



School context

Stewart House School is a co-educational, residential school located on the beachfront at Curl Curl on the Northern Beaches of Sydney. Our goal is to develop children's social and emotional skills and promote a healthy and active lifestyle.

While at Stewart House students are provided with health services including optometric, audiometric, dental and medical screening and initial treatment and referral as required.

Children also participate in educational programs that provide activities to promote social and emotional competence and develop independence in self-care skills and resilience.

Principal's message

Stewart House School continues to provide a nurturing, respectful and caring environment for students needing respite care due to ill health, emotional or other distress, financial or social disadvantage, isolation or difficulties in coping at school due to a lack of social skills.

All programs in the school and the structured residential program remain clearly focussed on developing children's social and emotional skills and promoting a healthy and active lifestyle.

Creating a positive school culture is fundamental in helping students to develop social and emotional competence in a safe and supportive environment. Our goal is to create a school culture that enhances engagement with peers and adults within an environment that supports a dynamic learning program.

Funding through 'Every Student Every School - Special Schools as centres of expertise,' provided professional learning for staff to implement social and emotional learning programs to better meet the needs of students with complex learning needs and students with an Aboriginal heritage.

Our two projects, the Four Rooms of Change and the Aboriginal Cultural lessons were developed to provide opportunities for all students to participate in experiences to enhance their emotional competence and understanding of Aboriginal Heritage and Culture.

In creating a safe environment at Stewart House it was crucial to address covert bullying. Students were identified as needing skills and strategies to manage the emotional trauma caused by bullying and to get help or manage it themselves. In 2012/ 2013 this program was developed and implemented through the appointment of a Student Welfare Worker two days a week under the School Welfare Worker Program.

During the year work has been undertaken to refurbish the timber verandahs with Spotless building a deck as a donation to the school. The school kitchen was replaced so that facilities are more appropriate to allow student cooking classes in 2014. A new playground has been built and the complete refurbishment of the school bathrooms is planned in 2014 with Stewart House providing additional funding.

Playground for primary students



Deck provided by Spotless



The students attending Stewart House have enjoyed a wide range of experiences due to the generosity of agencies that provided access to their facilities at no cost. We appreciate the support of Taronga Park Zoo, the Museums in Sydney, NSW Ferries, Sydney Olympic Aquatic Centre and the IMAX Theatre.

Students from other schools visit Stewart House School to distribute Easter eggs and candy canes at Christmas and spend time with students.

Forest High students provided Easter eggs.



Students from rural schools perform concerts for the Stewart House children.

Yanco drummers performed



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

Marilyn Bourne, BA, Dip Ed, Dip Continuing Ed, MA(School Counselling), M Spec Ed (ED/BD), MAPS.

Student information

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

Students attending Stewart House were selected by principals as being in need of respite care due to family breakdown, school or family crisis and social or geographic isolation. Information provided by home schools and parents/ carers is recorded on a student profile so that staff are aware of and can accommodate the stressors in individual children's backgrounds during their time at Stewart House.

In 2013, 1610 mainstream students attended Stewart House from 847 schools across NSW and the ACT in 19 groups staying 12 days each.

Of the total, 164 students, or 10% of the intake for 2013 spoke 'Languages Other Than English' and 185 students or 11% were return visitors, which was 3.5 times the number of return visitors in 2012.

Data collated on student admissions during 2013 identified reasons for inclusion in the program as living in an isolated situation (224 students is 14% of the intake) and economic disadvantage and/ or lack of opportunity (699 students representing 43% of intake).

The special education groups in 2013 included groups from both city and rural areas. In total, 180 students with special needs and accompanying staff attended in three groups staying for four days each.

To accommodate the special education groups, our School Development Days are held on alternative days to allow students to arrive on the Sunday so that days are not lost through travel.

