

# THE JOSEPH VARGA SCHOOL

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022



FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022  
ABN: 84 002 785 775

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*About this Report*

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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
- A summary of professional learning undertaken by teachers during the year
- Workforce composition including details of all teaching staff (as defined by the TA Act)
- A description of how the school manages student non-attendance.
- Post school destinations
- Enrolment policies and characteristics of the student body
- School Policies and Procedures
- School determined improvement targets
- 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 principal on 02 9398 5110 or visiting the school's website at [www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au](http://www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au)

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*A message from key school bodies*

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### **Chairperson's Report**

It is with pleasure we present our Annual Report for 2022.

2022 was a significant year signalling the return to full-time on-site learning for our students and families. The full-time return to the usual daily routines and structures was a huge relief for all involved at JVS and a reminder of the significant importance that JVS plays in the lives of our students, families, and staff.

In August, we were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of long-term Director Mr. Jack Ritch. Mr. Ritch had been a very active Director at JVS since 2006 and his vibrant presence, dedication, integrity, and skillset is so greatly missed. Thank-you Jack for your amazing contribution to JVS and our thoughts are with you and your family.

In December, longstanding Chairperson Mr. Raymond Collins resigned as Chairperson, and I was honoured to be endorsed as his replacement. I wish to thank Mr. Collins for his outstanding contribution and strong leadership. Mr. Collins has whole heartedly and generously donated his energy and high-level skillset to JVS since 2010 and his presence and leadership is an inspiration.

Amongst the very sad loss and significant change, the School Board and I felt motivated to responsibly embrace its charter and carry it into the future.

After responsibly exploring different options, The JVS Board made an informed endorsement to apply in 2023 to NESAC to be recognised as a K-12 'School of a Kind' Special School.

Our submission, once approved, will allow JVS to provide an interactive, experiential, wholistic curriculum that is individualised for each student with a focus on literacy, numeracy, communication, physical, emotional and social development. These aspects of personal growth hinge on the overall well-being of each individual child that is the cornerstone of our new 'School of A Kind' approach, which in turn requires careful co-ordination and monitoring, through our comprehensive Individual Programs.

In a roundabout way this formal direction maintains synchronicity with the school's humble beginnings - to truly be a school *with a difference* that provides a unique 'family – feel' environment and wholistic educational approach.

JVS continues to assist students who have previously experienced difficulties with schooling, to grow and feel a sense of belonging, enjoyment, and achievement.

I wish to thank our Principal, Dan Lynch, for his respectful and unwavering support in upholding our school's charter; the daily dedication of our staff; the collaborative support of our families; and the oversight of our School Board.

**Dr. Cathy Little**  
**Chairperson**

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*Contextual information about the school*

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The Joseph Varga School (JVS) is a registered special education school, which caters specifically for 'at risk' children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and/or other sensory, physical, Intellectual, or emotional disabilities.

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.

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.

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.



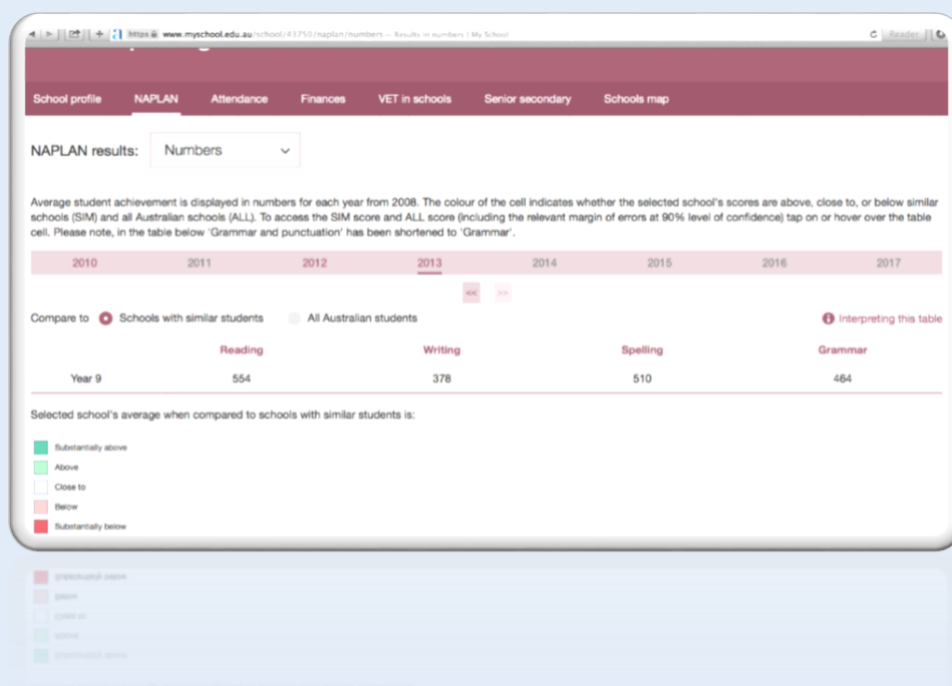
Further information regarding the history and context of the school can be found at:  
[www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au](http://www.josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au)

