



Annual Report

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Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) is Australia's largest autism-specific service provider, with one of the biggest autism-specific school programs in the world. A not-for-profit organisation, we work in partnership with people of all ages on the autism spectrum, and their families to deliver evidence-informed solutions that are person centred family focused and customer driven.

Aspect's Purpose

a different brilliant®
understanding, engaging & celebrating the
strengths, interests & aspirations
of people on the autism spectrum

Our Vision

The best opportunities
for people on the autism
spectrum

Our Mission

We work with people of all ages
on the autism spectrum, delivering
evidence-informed solutions
that are person-centred,
family-focused &
customer-driven.

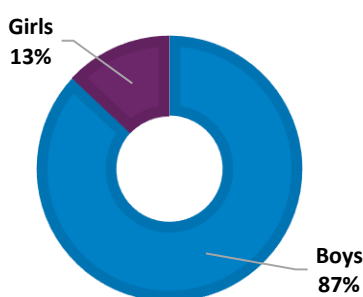
Our Values

We are passionate
about people,
about being positive and
about what's possible

Message from the principal

2018 was a year of considerable growth and progress across a range of areas for the Aspect Western Sydney School. Driven by our continued commitment to improvement and exceptional service, many goals were achieved and future plans developed.

Aspect Western Sydney School caters to students across the Greater Western regions of Sydney. There were 156 students in 2018 of whom 87% were boys.



The main campus at Wetherill Park has administrative office and six classes comprising of both infants and primary stages. The school has 13 satellite classes. Eight infants/primary classes are located at Smithfield, Fairfield West, Blacktown, Richmond, Springwood, Schofields, Lawson and Kemps Creek and five high school classes are located at Marayong, Schofields and Springwood in the Blue Mountains, Kemps Creek and Castle Hill. This expansive reach across a range of locations means that Western Sydney School has established strong relationships with education sectors within both the NSW Department of Education and Catholic schools.

In 2018, the most significant shift for the school was a change in leadership, including a change in the leadership framework. At the start of Term 3, a new Executive Principal was appointed for both Aspect Western Sydney and Aspect Macarthur schools. This appointment meant that both schools formed a close working relationship and started what will become, a merging of skills, knowledge, experience, resources and expertise across both settings. This structural change was well received by students, staff and community. So much was achieved in a short time to support our belief that a collaborative and consistent approach to school leadership leads to increased opportunities and experiences for all involved.

During this period, Western Sydney School continued its commitment to the Aspect Comprehensive Approach (ACA) and continued to be guided by a school wide business plan. The main priority areas identified in 2018 were improving person centred and family focused

practice, increasing and improving parent engagement and strengthening individualized student processes such as the individual planning process.

Throughout the year, a school wide improvement plan focused on K-12 curriculum and created with the help of AISNSW in 2017 rolled out across the school. This plan strengthened both curriculum development and program delivery across all KLA's. School staff participated in extensive professional learning both with AISNSW consultants and utilising online learning.



Towards the end of the year, school facilities and school wide information technology (IT) were focus areas for improvement so many new projects were planned and completed. IT was upgraded across the entire school and the main school campus received new playground equipment, new carpet in all classrooms, pin boards and additional playground equipment.

2018 was a time of great change but our individualised, person centred, student focused approach to all we do and say continued to guide and inform all decisions and future directions.

Lee Casascelli

Executive Principal

Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing

Each student has an individual profile of characteristics that outlines strengths and interests, current levels of functioning and areas for development in the autism-specific areas of learning: social communication, social interaction, behaviours and sensory processing which are integrated into the NSW Education Standards Authority 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 provides information and training workshops to families to help them support their child.

Literacy and Numeracy Assessments

For NAPLAN results, please refer to My School website www.myschool.edu.au



Senior secondary outcomes

Record of School Achievement

The formal Record of School Achievement credential was awarded by NESA to 11 students from Aspect Western Sydney in 2018 including four students that completed the full life skills course and one student that completed the partial life skills course.

Higher School Certificate

The Higher School Certificate was awarded to two students at Aspect Western Sydney in 2018.

Year 12 students attaining a Year 12 certificate or equivalent VET qualification

Two students were attending VET courses in Construction and Industrial Technology as part of their pattern of studies.

