

Annual School Report

Aspect Central Coast School

2023



INSIDE THE REPORT

All about Aspect

Aspect Comprehensive Approach

Message from the principal 5

Student outcomes 6

Teacher professional learning, accreditation,
qualifications and workforce composition 7

Student attendance, retention rates and
post-school destinations in secondary schools 8

Enrolment policy 9

Other school policies 11

School determined priority areas for improvement 13

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility 14

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction 14

Financial information 15

our vision

The best opportunities for people on the autism spectrum.

our values

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

our mission

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

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

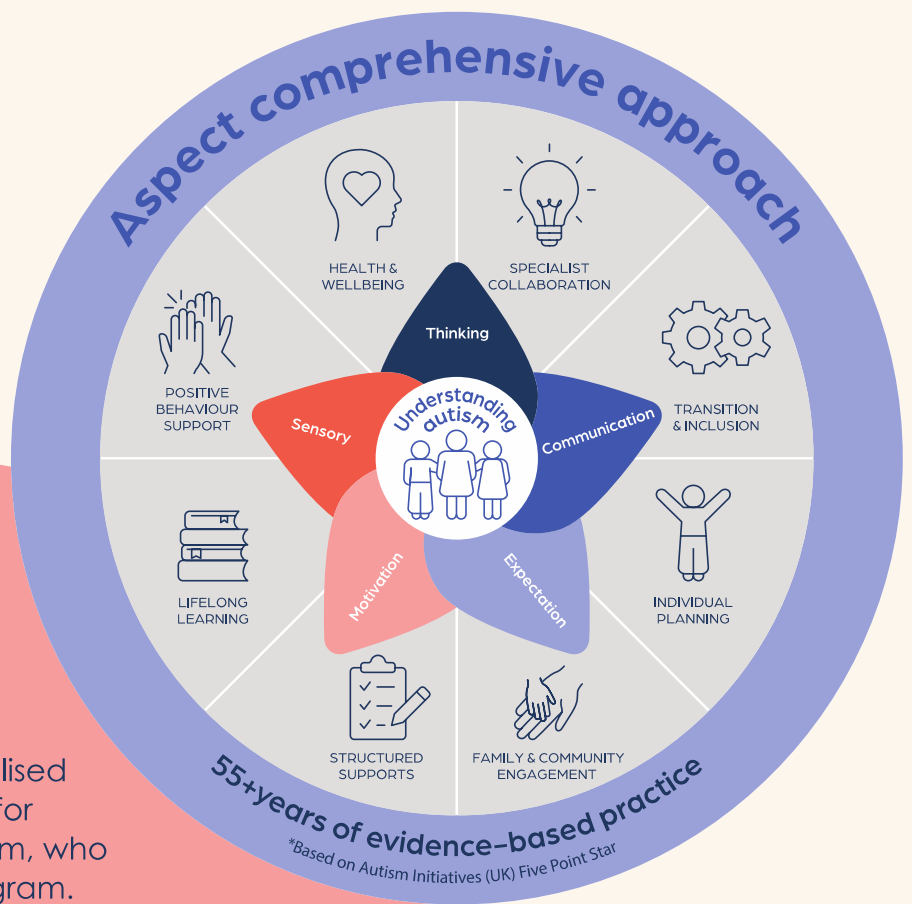
We work to understand people on the spectrum from their perspective

Our approach is autism-specific

Our research focuses on best practice

We expect positive change and progress

Together we can achieve positive outcomes.



Aspect schools provide specialised evidence-informed programs for children on the autism spectrum, who require an autism specific program.

The primary focus of the schools is to equip students with the skills to become as independent as possible and enable them to transition into more inclusive settings. This is achieved through the application of the Aspect Comprehensive Approach. At the centre of the approach is the Autism Initiatives' (UK) Five Point Star to support autism-specific person-centred planning and respectful and positive relationships between the educator and student. It also focuses on the following elements: Individual Planning; Family & Community Engagement; Learning & Participation; Positive Behaviour Support; Structured Supports; Transition & Inclusion; Specialist Collaboration; and Health & Wellbeing.

Message from the principal

In presenting the 2023 annual report I would like to acknowledge the Darkinjung people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which our campuses are located.

Aspect schools all share Aspect's Vision to offer the best opportunities for individuals on the autism spectrum, through the delivery of evidence informed programs which are person-centred and family focused.