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### *Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing*

Due to diagnosis which can 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 adjustments or 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.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to [myschool.edu.au](https://myschool.edu.au) to access the school data.



NAPLAN results are not publically displayed in instances where the total student participation for a given year is less than 5 students or less.

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### *The granting of Records of School Achievement (RoSA)*

The RoSA is a cumulative credential that allows students to accumulate their academic results until they leave school. It is of specific use to students leaving school prior to HSC.

The RoSA records completed Stage 5 and Preliminary Stage 6 courses and grades participation in any uncompleted Preliminary Stage 6 courses.

As a small ASD school student enrolment and participation in Year 10 secondary education and beyond fluctuates from year to year.

In 2022 there were no students issued with a Record of School Achievement (ROSA).





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*Results of the Higher School Certificate (HSC)*

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As a small ASD school student enrolment and participation in Year 11 and Year 12 secondary education fluctuates from year to year. Whilst JVS is registered to deliver Years 11 and 12 it is not accredited to offer HSC to students in Years 11 and 12. Hence there were no students in 2021 participating in HSC.

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*A summary of professional learning undertaken  
by teachers during the year*

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

Professional Learning provided to staff in 2022 included:

- Whole staff participation in Child Protection Legislation and supporting students with Special Needs (AISNSW Online learning).
- Ongoing Professional Development with school principal, psychologist (clinical) and speech pathologist with emphasis on ASD learners.
- Representation at AIS Governance Symposium by Principal





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### *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) are summarised in the 2 tables below:

#### **Teaching Staff -2022**

| 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- 2022**

| Workforce Composition | FTE | Indigenous |
|-----------------------|-----|------------|
| Teaching              | 5   | Nil        |
| Administration        | 3   | Nil        |



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*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 2022 were diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (other additional diagnosis may also be evident). With the support of Assisted School Travel the school is able to accept enrolments from all over Sydney.

The average student attendance per grade in 2022 was: -

| Year Level           | Attendance Percentage |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Kindy:               | No students           |
| Year One             | 90.28%                |
| Year Two             | No students           |
| Year Three           | No students           |
| Year Four            | 97.51%                |
| Year Five            | No students           |
| Year Six             | 95.24%                |
| Year Seven           | 96.66%                |
| Year Eight           | 95.92%                |
| Year Nine            | No students           |
| Year Ten             | 98.52%                |
| Year Eleven          | 90.48%                |
| Year 12              | 93.2%                 |
| <b>Total Average</b> | <b>94.72%</b>         |

Under the *NSW Education Act 1990*, schools are required to ensure that individual students meet certain attendance standards, including mandatory attendance for students under 17 years of age, unless exemptions are applicable. The principal of JVS maintains a register, in a form approved by the Minister, of the enrolments and daily attendances of all children at the school, which includes information for each student as required by Section 3.8 of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual.

The school is required to regularly submit attendance figures for a specified period to government authorities.