Year 12	Qualification / Certificate	Percentage of students
2018	HSC	100%
2018	AQF Certificate III or above	0%

Senior secondary outcomes are documented on the My School website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au>.



Teacher professional learning, accreditation and qualifications

The following professional learning activities were undertaken by staff throughout 2018:

Description of professional learning activity	No. of staff participating
Aspect Comprehensive Approach: includes individual planning, learning and participation, transition and inclusion, structured teaching, positive behaviour support, health and wellbeing, specialist collaboration, family and community engagement.	All
Supporting people on the autism spectrum using the 5 Point Star	35
Staff Induction - new staff participated in the Aspect New Starters Day and onsite school specific induction programs.	3
Aspect Professional Code of Conduct - face to face workshop and online module.	All
Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (foundation and refresher courses) - a framework for decision making and problem solving to prevent, de-escalate, and safely respond to disruptive or assaultive verbal and physical behaviours	All
Child Protection - responsibilities related to child protection based on state/territory legislation, federal legislation and Aspect policy and procedures	All
Disability Standards for Education - overview of the Disability Standards for Education (2005) and the legal obligations of all education providers	30
CPR training - skills to provide Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	44
First Aid - knowledge and skills to help an ill or injured person until emergency help arrives	2

Teacher accreditation

Level of accreditation	Number of Teachers
Pre-2004 teachers (accreditation not required in 2017)	14
Conditional	2
Provisional	5
Proficient Teacher	20
Highly Accomplished Teacher(voluntary accreditation)	Nil
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	Nil
Total number of teachers	41

Teacher qualifications

Category	Number of Teachers
Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines, or	41
Teachers having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications	Nil

Workforce composition

Composition of Aspect Western Sydney School staff is documented on the My School website www.myschool.edu.au

No staff is identified as of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background.

Student attendance, retention rates and post-school destinations in secondary schools

Student attendance rates

Kinder	90.28%	Year 7	89.35%
Year 1	85.79%	Year 8	91.71%
Year 2	90.21%	Year 9	82.48%
Year 3	92.50%	Year 10	93.54%
Year 4	87.99%	Year 11	94.27%
Year 5	88.81%	Year 12	96.48%
Year 6	91.34%		

For the whole school student attendance rate, please refer to the school's data on the My School website www.myschool.edu.au

Retention of Year 10 to Year 12

33% percent of the 2016 Year 10 cohort completed Year 12 at Aspect Western Sydney School in 2018.

2 of the 6 who completed Year 10 in 2016 went on to complete year 12 at Aspect Western Sydney School while 3 other students completed their Year 12 at a mainstream high school.

Post-school destinations

Two students left Aspect Western Sydney at the conclusion of their Year 12. One student secured an apprenticeship as a green keeper. The other student moved interstate and we don't have further information.





Enrolment policy

Aspect provides autism-specific educational services for eligible school-aged children on the autism spectrum, to prepare them for transition to environments that are not autism specific.

Aspect recognises that children on the autism spectrum have the right to access and equity of services regardless of their gender, race or ethnicity, religion or language.

An application is made for an Aspect school rather than a specific class. Our school's professional staff decide in consultation with the family which class is best suited to the educational needs of the student. Each school is responsible for managing its own application, intake and waiting lists process, which is managed by the school principal.

When vacancies arise in the school, the decision about how to fill them is made based on whether the type of vacancy available would be appropriate for the child. Factors taken into consideration include the type of vacancy available, the child's age, the length of time a child has been on the waiting list, the availability of alternative placements and the family situation.

Entry criteria

Aspect schools are funded in part by the Commonwealth and state governments, which have specific criteria for placement. To be eligible for placement in one of Aspect's schools, prospective students must satisfy the following criteria:

Citizenship and visa status - a child must:

- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Australia or holds an eligible visa (refer to guide to checking citizenship and visa status for enrolment).
- be aged between 4 and 17 years.

Diagnosis - a child must:

- in both NSW and South Australia, have a current diagnosis which is not more than twelve (12) months old as being on the autism spectrum from a specialist medical practitioner, child psychiatrist or clinical psychologist with the necessary training and experience to be able to undertake a diagnostic assessment;
- in South Australia, a second report from a psychologist or speech pathologist that confirms the diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder that is not more than two (2) years old; and
- in both NSW and South Australia, have a current standardised cognitive or developmental assessment (e.g. IQ testing, Griffiths, WISC-IV, WPPSI-III, Stanford Binet V) which is not more than two (2) years old.