Aspect Central Coast School provides education for 138 students (109 boys and 29 girls) on the autism spectrum across our six sites. Class groups are small with a high teacher to student ratio and a teacher's aide appointed to each class. In 2023, 44 primary age students were enrolled at the main school site at Terrigal, with 45 primary school aged students enrolled in the surrounding satellite programs at Noraville, East Gosford and Woy Woy. Additionally, there were 20 students from years 7 to 10 attending the high school satellite unit at Tuggerah and 29 students were enrolled in the High School Life Skills program at our new senior college campus in Terrigal.

Our Terrigal Campus and Senior Campus have had significant improvements in our physical environments in 2022, our school community began 2023 with both sites having complete refurbishments and new learning and play spaces with specific Autism friendly design principles. The improvements in our physical environment provided an increase our enrolment capacity at the Senior College to 30 in 2023 and further 6 places in 2024.

I would like to congratulate the Aspect Central Coast School community for their effort, determination and commitment in 2023, as we experienced a year of a sharp focus on our school improvement journey with our work with Dr Lyn Sharratt, a leading education expert and published researcher who works with schools to improve learning outcomes for students.. This year, members of our school attended professional learning days as part of a Learning Collaborative across all nine Aspect Schools. It was an exciting opportunity for Aspect staff to deep dive into Dr Lyn Sharratt's 14 Parameters to support School Improvement, and consider how this framework can be applied in our Autism Specific context.

The whole school approach will ensure the most effective evidence-based teaching methods are used across the school and teaching and learning programs are adjusted to address individual student needs. This will ensure that all students are challenged and all adjustments lead to improved learning. This framework, has enabled school leaders to work towards building collaborative and quality learning cultures across the school, which utilise data to foster student growth.

The school maintained a deliberate focus on the social and emotional learning needs of our students which was enhanced through all staff being trained in the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM). The BSEM focuses on supporting students' self-regulation, strengthening student-teacher relationships and implementing strengths-based practices. The practical, classroom-based strategies aim to increase engagement, thereby improving academic achievement for all students.

Our school made significant improvements in the quality of education and built relationships with existing and new supporters and community groups. Aspect Central Coast School appreciate the close working relationship with our colleagues in the local Catholic Education schools. Our continuous improvement agenda which has been driven from the feedback from our school community via the Perspectives Survey has enabled improvements in the areas of leadership, teaching and learning and wellbeing.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication, passion and care that the staff at Aspect Central Coast School demonstrate every day in the pursuit of quality education for our school community.



Mark Rudd
Principal

Student outcomes

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 (NESA) 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.

Aspect Central Coast School understands the importance of core Literacy and Numeracy skills for all students. To support best practice in teaching and learning, teachers utilise literacy testing across the school each year to help inform practice and monitor progress. For numeracy, a range of suitable assessments are utilised, to inform our teaching, and monitor student progress.

Senior secondary outcomes

Record of School Achievement

7

Higher School Certificate

22

In 2023 twenty-two students graduated from Year 12 (100%). The College offered six Stage 6 Life Skills NESA-Developed courses, one TVET course and five school-developed courses. Thirteen students (59%) completed the Certificate II Skills for Work and Vocational Pathways course at TAFE and nine students completed the Stage 6 Agriculture Life Skills course. All students attended Work Experience 3 hours per week for the entire year. All students were successful in gaining School Leavers' Employment Support funding via the NDIS.

Teacher professional learning, accreditation, qualifications and workforce composition

The following professional learning activities were undertaken by staff throughout 2023:

Description of professional learning activity	No. of staff participating
Aspect Learning Improvement Collaborative: introduction to Dr Lyn Sharratt's 14 Parameters	All
Berry Street Training – trauma informed practice	All
Child Protection – responsibilities related to child protection based on state/territory legislation, federal legislation and Aspect policy and procedures	Online
Aspect Professional Code of Conduct – face to face workshop and online module	Online
Smoking Ceremony	All
CPR training – skills to provide Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	38
CPI Safety Intervention – trauma informed and person-centred training to prevent, de-escalate, and safely respond to crisis situations	36
Disability Standards for Education – overview of the Disability Standards for Education (2005) and the legal obligations of all education providers	31
Manual handling & Work Health & Safety	31
Aspect Learning Improvement Collaborative (ALIC) Curriculum – science resources	23
ALIC CLARITY: What matters most in learning, teaching, and leading.	23
Core words	30
Proprioceptive input in the classroom and school environment	22
Scope and sequence input	22
Edu Influencers – building leadership capacity	8
ALS – Planning and Programming English K-2	1
ALS – Planning and Programming Maths K-2	1
Safety Intervention training renewal	1