All unexplained absences may be followed up by requests to clarify and substantiate the absence by the telephone and through email.

All explained absences are required to be supported by a note, an email, a phone call, or medical documentation, especially, where appropriate, in the case of a student's absence that is for more than one day.

If the student continues to be absent, or a pattern of absenteeism has developed in relation to the student not attending school, then a more serious letter will be sent to the parent demanding immediate clarification and action.

JVS utilises an electronic Student Management System to collect, store and report attendance information.

#### **Parent / Carer Responsibilities:**

Parents are required to contact the school before 9am if their child is not attending indicating the reason for non-attendance (i.e sick, specialist appointment).

Parents are required to provide a medical certificate if a child is away for more than two days.

Parents are expected to contact the school to ensure the school has their most up to date contact and emergency contact information.

### **Resolving Poor Student Attendance**

If parent/s supply no medical certificate in support of a student not attending school, or when applying for an exemption, and the student still does not attend school, and has been away for a period greater than 14 days, then the Principal has the power to inform the parent in writing that the child is in breach of legal requirements that the child should be attending school.

If the parent refuses after a further request to supply a medical certificate, then the Principal can encourage the parents to enrol their child at another school.

If there is still no action by the parent in relation to the child returning to school, or in terms of pursuing the enrolment of their child at another school, the Principal can terminate the enrolment in writing by informing the parent/s that the child is no longer enrolled at the school, and must seek to enrol the student elsewhere.

At this point, the school will inform the local Home Liaison Office and/or Community Services Office (through a formal notification), that the child is not attending school and/or may be 'at risk' in the community.

In some circumstances, the Home Liaison Office and The Joseph Varga School will work together to identify another school or setting (e.g. TAFE), which the target child will be able to attend.

All during these attempts to resolve poor student attendance, the school will seek advice from, and involve, doctors, experts, parents, and interested stakeholders in the consultative process.

This can involve recourse to legal action by obtaining 'Compulsory Schooling Orders' through either the Local Court or the Children's Court.

In determining a course of action under this legislation, the principal will also refer to and keep in mind the requirements under the Keep Them Safe legislation.

### **Other Strategies for Increasing Attendance:**

When a pattern of irregular attendance, school phobic response, or truancy has been established, parents/carers are invited to the school for a formal meeting. While parents are reminded about the legislative requirements for students to attend school, the focus is on generating positive strategies and methods of making learning a more enjoyable and rewarding experience for the student.

The classroom teacher is involved in this discussion with parents and/or the principal to talk about the classroom environment and determine whether classroom routines or program modifications are required to support increased engagement and the desire to attend school.

Individual students are included in discussions to ascertain any difficulties the student is facing engaging in the school and classroom program.

The school will also determine the relevance and possibility of the family utilizing the Government Taxi Scheme if geographical distance and the student's needs etc, are contributing factors to the student's non-attendance.



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*Post School Destinations*

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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 2022 we oversaw the successful transition of one JVS student back to larger mainstream school settings, and one senior student transitioned to SLES Disability Employment Program.

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*Enrolment policies and characteristics of the student body*

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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).

Evidence of a current diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is required. This evidence must include:

- (a) a current diagnosis from a specialist medical practitioner or registered clinical psychologist, which is not more than 12 months old; and
- (b) a current standardised cognitive or developmental assessment (e.g. Griffiths, WISC-V, WPPSI-III, Stanford Binet V), which is not more than two years old.

Please note: additional comorbid diagnosis may exist.

It is important that parents wishing to enrol their child at JVS are aware of the culture of the school, its education offerings, the terms on which their child is enrolled as a student, and the responsibilities of parents of children enrolled, before making a commitment.

This should help avoid subsequent disputes and help in eliciting from the parents queries and concerns which may be relevant to the child's future schooling.

