School and are actively supporting students and parents. Co-operative Religious Instruction is taught in most classes, except Prep, once a week, by volunteer visiting Catechists. The supportive and caring nature of the school environment has a very positive impact on the morale of students and staff alike.

Our School Chaplaincy Program is a feature of the support that we are able to provide all members of our community.

Our Staff and Student Well-being Policy ensures we focus on the social and emotional components of our people and this has ensured we have an exceptionally friendly and supportive school environment where the climate features happy and well supported children, staff and parents.

Parent, student and staff satisfaction with the school

Performance measure	2013	2014	2015
Percentage of parent/caregivers who agree# that:			
their child is getting a good education at school (S2016)	97%	100%	100%
this is a good school (S2035)	94%	95%	98%
their child likes being at this school (S2001)	94%	98%	100%
their child feels safe at this school (S2002)	94%	98%	100%

Performance measure			
Percentage of parent/caregivers who agree# that:	2013	2014	2015
their child's learning needs are being met at this school (S2003)	91%	98%	100%
their child is making good progress at this school (S2004)	94%	100%	100%
teachers at this school expect their child to do his or her best (S2005)	97%	98%	98%
teachers at this school provide their child with useful feedback about his or her school work (S2006)	100%	98%	94%
teachers at this school motivate their child to learn (S2007)	94%	100%	98%
teachers at this school treat students fairly (S2008)	91%	95%	96%
they can talk to their child's teachers about their concerns (S2009)	100%	98%	98%
this school works with them to support their child's learning (S2010)	97%	93%	93%
this school takes parents' opinions seriously (S2011)	91%	93%	91%
student behaviour is well managed at this school (S2012)	88%	91%	100%
this school looks for ways to improve (S2013)	97%	98%	100%
this school is well maintained (S2014)	100%	95%	100%

Performance measure			
Percentage of students who agree# that:	2013	2014	2015
they are getting a good education at school (S2048)	92%	97%	100%
they like being at their school (S2036)	86%	95%	99%
they feel safe at their school (S2037)	82%	95%	98%
their teachers motivate them to learn (S2038)	99%	94%	100%
their teachers expect them to do their best (S2039)	99%	98%	100%
their teachers provide them with useful feedback about their school work (S2040)	95%	92%	99%
teachers treat students fairly at their school (S2041)	87%	91%	93%
they can talk to their teachers about their concerns (S2042)	80%	90%	93%
their school takes students' opinions seriously (S2043)	81%	91%	91%
student behaviour is well managed at their school (S2044)	76%	84%	86%
their school looks for ways to improve (S2045)	91%	96%	100%
their school is well maintained (S2046)	86%	92%	98%
their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things (S2047)	91%	98%	98%

Performance measure			
Percentage of school staff who agree# that:	2013	2014	2015
they enjoy working at their school (S2069)	95%	97%	100%
they feel that their school is a safe place in which to work (S2070)	97%	99%	100%
they receive useful feedback about their work at their school (S2071)	89%	91%	94%
they feel confident embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the learning areas (S2114)	97%	90%	98%
students are encouraged to do their best at their school (S2072)	100%	100%	100%

Performance measure			
Percentage of school staff who agree [#] that:	2013	2014	2015
students are treated fairly at their school (S2073)	97%	100%	100%
student behaviour is well managed at their school (S2074)	93%	94%	97%
staff are well supported at their school (S2075)	90%	93%	96%
their school takes staff opinions seriously (S2076)	88%	90%	97%
their school looks for ways to improve (S2077)	96%	97%	99%
their school is well maintained (S2078)	90%	93%	99%
their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things (S2079)	91%	90%	94%

[#] 'Agree' represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.
DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

Parent and Community Engagement

Involving parents begins with being welcomed and involved in their child's classroom and the activities of this classroom. Building a relationship with teachers is vital and all teachers welcome the opportunity to get to know parents and discuss progress of children in the classroom.

Opportunities for parent involvement exist in all classrooms with teachers requesting various levels of support in a variety of activities.

