

THE JOSEPH VARGA SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT 2015



FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2015
ABN: 84 002 785 775



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1. OUR PHILOSOPHY

The Joseph Varga School (JVS) is a registered special education school, which caters specifically for children with a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). We offer a welcoming, accepting, safe and supporting ‘family feel’ environment.

We are committed to understanding, as individuals, the children in our care and positively guiding each one of them to become self aware and self disciplined members of society. We strive to comprehensively understand the specific needs of each child and tailor a program that best caters for and supports the child's educational, social and emotional development.

With dedicated teachers, specialist support, ongoing assessment, state of the art technology and a positive approach to personal development, our school is well equipped to support our students.



2. ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Annual Report provides our school community with fair, reliable, and objective information about school performance measures and policies. This Report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies and the school community.

The report covers the following information relating to the school's operation:

- A message from key school bodies
- Contextual information about the school
- Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing
- The granting of Records of School Achievement
- Results of the Higher School Certificate
- Post school destinations
- A summary of professional learning undertaken by teachers during the year
- Workforce composition including details of all teaching staff (as defined by the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004)
- Characteristics of the student body, attendance rates for each Year level and the whole school
- A description of how the school manages student non-attendance.
- School Policies and Procedures
- Priority areas for school improvement
- Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility
- Parent, student and teacher satisfaction
- Summary financial information



Further information about the school or this Report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 9398 5110 or visiting the school's website at www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au

3. A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

Chairman's Report

2015 was a landmark year for JVS as it signaled our first year as a Special Education provider catering specifically for students with a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The transition, from a generalised special needs school into a ASD specific school, was a success with the school's traditional family focus and ethos being maintained and additional support, expertise and resources being put in place to ensure a specialised learning environment for our students.

Dr. Cathy Little was a valuable addition to our Board of Directors in 2015. Dr. Little in her role as lecturer in Special Education at the University of Sydney provided great insight and support during this transition year.

The school has again had a very successful year in relation to its finances. The change to an ASD Focus School has enabled the School to secure additional funding resources to better assist our students.

We have been able to pay off all our ancillary debts, which will enhance future cash-flow. All our compliance matters are up to date and the school is in a stronger and healthier financial position than it has been in the past as a result of tighter financial controls and management of the service. In turn this has enabled the service to grow and be sustainable into the future.

We still have large debts to service through previous loans, but we are confident we can manage these debts into the future. All in all our finances are getting stronger every year and we envisage future growth which will make Joseph Varga School a secure service for families in need for many years to come.

I would like to thank all directors, our principal Dan Lynch and all staff who have dedicatedly worked to ensure a supportive and wholistic education and experience for our students. I would also like to thank the school's bankers, the National Australia Bank, for their ongoing assistance.
Yours Sincerely

Raymond Collins
Chairperson

4. CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Since 1980, JVS has been providing education services to children with learning disabilities, autism, conduct disorders, and/or emotional disturbances. 2015 marked the first year that it was a requirement of enrolment that the student was diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

We are committed to understanding, as individuals, the children in our care and positively guiding each one of them to become self aware and self disciplined members of society. Our approach is to comprehensively understand the needs of each child and tailor a program that best caters for and supports the child's educational and emotional development.

JVS provides a welcoming, accepting, safe and supporting environment that has a *'family feel'*. Many children who have previously *'fallen through the gaps'* of mainstream schooling have excelled in the environment unique to our little school.



Further information regarding the history and context of the school can be found at:
www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au

5. STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING

The school participates in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).

As the majority of our students have learning and emotional needs which result in significant delays in their learning and achievement, NAPLAN testing can be a challenging experience for our students and in some instances students are granted an exemption from participation.

The consequent results do however supply JVS with valuable information on which to base short/long term planning and programming to meet student needs.