Teacher accreditation

Level of accreditation	No. of teachers
Conditional	0
Provisional	1
Proficient Teacher	47
Highly Accomplished Teacher or Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditations)	0
Total number of teachers	48

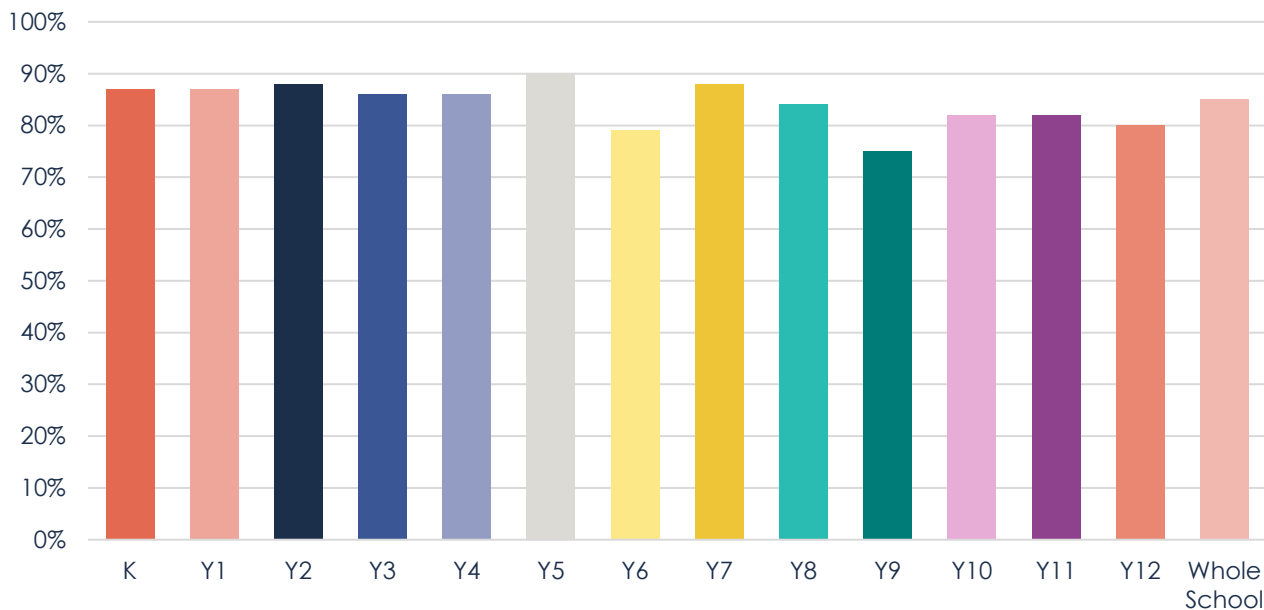
Teacher qualifications

All teachers have teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines.

Workforce composition

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

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



Student attendance rates

Kinder	87%	Year 7	88%
Year 1	87%	Year 8	84%
Year 2	88%	Year 9	75%
Year 3	86%	Year 10	82%
Year 4	86%	Year 11	82%
Year 5	90%	Year 12	80%
Year 6	79%	Whole School	85%

Management of non-attendance

Aspect Education has a work instruction to ensure compliance of the Aspect schools with school attendance requirements for compulsory school-aged students as outlined by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

Unexplained absence will be followed up by the school with the parent/guardian. Repeated unexplained absence or absence of concern may need to be reported to Family and Community Services.

Where unsatisfactory attendance is identified, a student attendance improvement plan is formulated in collaboration with the student and their parent/guardian. The plan is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

Aspect Central Coast School has an automated SMS messaging service that advises parents/guardians if their child is absent and they have not notified the school of the absence before 9:30 am. The school executive hold attendance meetings to review data and collaborate with Aspect Central Coast School learning support team and external allied health professionals to support attendance improvement plans and tracking. Where unsatisfactory attendance is identified, a student attendance improvement plan is formulated in collaboration with the student and their parent/guardian. The plan is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

Retention of Year 10 to Year 12

75%

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-111, 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 school's 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 2023

Access to full text

Student welfare

The school seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment to support the mental, physical and emotional wellbeing of students through the following policies:

Customer Experience and Service Innovation Policy – defines the way Aspect works in collaboration with students and families to achieve their goals.

