LES POWELL SCHOOL
Annual School Report

2012
Our school at a glance

Students
Les Powell School is a Special Education School in Sydney South West Region catering for students with special needs. In 2012 our school enrolment was 79 including 28 girls and 51 boys. The school provides quality individual educational programs for students with moderate to severe intellectual and multiple disabilities from Kindergarten to Year 12. Students have full access to a broad curriculum from the NSW Board of Studies Key Learning Areas.

Staff
In 2012 Les Powell School had 34.5 members of staff; this included 13 classroom Teachers and 15 School Administration and Support Staff. The staffing allocation also included part-time staff Librarian, ESL, Hydrotherapy Instructor, School Counsellor, Occupational Therapist, Cleaners and visiting Itinerant Support Teachers. In addition to the principal, our school has three assistant principals as part of the School’s Executive Team. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Significant programs and initiatives

School initiatives
Les Powell School ran a number of programs and initiatives to give students extra educational support.

These programs included:
- Integration program, buddy reader and play.
- Community Access program for senior students and integration programs for students to access mainstream schools.
- Picture Exchange Communication System.
- Hydrotherapy and swimming scheme program.
- Live Life Well, sport and nutrition.
- Gardening program and vegetables growing.
- Active after school program- engagement of external agencies to increase students’ participation in sporting activities.

Student Achievement in 2012
Because of their special needs, students at Les Powell School were exempted from various external assessments including National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy. However, nine Les Powell students received their Record of Students Achievements (ROSA), two
received Year 11 Preliminary Certificate and 2 received their High School Certificates based on Life Skills special program of studies. We also had three students who received significant community awards. Mahalia Coleman was awarded the Public Education Ambassador for Les Powell School by Department of Education and Communities. Brandan Theam received the Quota Award, Hileen Khedier received the Reuben F Scarf Award and John Tran who was a runner up in the local Schools Arts awards.

Messages

Principal’s message

It is with great pleasure that I present this report on our school’s achievements in 2012. Our school team is focused on the individual development of our students by endeavoring to meet their academic, physical, social and emotional needs. Our school provides opportunities for students to maximise their learning potential in a safe and happy environment. Every student has the capacity to learn and has the right to educational opportunities through equitably delivered quality teaching and learning programs.

The abilities, talents and skills of all school community members are recognised, valued and developed. The school’s management framework provides opportunities for staff to demonstrate their abilities to lead and manage projects that benefit the corporate life of the school and leads to improvement in learning outcomes for students.

Having an open door policy within the school and employing a Community Liaison Officer has ensured good communication with parents and the whole school community. We encourage parents to be partners in the education of their child by participating in Individual Educational Planning (I.E.P.) meetings and other scheduled events.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school’s achievements and areas for development.

Mr Sargon Makko

P & C and/or School Council message

Wheels Towards Independence Incorporated is a charity organisation which supports Les Powell School. The charity was formed in 1990 to provide transport for our students, enabling them to access the wider community. The charity has a contract with the Department of Education and Communities to transport our students to and from school. Wheels Towards Independence organisation is a fundraiser as well. In 2012 Wheels purchased a new mini bus and provided essential transport service for all students.

Student representative’s message

Each year Les Powell staff nominate students to be the recipients of special awards at school and in the community acknowledging students’ achievements. The recipients of these awards for 2012 were:

Junior category – Lydia Behnam.
Senior category – Usamah Khedier.
Principal’s award - Mahalia Coleman, Hileen and Usamah Khedier, Zoe McFarlane, Laura Le, Isaiah Zadro, Lydia Behnam, Tiffany Argyrou, Shreya Shevkari and Damien Kuhlmann.
Sports person of the year – Brendon Chandaeng.
Premier’s Sporting challenge- Ben Mila.
Swimming Awards – Nikola Hajdukovic, Marijann Kapitanovic, Andie Midson and Mahalia Coleman
Representative teams acknowledgement - School’s combined sporting team and School’s Signing Choir.
Chris Hayes Award – Andrew Do

School context

Student information

Students attending Les Powell School present with a broad range of diverse and complex learning needs. All students have a primary intellectual disability. Twenty-five of the students are in the moderate intellectual ability range (IN2) and fifty-four in the severe intellectual disability range (IN3). Students also present with
secondary disabilities such as autism (Aut), physical disability (PH), sensory impairments (S), diagnosed health conditions, challenging behaviour (B) and communication impairments.

**Student enrolment profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student attendance profile**

On average each day 85% of students attended school. This was similar to daily attendance in 2011. Factors which affect attendance at Les Powell School include students’ complex medical conditions, students’ disabilities and physical needs.