Student enrolment profile

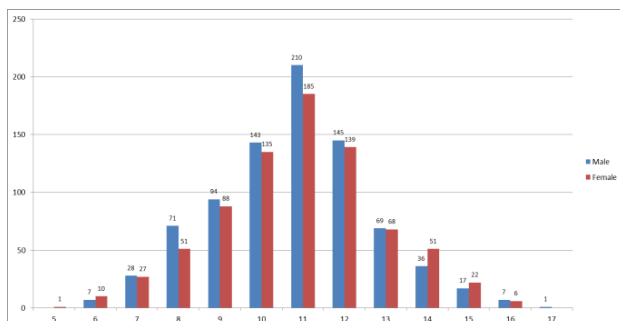
The majority of students attending (70%) are aged from 9 to 12 years of age, a similar ratio to previous years.

Student referrals and school counsellor contact with home schools provides staff with information to enable them to accommodate the needs of individual children while at Stewart House.

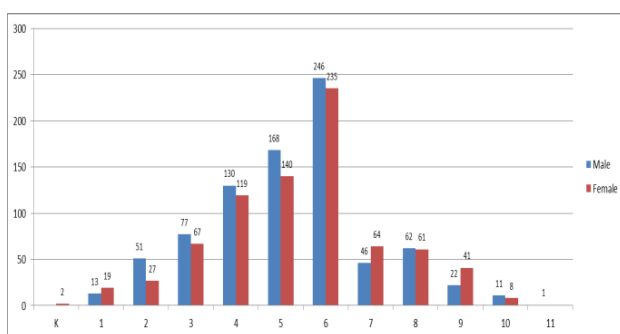
Student enrolment profile 2013

The majority of students attending Stewart House are in upper primary aged 10 to 12 years of age and in Year 6.

Stewart House 2013 Age profile of children



Stewart House 2013 Grade profile of children



Workforce information

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

Workforce composition

Position	Number
Principal	1
Assistant Principal(s)	2
Classroom Teacher(s)	5.6
School Counsellor	.3
School Administrative & Support Staff	1.6
General Assistant	.4
Student Learning Support Officer	3
Aboriginal Education Officer	1
Total	14.9

Teachers are drawn from primary, secondary and special education with a range of skills and experiences in Student Welfare, Visual Arts, PD/H/PE and Technology. Teachers share a common interest in teaching children with welfare and behavioural needs and are proactive and flexible, catering for individual students. Volunteers in placements for work experience from TAFE, Universities and Colleges provide welcome additional adults to interact with and support students.

Students of Aboriginal heritage attending Stewart House in 2013 made up 22% of student intake which entitles the school to an Aboriginal Education Officer (AEO). During 2013 the AEO had a wide variety of teaching and learning experiences drawn from his cultural knowledge and background allowing students to experience a highly engaging program.

Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100
Postgraduate	47
NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation	12

Financial summary

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

Date of financial summary	30/11/2013
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	101463.91
Global funds	103480.09
Tied funds	97188.34
school & community sources	6968.00
Interest	2956.22
Trust receipts	795.55
Canteen	0.00
Total income	312852.11
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	2964.45
Excursions	5742.34
Extracurricular dissections	5440.01
Library	0.00
Training & development	600.

Tied funds	102893.97
Casual relief teachers	47353.99
Administration & office	44083.48
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	33701.50
Maintenance	10053.48
Trust accounts	1704.30
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	254537.52
Balance carried forward	58314.59

School performance 2013

ARTS

The students at Stewart House participate in many varied and exciting art and craft projects throughout their stay. These include clay work and firing, wood work, face masks, laminated autograph sheets and jewellery.

Students with samples of wood craft



Many students have enjoyed creating animal water colour paintings based on their visit to Taronga Park Zoo. The aim of these projects is to encourage students to interact with each other and the teaching staff in a relaxed and creative environment. The students take great delight in finishing these projects and are always keen to take their works home to show to their families and teachers at their home schools.

