

Annual School Report

Aspect Hunter School

2025



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All about Aspect

Our values

Our values guide the way we work, connect and grow. We chose the word THRIVE because it reflects what we want for everyone at Aspect – for Autistic people, their families, and our staff. It's about growing, achieving, and connecting.

Our vision

Together, we're creating a world where Autistic people are seen and valued, and have access to the right support to live, learn, work and play.

Our purpose a different brilliant®

Understanding,
engaging and celebrating
the strengths, interests
and aspirations of people
on the autism spectrum.

Our work

We focus on the strengths and interests of people on the autism spectrum.

We work in partnership with people on the spectrum, their families and their communities.

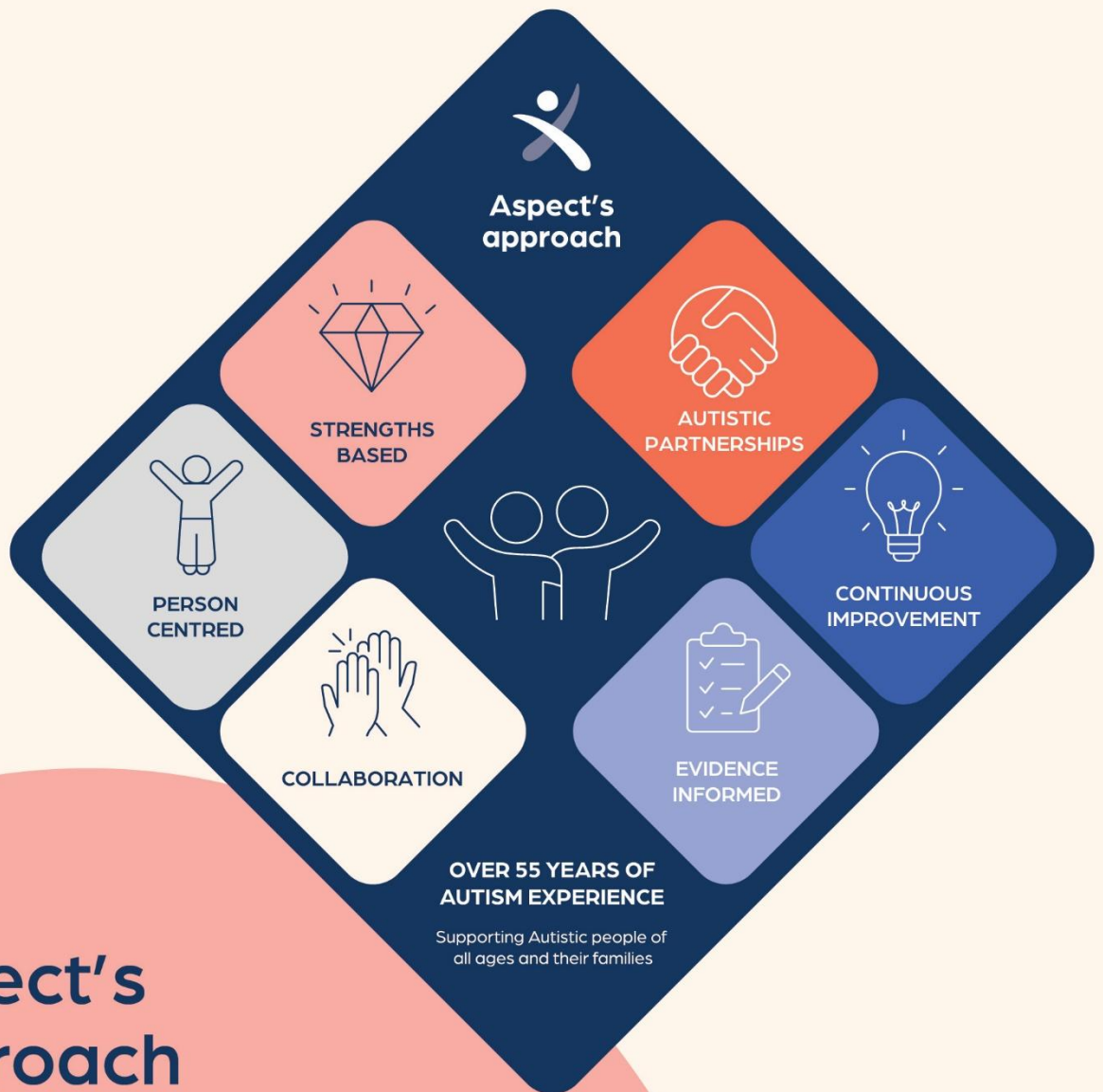
We work to understand people on the spectrum from their perspective.