**Class sizes**

The school is organised into 12 class groups with four classes in the K-2 years, four in Primary years and four in Secondary years.

**Retention to Year 12**

In 2012 there was 100% retention of students in Year 12.

**Management of non-attendance**

A number of students at Les Powell School have high support needs as well as complex medical conditions which affect their daily attendance. School has a close link with the parents ensuring full or part time attendance when the students are well enough. It is very seldom that a student is referred to the home liaison officer. Special exemption letters are also sent to parents and carers to justify students’ absenteeism.

**Post-school destinations**

In 2012 two students were successful in gaining a position in the post-school programs.
Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

Two students graduated from Year 12 and attained their High School Certificates based on Life Skills special program of studies. The students were Mahalia Coleman and Usamah Khedier. Both students were also successful in gaining a position in the post-school programs through the Department of Aging, Disability and Home Care.

Staff information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers IS/IO</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief face to face (RFF)</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP including CLO &amp; Hydrotherapy</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National partnership</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2012 Les Powell School had one staff member with indigenous background.

Staff retention

We were fortunate to retain all our staff from the previous year, with the exception of one School Administrative & Support Staff member who was transferred on request. One teacher was appointed into a vacant position.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>49472.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>185505.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>204623.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>17673.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>5217.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>2434.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>464926.49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure

Teaching & learning
- Key learning areas 5702.85
- Excursions 1690.36
- Extracurricular dissections 3291.92

Library 2465.10

Training & development 2568.75

Tied funds 150131.80

Casual relief teachers 56048.99

Administration & office 41032.9

School-operated canteen 0.00

Utilities 60260.92

Maintenance 24615.95

Trust accounts 4123.07

Capital programs 0.00

Total expenditure 351932.61

Balance carried forward 112993.88

A full copy of the school’s 2012 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2012

Achievements

Students, teachers and parents at Les Powell School value, support and enjoy the opportunities for students to participate and challenge themselves through a variety of games, sports, art pursuits and experiences. These experiences give students the opportunities to belong and to be part of a team. Our students are
being challenged to try new things and achieve “personal best”.

**Arts**

Creative and performing arts programs are always popular and have strong focus at Les Powell School. Class teachers provided a strong foundation for student learning and creative expression which includes:

- art, craft and painting
- dance
- music

*Students enjoying end of year Disco.*

Creative and performing arts lessons and activities are used as a powerful tool in teaching and learning. These activities provided a positive platform where students with special needs can participate and develop important skills including:

- self awareness
- social skills
- awareness of others
- self expression
- sensory engagement
- communication
- self-esteem

Students’ art work, work samples and paintings are displayed across the school buildings and in their classrooms especially on special celebration days such as Harmony Day, Literacy and Numeracy day and Education Week. Our established signing/singing choir continue to progress and perform new songs including a school song. The choir is very popular with high demand for performances. In 2012 performances included Principals’ Conference, School’s Celebration Assembly and International Day for people with disabilities. Students also participated in community organised art events such as the local schools art competition organised by Federal Member for Fowler Mr Chris Hayes.

- Congratulations to John Tran for receiving the runners up prize.

- As part of their performing arts program, all students performed at the annual school presentation assembly for their parents and the community. They also attended theatre and cinemas to experience and appreciate the value of arts. External performers were also invited to school to perform for the students.

**Sport**

Les Powell School continues to recognise the many benefits of physical fitness, nutrition, skills development and the importance of team work and sportsmanship. This strong focus on sport and the introduction of Live life Well @School initiatives including Crunch and Sip, has led to increased participation in school and community based sporting activities. School structured lessons and privately delivered lessons by Australian Sports Commission coaches were conducted in movement, gross motor and team sports. Our hydrotherapy program and learn to swim continued to be a popular activity culminating in Department of Education Swimming Scheme and school based swimming carnival. Our students also attended community based carnivals and other sporting events including interschool sport for students with special needs.
In 2012 the year of the Olympics and Paralympics Les Powell School teamed up with Mark Busby (Regional Coordinator– Active After School Communities via Australian Sports Commission) to host and present an Interschool Sports Challenge based on Paralympics theme across three regional areas for students with special needs. This was also part of the Australian government, in partnership with the Australian Olympic (AOC) and Australian Paralympics Committee (APC), incorporating the Prime Minister’s Paralympic Challenge. The event was held at Whitlam Centre at Liverpool with 8 schools competing from three different regions. Les Powell School was crowned the Champion School.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**

To learn, understand and appreciate the indigenous culture of Australia, performers were invited to visit our School and perform for our students. Students benefited from the use of books and other resources based on the indigenous culture of Australia. Teaching and learning units and themes were conducted in the library and in classes which included Aboriginal craft and music.