Registration to school waitlist

Expression of interest in Aspect schools may be made in the following ways:

- direct enquiry to the Aspect school by telephone or email;
- telephone or email to Aspect Customer Service, who will direct the enquiry to the school;
- general enquiry via the Contact Us page on the Aspect website, which will be directed to the school.

The registration form can be obtained from the following processes:

- families who are interested in enrolling their child to an Aspect school are asked to attend a School Information Session. Aspect principals or their delegate are responsible for organising a school information session once per school term, in line with the School Information Session work instruction, for prospective parents or guardians who would like to enrol their child. This information session outlines the Aspect education program and the registration and enrolment process. The school registration form is obtained after attending this session.
- families who are unable to attend a School Information Session can obtain a registration form directly from an Aspect school. A School Enrolment Committee representative will provide them with information about the Aspect education program and the registration and enrolment process, before sending them the registration form.

A non-refundable processing fee is required for each application submitted.

Application to more than one Aspect School

When a family wants to place their child on the waitlist of more than one Aspect school, they first apply to their preferred Aspect school and indicate which other Aspect schools they will consider enrolment. The preferred Aspect school is responsible for processing the application, inform the other Aspect school/s to place the student on their school's active waitlist and share the application documents.

Aspect School Enrolment Committee

School principals are responsible for convening the Aspect School Enrolment Committee (comprised of school principal, psychologist and selected school coordinators) which meets once per school term, following the information session, to review registrations received. This committee determines if a child is eligible for placement in an Aspect school.



Eligible/Not Eligible for service

Citizenship and age criteria

If the citizenship or age criteria is not met, a school representative will inform the parents or guardians that their child is not eligible for enrolment due to citizenship or age criteria not being met. If the parents or guardians are not satisfied with the result, they can make a complaint to Aspect (refer to Aspect's Complaints Management procedure).

Diagnosis criteria

If the child has been deemed eligible by the Aspect School Enrolment Committee, the principal will inform the parents or guardians that, based on the diagnostic information provided, their child has been deemed eligible for the program (Letter - Confirmation of diagnosis) and their child's name has been placed on the school waitlist.

The principal is responsible for referring the application to the Aspect Eligibility Committee if the diagnosis needs clarification. Parents/Carers will be informed, in writing (Letter - Application sent to full eligibility committee), that their case has been sent to the Committee for review.

If further information is required by the Committee, the principal is responsible for writing to the parents requesting updated information (Letter - Request for updated Psychological reports).

Aspect Eligibility Committee

The National Director, Aspect Education is responsible for:

- convening the Aspect Eligibility Committee once per school term to review any registrations that require clarification, and
- reporting to Aspect principals the results of the Aspect Eligibility Committee, so that they can inform the parents of the outcomes.

The principal will inform the parents or guardians (Letter - Confirmation of diagnosis) that based on the diagnostic information provided their child has been deemed eligible

for the program or not and, if confirmed, the child's name is placed on the schools waitlist.

Vacancy Management

If a vacancy arises, students on the waitlist who can potentially fill the vacancy will be considered. The principal or delegate interviews families whose child might fill the vacancy regarding accommodations/ adjustments for their child following the interview pro forma.

If a student being considered for enrolment is not an Australian citizen, the principal or their delegate must check that the visa is still valid and eligible for enrolment.

Following completion of the interview, the principal, or their delegate will complete the Risk Management Plan pro forma, to assist with decision making.

Following the interview process, the school will inform the family if a child has been offered a placement (Letter - Enrolment Contract/Acceptance of Offer) or (Letter - Placement to Satellite Class) or will be retained on the school's waitlist.

Principals are responsible for forwarding parents the relevant enrolment package and liaising with them throughout the process.

Enrolment Package

When a family is offered a placement, in addition to the enrolment contract, they will be sent documents based on the enrolment acceptance checklist.

A family can decline an enrolment offer and inform Aspect school if they want to be placed in the school's active waitlist.

To secure enrolment, the family must pay a non-refundable enrolment fee as published in the Aspect School fees schedule (NSW or SA).

