School Performance Report 2014

Context

Our Lady of La Vang (formerly St Ann’s Special School) is a non-graded, Catholic special school that provides a specialized educational environment and facility for 58 students aged between 5 and 20 years. The school has the capacity for a FTE enrolment of 63 students. All students have an intellectual disability; many also have an autism spectrum disorder, or multiple disabilities and complex medical conditions.

Our Lady of La Vang is a division of Catholic Special Schools Incorporated. It is responsible to a Board of Management. Membership is comprised of a Chairperson and a deputy chair appointed by the Director of Catholic Education, South Australia, (CESA), a secretary, a finance officer and two community members appointed by the Archbishop of Adelaide, the two Principals, and one staff and one parent representative staff from each school.

With the active support of South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) and CESA, the school is adequately funded. Funding is indexed and adjusted annually, based on student enrolment numbers. This financial security has resulted in achieving the necessary staffing levels for students to access a curriculum specifically designed to meet the needs of the cohort of students.

The leadership structure is made up of the Principal, an Assistant Principal: Curriculum, an Assistant Principal: Operations and a Wellbeing Coordinator. Staffing is made up of professional educators, a Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist and Education Support Officers.

The school is organized around three clusters: Early Years (5-10 years old), Middle Years (10-15 years old), and Senior Cluster (16-20 years old). Each Cluster is responsible to a teacher who has been formally appointed to the position of Lead Learner (POR 1 Level).

Staffing

Based on the August Census:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Full Time Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching staff</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Support Officers, bus drivers &amp; bus support staff</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Pathologist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration (including Finance Officer)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENROLMENTS

27 primary and 31 secondary students
The students are grouped into 9 classes as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLUSTER</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Junior classes 5-9 years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Middle classes 9-12 years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Senior Middle classes 12-16 years</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CURRICULUM

Being, Belonging and Becoming, the Early Years Framework is used to construct curriculum and to provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences. To support this professional staff have engaged in ongoing professional learning about play based approaches to teaching and learning, child development, attachment theory, positive programming and interactive approaches such as Intensive Interaction, Floortime and Marte Meo.

During 2014, a group of professional staff worked collaboratively to develop and share with all staff information about play. Teachers use Learning Stories to provide information to parents about the student’s learning. In 2014, the Gowrie Training Centre worked in partnership with school staff to further refine skills in writing Learning Stories.

Intensive Interaction is practised across the school to support students to learn the fundamentals of communication which includes eye contact, sharing space, turn taking and initiating communication with others. The Intensive Interaction Coordinator facilitated regular meetings of practitioners. The Intensive Interaction Coordinator and Speech Pathologist developed a school based training package to provide new and existing staff with training in Intensive Interaction. Intensive Interaction is characterised by:

- following a child’s lead, being invited into and joining in with his/her world as a communication partner
- over time and informed by a child responses extending the interactions
- the use of videoing to observe and moderation.

STAFF RETENTION

Retention rate: 95% of professional staff continued service into 2014, one professional took maternity leave in 2014.

Teacher Attendance: 3,100 days per year
211 days absent
93% attendance rate

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Undergraduate
- Diplomas 3 (16%)
- Bachelor degrees 6 (32%)

Postgraduate
- Master’s degrees 10 (52%)

EXPENDITURE AND TEACHER PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

In 2014 all teaching staff (100%) participated in professional learning. The school community has been informed of professional learning during 2014 via the newsletter. Staff Professional learning has three integrative components designed to develop the professional and personal capacities of individual staff and the culture of learning at La Vang, these are:
School based programs involving all staff, facilitated by staff or by external facilitators, this includes mandatory WHS training

Individual professional learning focus – staff have access to individual professional learning budgets to use in ways individually identified and relevant to their work

Professional personal development which includes warm and cool feedback, critical friends, mentoring and performance development review.

