



## **South East Sydney School for Children with Autism 2005 Annual Report**

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) operates six schools located in the Sydney Metropolitan area, the Hunter region, the Central Coast and the South Coast. These schools cater 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 Office mainstream school. Satellite classes are an important step in the transition of students with ASDs into wider educational settings.

The South East Sydney School encompasses nine different sites within the South East Sydney region. The area covered by our enrolments includes Vaucluse in the east, East Hills in the west and the Sutherland area in the south.

The base/administration centre of all these sites is located at Peakhurst along with three classes. These classes include an early childhood class, an infants' and a primary class.

The Bourke St Unit in Surry Hills has two classes, an early childhood and an infants' class.

The Sylvanvale unit at Kirrawee has five classes, an early childhood class and four infant's classes.

The infant satellite classes are located at Waverley, Leichhardt, Kareela, Caringbah and East Hills. The two primary units are based at Leichhardt and Caringbah and a secondary high school satellite class is located on the grounds of Sydney Secondary College, Balmain campus.

The school provides an autism-specific curriculum as well as the mandatory curriculum recommended by The Board of Studies and community integration programs supported by a multidisciplinary team comprising of an occupational therapist, speech pathologist and school counsellor. There is a strong commitment to transitioning a student to the next least specialised setting.

## 1. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN STATEWIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

Every student has an individual education 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 schools use a multi-disciplinary team approach, working collaboratively with families to develop the best possible outcomes for the students. The schools provide information and training workshops to families to help them support their child.

In 2005 four year 3 and no year 5 students participated in the Basic Skills Test (BST) and Primary Writing Assessment (PWA). To protect the students' identity, performance data has not been reported. Six students of year 3 age and one student of year 5 age were enrolled in the school. Their individual student profile achievements of the year 3 students summarised below. The individual students profile achievements of the year 5 student has not been reported to protect the student's identity.

### Individual Student Priorities Achievement Summary 2005

	Achieved	Developing	Emerging	Targeted	Not commenced
Year 3	11%	46%	29%	14%	0%

## 2. TEACHER STANDARDS

In 2005 the school employed 22 teachers in permanent and part time positions. All teachers have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or from a recognised overseas higher education institute.

## 3. RETENTION RATES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Years compared	Year 7 total enrolment on census date 2002	Year 10 enrolment on census date 2005	Year 7 enrolment at census date 2002 remaining in Year 10 on census date 2005	Apparent retention rate	Actual retention rate
2002/2005	4	2	2	50%	50%

As for all of Aspect's schools, the South East School for Children with Autism 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. The success of the schools' transition programs reflects the small number of students in years 7–10 who continue their education at Aspect schools.

## 4. ENROLMENT POLICIES AND PROFILES

### STANDARD 1: SERVICE ACCESS

#### 1.1: SERVICE ENTRY

##### 1.1.2: Service Entry: Schools

Children with an autism spectrum disorder who require specialised educational placement in an Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) school and who meet the criteria for enrolment can access the enrolment process based on relative need and subject to the availability of a suitable placement.

Aspect 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.

##### **When to use**

When parents or carers are seeking placement for a child with an autism spectrum disorder in an Aspect school.

##### **Guidelines**

Eligibility for enrolment in an Aspect school requires a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder by either a paediatrician or psychiatrist and a recent cognitive assessment by a psychologist.

##### **Procedures**

###### **Application Process**

An application for school placement can be made for a child from 3.9 years to 15 years of age by parents or carers. Application forms are available from the office of the Director, Education & Research and each Aspect school.

As part of the application process the parents or carers agree, in writing, to the release of information from other agencies where appropriate (note: such information is only sought in order to assist the Eligibility Committee to establish eligibility for services in consultation with the family).

A current psychological assessment (no more than 12 months old) and a report from a paediatrician or psychiatrist diagnosing an autism spectrum disorder must accompany the application.

An application processing fee is to be paid at the time of the application.

###### **Approval Process**

Eligibility is determined by Aspect's Eligibility Committee which meets once a term.

###### **Applicants deemed eligible for services:**

If deemed eligible the child may either be offered services or placed on a waitlist for services, depending on availability. After the Eligibility Committee meeting, the referral information is sent to the relevant Aspect school principal. A letter stating the outcome of the school application is forwarded to families or carers by the Director, Education & Research. An offer of placement in an Aspect school, and the type of class offered (base or satellite class) is subject to the availability of an appropriate place and is based upon the learning and developmental needs of the child as determined by the Principal.

**Applicants not eligible for services:**

If deemed not eligible for services then the Director, Education & Research will write to the family, carer or guardian providing reasons and where possible make recommendations to other services that may be more appropriate.

**Student Population**

All students enrolled at the South East 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.

South East Sydney School for Children with Autism’s enrolment for 2005 was 88 students (9 girls and 79 boys). Eight students were in a secondary class. 84% 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:

- Minimises 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 2005.

