



Western Sydney School for Children with Autism 2004 Annual Report

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) – formerly Autism Association of NSW – operates six schools located in the Sydney Metropolitan area, the Hunter region, the Central Coast and the South Coast. These schools are schools for children with autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) who require specialised education programs.

The primary focus of the schools is to equip students with the skills to enable them to integrate into the wider community and to become as independent as is possible. In recognition of the special needs of students with ASDs, the ratio of staff to students is low. Aspect schools provide educational services for children aged 4 to 16 years. Aspect has a policy of transitioning students with ASDs into more inclusive settings. These settings include mainstream, support classes or special schools. The decision to transition a student is based on the student's ability to cope in a less specialised setting and is made by both families/carers and staff as part of the Individual Education Plan.

All Aspect schools comprise a base school/administrative centre and a range of satellite classes. A satellite class is an autism specific support class operated by an Aspect base school but which is located in either a Department of Education & Training or Catholic Education mainstream school. Satellite classes are an important step in the transition of students with ASDs into wider educational settings.

Western Sydney School for Children with Autism, was established in 1985. The school is located in Sydney's western region, covering a broad geographical area. The school which is the largest of Aspect's schools spans seven separate sites, with satellite classes in Richmond, Blacktown, Marayong, Fairfield West, Smithfield and Minto. The base school/administrative centre is located at Wetherill Park.

The satellite class established on the premises of St Andrew's Holy Family School in Marayong was the first secondary satellite class within a mainstream school.

The school provides specialised curriculum and community integration programs supported by a multidisciplinary team comprising of an occupational therapist, family support worker and school counsellor. There is a strong commitment to transitioning a student to the next least restrictive setting.

1. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN STATEWIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

Every student has an individual program developed in consultation with families, after careful assessment of their strengths and needs in all environments. The schools' curriculum is based on the core competencies of autism including social,

communication, sensory and behavioural needs which are integrated into the NSW Board of Studies mainstream curriculum – the Key Learning Areas (KLAs). The school uses a multi-disciplinary team approach, working collaboratively with families to develop the best possible outcomes for the students. The school provide information and training workshops to families to help them support their child.

In 2004 three year 3, five year 5 & no year 7 students participated in the Basic Skills (BST), Primary Writing Assessment (PWA) or English Lit (ELLA) tests. Enrolled in 2004 were 5 students of year 3 age, 6 students of year 5 age and 6 students of year 7 age. Their individual Student profile achievements are summarised below.

Year 3-BST.

Three students from year 3 completed the BST for Literacy & Numeracy.

Year 3-PWA

Three students participated in the PWA.

Year 5-BST

Five students from year 5 completed the BST for Literacy & Numeracy.

Year 5-PWA

Five students participated in the PWA.

| Individual Student Priorities Achievement Summary 2004 | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Year 3 | | | | |
| Achieved 55 % | Almost Achieved 20 % | Partial 15 % | Little/ No Progress 2 % | Not commenced 8 % |
| Year 5 | | | | |
| Achieved 10 % | Almost Achieved 25 % | Partial 5 % | Little/ No Progress 15% | Not commenced 45 % |
| Year 7 | | | | |
| Achieved 60 % | Almost Achieved 25 % | Partial 15 % | Little/ No Progress 0% | Not commenced 0 % |

2. TEACHER STANDARDS

The school employs 21 teachers in permanent and part time positions. All teachers have teaching qualifications awarded from a higher education institution within Australia.

3. RETENTION RATES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

| Years compared | Year 7 total enrolment on census date | Year 10 enrolment on census date | Year 7 enrolment at census date remaining in Year 10 on census date | Apparent retention date | Actual retention rate |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2000/2003 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 60% | 20% |
| 2001/2004 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 100% | 37.5% |

The Western Sydney School for Children with Autism as part of Aspect has a policy of transitioning students with autism spectrum disorders into more inclusive settings. The decision to transition a student is based on the student's ability to cope in a less specialised setting and is made by families/ carers and staff as part of the Individual Education Plan.