Strategy and Risk Management – identifies risks and defines criteria for the assessment of consequence of those risks

Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk - ensures that staff understand and recognise the rights of the people we support to make informed choices and take calculated risks. Aspect facilitates each student's meaningful choice and control to maximise their independence; and minimises the risk to the individual or others wherever possible.

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

Strategy and Risk Management was reviewed & updated in 2023.

Safeguarding the People we Support was reviewed and updated in 2023 to update language and match legislation.

The following policies can be accessed from Aspect's website www.aspect.org.au/about-aspect/policies

Customer

Strategy and Risk Management

Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk

Safeguarding the People we support

Pastoral Care and Bullying Prevention in Aspect Schools

The Aspect Comprehensive Approach (ACA), including the use of the Five Point Star, drives aspect's guiding principles for pastoral care.

Aspect is required and seeks to exercise due diligence in all of its duty of care responsibilities towards students, staff and the school community. Leaders of the school endorse activities and plan for the safety and maintenance of good mental and physical health and well-being of the students, staff and parents involved. Schools seek to accommodate and make provision for particular needs of individuals who require special arrangements to secure safety and avoid discomfort or threat to their health and wellbeing.

Bullying or harassment is not tolerated in any form. All members of our community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment which promotes personal growth and fosters positive self-esteem for all. Aspect Schools aim to maintain a setting in which everyone feels valued and respected and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted and encourages the reporting of complaints and feedback.

Nil aside from changes listed above.

The full text of the Pastoral Care and Bullying Prevention in Aspect Schools procedure can be accessed by request from the school principal.

The following related policies can be accessed from Aspect's website www.aspect.org.au/about-aspect/policies

Aspect Comprehensive Approach (ACA)

Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk

Embracing Diversity

Feedback, Complaints and Incidents

Safeguarding the People We Support

Discipline

Aspect adopts a positive behaviour support (PBS) approach when working with children on the autism spectrum ranging from strategies for all students through to more intensive strategies for students who may exhibit more challenging behaviours as outlined in the Positive Behaviour Support policy.

Aspect follows a PBS approach but when behaviours occur that put the safety of any stakeholder at risk, the school will be required to implement appropriate procedures to safeguard all stakeholders' safety. All staff have responsibilities in relation to implementing discipline in Aspect Schools.

Nil

The full text of the Discipline in Schools work instruction can be accessed by request from the school principal.

The Positive Behaviour Support policy (PBS) can be accessed from Aspect's website

[www.aspect.org.au/about-aspect/policies](http://www.aspect.org.au/about-<u>aspect/policies</u>)

Complaints and grievances resolution

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) values complaints about the quality of its service and communications to support the continuous improvement of services and management.

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.

Nil

The full text of the Complaints Management Process can be accessed by request from Aspect's website

[www.aspect.org.au/feedback-and-complaints](http://www.aspect.org.au/feedback-and-<u>complaints</u>)

The Feedback and Complaints brochure can be downloaded from our website

[www.aspect.org.au/uploads/docume-nts/Governance/Aspect-Feedback-and-Complaints-Brochure.pdf](http://www.aspect.org.au/uploads/docume-<u>nts/Governance/Aspect-Feedback-and-Complaints-Brochure.pdf</u>)

The Feedback, Complaints and Incidents policy can be accessed on Aspect's website

[www.aspect.org.au/about-aspect/policies](http://www.aspect.org.au/about-<u>aspect/policies</u>)