Our approach is autism-specific.

Our research focuses on best practice.

We expect positive change and progress.

Together we can achieve positive outcomes.



Aspect's approach to supporting students on the autism spectrum

Drawing on nearly 60 years of expertise, Aspect schools deliver specialised, evidence-informed programs designed for children on the autism spectrum. We take a person-centred approach, learning how each student experiences the world and using their strengths, interests and aspirations to shape tailored supports.

Our practices are guided by the latest evidence, informed by input from the student and their support network, and are continually refined to meet each student's unique needs.

Message from the Principal

2025 has been a year of growth, reflection and a continued commitment to our vision of preparing students not only for academic success but for life beyond school.

At Aspect Hunter School, we proudly support 290 students across our main site at Thornton, as well as our satellite locations at Holy Spirit Abermain, Our Lady of Lourdes Tarro, St James' Muswellbrook, and Waratah West Primary and in Port Macquarie at St Joseph's Primary and High School at MacKillop College. In addition, we have students engaged in our Distance Education program. With 13% of our students identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, we remain deeply committed to celebrating neurodiversity, championing inclusion, and ensuring every student is supported to thrive.

Our Strategic Improvement Plan and Annual Action Plan have guided a strong focus across leadership, teaching and learning, wellbeing, and community partnerships. A key priority has been building staff capacity through targeted professional learning and a culture of instructional leadership. The introduction of Breakspear's Teaching Sprints has further strengthened this work, providing a structured, evidence-informed approach for teachers to collaboratively refine teaching strategies and respond to student need through ongoing assessment and reflection cycles.

Central to our educational program is the belief that quality assessment informs instruction. Throughout 2025, staff have continued to embed practices aligned with Dr Lyn Sharratt's Parameters, ensuring that learning intentions, success criteria and descriptive feedback are visible and meaningful for students. This approach supports each child to succeed at their point of need across academic, social and emotional domains.

Wellbeing and student voice have also been a significant focus. The embedding of Berry Street practices, particularly through daily Morning Meetings, has strengthened relationships and created predictable, safe classroom environments. These routines support students to develop emotional regulation, respect for others and a sense of belonging.

In our Distance Education program, students have demonstrated responsibility and leadership by initiating and leading interest-based groups, fostering connection and engagement beyond traditional learning structures.

Aspect's autism-specific approach continues to underpin all aspects of teaching and learning. Through the integration of explicit teaching, structured supports and a commitment to unconditional positive regard, we ensure that each student is known, valued and supported. This is complemented by a strong case management approach and early, targeted interventions that respond holistically to student needs.

Our commitment to community connection has remained strong. Throughout the year, students have participated in social groups, community partnerships and transition programs that build real-world skills and connections beyond the classroom. These experiences reinforce the relevance of learning and support successful pathways beyond school.

As we reflect on 2025, I acknowledge the dedication of our staff, the partnership of our families and the achievements of our students. Together, we continue to build a school community grounded in respect, responsibility and the shared belief that every student can succeed.



Craig McNee
Principal

Message from the Parents and Friends (P&F)

In 2025, our school the Parents and Friends (P&F) played a vital role in strengthening our community and enhancing opportunities for students through both fundraising and social initiatives. Fundraising efforts included successful Meat Raffles at Settlers, an Easter Egg raffle, our Creative Arts Night and festive Christmas hamper raffles. Alongside these, the P&F created meaningful opportunities for connection by hosting a Mother's Day afternoon tea, a Father's Day BBQ, Mums' and Dads' nights out and a range of family social activities.

The funds raised were directly reinvested into the school, providing valuable resources and enriching experiences for students, including new playground equipment, balls, creative arts materials, a colour fun run and inclusive sporting opportunities such as futsal. These efforts significantly contributed to a vibrant, inclusive and well-resourced learning environment for all students.

Amy
P&F 2025



Message from the Student Representative Council (SRC)

In 2025 our SRC members collaboratively worked together to initiate and help plan the following:

- PJ day
- Movie day
- Water balloon fight
- Colour Run
- Sport days
- Tuck shop
- New ping pong table
- Trampoline
- Video games
- New card and board games

I think a SRC member is one who the class believes in and they can trust and who can hear them out for their needs or what you want you ask them.

Finn Daley

I think a great SRC member is someone who can be a great role model in class and outside of class and who can understand and show respect to teachers and students and who also can model the School's STAR VALUES.

Layla-Rose

Student outcomes and results

Each student is supported through an individual plan that builds on their strengths and interests, while identifying areas of development to maximise access, engagement and progress in learning. These plans attend to autism-specific areas of learning, including social communication, social interaction, and sensory processing, and are integrated within the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) curriculum through Key Learning Areas.