The procedures for enrolment include the following elements:

- a. An initial phone interview (vetting):
- b. The Principal predominantly takes phone and email communication from interested parents and confirms diagnosis of ASD.
- c. The Principal contacts parents and determines the needs of the child and whether the school's programs and ethos can meet these needs, or whether there is a 'match' between 'what the child needs' and 'what the school can offer'.
- d. The Principal encourages families to come and visit the school to learn of our facilities.
- e. The Principal ascertains the commitment of the parents to work with the school to meet the student's needs.
- f. An initial request from JVS for documentation from parents/carers in preparation for the initial school interview:
- g. Past psychometric assessments conducted by a specialist medical practitioner or registered clinical psychologist with evidence of an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- h. Past risk plans and assessment from previous schools.
- i. Any additional diagnoses determined by a medical practitioner/psychiatrist (including prescribed medication/s)
- j. Reports from therapists (such as psychologist, speech pathologist, occupational health, physiotherapist)
- k. Past school reports or other relevant documentation from specialists.
- l. The Principal makes a determination to invite the parents for a second visit with the student to the school for a face-to-face interview (and if considered appropriate, an induction).
- m. Student and family are shown around the school.
- n. Child is asked to complete a few basic assessments in literacy / numeracy and behavioural observations are made.
- o. The Principal and/or delegated staff complete an initial risk assessment of the student as part of the interview process.
- p. Parents are interviewed separate from student about the family unit, their child's development, strengths, needs, interests, experiences at other schools, interventions etc
- q. The Principal and/or delegated staff begin to complete an interim Individual Education Plan (IEP) for the child, noting the 'Adjustments' that may be required, in the event the parent/s are offered, and accept a placement for the child at the school. These 'adjustments' may occur in terms of the Academic, Emotional, Behavioural and Functional nature of the school's program, risk management, classroom organization, and in terms of the staff and the resources required.
- r. If required, the Principal will consult with a Consultant Psychologist to offer further feedback and determine the extent of the adjustments required to support enrolment.
- s. The Principal is aware that such 'Adjustments' must be thought about and organized before a placement is offered to the family.

- t. If during the enrolment interview, the Principal considers it more appropriate for the parent/s or carer/s to enrol their child at another school, the Principal will advise the family of other special schools or educational settings that may be better equipped to cater for the particular student's needs.
- u. School Fee policy is then presented to parents.

The Parent Handbook is provided to the parents of a prospective student, considered appropriate by the Principal, in terms of a placement for their child at the school.

### **Application Process**

The Enrolment Information Form' requests:

- a) Personal information about both parents and the student as required by the Act;
- b) Details of special circumstances of the student that may need to be taken into account by the school (such as medical conditions, additional special needs, special gifts or talents, psychological test results, that may impact on the students education);
- c) The completion of Behavioural Checklists by parent/s;
- d) Declarations (e.g. confidentiality, overseas student),
- e) The Attachments of Certain Documents (e.g. evidence of birth, citizenship, custodial agreements), and
- f) The Completion of Certain Consent Forms (e.g. medication, local excursions, visiting local shops during school time).

### **Enrolment Contract**

The Enrolment Contract as a general rule, legal opinion suggests that 'a term of a standard Contract will be void if it is Unfair.' The distinctive features of 'The Enrolment Contract' include:

- Rules & Regulations
- School Fees
- Cancelling Enrolment
- Discipline
- Emergencies
- Authority To contact Professionals and/or Release Professional Information
- Legal Advice

Other Relevant Conditions of Entry (conveyed verbally, but not necessarily fully included in The Enrolment Contract):

- a) A place for enrolment cannot be confirmed, until the school systematically completes its enrolment process, which includes parents signing the enrolment contract.
- b) The Joseph Varga School reserves the right to impose a condition on a new student's enrolment at the school that requires the family to agree to and 'signs off' on an Individualised Behaviour Contract for the new student.
- c) The Principal, in specific cases where the student's behaviour is deemed a High Risk to self or others at the school, may employ a Behaviour Contract, as a Condition of Enrolment.
- d) Such a decision is taken after a student's supporting documentation has been reviewed, and an initial risk assessment of the student has been completed.