School determined priority areas for improvement

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Teaching and learning	Teaching and learning programs are dynamic, individualised, show annotations based on feedback on teaching practice, student progress and achievement.	Staff have made significant progress in data informed programming including differentiated teaching and learning practices. Teachers have started a focus on learning intentions.
	The learning goals for students are informed by parent collaboration, analysis of school based and external student progress and achievement data.	Each student has at least two academic goals developed collaboratively with parents using a range of data sources.
Leadership	The leadership team ensures that implementation of new syllabuses and assessment and reporting process meets NESA requirements, including the use of data walls to inform quality programming.	Aspect Central Coast School successfully started the implementation of the new syllabuses as per NESA scheduled timeframes, including aligning student reports to the new syllabuses.
	The leadership team develops processes to collaboratively review teaching practices to acknowledge quality teaching practices and to address underperformance by the end of 2023.	The leadership team have reviewed and developed processes for teaching and learning practices focusing on quality feedback.
Wellbeing	The school identifies individual learning and wellbeing needs through Berry Street Education Model to regularly monitor individual wellbeing needs.	The staff have engaged in the first phase of Berry Street Education Model to develop collaborative wellbeing strategies for the whole school community.
	The school and the Learning Support Team is organised so that all students have opportunities to meet with identified staff who can provide advice, support and assistance to help the student by the end of 2023.	The Learning Support Team lead the process of identifying the Central Coast staff, Aspect Education staff and external community members to provide the appropriate assistance to students in a case management style of support.

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

Aspect Central Coast School wants all students to recognise that they are a valued part of the school community, with parents and staff providing care and support that promotes self-esteem, mutual respect and responsibility.

Students have the opportunity to participate in cultural activities such as Harmony Day, National Reconciliation week and NAIDOC week. In 2023 students also participated in Sorry Day and Graduation ceremonies.

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

Family and Student Feedback

There are formal and informal opportunities to provide feedback to the school. In 2020 and 2022 Aspect Central Coast School conducted the AIS Perspectives Survey. The results of the survey have informed our future school planning.

The results from the survey indicated that our strengths that set Aspect Central School apart from our competitors include excellent feedback in following areas:

- Clearly understood vision, mission and values
- Our ability to design learning to meet unique needs of individuals
- Our steadfast focus on ensuring inclusive learning environments
- Strong community reputation

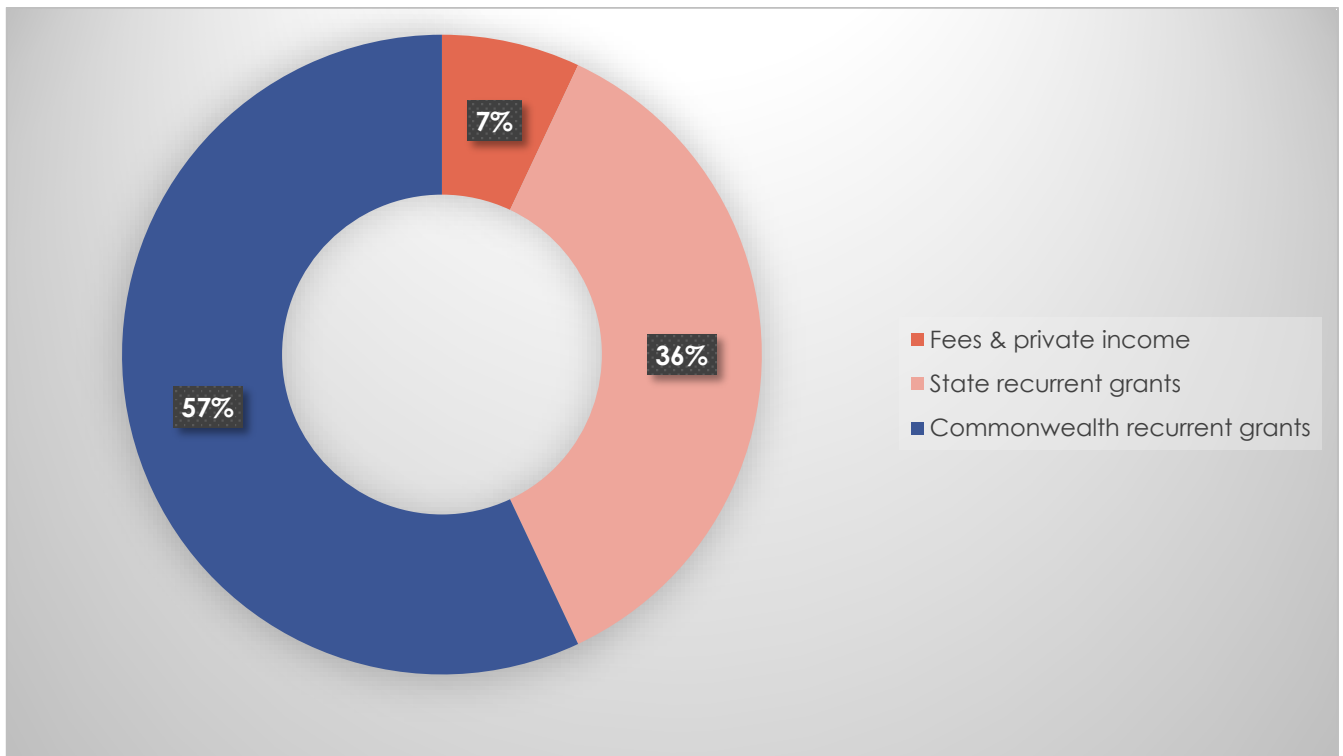
The average net promoter score for schools in general is between 47 – 84. Aspect schools average net promoter score was 68.9. This score places Aspect schools in the high range suggesting that our schools are highly recommended and that overall satisfaction with the service provided is very high.