Students were encouraged on a regular basis to learn and respect the original owners of the land in the “Welcome to Country” segment of our school assemblies.

**Multicultural Education**

Les Powell School has a vast collective multicultural background with 80% of school population coming from non English speaking backgrounds representing 22 cultural groups.

The School Community Team through its Priority School Program and National Partnership initiatives, utilises the school’s Community Liaison Officer to encourage the participation of parents in school activities, especially parents with non English speaking background. The diverse cultural backgrounds of our students was recognised and celebrated on our HARMONY DAY. Harmony Day is a time for all of Australia to come together to reflect and celebrate the many cultures that make Australia today. English as a second language (ESL) was introduced to address the needs of non English speaking backgrounds students.
National partnership programs

Les Powell School is now participating in two National Partnerships, the Low Socio-Economic status school communities and Every Student, Every School: learning and support. The Low Socio-Economic status school communities is for three years from 2012 to 2014 which require schools to implement actions across six reforms focusing on teacher quality, improvement in student outcomes and strengthening community engagement. Every Student, Every School: learning and support started mid 2012 focusing on sensory education.

The ESES project is designed to investigate sensory issues which impact on the learning of students. The product which we will develop is a Sensory Activity Handbook that collates a wide range of practical activities and strategies to support students’ sensory needs.

Progress on 2012 targets

Target 1

To increase levels of literacy and communication skills by developing and implementing school wide relevant and challenging communication and Literacy programs which included Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS).

Our achievements include:

- 100% of staff undertook the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) training with ongoing support, guidance and monitoring provided by the National Partnership (NP) leader.
- Extra support staff member was also beneficial for the development and initial implementation of PECS programs to enable more consistent use in class.
- Staff survey indicated that (PECS) has been developed and implemented with 23% of students in the school including 8% who are in Phase 1, 14% in Phase 2 and 1% in Phase 3.
- Teachers reported that students using PECs programs are communicating more effectively with staff.
- Some nonverbal students have made surprising progress in PECS and have demonstrated a higher level of understanding than in previous communication programs. Some students are repeating words used in the program.
- Staff reported an increase in confidence in implementing and progressing students through the phases in the PECS programs.

Target 2

To increase students engagement and participation in learning by addressing their sensory needs.

Our achievements include:

- Formation of a team through the National Partnership Every Student Every School (ESES) to explore strategies to improve the classroom management of student’s sensory issues which impact on curriculum access.
- After discussion with the school community the team is in the process of establishing a multi-sensory library supported by a Sensory Management Handbook and DVD. Allied health professionals will also be consulted in this process.
- As a result of hours of research, networking with relevant others, visiting schools with sensory rooms such as Lucas Gardens SSP, Mainsbridge SSP and Lurnea Public School, we identified the need of therapists input. Two occupational therapists with extensive knowledge and experience were consulted who provided valuable guidance as well as professional learning sessions in this area.

Community Members learning about Literacy Program at Les Powell School.
Once the room was identified whole staff brainstorming sessions resulted in the painting of the room, fitting of electronic blinds, installation of audio equipment as well as the purchasing of educational aids targeting vestibular, visual, olfactory, oral and proprioception input.

A planned professional learning session, provided teachers with detailed lesson plans, each with its own lesson sequence and activities. Equipment used were identified and demonstrated. Staff had the opportunity to comment, adapt and modify these plans to suit the needs of their students.

School evaluation

NSW public schools conduct evaluation to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2012 our school carried out evaluation of parent satisfaction on learning, home and school communication.

Background

The school conducted a detailed survey to ascertain the satisfaction level of parents and carers on learning and the communication between home and school.

Findings and conclusions

The survey was well received with 42 responses received which is 57% of the total number illustrating a strong community support. The survey also reaffirms our beliefs that Les Powell School is a student-centered school with a culture that provides a stimulating and challenging learning environment, where values and beliefs contribute to learning. Students’ achievements are also identified, promoted and celebrated.

### Results from Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Two way communications is available to parents and teachers. Parents have opportunities to speak with staff at the school. Translators are made available if needed.</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Parents feel welcome in the school.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Parents are consulted and active in decision making about their child’s programs (Individual Educational Programs meeting)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Parents are well informed about their child’s progress and have opportunities to discuss their child's concerns with the teachers and Principal.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Parents have opportunities to attend a range of school activities.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Parents are offered opportunities to take part in a range of parent/child workshops as requested by you through surveys.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>My child’s classroom is an interesting place to learn.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>My child has access to special equipment that supports his/her learning.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The school expects students to achieve to the best of their abilities.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>My child is given the opportunity to do things in the classroom that are new and different.</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future directions

The survey results were discussed with all staff.