The school adopts a multi-disciplinary approach, with teachers, support staff and therapists working collaboratively with families to adjust teaching, monitor progress and support meaningful educational outcomes for each student.

Literacy and numeracy assessments

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

The school administers a range of literacy and numeracy assessments each year to inform teaching practice and monitor students' progress over time. This includes selected standardised assessments, as well as alternative and individualised assessment tools designed to reflect the communication profiles, learning styles and support needs of our students.

Senior secondary outcomes

Fourteen Year 10 students were eligible to receive a Record of School Achievement (RoSA). In addition, two Year 11 students who concluded their schooling at the end of Year 11 were also eligible to receive a RoSA, which reflected their Year 10 studies completed in the previous year together with the Year 11 courses completed in 2024.

Four students (100%) attained the Higher School Certificate (Life Skills). Of these students, two (50%) also completed AQF Certificate II qualifications through vocational education and training undertaken both through the school and with an external provider.

The school offered eight NESA-developed Stage 6 Life Skills courses and one VET course, Certificate II in Workplace Skills, across both face-to-face and Distance Education cohorts. Students were supported to participate in externally delivered VET courses, including those provided through TAFE and other registered training organisations.

Post school destination

Most students who left school, following completion of their schooling transitioned to a range of post-school pathways including TAFE, employment or preparation for workforce participation. During the year, five students attended work experience programs.

Staffing

Teacher accreditation

Numbers reflect teacher accreditation status as at the end of the 2025 school year.

Level of accreditation	No. of teachers
Conditional	2
Provisional	0
Proficient Teacher	80
Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Total number of teachers	82

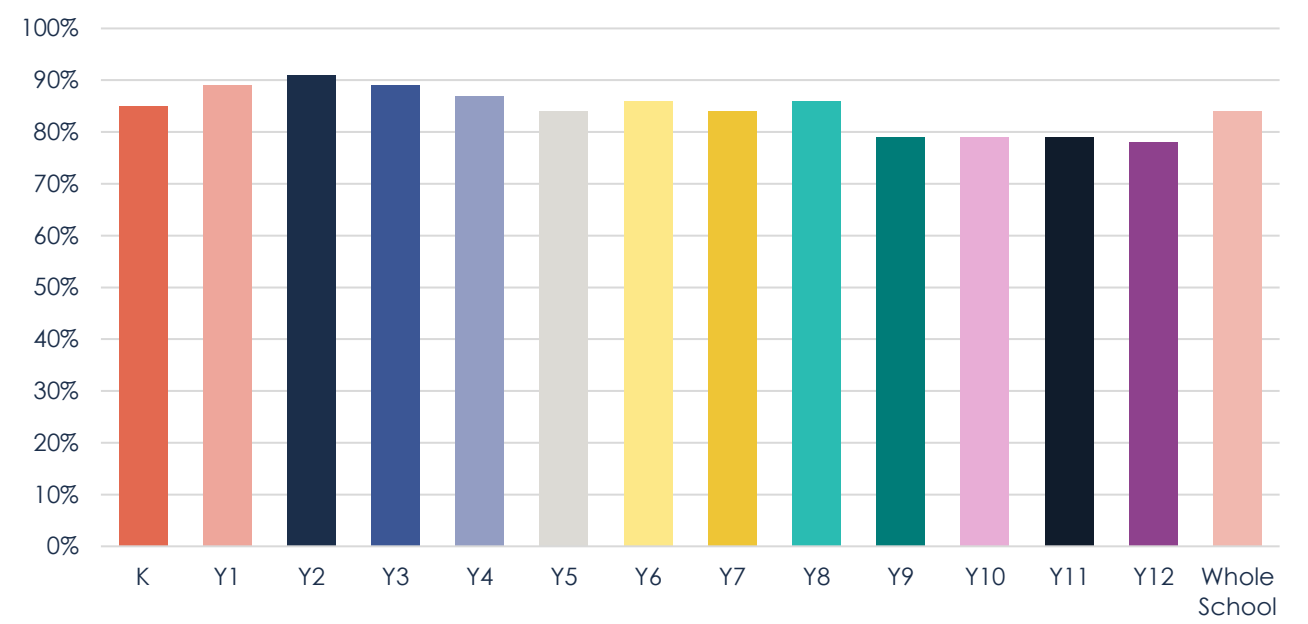
Workforce composition

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

At our school, we welcome staff and students from all backgrounds, cultures and beliefs. Aspect Hunter School values the contribution of Autistic and neurodiverse staff, who's lived experience informs inclusive and supportive practice. We encourage applications from Autistic teachers and other neurodiverse staff, while recognising that disclosure of neurodiversity is a personal choice.