When a family informs the Aspect school of their decision to withdraw their child from enrolment before commencing, they must also inform the Aspect school if they wish to be placed in the school's active waitlist.



Other school policies

Summary of policy	Changes in 2018	Access to full text
<p>Student welfare</p> <p>The school seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment to support the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of students through the following policies:</p> <p>Person centred approach and recognition of values - define and work towards achieving individual's goals and personal lifestyle choices with support and input from those who care about them</p> <p>Risk management framework - identifies risks and defines criteria for the assessment of consequence of those risks</p> <p>Duty of care and dignity of risk - ensures that staff understand and implement the principles of Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk, recognising the rights of the people we support to make informed choices and take calculated risks</p> <p>Safeguarding the people we support - Aspect is committed to appropriately responding to and preventing incidents of abuse, injury, neglect and exploitation of the people we support, in both participation with Aspect, and as a partner of the broader community</p>	<p>No changes were made in 2018</p>	<p>The full text of Aspect policies</p> <p>Person centred approach and recognition of value status;</p> <p>Risk management framework;</p> <p>Duty of care and dignity of risk; and</p> <p>Safeguarding the people we support</p> <p>can be accessed by request from the school principal or from Aspect's website</p> <p>https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/content/aspect</p>
<p>Anti-bullying</p> <p>For some young people on the autism spectrum, it can be very difficult to recognise bullying. The school seeks to develop supports to assist students to understand that:</p> <p>bullying is about the misuse of power in relationships</p> <p>bullying is when someone experiences repeated verbal, physical and or social behaviour that causes harm</p> <p>bullying is mean and can be very hurtful</p> <p>there are different kinds of bullying</p> <p>no kind of bullying is ever OK</p> <p>bullying should always be reported</p> <p>adults will do all in their power to take it seriously and deal with it</p>	<p>No changes were made in 2018</p>	<p>http://www.positivepartnerships.com.au/sites/default/files/positive_partnerships_bullying_fact_sheet.pdf</p>
<p>Discipline</p> <p>Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) considers that the behaviour of children with autism spectrum disorders requires support and understanding. Challenging behaviours are best understood and responded to by applying a positive approach as outlined in Aspect's Positive Behaviour Support Policy.</p> <p>Positive Behaviour Support is a comprehensive approach to supporting situations where there is challenging behaviour and combines the science of learning (from Applied Behaviour Analysis) with human rights and values. PBS works in respectful collaboration with individuals and their families to use effective evidence based strategies to increase the quality of life for all involved.</p>	<p>No changes were made in 2018</p>	<p>The full text of Aspect Positive Behaviour Support policy can be accessed by request from the school principal or from Aspect's website</p> <p>https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/content/aspect</p>
<p>Complaints and grievances resolution</p> <p>Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) values complaints about the quality of its service and communications to support the continuous improvement of services and management.</p> <p>Aspect's complaints management process provides a transparent framework for promptly and sensitively addressing and resolving complaints and disputes that may arise from complaints having regard to procedural fairness, confidentiality and privacy.</p>	<p>No changes were made in 2018</p>	<p>The full text of the Complaints Management Process can be accessed by request from the School Principal or from Aspect's website</p> <p>https://www.autismspectrum.org.au/sites/default/files/Aspect-Feedback-Complaints-Brochure2019.pdf</p>



School determined priority areas for improvement

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Teaching and learning	In consultation with the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AISNSW) and as part of the school wide improvement plan, focus on improving student engagement.	Increased focus on student strengths and interests. Embedding of strengths and interests into all learning programs to increase motivation and engagement.
	Staff to focus on the structured supports element of the Aspect Comprehensive Approach (ACA) and to ensure that all students have access to individualized visual or augmentative means of communication.	ACA review conducted. Environmental audits conducted across all classes. Visual supports introduced reflecting student strengths and interests.
	Staff led implementation of playground programs to teach play based skills to students.	Set up essential visual supports across the playground.
		Purchased additional equipment to support the playground program.
		Audit of playground space. Action plan created for follow up in 2019.
Family support		Therapist led programs trialled.
		Zones of regulation programs offered to several classes and sites.
Staff development	Increase involvement of families in the Individual Planning (IP) process.	Revised student profile forms implemented across the school so that parent involvement is increased.
	Continue to include Net Promoter Score (NPS) survey link in the weekly school newsletter to families.	Increased completion rates. Overall improvement in number of families participating in the survey.
	School wide compliance training to ensure that all staff are working within policy frameworks and are aware of roles and responsibilities.	Staff completed online training in safeguarding student welfare.
WHS compliance	Ongoing Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA), Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and Child Protection training.	All staff undertook MAPA and Child Protection training in 2018.
	NESA compliance.	In consultation with AISNSW all staff engaged in regular and comprehensive training focused on curriculum and compliance.
	Safe work practices.	Conducted regular spot audits across all school sites. Followed through with all necessary changes, upgrades and/or training.
	RiskMan training and implementation	All staff trained in RiskMan. Established timelines for reviewing and closing incidents.