- e) Such a 'behaviour contract' (which can be for a designated period of time) also becomes part of The Enrolment Contract with the school, so that the student is able to attend JVS.
- f) If a newly enrolled student seriously breaches the Behaviour Contract in his/her First Term at the school, on more than Two Occasions, he/she may be Expelled (instead of being 'Suspended' first), on the grounds of Risk Management.
- g) In this case, if parents or the student refuses to sign the Behaviour Contract, then the school will not offer a placement.
- h) For all students, it is similarly a condition of enrolment that at any time, whilst the child is enrolled at the school, the school may request (without notice), given the risk to the child and to others, a Current and Intensive Psychological or Psychiatric Assessment, as a condition of the student's continuing enrolment.
- i) In the event that the parents cannot organise such an assessment quickly, the school reserves the right to temporarily 'Suspend' the student from attending the school, until such time as the assessment is completed, on the grounds of its Risk Management Policy.
- j) If the school decides to take this course of action, the school will supply work packages for use at home or elsewhere.
- k) Once the psychological/psychiatric assessment is conducted, and the report is submitted to the Principal, a further condition of the child being able to re-attend the school may be imposed. This requires the formulation and implementation of a suitable new risk management plan, with parents and interested stakeholders. The plan also involves monitoring and review, on an ongoing basis.
- l) Along these lines, the school can impose another condition on the parents too. This may require that the child undergoes ongoing psychiatric intervention, in order to stabilise the child's condition, regardless of whether new medication has, or has not, been introduced.
- m) If the Board of Directors of The Joseph Varga School, and/or The Principal believes that a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation between parents and the school has broken down to the extent that it adversely impacts on that relationship, then the Principal in consultation with the Chairman of the Board of Directors may require the parent to remove the child from the school.
- n) The Joseph Varga School will only exercise its powers under this clause to 'Expel' a pupil permanently, if it has provided the pupil and the parents of the pupil with details of the conduct, and the opportunity to respond according to the tenets and procedures of Procedural Fairness.

### **Maintaining Enrolment**

To maintain enrolment and to assist with our understanding of each child's specific needs, parents are required to provide the school with a cognitive and developmental assessment by a suitable qualified specialist every 2 years.

Acknowledging that it is the responsibility of the parents to arrange an assessment, JVS may be able to assist with this process.

The parent(s)/carer(s)/guardian(s) agree to pay the fees as stated in the Letter of Offer from The Joseph Varga School (unless scholarship offered), and freely accept liability in relation to payment of such agreed fees, which must be paid by the end of the first week of each term, unless special arrangements are included in this letter, or are agreed to in writing elsewhere.



In the event that fees are not paid by the end of the second week of the term, parents accept that their child's enrolment at The Joseph Varga School can be cancelled, on Two Week's Notice, and/or legal action can be initiated by the School to recover the fees owed.



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*School Policies*

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The Joseph Varga School's core Policies and Procedures (including student welfare anti-bullying, discipline and complaints and grievances and all others) are publicly available on the schools website <http://josephvargaschool.nsw.edu.au/policies/>. These Policies aim to facilitate the efficient and effective operation of the school as a registered Special Education provider. These policies are reviewed annually and 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.

The School is committed to providing a safe environment for students where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel secure and safe.

JVS is a highly supportive educational environment that is focused on fostering the social, academic, physical and emotional development of students.

However, there exists situations where protective limits need to be placed on violence, physical threats, verbal abuse, threatening gestures, sexual harassment and racial vilification which effect the safety of staff, other students and themselves.

The parent(s) / carer(s) / guardian(s) also understand that if their child demonstrates high risk and high safety concern behaviours then the school's disciplinary response will escalate, in accordance with the school's relevant policies and procedures, resulting in a standard process, beginning with a Behaviour Contract, moving through to Suspension, and in some cases, Expulsion and Exclusion.

Disciplinary measures of the above, are based on a process of procedural fairness at all times.

The ultimate goal becomes 'Self-Discipline' through self-control, self-regulation and the development of the skills required to self-manage and self-monitor.