Fourteen of our staff members have identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. We encourage applications from First Nations teachers and other staff and remain committed to building a culturally inclusive workforce where privacy and individual choice are respected.

Student attendance



Student attendance rates

Kinder	85%	Year 7	84%
Year 1	89%	Year 8	86%
Year 2	91%	Year 9	79%
Year 3	89%	Year 10	79%
Year 4	87%	Year 11	79%
Year 5	84%	Year 12	78%
Year 6	86%	Whole school	84%

In 2025, students attended school on average 84% of the time. This represents a small increase to overall attendance in 2024.

Management of non-attendance

Aspect has a student attendance procedure which is implemented consistently across all schools.

All unexplained absences are followed up on the day of absence and the days following by the school administration team using a range of methods, including SMS messages, email and phone calls.

If a student is absent for more than three consecutive days without explanation, the matter is referred to the Principal, who continues to monitor attendance and initiates appropriate action to check on the wellbeing of the student and family. This may include notifying relevant authorities.

Where patterns of repeated unexplained absence or absence of concern are identified, the school follows statutory reporting requirements, which may include notification to Family and Community Services.

Where unsatisfactory attendance is identified, a student attendance improvement plan is developed collaboratively with the student and their parent or carer. Plans are monitored and reviewed regularly, with adjustments made to support re-engagement and ongoing participation in learning.

School policies

The following school policies and procedures are publicly available on the [website](#):

- Feedback and Complaints
- External whistleblowing
- Enrolment
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Discipline & Positive Behaviour Support
- Anti-bullying

This information, along with the annual report, is available on the school's dedicated web pages within the [Aspect website](#).

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

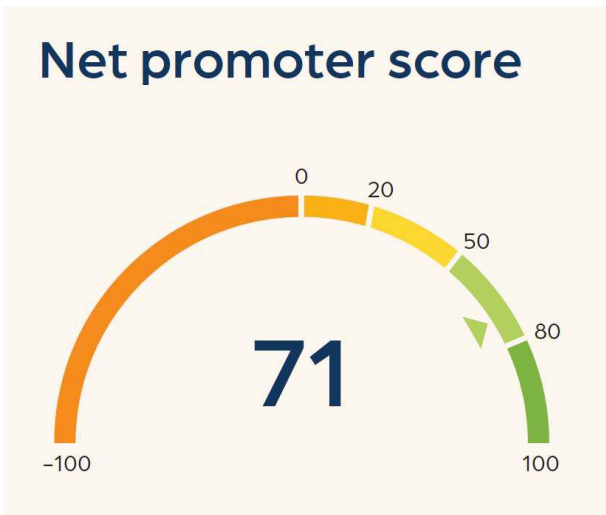
Stakeholder satisfaction is gathered through a range of sources, with the Aspect Perspectives Survey serving as the primary system-wide tool for understanding the experiences of students, families and staff. Conducted every two years, the most recent survey took place in 2024 and provided valuable insights into engagement, wellbeing, communication and support. These findings have directly informed school and system improvement priorities for 2025, with the next survey scheduled for 2026 to support ongoing reflection and continuous improvement. The Net Promoter Score (NPS) was 71, indicating that most families would highly recommend the school and feel confident in their choice, recognising the high-quality, inclusive education provided.

2024 Perspectives Survey feedback highlights a shared view across students, families and staff that the school fosters a culture that celebrates the strengths and interests of autistic students. A significant majority of families (91%) reported that the school actively affirms students' strengths, and 90% agreed that the school supports ongoing professional learning in autism for staff.

Families expressed confidence that their children experience a strong sense of belonging, feel safe and supported by trusted adults, and are guided to navigate social challenges. They value the school's proactive approach to addressing bullying, and its commitment to fairness, inclusion and cultural respect.