School facts 2013		Student background 2013													
School sector	Non-government	Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)	-												
School type	Special	School ICSEA value	-												
Year range	U, K-10	Average ICSEA value	1000												
Total enrolments	36	Data source	-												
Location	Metropolitan	Distribution of students¹													
School staff 2013		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Bottom quarter</th> <th>Middle quarters</th> <th>Top quarter</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>School Distribution</td> <td colspan="3">Data not reported</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Australian Distribution</td> <td>25%</td> <td>25%</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Percentages are rounded and may not add to 100</p>			Bottom quarter	Middle quarters	Top quarter	School Distribution	Data not reported			Australian Distribution	25%	25%	25%
	Bottom quarter	Middle quarters	Top quarter												
School Distribution	Data not reported														
Australian Distribution	25%	25%	25%												
Teaching staff	7	Students 2013													
Full-time equivalent teaching staff ²	7	Total enrolments	36												
Non-teaching staff	1	Girls	2												
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff ³	1	Boys	34												
School finances 2012⁴		Full-time equivalent enrolments ⁵	36												
Total net recurrent income	\$1,290,251	Indigenous students	-												
Per student net recurrent income	\$30,720	Language background other than English ⁶	8%												
Total capital expenditure	\$25,210	Student attendance rate	90%												
Links															
School website	The Joseph Varga School														
Sector, system or association website	Association of Independent Schools of New South Wales														
School satisfaction information															
<p>All schools are required to report on parent, teacher and student satisfaction in their annual reports. In 2012, nationally consistent school opinion survey items were agreed by education ministers for parents and students (known as the National School Opinion Survey). A survey and data collection tool that can collect responses to the National School Opinion Survey was made available for all schools to use in August 2013. Schools can use the national parent and student survey items to report on school satisfaction in their annual reports. See the school annual report for information on parent, teacher and student satisfaction.</p> <p>For further information about the National School Opinion Survey, see School opinion information on the ACARA website.</p>															

Details of 2015 results can be found at:

<http://www.myschool.edu.au/ResultsInNumbers/Index/74935/TheJosephVargaSchool/43750/2013>

6. THE GRANTING OF RECORDS OF SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT (ROSA) AND RESULTS OF THE HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

As a small transitional school student enrolment and participation in secondary education fluctuates from year to year.

In 2015 one student received a Record of School Achievement.



7. POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS (SECONDARY SCHOOLS ONLY)

Our students receive a solid education in a caring Special Education environment as they work towards reintegration with the mainstream.

We do not hold students back when they are mainstream ready. In 2015 one student received a ROSA and attained full-time employment.

8. A SUMMARY OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING UNDERTAKEN BY TEACHERS DURING THE YEAR

The teaching staff participated in a variety of professional learning to improve their standard of teaching competence, curriculum development and effectiveness with respect to catering for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Professional learning included:

- Whole staff participation in Tony Attwood ASD conference
- All staff being trained in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention.
- Staff participation in the annual Redbank School Conference.
- Ongoing Professional Development with school psychologist

9. WORKFORCE COMPOSITION AND TEACHING STAFF

Details of the workforce composition of full-time staff and the specific characteristics of all teaching staff (as defined by the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004) are summarised in the 2 tables below:

Teaching Staff

Category	Number of Teachers
(i) having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines,	6
(ii) having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications	

Workforce Composition- 2015

Workforce Composition	FTE	Indigenous
Teaching	6	Nil
Administration	2	Nil

10. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY, ATTENDANCE RATES FOR EACH YEAR LEVEL AND THE WHOLE SCHOOL AND A DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE SCHOOL MANAGES STUDENT NON-ATTENDANCE.

As an ASD Special Education provider all students who attended the school in 2015 were medically diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (other diagnosis may also be evident).

Student attendance is recorded daily and non - attendance is followed up in every instance unless a parent advises the reason.

Parent meetings are held to resolve and support any issues of ongoing unexplained non-attendance.

Mandatory reporting procedures apply where absences are extended or the student may be at risk.

The average student attendance per grade in 2015 was: -

Kindy: NA

Year One: 94.90%

Year Two: 94.15%

Year Three: 47.8%

Year Four: 97.96%

Year Five: 92.76%

Year Six: 97.2%

Year Seven: 96.16%

Year Eight: 92.30%

Year Nine: 86.56%

Year Ten: 71.3%

11.SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A full suite of the Joseph Varga School Policies and Procedures (including enrolment, student welfare, anti-bullying, discipline and complaints and grievances and all others) are publicly available on the schools website www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au

Parents are officially notified, with one term notice, when the Board updates policies from time to time.