In 2014 the whole staff professional learning program included the following:

- Ecological Sustainability in partnership with Wipe Out Waste, Mary Kelson and David Hillard (CEO)
- Distressed or Deliberately Defiant, Dr Judith Howard
- Let's Laugh, Bronwyn Roberts
- Catholicity and Wellbeing, Mary Kelson.

Mandatory training (all staff):
- Basic Education Life Support (BELS), Epilepsy/Epipen
- WHS Yearly induction to all staff
- Manual Handling Slips, Trips and Falls
- Bullying and Unacceptable Workplace Behaviour.

In 2014 a total of approximately $35,140 was spent on professional learning for school staff. In addition to this, Catholic Education SA provides professional development and consultancy services for all Catholic schools. The teaching and support staff have been involved in other training and development that was supported and funded by CESA including the Study Incentive Program.

**STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

The average student attendance rate for our school in 2014 was:

- Junior Cluster 91.6%
- Middle Cluster 93.4%
- Senior Cluster 93.45%

**STUDENT NON-ATTENDANCE**

When a student is not attending school for the day, parents / caregivers telephone or email the school informing personnel of the student's absence and this is documented accordingly. If a student has not arrived by 9.15 am, school personnel make contact with the parent / caregiver by phone.

**STUDENTS**

**New students:**

Four new students commenced at the school in 2014, three in the Junior Cluster and one in the Middle Cluster

**Graduates**

Three students completed their schooling in 2014. Two senior students were presented with the Archbishop's Award at St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral. Along with students from other Catholic secondary schools in South Australia, they received these awards for the contributions they have made to others and to the life of our school.

**Post School Destinations**

100% of students who left school in 2014 were successfully placed in a Business Enterprise Centre or a Day Options program and their achievements were celebrated in a graduation ceremony. They are supported in this process by a Transition Coordinator.

Two of the students are accessing various Day Options programs. One student is undertaking a combination of supported work and work within the family business.
Transition Evening

The Transition Coordinators from Our Lady of La Vang and St Patrick’s hosted a Transition Evening. This provided parents with information about the varied services available for their children after leaving school. Presenters from Family Advocacy, Bedford, Phoenix, Minda, Disability SA and Centrelink (Dept of Human Services). Topics included:

- Recruitment, Employment and training
- School to work transition
- Day Option Choices
- Individualised Funding
- Funding through Centrelink
- Advocacy.

PLANS TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING

A range of plans to support student learning and wellbeing are incorporated into the school’s practice. These include Individualised Education Plans (IEP), Positive Programming, Moving and Handling, Personal Care, Continence Care and Oral Eating and Drinking Plans.

The development and review of these plans require a significant amount of time, resources and energy. Considerable collaboration between home and school is required.

BENCHMARK RESULTS /ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

All students are exempted from participating in the NAPLAN testing program. Individual student progress was reported during 2014 via two school reports and through the development and review of Individual Education Plans (IEPs). IEP’s are developed for all students in Term 1 of the school year. Learning Stories are produced in the First Semester for all students. Formal reporting against IEP goals is produced in Semester Two and provided to all parent/caregivers.

PROPORTION OF YEAR 9 STUDENTS RETAINED TO YEAR 12 OR EQUIVALENT

The secondary aged students are grouped as class and cluster groupings not year levels. Our Lady of La Vang had 100% retention rate in 2014.

All students who were in the equivalent of Year 12 were enrolled at the school since the equivalent of Year 9.

SATISFACTION LEVELS

Staff
- Please see attachment regarding staff satisfaction

Parents
- Please see summary of questions and responses below.

Students
- This is not obtainable in traditional ways with our students.