Parents can also become involved in activities of our P&C Association all of which significantly contribute to the effectiveness of our school while providing parents an opportunity to network. One such successful activity is the Craft Group which meets weekly to make items which then become the stock for the Mothers' and Fathers' Day Stall run for the children to purchase gifts for these special days.

A Principal Parent Forum was instigated in 2015. This Forum seeks to have a representative from each class who then collectively meet with the Principal, twice per term. The Forum is then presented with topics and items that are discussed, taken away to gain further ideas from parents and then brought back to share at next Forum.

Collectively, school staff and P&C members encourage parents and families to become involved in our school and the activities of their children.

One only has to visit our school at arrival and departure times to see how welcomed and engaged parents are at Darling Heights State School.

Reducing the school's environmental footprint

Of our School Values, Respect is one and includes Respect for our Built and Natural Environment.

Featuring as part of this is the efforts of staff and children to reduce the Environmental Footprint we leave. Water saving devices have been installed in all toilets as has a solar panel system which generates electricity and feeds it back into the system. Children are regularly made aware of the need to conserve the resources we have, especially those of water and electricity.

The following Data is sourced from the school's annual utilities return and is reliant on the accuracy of these returns.

Years	Environmental footprint indicators	
	Electricity kWh	Water kL
2012-2013	248,060	1,111
2013-2014	199,658	0
2014-2015	226,735	

*The consumption data is compiled from sources including ERM, Ergon reports and utilities data entered into OneSchool by each school. The data provides an indication of the consumption trend in each of the utility categories which impact on the school's environmental footprint.

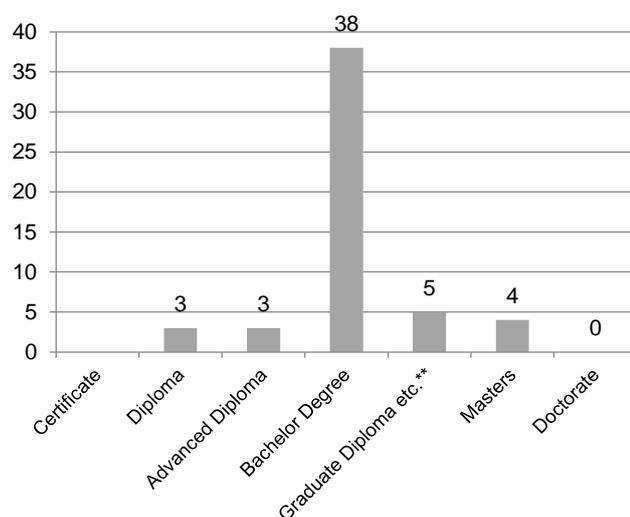
Our staff profile

Staff composition, including Indigenous staff

2015 Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff*	Non-teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	53	42	<5
Full-time equivalents	49	29	<5

Qualification of all teachers

Highest level of attainment	Number of Teaching Staff *
Certificate	
Diploma	3
Advanced Diploma	3
Bachelor Degree	38
Graduate Diploma etc.**	5
Masters	4
Doctorate	0
Total	53



*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

**Graduate Diploma etc. includes Graduate Diploma, Bachelor Honours Degree, and Graduate Certificate.

Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2015 were \$ 29 552 plus significant un-costed contributions such as teacher release and Staff Meeting sessions.

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

The Australian Curriculum - Geography;

Effective Unit Curriculum Planning Practices

School Wide Positive Behaviour Training,

Literacy Workshops especially about Reading and Comprehension procedures.

Collecting Data to inform Teaching and Learning. ICT's – I-Pad applications for the Classroom.

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2015 was 100%.

Average staff attendance	2013	2014	2015
Staff attendance for permanent and temporary staff and school leaders.	97%	97%	96%

Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year

From the end of the previous school year, 98% of staff was retained by the school for the entire 2015 school year.

School income broken down by funding source

School income broken down by funding source is available via the *My School* website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

To access our income details, click on the *My School* link above. You will then be taken to the *My School* website with the following 'Find a school' text box.