SPORT

Staff continued with the 'Live Life Well' program using resources prepared to support the skills training lessons for students. Live Life Well at School is a joint initiative between the NSW Department of Education and Communities and NSW Ministry of Health. At Stewart House the program developed and enhanced teachers' knowledge and skills in teaching fundamental movement skills and nutrition as part of the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PD/H/PE) syllabus.

Surf Life Saving Australia presents a session of beach awareness and safety to each class in each group. These interactive sessions build and extend students' knowledge of being safe at the beach and responses in an emergency. Surf Life Saving staff assist teachers to organise games on the beach and swim in the local pool when weather permits.

Swimming is an integral part of the Stewart House School and Recreation Program. All students participate in swimming activities at ocean pools or indoor heated pools during their visit. All students who successfully complete the swimming test of 25 metres are fitted with blue bands and poor swimmers with yellow bands, in accordance with DEC policy.

Lifesavers give lessons on surf safety



Active After School Sports run two sessions a week for students with sessions from a range of areas including yoga, league, beach games and ball skills.

Yoga, Meditation and Relaxation

In 2013 child specific yoga, meditation and relaxation were provided for students in the school and after school programs with positive results.

Students have had fun exploring what their bodies can do and accepting themselves as they are. They have learnt skills to help them minimise distractions, focus on the present, slow down to still the body and mind.

Students have expressed feelings of increased confidence, a realisation of the power of the mind and gratitude for the skills they have learnt and can use in the future.

Aboriginal language



Significant programs and initiatives

The Student Welfare program

Student Welfare programs have a high priority at Stewart House. They enhance student outcomes by assisting children to develop confidence, trust in others and build self-esteem. These programs include social skills lessons and reward programs that enable children to change their perception of their world and themselves.

The school uses Positive Behaviour for Learning but this is an external, behaviourist program that assists students to follow the highly visible rules. Our goal setting is about students learning to be responsible for their own behaviour with the aid of external cues. The student management program is implemented in a limit setting

environment where prosocial and adaptive behaviour is shaped by the consistent use of positive reinforcement. Children are supported in many ways with positive consequences for prosocial behaviours including extrinsic rewards such as;

1. Dolphin dollars to acknowledge prosocial behaviours in individual classrooms and the playground,
2. Treasure Board stickers and rewards for displaying prosocial behaviours and
3. Merit certificates at assembly that are linked to prosocial behavior.

Social skills

Junior Program

The Junior Social and Emotional Skills program was reviewed during 2013 to ensure that it continues to produce positive outcomes for our students and reflect the actual content of the lessons.

Students engaged in four specific lessons focussed on:

1. Meeting and getting to know others,
2. Keeping friends and being inclusive,
3. Making good choices and having a positive attitude in solving problems,
4. Celebrating our strengths and being resilient and strong.

Students continued to make substantial improvements throughout their two week stay with teachers adapting the lessons to suit the specific needs of the students in their classes. The lessons are now deeply embedded into our fortnightly program and continue to evolve in response to student needs.

Senior Program

The senior social skills program incorporates the Personal Development/Health/Physical Education Years 7-10 syllabus outcomes of enhancing students' self-esteem and sense of self, improving their capacity to manage challenging circumstances, developing caring and respectful relationships and developing skills that enable students to adopt and promote healthy lifestyles.

Our program aims to build emotional resilience and problem solving abilities, encourage peer learning and promote self confidence when dealing with difficult or anxiety provoking situations.

Lessons cover the following topics;

- Acknowledging and building on personal strengths,
- Using positive self talk,
- Identifying support networks and raising awareness of the importance of reaching out to others,
- Using a five stage process for solving problems,
- Exploring different coping strategies to build resilience,
- Exploring ways to deal with bullying,
- Setting personal goals.

Aboriginal Education

Aboriginal Education has been an integral part of the Stewart House program with 351 (22%) Aboriginal students visiting in 2013.