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Changes in 2005</b>	<b>Access to full text</b>
<b>Child Care and Protection</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legislation requirements</li><li>• Definitions</li><li>• Guidelines</li><li>• Procedures</li><li>• Responding to allegations against employees</li><li>• Investigation processes</li><li>• Documentation</li></ul>	No changes	Issued to all staff  <i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office

Policy	Changes in 2005	Access to full text
<p><b>Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work and personal behaviour</li> <li>• Confidentiality and privacy</li> <li>• Conflict of interest</li> <li>• Copyright</li> <li>• Acceptance of gifts or benefits</li> <li>• Personal presentation</li> <li>• Public statements</li> <li>• Complaints handling</li> <li>• Legislation</li> </ul>	No changes	<p>Issued to all staff on commencement of employment</p> <p><i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office</p>
<p><b>Community Access</b> encompassing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Procedures — staff requirements</li> <li>• Supervision</li> <li>• Risk assessment</li> <li>• Documentation</li> </ul>	No changes	<p>Abbreviated text in Parent IEP Handbook</p> <p><i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office</p>
<p><b>Communication — Protocol</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Guidelines for all communication in Aspect</li> <li>• Access to decision making in the organisation</li> </ul>	No changes	<p>Text of class communication in Parent IEP Handbook</p> <p><i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office</p>
<p><b>Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principles</li> <li>• Definitions</li> <li>• Guidelines</li> </ul>	No changes	<p><i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office</p>
<p><b>Comprehensive Education Approach</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning characteristics of people with ASD</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Features of educational programs for people with autism</li> <li>• Transition</li> <li>• Training and consultancy</li> </ul>	Reviewed June 05	<p>Full text in Parent IEP Handbook</p> <p><i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office</p>

Policy	Changes in 2005	Access to full text
<p><b>Emergency Procedures</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Procedures and Contingency Planning</li> <li>• Legislation</li> </ul>	Reviewed June 05	Full text in <i>Our People — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<p><b>Working with Families</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Process</li> </ul>	Revised August 05	Full text in Parent IEP Handbook  <i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<p><b>Individual Educational Plan</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Process</li> <li>• Structure</li> </ul>	No changes	Full text in Parent IEP Handbook  <i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<p><b>Incidents/Critical Incidents</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition</li> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Investigation guidelines</li> <li>• Procedures</li> <li>• Documentation</li> </ul>	Approved Feb 05	<i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<p><b>Medication and Illness</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of the unwell person</li> <li>• Procedure</li> <li>• Administering children's medication</li> <li>• Asthma plan</li> <li>• Epilepsy management</li> <li>• Documentation</li> </ul>	No changes	Abbreviated text in Parent IEP Handbook  <i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<p><b>Missing Client</b> encompassing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background</li> <li>• Protocol</li> <li>• Prevention</li> <li>• Documentation</li> </ul>	Approved June 05	<i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Changes in 2005</b>	<b>Access to full text</b>
<b>Positive Behaviour Support for Challenging Behaviour</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition</li> <li>• Legislation</li> <li>• Individual planning and support</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Prohibited/restricted practices</li> <li>• Crisis intervention</li> </ul>	No changes	Full text in Parent IEP Handbook  <i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<b>OH&amp;S</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislation OH&amp;S Act 2000 and OH&amp;S Regulations 2001</li> <li>• Consultation</li> <li>• Induction and training</li> <li>• Incident and accident reporting</li> <li>• Personal protective equipment</li> </ul>	No changes	Full text in <i>Our People — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<b>PRN Medication</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Procedures</li> </ul>	Approved June 05	<i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<b>Safe and Supportive Environment</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child protection</li> <li>• Support</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Supervision</li> <li>• Conduct</li> <li>• Complaints</li> <li>• Pastoral care</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>	Approved Sept 05	<i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<b>Student Attendance</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Procedures</li> </ul>	Approved June 05	<i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<b>Sun Smart</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Procedures</li> </ul>	No changes	<i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<b>Swimming</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Procedures</li> </ul>	No changes	<i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office

Policy	Changes in 2005	Access to full text
<b>Visual Support</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principles</li> <li>Guidelines</li> </ul>	No changes	Full text in Parent IEP Handbook  <i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office

## B. Discipline

Policy	Changes in 2005	Access to full text
<b>Positive Behaviour Support for Challenging Behaviour</b> encompassing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definition</li> <li>Legislation</li> <li>Individual planning and support</li> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Prohibited/restricted practices</li> <li>Crisis intervention</li> </ul>	No changes	Full text in Parent IEP Handbook  <i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office
<b>Discipline</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines</li> </ul>	No changes	<i>Our Management — Policies, Guidelines &amp; Procedures</i> policy folder in administrative office

## C. Reporting complaints and resolving grievances

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 complaints, "*Complaints by People with ASD and/or their families*" (revised Sept 05), is provided in the *Our Management — Policies, Guidelines & Procedures* policy folder in the administration office.