Traditionally, discipline is applied by external agents to get students to change their behaviour, where as self-discipline springs from self-regulatory and self-reinforcing mechanisms; without the need for the intervention of external disciplinarians, but within the child him/herself. The rewards are intrinsic rather than extrinsic.

In this kind of approach, discipline is effective, but is not a rigid Policy, rather it is flexible, dynamic, responding to individual student's needs, thereby not carrying with it the repressive nature of many other mainstream formal approaches to discipline.

It is School policy, that the virtues of orderly conduct and polite manners form part of mutual respect (which also develops in hand with self-respect).

Discipline problems can frequently be pre-empted, redirected or rectified before they occur within classrooms and the school generally, by a firm, sensitive, consistent approach.

The key to the effectiveness of school wide behaviour management rests in the staff consistently applying, consolidating, and extending the agreed 'student code of conduct'.

This also requires staff to regularly review and discuss best practices and strategies with a view to encouraging students to accept more responsibility for managing and disciplining themselves.

Part of these discussions involves identifying, modelling and engendering the use of explicit strategies and tools (for example, anger control) that students themselves can use to regulate their own behaviours in natural situations. This kind of instruction to students frequently occurs in natural contexts as part of the resolution of the issue at hand.

Another important aspect of this discipline policy is that the school ethos ensures that while students are likely to make mistakes in judgment and choices as part of their learning development, no punitive record or 'demerit' system is used to record or recall these mistakes; instead each day represents a new baseline for the child.

The only exception to the application of this policy occurs in situations where the behaviours of the child may constitute a risk to him/herself, to others, or to school property.

This ensures disciplinary matters can be dealt with quickly and effectively in a positive and productive manner, as they immediately arise naturally in real-life situations, both within and outside the school.

In this mix, it is also not unusual for 'Negotiation', 'Conflict-Resolution Techniques' and 'Neuro-Linguistic Processing' (NLP) strategies to be implemented by the trained teachers and/or specialists, in order to help students re-pattern or re-program their responses.

Students are emotionally challenged to employ meta-cognitive processes including mindfulness, self-awareness and self-talk to help them establish appropriate limits on their own behaviour.

Such School staff also work as active listeners and can be humorous to help diffuse volatile situations.

#### **Procedures:**

The ultimate objective of the school's discipline policy is to reiterate student 'Self-Discipline', though this is built up progressively and cumulatively over a period of time, in the following manner:

- Remind student about 'Code of Conduct'
- Verbal discussion with student about the reasons for the behaviour
- Discussion of alternative ways of coping
- Modelling approaches and learning to take other people's perspectives
- Learning to acknowledge that one has acted inappropriately
- Classroom teacher implements classroom-based strategies to increase child's behavioural toolkit e.g:
  1. Role playing situations where the protagonist and victim exchange roles
  2. Creating a forum (Restorative Justice)
  3. Cooperative activities and behaviours
  4. Trust exercises
- Conference with Principal
- Psychological counselling
- Breaking down the student's (verbal, behavioural, attitudinal) defensiveness (administered by an expert using for example, strategies that directly confront the child with evidence from those he/she has accused and/or abused and working through inconsistencies in how the participants justify their actions, with a view to the parties accepting the).
- In school consequences for repeated inappropriate behaviours:
  1. Isolated break (with supervision)
  2. Loss of camp, sport, or excursions
  3. Loss of computer or technology
- In-school consequences for severe inappropriate behaviours:

1. Collaborative conference and behavioural/emotional planning with parents/carers present.
  2. Individualised Behaviour Contract
- At home consequences established by parents e.g. loss of television, electronics, technology, pocket money, leisure activities.
  - If contract is breached, another parent conference. Student is 'suspended' (refer to POLICY: Procedural Fairness).
  - The disciplinary procedures undertaken by the School will vary according to the seriousness of the alleged offence and the individual student and could result in expulsion.
  - For more serious offences that involve physical abuse, either of peers or staff, the gradually more prominent involvement of Medical Staff, Community Services, and Police Liaison Officers may be involved in the management and resolution of the issues.