FINANCE

- Commonwealth Government $2,825,656
- State Government $1,287,851
- Fees $183,970
- Other income $238,991

COMMUNITY

Traces of Us - South Australian Living Artists (SALA)

- Our Lady of La Vang participated in the South Australian Living Artists exhibition. ‘Traces of Us’ reflected the teaching and learning values of Our Lady of La Vang School. The dignity and capability of each student (and adult) in the community was respected.
and nurtured in the pedagogical processes inherent to the exhibition. We aimed for it to shine with the 'light of love,' in beauty, imagination and joy

- The art work was created in the daily context of student's learning experiences. Some students took the time to quietly paint alone while others painted in the joyful company of others. Every student in the school in some way contributed to an art piece under the guidance of the Artist in Residence and Art teacher and all of the staff. Mr Hieu Van Le opened the exhibition. Over 250 people visited the school as a part of this SALA event

- Staff had created thousands of stars which were hung as a centre piece in the space. These were made as a part of the million stars project aimed at awakening awareness of violence and the need for peace

- A Graduation celebration was held for students and families leaving the school

- Andrew Chinn performed many of the student's favourite Religious songs

- Christmas on the Green – family and friends outdoor picnic and Christmas concert was held one evening in December. Students told the Christmas story, sang songs and the community joined in a Christmas procession.

**CONNECTING UP PARENTS (CUPS)**

CUPS has continued to focus on organizing social events and working with the Parent Liaison Officer to facilitate opportunities for parents and families to come together. Two community consultation processes were organized enabling parents / carers and friends to dialogue, define the purpose of CUPS and plan possible gatherings.

**PARENT SUPPORT & LIAISON**

During 2014 the following occurred:

- Morning teas and welcome for new parents
- Attendance at 'Life After School' Minda parent group meetings
- Regular contact with families and follow up
- Promotion of external information sessions
- Respite information was provided to families
- Communication with families via newsletter
- Assisting parents with the NDIS queries.

**OTHER HIGHLIGHTS**

The school website and the prospectus were launched at one of the two “Meet and Greet Staff” evenings held during the year.

More than 80 delegates at the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) visited the school to look at the school’s design response to student and staff needs. The delegates were educators, and architects who specialise in educational environments.

**SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT**

During 2014 the school began to engage in a self-assessment process that will lead to the development of a School Improvement Plan based on the domains of the Continuous Improvement Framework for Catholic Schools.

**2014 School Improvement Plan**

- The school developed its website
- Updating of the marketing and public profiling of the school, including the school prospectus
- the ICT filing system was redesigned and upgraded
Staff and students established pedagogical processes pertinent to the capacities of the students in the new environment.

**Progress towards Achievement of 2013 Goals**

- The key goal in 2013 was the successful transitioning of students, staff and families from the school site at Marion to the new site at Flinders Park.
- This consequentially required upgrading of ICTs, equipment and ongoing staff training.

**Parent Satisfaction Survey 2014**

*Can you please list 3 things that are done well at OLoLV?*

- The focus and interaction with our child
- The trust that has developed between our child and staff
- The opportunity to go on excursions, to see and be involved in the wider community
- Inclusivity of all children regardless of developmental issues
- Understanding and empathy amongst all staff members towards children
- Wide range of activities throughout the day
- Parent communication
- Individualised education
- Respect for neurodiversity and children’s individual needs/uniqueness
- Great staff
- Safe environment, Good facilities
- Ensuring my child is happy
- Safe
- Is allowed to do things he enjoys as well as what is required
- Friendly, approachable, welcoming
- Care for each individual family
- Flexible and adaptive
- Staffing levels are good and the staff are all excellent!
- Beautiful, happy and safe environment
- Meeting the differing, individual needs of each pupil
- Lots of one on one time for students
- Catering to students’ interests
- Providing a fantastic facility
- Selection of amazing staff
- Developing a program of learning that is appropriate to each cluster
- Developing a feeling of community
- Cultural/community of the school
- School set-up – facilities
- General level of care
- Very efficient and understanding staff
- Child – teacher bonding
- One paragraph in the diary highlighting the daily activities
- Parent Liaison officer – info to parents
• Fosters a sense of community
• Good for communication in a generic sense eg. Access to staff and newsletter
• Concerns are listened to
• School is very well resourced
• Staff are caring and pro-active
• Emotional well being
• Staff genuinely care about students/families
• Staff tailor learning programs to be flexible and responsive to childrens’ needs

Can you please list 3 things we could do better at OLoLV?