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Continuous improvement	Embed Autism Initiatives' (UK) Five Point Star approach across all ACA elements in 2019.	All staff participated in Five Point Star training at the end of Term 4.
	Build partnership with Aspect Macarthur School to expand knowledge, skills and experiences of school staff.	Staff visited partner school in Term 4 to establish relationships and explore & examine school wide approaches and processes.
		Cross school leadership team planning and professional development.
Student achievement		All staff scheduled to participate in Positive Partnerships whole school program in Term 1 2019 with Aspect Macarthur School to establish cross school goals and initiatives and to strengthen new relationship.
		Cross school visits are scheduled for 2019. Cross team planning, sharing of resources, programs and activities.
	Increase student involvement in the Individual Planning (IP) process. Increase post school opportunities for high school students - Work Ed program in 2019.	More students participating in IP meetings. Secured funding from the Redan Foundation to offer a work education program in 2019. Started planning and preparing the content and the experiences for the program.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility



Aspect Western Sydney School wants all students to recognise that they are valued and an integral part of the school community, with parents and staff providing care and support that engender self-esteem, mutual respect and responsibility. There is much scope to develop talents through each student's Individual Plan and to learn through experiences.

The structure of the school's satellite program provides opportunities for students to participate in classes and cultural activities with host school students, which allow them to get to know each other. The satellite program has assisted in promoting respect for the individual and the rights of others.

Aspect's Purpose of "understanding, engaging & celebrating the strengths, interests & aspirations of people on the autism spectrum" and Aspect's Value of "we are passionate about people, about being positive and about what's possible" mirror the nine recommended values of the National Framework for Values in Education.

Aspect has a commitment to ensuring all team members know and embrace our core values to ensure they are reflected in interactions and relationships with stakeholders. Aspect recognises that in order to achieve this it is important to share information with staff and the community so that Aspect is known not only for the work that we do but also for the values we uphold.



Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

I can't believe how much my child has improved since starting school at Aspect Western Sydney. She has exceeded all my expectations.

feedback from parents at Western Sydney focuses mostly on the care shown to students and families and the knowledge and skills of the staff. Areas for improvement in 2019 include more formal opportunities to connect with and plan with parents such as the establishment of a Western Sydney School P&F association.

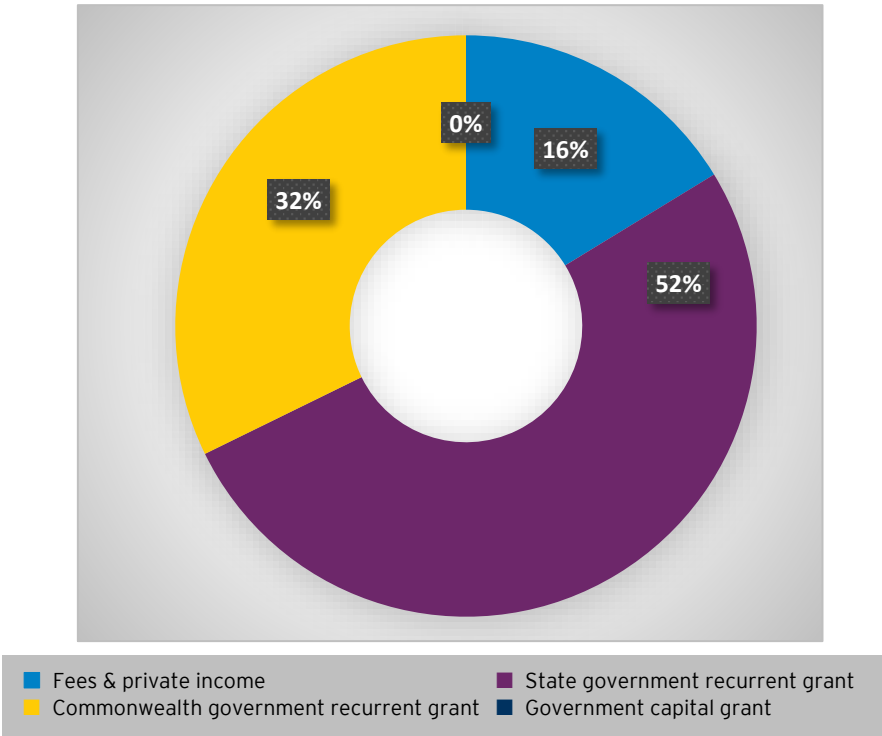
I am so grateful that my child attends an Aspect school.