Policies and procedures relating to student discipline and general student behaviour management issues, along with all grievances and complaints by students, parents, teachers, are always treated by The Joseph Varga School in a manner consistent with the basic rights of 'Procedural Fairness'.

This rests on the principles of **'being heard'** and **'the basic right to an unbiased decision'**, in cases where allegations, problems, issues, complaints, arise.

### Scope

All, or where appropriate, some, of the elements of Procedural Fairness invoked at The Joseph Varga School include:

- Nominating a staff member to conduct the investigation as soon as possible;
- Ensuring that the person does not decide a case in which he/she has a conflict of interest;
- Acting fairly and without bias;
- Informing, for example, the student, of the substance, with as much detail as possible, of the allegation(s) or complaint(s) made against him or her;
- Providing, for example, the student with a reasonable opportunity to respond or put his/her case, either in writing or orally;

- Considering, for example, the student's response;
- Making reasonable inquiries or investigations before making a decision;
- Considering all relevant available evidence, including evidence that supports the allegation and evidence that does not support the allegation;
- Providing a preliminary view and the intended likely action to the person under investigation;
- Informing, for example, the student, parent/s and significant others that the preliminary decision can be commented upon, or appealed to the Principal of The Joseph Varga School;
- Allowing a submission from, for example, the student, parent/s and significant others before a final decision is made;
- Making a final decision.



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### *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 2022 and throughout the year the school was restricted in achieving some set goals due to adherence to COVID 19 government guidelines.

**The 2022 priorities for improvement set and achieved by the school are shown below:**

| <b>Improvement Targets</b>                                  | <b>Key improvements set for 2022</b>  | <b>Key improvements achieved for 2022</b>  | <b>Key improvements set for 2023</b>  |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Social, Emotional and Relationship Skill Development</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To maintain a highly structured and familiar environment that provides regular opportunities for our ASD students to participate in structured activities that model and foster Social, Emotional and Relationship Skill Development.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highly Structured lessons that explicitly teach and role model social, communication and social interaction skills and promote positive behaviours.</li> <li>Continued support from consultant Speech pathologist and Psychologist to support our teaching team.</li> <li></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To continue to maintain a highly structured and familiar environment that provides regular opportunities for our ASD students to participate in structured activities that model and foster Social, Emotional and Relationship Skill Development.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Staff Professional Development</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To continue to provide quality Professional learning opportunities to ensure staff remains up to date with best practice pedagogies for ASD and Special Needs learners.</li> <li>Support staff to</li> </ul>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole staff participation in Child Protection Legislation and Special Education (Online learning - Covid).</li> <li>Ongoing specialist guidance and professional learning for students with special needs by</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To continue to provide quality Professional Learning opportunities to ensure staff remain up to date with 'best practice' pedagogies for ASD and Special Needs learners.</li> <li>Support staff to</li> </ul>  |

|                                      |   |  |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--|
|                                      | achieve maintenance of NESA professional learning hours at proficient teaching level.   | the principal, consultant psychologist and speech pathologist.   | achieve maintenance of NESA professional learning hours at proficient teaching level.  |
| <b>Physical Learning Environment</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of a new student sensory garden that staff can work with students to take ownership and care of.</li> <li>• Continued Improvements to visual displays throughout the school to support engagement, positive behaviours and communication.</li> <li>• Ongoing upgrades to school IT infrastructure.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design of school Sensory Garden commenced.</li> <li>• Ongoing Improvements made to resource purchases, and visual displays throughout the school to support engagement, positive behaviours and communication.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To source funding and build a new student sensory garden that staff can work with students to take ownership and care of.</li> <li>• To upgrade playing surface to further support structured physical activity at lunch times.</li> <li>• Continued Improvements to visual displays throughout the school to support engagement, positive behaviours and communication.</li> <li>• Ongoing upgrades to school IT infrastructure</li> </ul> |
| <b>Student Engagement</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing extra-curricular engagement activities based</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Youth Nights' for students of the Apex Class as a reward for effort</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing extra-curricular engagement activities based</li> </ul>   |