• We answered Question 1. With a 5, but we don’t really understand the curriculum for our child
• More communication (written) about how our child is learning and developing
• Would be wonderful to be able to have the opportunity to see our children, say, a couple of times a year, performing their normal class activities
• Everything is done so well, no issues have arisen
• Post school options (more choices other than ADE’s)
• Would love music teacher to come back! The music program was incredible!!
• Daily notes home
• Be more flexible
• Drop off point at junior side needs a buzzer
• Because my child is nonverbal I know nothing about his week till Friday where I may receive 4-5 pictures but no written feedback
• A small entry in his diary 2-3 times a week and not just when he’s been difficult
• Communication of non teacher base programs (i.e toileting, oral food intake) and their progress
• Pupils to have more regular contact with their non-disabled peers/schools
• Daily/weekly feedback/photo’s etc of activities and achievements
• I miss the communication in the diaries. I know this is an issue that has been hashed around but it really helps me to talk to my son about his day. It only has to be a line or two which helps build relationship with his teachers. eg I had to look on the website to learn about the city.
• Better communication between educators to parents (use of communication book)
• New to the school to answer this question, but would love to see more pictures (just one page) highlighting our child’s routine to be send per week.
• Specific communication about individual children
• Better explanation to parents (in lay language) as to why the pedagogy and the curriculum is best practice
As my son is unable to tell me what he does daily I wish there was a procedure where I would receive written information as to what he has been doing.

We are happy with how things are being done

I would have liked there to be a place for my son’s communication system, proloquo2Go, as I am concerned about how he will communicate with others in the future who do not know him well.

Staff Satisfaction Survey

What 3 things give you the most satisfaction in your work?

Teaching and Learning
- The philosophy and pedagogy of the school which gives students voice and choice*
- Working as a “valued team member” to deliver a curriculum which best suits EACH individual student*
- How student focused we are and how students are encouraged to explore and be creative
- Teaching our students and going on a learning journey with them
- Playing with the kids
- That there are no set recess and lunch times
- “Smiles, joy and laughter” from students and staff*
- Making “real connections” and developing relationships to foster ongoing LEARNING for the students***
- Our open door policy
- The emphasis on training and access to training and professional development and learning, the encouragement we get to do this and sharing information with colleagues*****
- Being trusted to plan and implement an individualized play based curriculum that is developmentally appropriate for each student
- Learning Stories
- The students: growth, achievements, goals reached* and making a difference in their lives*
- Intensive Interaction sessions when I make a connection with a student
- Seeing the students in my care make progress and are happy and relaxed and making the most of everyday and watching them thrive*
- Watching our students engage and interact
- Winning: after completing new and challenging tasks
- Building relationships with staff and students alike
- Creating a warm, inviting atmosphere where students feel “at home”. Facilitating a rich, sensory learning environment, where students and staff talk. Create, discover and learn. Playing, singing, dancing, creating and doing dramatic play and storytelling with students. Encouraging staff participation in these activities
- Feeling and forbearance: Knowing that I am being supported by colleagues who really KNOW our student’s subtle but significant needs, and are always ready to lend a hand. I get most satisfaction from seeing those who put aside what their society has inculcated so as to appreciate what a student is feeling in that moment and understanding it from their perspective as much as possible.
• Bringing out the best in me and letting the students be
• Not making our students do maths or English that they will NEVER understand or be of any use to them