Aboriginal artwork



Students commence each daily assembly with Acknowledgement of Country. Students have visited Bobbin Head, West Head and Bayview Aboriginal sites while studying bush tucker and the local flora and fauna and the Dreamtime. They also participate in Aboriginal dance, song and art during their stay.

Playing the didgeridoo at West Head Lookout



Significant programs and initiatives

Health programs

Triage nursing

Nurses supervise the administration of medication and run a triage system for students needing medical attention on a daily basis.

The management of medication included;

- supervising 140 students (9%) who arrived with allergies,
- 348 students (22%) arrived with health issues,
- 104 students (6%) were prescribed ADHD/ADD medications,
- 163 students (10%) on other prescribed medications and
- 248 students (15%) on asthma medications.

Of the children attending during 2013, 743 (44%) received triage by nursing staff. Of these 69 (4%) visited local medical centres or hospitals for further treatment.

Audiometry

Each fortnight nursing staff from Northern Sydney Area Health assess each child's hearing.

In 2013, 5% of the students screened were identified with hearing problems requiring further investigation with 74 children attending Macquarie University for advanced testing. In 2014 staff and students from Macquarie

University will be attending Stewart House to assess students on site.

Optometry

Students from UNSW screen students



24% of the children assessed by the optometrist and students from NSW University had vision problems. Teachers Health provided 84 new sets of glasses with students able to choose the frames that best suited them.

Preventative dental health program

Dental health continues to cause concern. Dental staff referred 91% of students assessed for further treatment in their local area. Fluoride treatment was administered to 1075 students (67%). Urgent treatment was provided to 32 students at Mona Vale Hospital for advanced decay.

Staff from the school and residential program present different aspects of dental hygiene to the students. Throughout 2013 all students were provided with a toothbrush and toothpaste. The students were given dental lessons about the care of their teeth and procedures for proper brushing.

National Partnerships

1: The Four Rooms of Change

The focus of our project was 'Building Social and Emotional Wellbeing at Stewart House School'.

Students in our 2013 cohort have been identified with the following delays;

- 24% experience interpersonal difficulties with their peers,
- 31% experience behavioural/ social and/ or emotional difficulties and
- 8% experience interpersonal difficulties with adults.

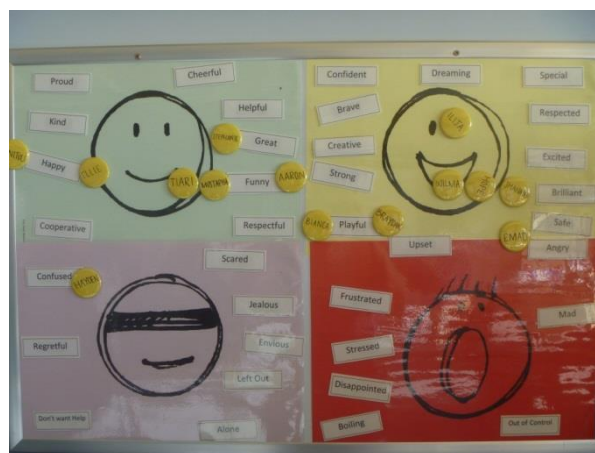
The Four Rooms of Change complements our social skills program as it enables students to develop higher levels of emotional intelligence and empathy through being able to;

- identify and label emotions,
- understand their own emotions and behaviours,
- manage their own experiences by taking responsibility for their own emotions and actions and
- recognise and respond to the emotions of others.

School staff trained in the Four Rooms of Change in Term 4, 2012 with Clarion Learning, the company that facilitates this program in Australia.

A staff team prepared lesson outlines and made the resources. This program has been presented to 1610 students attending Stewart House this year with materials sent home with the students to enable them to continue to use the program at home with information provided for their parents/ carers.

The Four Rooms of Change boards



We have also attached emailed information to the principals of the 847 schools that these students attend.