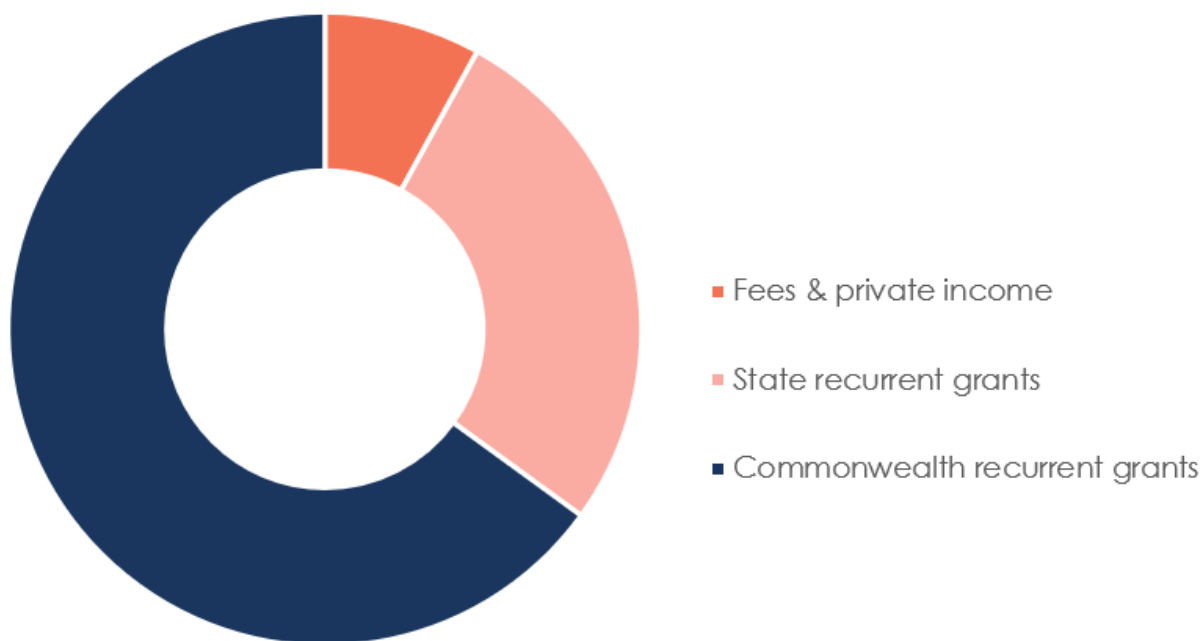
Staff similarly reported that students feel valued, accepted and included. They noted that the school's vision and mission provide clear direction, and that collaborative approaches to teaching and assessment enable differentiated support for students. This contributes to family confidence that individual learning needs are well understood and effectively supported.

Overall, the data reflects a cohesive and positive school culture, underpinned by individualised planning, inclusive practice and ongoing professional learning, enabling students to thrive and achieve meaningful outcomes.

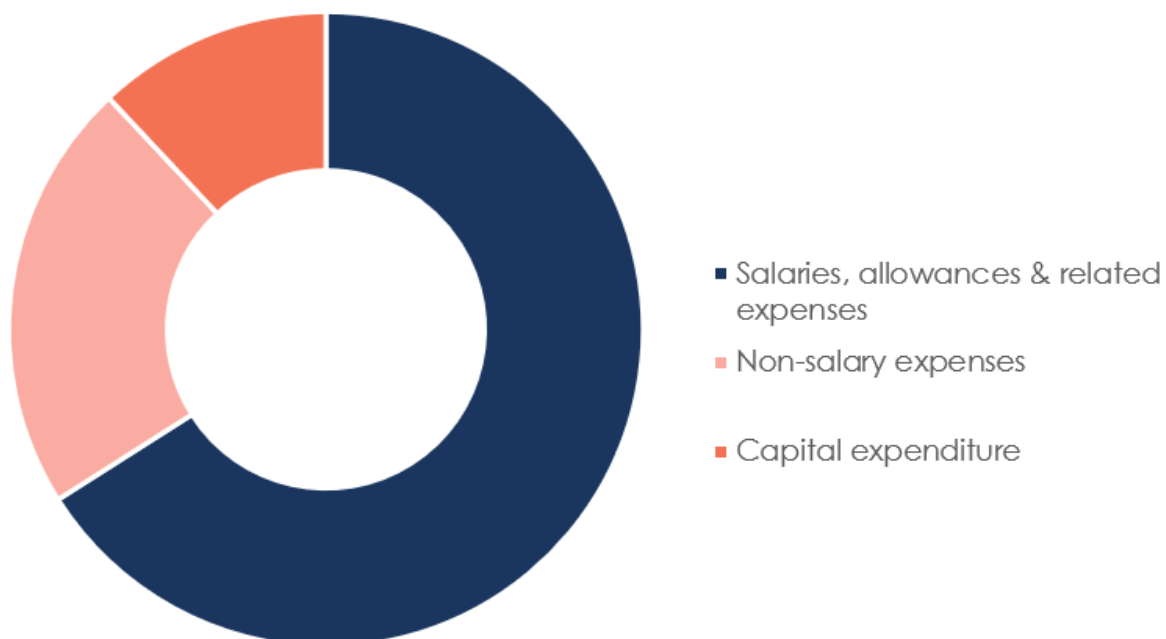


Financial information

Recurrent/capital income



Recurrent/capital expenditure





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