**Staffing**
• Having the staffing to allow time to spend with each student
• Supportive and consultative leadership
• The skill level of the staff
• The way the Junior Cluster works is a great example of staff cooperation and sharing. How they work as a team, to support not only students but each other
• Team work: colleague interactions for common goals and staff dedication
• Positive relationships with staff members, good team work, and an excellent support network system
• Having great support from our leaders and our colleagues
• Working collaboratively: the warm, non-competitive, congenial relations between staff is such a special and unique aspect of working at OLOLV. I feel there is equal partnership between staff regardless of their role or professional status.
• Being open and helping each other

**Environment**
• Working in a beautiful environment with mostly united colleagues in a student centred learning facility
• Welcoming people into our school community and organizing community events
• Working in an open and calm environment
• Fluidity and Freedom: the flexibility and openness of sharing classrooms, toys etc, and especially seeing the students interact with just about anything and anyone they choose in any given moment. I get a lot of satisfaction knowing that our students anxieties are looked after in this one way, which then leads to better teaching/learning opportunities.
• Fun and Friendly: Beyond the stress is the fact that everyone is working (or attempting to work) towards the same goal of creating an atmosphere that is fun for both staff and students. There is a LOT of laughter.

**What 3 things give you the least satisfaction in your work?**

**Teaching and Learning**
• Staff that don’t always work in ways that supports the pedagogy of the school
• Not being able to spread myself around to each child at every minute
• Not knowing some triggers that may upset some children: a matter of learning, watching and getting to know everyone much better
• Some people still just don’t get it
• Not knowing some of the new students, especially in the Junior Cluster
• Feeling the need for more structure
• Getting people to be open and to learn
• Lack of relevant professional development
• Lack of communication re students/families having issues
• Sometimes my experience and knowledge are under utilized
• Cutting back on specialist teaching eg PE and Music
• Communication breakdown at OLOLV between staff and parents
• Still do not feel I have acquired sufficient knowledge and experience of Play, Intensive Interaction and Child Development
• This often doesn’t happen but any inconsistent approach (between staff or between staff and parents) in working with a student, can cause frustration. Inconsistent management may cause confusion for a student. Across a cluster, staff can have differing views regarding a situation. It can take a lot of thought and energy, on a teacher’s behalf, to introduce a new strategy to manage a student’s undesirable behavior or implement a new routine.
• It’s not with the work that I am dissatisfied but quite often I feel like I am not doing enough to help teachers in the area of managing behaviours triggered by anxiety.
• Sometimes, not often, I feel dissatisfied when I see a child with great learning potential ignored or unattended because there are more urgent matters at hand such as melt downs, lock downs and break downs (mostly in communication) Oh the tyranny of the urgent!!
• Loss of our music lesson and/or music based assembly

Negativity in the Workplace
• The gossip mill and staff that participate in “Chinese Whispers”
• People who moan about no set recess and lunch times
• People who moan about our open door policy
• People who don’t cope with or accept change

Time and Workload
• COMPUTERS!!! Slowly improving thanks to Mary K and Luke
• Workload, particularly in Term 1 and Semester 1, deadlines, working under pressure
• Extra admin workload: W & C Feedback to people you don’t work with*
• Injuries in the workplace. Our work environment brings many challenges, so SAFETY is so important!
• Feelings of exhaustion (sometimes)
• Inconsistencies in staffing: never know who will be absent, who you are working with etc
• Lack of time to access computer online info due to bus commitments
• Stressful situations which may occur eg staff, student injury and high anxiety levels of some students
• No time to interact with students and staff members from the Middle and Junior Cluster
• Paperwork*: I feel it piles up sometimes and then I have to spend time at home catching up
• Data entry
• I get the least satisfaction when I have a “touch and go” day, going in and out of classrooms but not having the proper time to interact with the students on a deeper level

Environment
• Swipe cards do not always work quickly enough when issues arise*
• Faulty fixtures and doors
• Cupboards in classroom hard to lock or don’t lock at all
- Undercover walkway for Juniors*
- The gap between the junior cluster and the rest of the school