Find a school

GO

Sector:

Government

Non-government

SEARCH

Where it says '**School name**', type in the name of the school you wish to view, select the school from the drop-down list and select <GO>. Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to confirm that you are not a robot then by clicking continue, you acknowledge that you have read, accepted and agree to the **Terms of Use** and **Privacy Policy** before being given access to the school's *profile* webpage.

School financial information is available by selecting '**School finances**' in the menu box in the top left corner of the school's profile webpage. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of income by funding source.

Performance of our students

Key student outcomes

Student attendance	2013	2014	2015
The overall attendance rate for the students at this school (shown as a percentage).	92%	93%	93%
The attendance rate for Indigenous students at this school (shown as a percentage).	90%	87%	90%

The student attendance rate is generated by dividing the total of full-days and part-days that students attended, and comparing this to the total of all possible days for students to attend, expressed as a percentage.

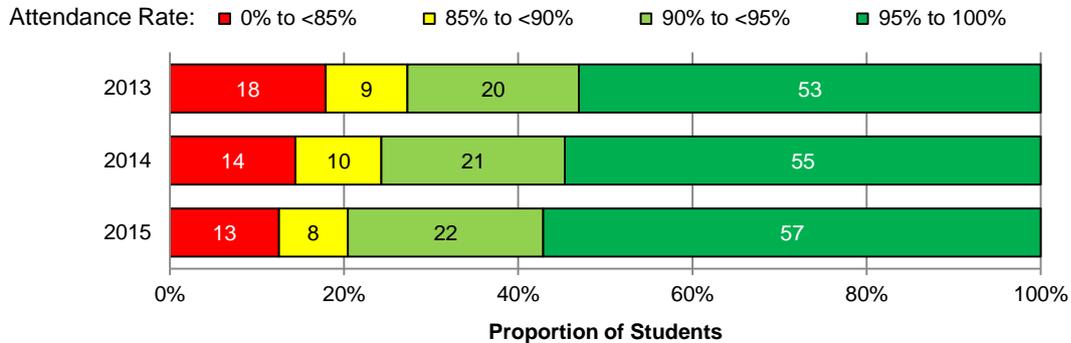
The overall attendance rate in 2015 for all Queensland Primary schools was 93%.

Student attendance rate for each year level (shown as a percentage)

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
2013	93%	92%	92%	92%	92%	93%	94%	91%					
2014	92%	93%	94%	92%	94%	92%	94%	95%					
2015	93%	92%	93%	94%	94%	94%	94%						

Student attendance distribution

The proportions of students by attendance range.



Description of how non-attendance is managed by the school

Non-attendance is managed in state schools in line with the DETE policies, SMS-PR-029: Managing Student Absences and SMS-PR-036: Roll Marking in State Schools, which outline processes for managing and recording student attendance and absenteeism.

Parents of children who show regular unexplained absence are contacted and discussions held on how regular attendance can be achieved.

In 2014 and to support targeted special interest groups, we provided Attendance Certificates to students who achieved 90% plus attendance in each term.

From 2014, where regular absence or lateness occurs, families receive a “post card” showing just how much school their child/ren are/will miss.

In 2015 and to continue in 2016, all students will receive a certificate if they attend greater than 95% in the semester.

Sandwich boards and notices on our school signs regularly remind parents of the importance of attendance at school.

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results – our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7, and 9.

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are available via the My School website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

To access our NAPLAN results, click on the My School link above. You will then be taken to the My School website with the following ‘Find a school’ text box.

Find a school

Sector:

Government

Non-government

Where it says '**School name**', type in the name of the school you wish to view, select the school from the drop-down list and select <GO>. Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to confirm that you are not a robot then by clicking continue, you acknowledge that you have read, accepted and agree to the **Terms of Use** and **Privacy Policy** before being given access to the school's *profile* webpage.

School NAPLAN information is available by selecting '**NAPLAN**' in the menu box in the top left corner of the school's profile webpage. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.