|                                       |  |   |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
|                                       | <p>on student interests for our teenage students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining teacher-student connection by incorporating appropriate student interests into curriculum and school life to foster engagement, quality learning, and teacher-student connection</li> <li>• Provide 'best practice' teaching pedagogies and learning supports in classroom for ASD learners.</li> </ul> | <p>and to provide positive social experiences..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in whole school professional learning and reflection days for staff to ensure staff are abreast of 'best practice' pedagogies to support our students.</li> <li>• Ongoing diagnostic testing of students to identify target areas for improvement.</li> <li>• Selection of inaugural school captains and vice captains based on demonstration of core school values.</li> <li>• Incorporating student interests into classroom activities and curriculum ie art, music, sport, role models, Information Technology.</li> </ul> | <p>on student interests for our teenage students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining teacher-student connection by incorporating appropriate student interests into curriculum and school life to foster engagement, quality learning, and teacher-student connection</li> <li>• Provide 'best practice' teaching pedagogies and learning supports in classroom for ASD learners.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Registration and Accreditation</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole school achievement of all teachers achieving NESA Proficient Teacher accreditation.</li> <li>• Review of school policies NESA Registration renewal process</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of school policies completed.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To apply to NESA to be recognized as a 'School Of A Kind' Special School.</li> <li>• Whole school achievement of all teachers achieving NESA Proficient Teacher accreditation.</li> </ul>   |

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*Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility*

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The 'Commitment to Grow' is a commitment made by each student to make a personal effort to have a positive attitude, to show respect to themselves and others, to be kind to themselves and others and to give their best efforts.

This 'Commitment' is also matched by a commitment made by the school and parents to understand and support the child in these endeavors.

A positive school culture of 'growth' lays the foundation on which behavioural, social, emotional and academic improvement rests. Visual displays promoting our school goals are displayed in prominent areas of the school.



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*Parents, student and teacher satisfaction*

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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 from parents set to specific criteria. The school also provides open parent meetings and conducts formal meetings with staff in which feedback for review is sought.

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



***Working Together***

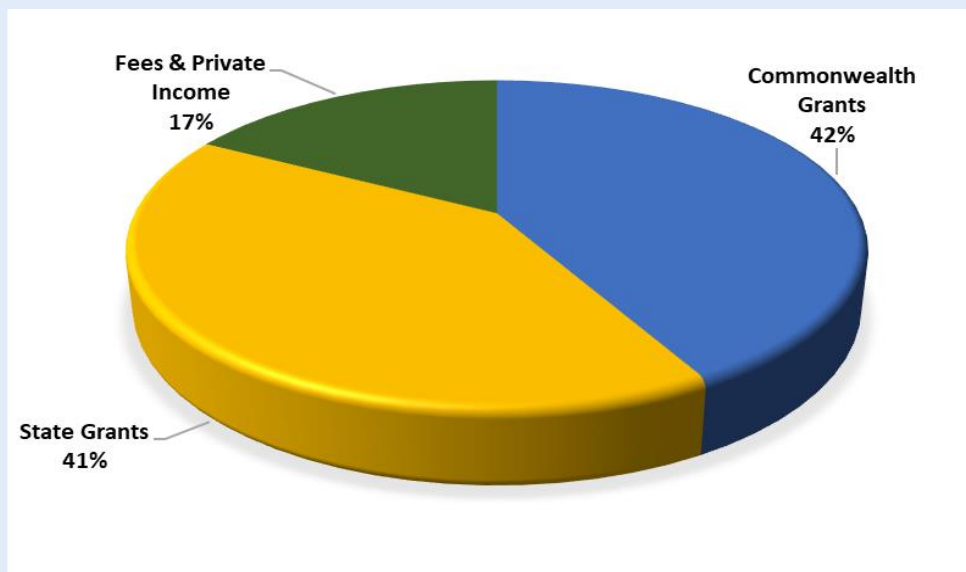
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*Summary financial information*

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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 2022.

*Income Sources 2022*



*Expenditure 2022*