As a condition of enrolment is that parents acknowledge that they have made themselves familiar with the school's policy and procedures on the website.

12. SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

The Joseph Varga School is committed to the ongoing improvement of the quality of education programs provided and the safety and welfare of students.

The following priorities for improvement were set for 2015 and throughout the year the school demonstrated achievement of all priorities:

The 2015 priorities for improvement set and achieved by the school are shown below:

<p>Physical Learning Environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding for upgrade of learning spaces and physical environment based on best practice models for children diagnosed with ASD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal shelter constructed. Upgrade of individual and whole school support resources for ASD students Strong emphasis on Education Technology maintained.
<p>Professional Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide staff with regular professional development opportunities to ensure staff remain up to date with best practice pedagogies for ASD learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff participated in Tony Attwood/Sue Larkey ASD conference All staff receiving training in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention. Regular professional development provided by school psychologist Staff participation in the annual Redbank School Conference.
<p>Child Protection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure high standards of child protection are maintained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Risk Assessments by psychologist to identify risks and provide supporting strategies to

		<p>mitigate risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff trained in Non Violent Crisis Intervention – promotion of Care, Welfare, Safety and Security Daily behavior analysis to monitor student behaviour and needs and target support areas.
Student Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure 'best practice' teaching pedagogies in classroom. Student interest based curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing diagnostic testing of students to identify target areas for improvement Adopting best practice learning programs and support materials.

13. INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

The 'Promise to Improvement' is a commitment made by each student to make a personal effort to have a positive attitude, to show respect to themselves and others, and to take ownership and be accountable for their actions. The 'promise' is matched by a commitment made by the school and parents to understand and support the child in these endeavours. The 'Promise' is our contract with each child, the foundation on which behavioural, social, emotional and academic improvement rests.



Further details can be found at www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au

14. PARENTS, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

The school values highly the importance of regularly reviewing approval and satisfaction levels. The school conducts termly parent and teacher meetings where feedback is sought by parents set to specific criteria. The school also provides open parent meetings and conducts formal meetings with staff in which feedback for review was sought.

Overall the parents of JVS greatly value the care and service provided by the school.

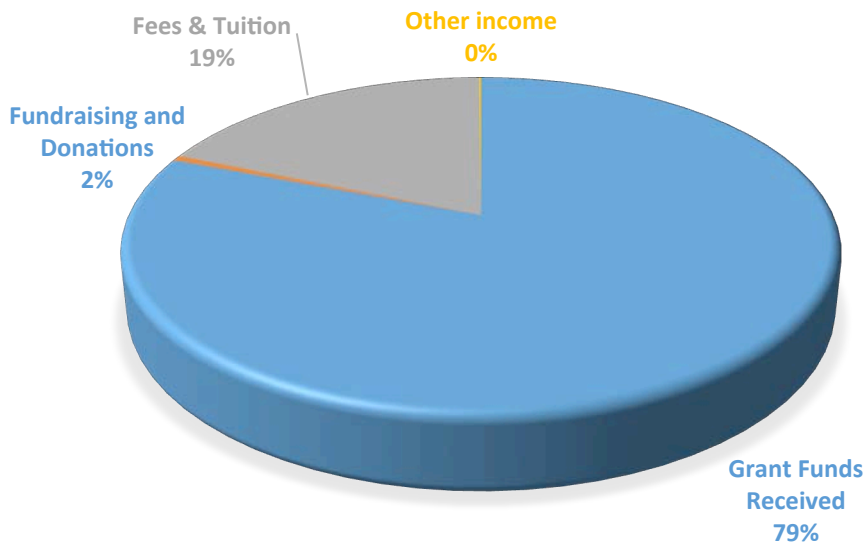


Working Together

15. SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Joseph Varga School is fully accountable for all funding that it receives. Each year, the school’s accountants submit to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the School. This statement details the income and expenditure of the school. In addition, the financial accounts for the school are audited annually. The following information represents the income and expenditure for the year ending 31 December 2015.

INCOME SOURCES 2015



EXPENDITURE 2015