Student Individual Plans

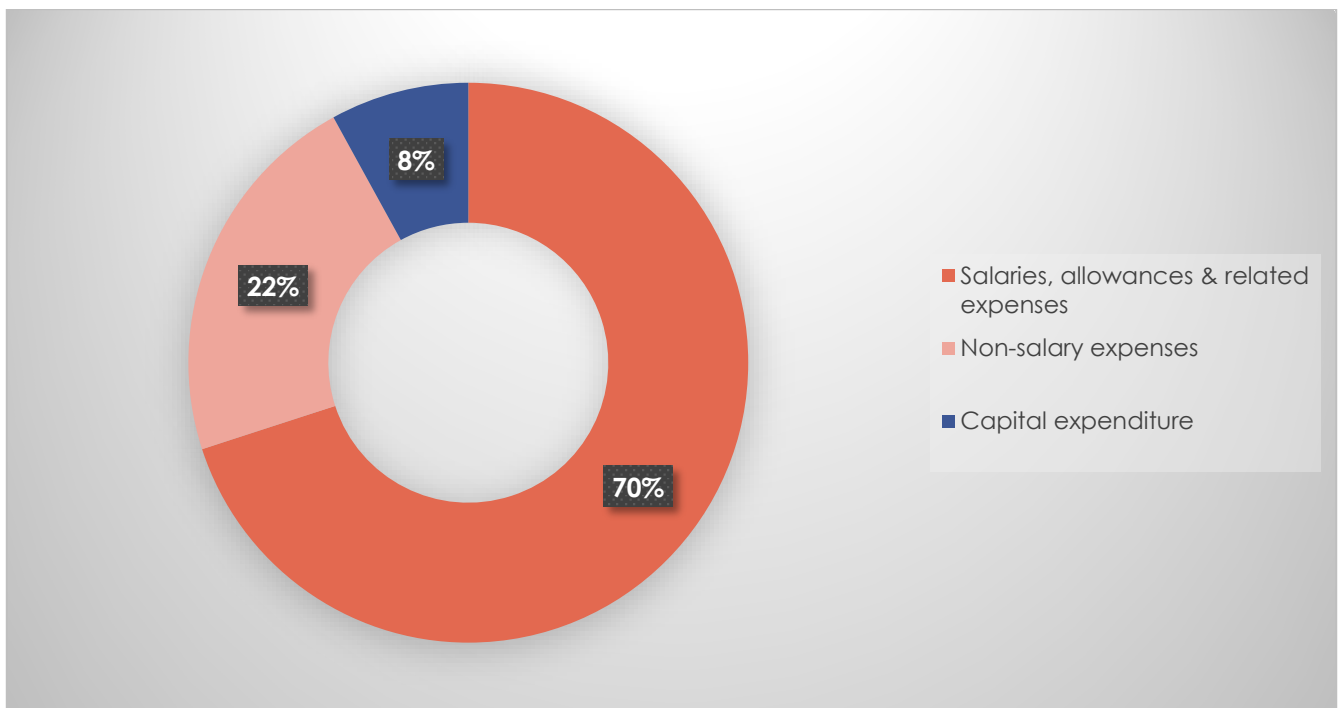
Every student at Aspect Central Coast School has an Individual Plan (IP). The IP is developed in collaboration with each student and their family. It incorporates a student's strengths, interests, goals and aspirations. Students, parents and teachers work as a team to achieve the goals.

Financial information

Income



Expenditure





aspect.org.au | 1800 277 328 | customerservice@aspect.org.au