During 2018, Aspect Western Sydney School surveyed families using the Net Promoter Score survey. The school scored a commendable return score of 60%. Positive

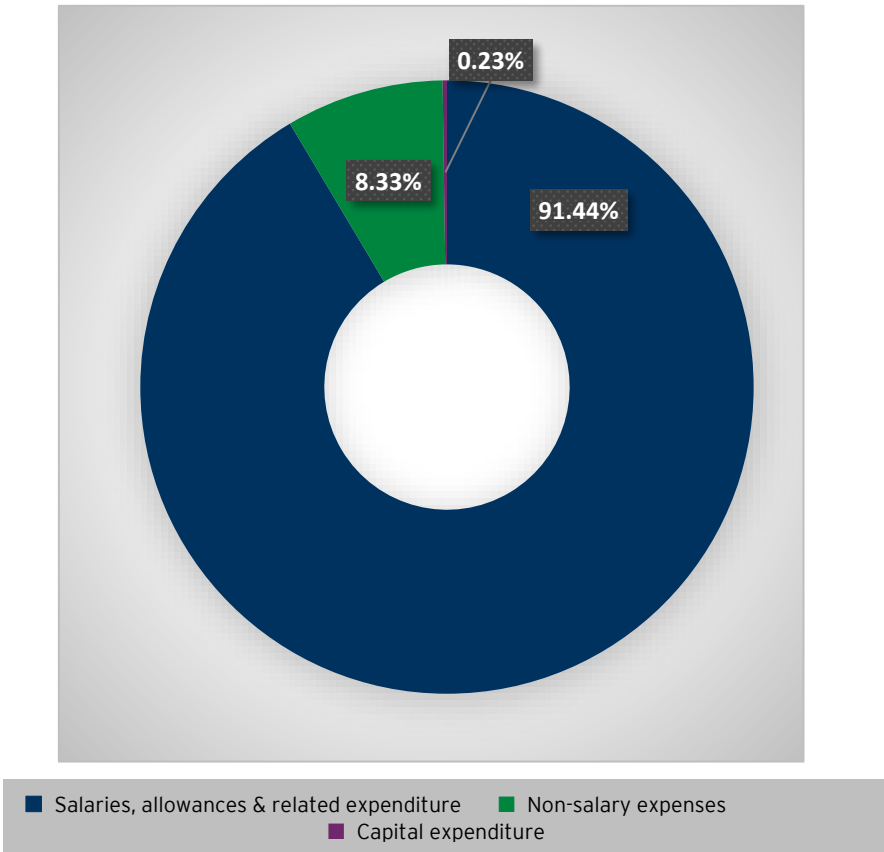


Financial information

Recurrent/capital income



Recurrent/capital expenditure





a different brilliant®

understanding, engaging & celebrating the
strengths, interests & aspirations
of people on the autism spectrum

Aspect Western Sydney School

295 Victoria Street, Wetherill Park NSW 2164

PO Box 6069 Wetherill Park NSW 2164

T +61 2 8786 3000

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

ABN 12 000 637 267

Building 1, Level 2,

14 Aquatic Drive, Frenchs Forest NSW 2086

PO Box 361 Forestville NSW 2087

T 1800 ASPECT (1800 277 328)

E customerservice@aspect.org.au