Future directions

The school will continue to strengthen the partnership with parents by engaging parents in school planning and future directions. The school will strive to meet the challenges of our students as their needs change.

The school also conducted a survey on our reporting system. Again the response was very satisfactory with all responders very happy with the current report system.

Professional learning

Each year schools are allocated funds for teacher professional learning. The policy and funds recognise the importance of ongoing professional development for all staff. At Les Powell in 2012 the funds were utilised for the ongoing Professional Learning of Teaching staff, Support Officers and Office staff. The learning occurred in numerous ways. In the first instance all staff have the opportunity to attend weekly professional development sessions at school that includes mandatory DEC topics as well as issues that are relevant to the students’ needs. Such development included emergency care, CPR, technology, communication, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), Sensory Education, and Child Protection updates to maintain current knowledge. At these weekly in-house meetings experts in the field were to train staff, in areas that might directly relate to the annual management plan and students/staff welfare. Staff are also informed and provided with opportunities for individual professional development at weekly administration meetings, where external opportunities are brought to the attention of all. Further professional development opportunities were offered on staff development days during the year.

School planning 2012—2014

The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

School priority 1

Outcome for 2012–2014

Increase levels of literacy/communication skills, development of numeracy programs and exploring the new Australian curriculum.

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- To increase the number of students using the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) from 23% in 2012 to 30% in 2013.
- To expand and reinforce teaching methods in the development and implementation of individualised numeracy programs.
- To identify and unpack the New Australian Curriculum at appropriate stages.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:

- Continue to employ a National Partnership leader (0.4) to lead the planning and coordination of professional learning and the development and implementation of communication, literacy and Numeracy programs.
- Develop a whole school literacy/communication policy incorporating specific programs catering for different communication abilities.
- Train staff in identifying students’ level of communication using the hierarchy of communication abilities.
- Train staff in the development and implementation of Numeracy framework.
- Continue and expand Buddy Reading Program with Mount Pritchard East School and a high school.
- Employ an SLSO to develop a bank of functional school wide communication resources.
- Purchase additional library resources including technology to be used in literacy programs.

School priority 2

Outcome for 2012–2014

Increase student engagement and participation in learning areas include technology, physical education, health, hydrotherapy and sensory management.
Increase and strengthen parent and community involvement in the school.

**2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- Increase student engagement and readiness to learn by addressing their sensory needs.
- Increase student engagement and participation in physical education/therapy services, needs and hydrotherapy.
- Increase student engagement and participation in technology.
- Increase student engagement and participation in environment education focusing on sustainability and gardening.
- Raise the level of parent and community involvement in the school including literacy, sensory education and numeracy programs.
- To reinforce appropriate behavior by implementing Positive Behaviour Intervention and Supports (PBL) incorporating visual communication.

**Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Continue to employ the consultancy or on-site services of a professional therapist to assess students and devise suitable programs to improve student outcomes and access to the curriculum.
- Use visual communication supports to reinforce appropriate behavior according to the PBL program.
- Purchase relevant hardware and software for the sensory Library and timetable classes to use the Library.
- Continue to provide professional learning sessions in sensory education to ensure students’ needs are addressed.
- Refer students to itinerant support teachers through LST including (ISTV, ISTB, ISTH).
- Therapy contact to report to all staff on the status of students currently waiting for or accessing therapy.
- Therapy contact to maintain therapy referral folder to allow for continuity of services.
- Investigate other funding sources for therapy services.
- Employ an AUSWIM instructor with training in disabilities to enhance the delivery of hydrotherapy.
- Implement Live Life Well @ School initiatives including Crunch & Sip in PDHPE program.
- All staff undertake targeted professional learning in the use of ICT for learning.
- Purchase technology resources such as Ipads, switches and AAC devices to increase engagement and enhance communication programs.
- Continue and expand the gardening program to include the harvesting of food for a healthy cooking program and to ensure sustainability.

**About this report**

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

Sargon Makko - Principal
Louise Melville - Assistant Principal
Andrew Oyarzun - Assistant Principal
Michael Jaftha - Assistant Principal
Audrey Jowsey - SASS member SLSO
Sharon Rutherford - Community member

**School contact information**

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Mt Pritchard NSW 2170  
Ph: 9821 1711  
Fax: 9821 2634  
Email: lespowell-s.school@det.nsw.edu.au  
Web: [www.lespowell-s.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.lespowell-s.schools.nsw.edu.au)  
School Code: 5712

Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at:

Incursion/Excursion & Community Participation