## 6. SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

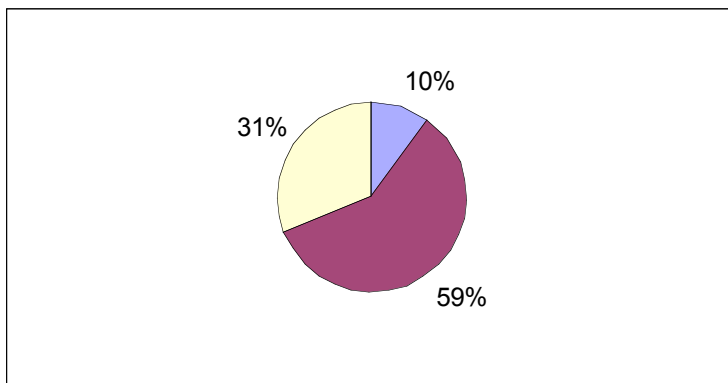
Area	Priorities	Achievements
Teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuously improve IEP</li> <li>Comprehensive educational approach</li> <li>Classroom programs</li> <li>Board of Studies curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All teachers trained</li> <li>All staff trained</li> <li>Some staff trained</li> <li>Some staff trained</li> </ul>

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Family support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase support to families</li> <li>• Issues for siblings</li> <li>• Counselling sessions for parents' pampering day — "Someone to turn to..."™ program</li> <li>• Grandparents' morning teas at Peakhurst and Bourke Street</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 family information sessions</li> <li>• Staff-parent forum meeting</li> <li>• Siblings workshop</li> <li>• Counselling sessions held</li> <li>• Morning teas held</li> </ul>
Staff development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection requirements</li> <li>• Medication</li> <li>• Mandatory reporting</li> <li>• Interpersonal Neurobiology — report from conference</li> <li>• Non Violent Crisis Intervention</li> <li>• Overview of WISC-IV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff trained</li> <li>• All staff trained</li> <li>• All staff trained</li> <li>• Family counsellor trained and delivered report</li> <li>• Some staff trained</li> <li>• All staff trained</li> </ul>
OH&S compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training in manual handling techniques</li> <li>• Training in risk assessment</li> <li>• Hazard and risk identification</li> <li>• Training in chemical safety</li> <li>• Community access</li> <li>• Registering injuries and accidents</li> <li>• Visitors' induction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff trained</li> <li>• All teachers trained</li> <li>• All staff trained</li> <li>• All staff trained</li> <li>• All staff trained</li> <li>• All staff trained</li> <li>• Some staff trained</li> </ul>
Continuous Improvement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual Education Plans</li> <li>• Transition survey to parents and receiving school for those students who left in 2003</li> <li>• Autism Quality Program Indicators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All teachers</li> <li>• Survey completed — 90% of students still in same setting</li> <li>• Completed — the survey has enabled school to identify areas for improvement in 2006</li> </ul>
Student achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition students with ASD to more inclusive setting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11% students transitioned to a mainstream setting</li> <li>• 6% students transitioned to a support setting</li> <li>• 1% students transitioned to post school options</li> </ul>

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Extend services to reach more students with autism spectrum disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New satellite class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infants' and primary satellite classes opened at Our Lady of Fatima, Caringbah</li> <li>• New unit at Kirrawee opened in January 2005</li> <li>• Infants' satellite class opened at St Columba's, Leichhardt</li> </ul>

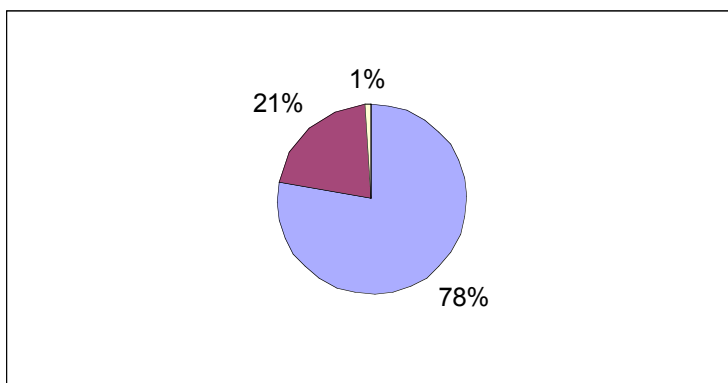
## 7. SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### 1) Recurrent/Capital Income represented by a pie chart



10% Fees and private income  
31% Commonwealth recurrent grants  
59% State recurrent grants

### 2) Recurrent/Capital expenditure represented by a pie chart



1% Capital expenditure  
21% Non-salary expenses  
78% Salaries, allowances and related expenses