4. ENROLMENT POLICIES AND PROFILES

STANDARD 1: SERVICE ACCESS

1.1: SERVICE ENTRY

1.1.2: Service Entry: Schools

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) will ensure that children with autism spectrum disorders who require specialised educational placement specific to Autism in an Aspect school and who meet the criteria for enrolment, will have access to enrolment based on relative need and subject to the availability of a suitable placement.

When parents or carers are seeking enrolment for a child in an Aspect school, there must be a match between the child's needs and the capacity of the Aspect school to meet those needs and the needs of the child's family or carers. For example, the placement offered must be age appropriate and directed at providing the child with a school placement in the least restrictive environment possible.

Aspect also recognises that children with an autism spectrum disorder have the right to access and equity of services regardless of their gender, race or ethnicity religion, or language. As a service provider Aspect will respond appropriately and sensitively to the needs of the entire community including people from indigenous and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds within the limit of available resources.

Student Population.

All students enrolled at the Western Sydney School for Children with Autism have been approved for enrolment by Aspect Eligibility Committee to determine that they have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, A typical autism or Aspergers disorder.

Western Sydney School for Children with Autism's enrolment for 2004 was 82 students (15 girls and 67 boys). 23 students were in a secondary class. 62% of the school population were aged 8 years and under.

5. POLICIES

Policies tabled below cover;

- A) Student welfare
- B) Discipline
- C) Reporting complaints and resolving grievances

Parents/caregivers may request a copy of policies by contacting the school office.

The school seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which:

- minimizes risk of harm and ensures students feel secure
- supports the physical, social, academic and emotional development of students
- provides students welfare policies and programs that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development

A) Student Welfare

To ensure that all aspects of the school's mission for providing for a student's welfare are implemented the following policies and procedures were in place (or being developed) during 2004.

| Policy | Changes in 2004 | Access to full text |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Child Care and Protection encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislation requirements• Definitions• Guidelines• Procedures• Responding to allegations against employees• Investigation processes• documentation | Approved July 2004 to comply with current legislation | Issued to all staff Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| Code of Conduct for staff encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work & personal behaviour• Confidentiality & Privacy• Conflict of Interest• Copyright• Acceptance of gifts or benefits• Personal presentation | | Issued to all staff on commencement of employment Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public statements • Complaints handling • Legislation | | |
| <p>Community Access encompassing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines • Procedures Staff requirements • Supervision • Risk Assessment • Documentation | Amended November 2004 | Abbreviated text in Parent IEP Handbook Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| <p>Communication encompassing Formal and informal mechanisms in place for facilitating communication between the school and those with an interest in the student's education and well-being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for all communication in AANSW • Access to decision making in the Aspect | <p>Reviewed 2004</p> <p>Approved February 2004 to comply with DADHC disability standards</p> | <p>Text of class communication in Parent IEP Handbook</p> <p>Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office</p> |
| <p>Duty of Care & Dignity of Risk encompassing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles • Definitions • Guidelines | Approved November 2004 | Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| <p>Education encompassing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning characteristics of people with ASD • Assessment • Features of educational programs for people with autism • Transition • Training and consultancy | | <p>Full text in Parent IEP Handbook</p> <p>Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office</p> |
| <p>Emergency Procedures encompassing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines • Procedures and Contingency Planning • Legislation | Amended April 2004 | Full text in Our People Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| <p>Families as Partners encompassing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines • Collaborative consultation • Sharing of skills, knowledge and experience | | <p>Full text in Parent IEP Handbook</p> <p>Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office</p> |

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| Individual Educational Plan encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines • Process • Structure | | Full text in Parent IEP Handbook Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| Incidents/ Critical Incidents encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition • Guidelines • Investigation Guidelines • Procedures • Documentation | Reviewed 2004 for approval 2005 | Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| Medication and Illness encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of the unwell person • Procedure • Administering children's medication • Asthma plan • Epilepsy management • Documentation | | Abbreviated text in Parent IEP Handbook Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| Missing Client encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Protocol • Prevention • Documentation | | Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| O H & S encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation OH & S Act 2000 & OH & S Regulations 2001 • Consultation • Induction & Training • Incident & Accident reporting • Personal Protective Equipment | Amended November 2004 to comply with current legislation | Full text in Our People Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| PRN Medication encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines • Procedures | Being reviewed 2004 for approval 2005 to be used in conjunction with a behaviour support plan | Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| Student Attendance encompassing | Being developed for approval 2005 | |
| Sun Safe encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines | Revised policy October 2004 | Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration |

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| | | office |
| Swimming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment • Staffing • Staff qualifications • Locations | Reviewed and approved July 2004 | Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
| Visual Support encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles • Guidelines | Approved September 2004 | Full text in Parent IEP Handbook Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |

B) Positive Behaviour Support for Challenging Behaviour

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Positive Behaviour Support for Challenging Behaviour encompassing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition • Legislation • Individual planning and support • Assessment • Prohibited/ restricted practices • Crisis intervention | No changes | Full text in Parent IEP Handbook Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder administration office |
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C) Policies for Complaints and Grievances Resolution

The school's policy for dealing with complaints and grievances includes processes for raising and responding to matters of concern identified by parents, students and staff. These processes incorporate, as appropriate, principles of procedural fairness.

The full text of the school's policy and processes for complains and grievances resolution is provided in the Our People Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy and Our Management Policies, Guidelines & Procedures Policy folder in the administration office.

6. SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

| AREA | PRIORITIES | ACHIEVEMENTS |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Teaching & learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better intervention strategies K-6 to improve Literacy & Numeracy outcomes. • improving student based outcomes as defined within individual IEP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased number of students undertaking basic skills tests in years 3 & 5. • increased number of teaching staff availing themselves of professional development courses pertaining to literacy/numeracy due to provision of in class support. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase possibility for students 16-18 years to remain in our service and continue with their education. • improve educational outcomes to students undertaking stages 4-6. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of student based outcomes identified within individual IEP either achieved or almost achieved across the school. • 3 students successfully retained in school 2 of who have enrolled in to year 11 & 12 programs. • 6 students successfully attained school certificate-4 by way of life skills alternative. |
| Family Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase support to families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applied to increase early intervention program to three days in 05 based on potential enrolments. • provision of regular family mornings and training for families. • putting in place measures to increase student enrolments in 05. • initiate staff/family forums one per term. |
| Staff development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training in child protection requirements • training for new staff in core competencies of communication, social skills, sensory and behaviour support • training in IEP/Program development & implementation. • training in sensory motor development & increasing sensory based activities within classroom program. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all staff trained • 3 teachers and 2 aides trained • all staff attended training. • all classroom teachers provided with training. |
| OH & S compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training in manual handling techniques • training in risk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all staff trained • all teachers & support staff |

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| | <p>assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hazard & risk identification • Infection control • facilities and equipment • training & revision of Non Violent Crisis Intervention strategies | <p>trained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all teachers and aides trained • all safety representatives & first aid staff trained. • all staff trained in use of specific equipment. All short term priorities in the plan have been completed – playground audit / playground upgrade recommendations in hand. • all staff in process of being trained. All new staff and identified staff based on need trained. |
| Continuous Improvement Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition Survey to parents and receiving schools for students who transitioned 2003. • review and further streamlining of IEP and classroom program process. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey completed – 94% of students are still in same transition setting. • staff completed review of current process and product, recommended areas in need of further improvement and trialled streamlined version in 2004. Parental feedback included in this process of review. |
| Student achievements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transition students with ASD to more inclusive setting. • improve student Literacy & Numeracy results. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24% of student population transitioned in 2004 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 9 students transitioned to a mainstream setting ○ 4 students transitioned to support setting ○ 6 students transitioned to a school for specific purposes ○ 1 student transitioned in to work program ○ 8 of the 11 students enrolled in years 3 & 5 sat the PWA and BST in both base and satellite school programs |
| Extend services to reach more students with autism spectrum disorders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new high school satellite class in a CEO school agreed upon. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 additional high school satellite class agreed to commence with 7 students initially to expand to 10. Commencement date January 05. |

7. SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