I have spoken to the Northern Beaches PPA, emailed and presented sessions and information to schools in Northern Sydney Region and presented a workshop at the Australian Special Education Conference in 2013. We will continue to share our school's progress with the Four Rooms of Change in 2014.

I will complete the facilitator's training for the Four Rooms of Change to assist with change management and resolve conflict within organisations. Following the training, I will be accredited to work in schools to facilitate the program in 2014.

2: Aboriginal Cultural Education

Staff have worked collaboratively to incorporate Aboriginal Culture and local history into Creative Art, PDHPE, HSIE, Science and English programs for K-10 students.

Dreamtime stories



The Aboriginal Culture and Heritage Project has had some outstanding successes. The staff participating in this initiative were presented with an Award of Excellence from the Regional Aboriginal Education Consultative Group in November, 2013. These awards were given for the Aboriginal lessons that were shared through conferences and staff training and student workshops across the Northern Sydney Region.

Our Aboriginal Program includes lessons in the following areas.

- Aboriginal Art
- Aboriginal Dance
- The Dreaming

- Indigenous Games
- Sustainability
- Music Study (Gurrumul)
- Guringai Language
- Engraving Site Visits

Staff have also developed and implemented a Cultural Awareness Camp and professional learning for staff at Stewart House School and local schools teaching Aboriginal Studies. This successful weekend will be repeated in 2014.

Stewart House staff at the cultural weekend



Significant programs and initiatives

Student Welfare Program

Our student welfare worker has developed a series of lessons to enable students to better manage interpersonal relationships at Stewart House and on their return to their home school. Lessons focus on tolerance and inclusion and are timetabled when children have bonded with each other and staff.

Bullying and antisocial behaviour are clearly defined with a powerpoint presentation, followed by an extensive range of strategies to encourage children to be active bystanders. Students are engaged with games, role playing, brainstorming and relevant videos.

Life Education

Stewart House was chosen to be the recipient of a Gold Harold Award at the Life Education annual presentation dinner for services to Public Education. During 2013 an amphitheatre was constructed on site to enable all groups in 2014 to have life education classes. Life education complements the social skills programs offered.

Gold Harold Award



School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan.

To successfully manage behaviour, welfare and discipline we employ a very simple level system that children readily understand and follow.

This is outlined below;

- **Yellow:** Student has misbehaved and requires a formal interview with Executive.
- **Orange:** Student has persistently misbehaved and ignored supports implemented by staff. The home school and parents/ carers are notified and liaise with Stewart House to develop a support plan.
- **Red:** Student behaviour is unacceptable and has had a significant impact on the care,

welfare and safety of others or themselves. Student is discharged from Stewart House.

As in previous years, behaviour bookings have little relationship to school programs and are dependent on the problematic behaviours of the referred students.

Information collated on servers

During 2013 all records kept by staff in cabins, in medical rooms and in school were entered onto the computer system for access across the site by all staff. These records include cabin notes, information on medication and triage by the nurse, student profiles and behavioural incidents.

Recording behaviour records on a server enables access by all staff on site in all settings, the school, cabins and medical rooms. This record shows the information needed to identify the student, the incident and strategies implemented by staff to manage misbehavior or homesickness. Information can be collated to form a report should behaviours escalate.

Homesickness has been recorded since the beginning of 2013 but is not included in the total.

Comparison Behaviour Bookings 2008 to 2013

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Yellow	78	60	66	67	47	82
Orange	17	7	10	26	13	23
Red Discharge	7	6	9	7	3	14
Homesick						24
Totals	102	73	85	100	63	119

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

The turnover of school staff at the end of 2014 is the largest in the three year cycle with five members of the teaching staff (2/3 total) and the Principal transferring within a six month period. This will necessitate both extra staff and support with accurate documentation of all routines. We may also have difficulties in transporting students

by bus as newly appointed staff need time to get their bus licence.

We have requested increased counsellor support as needed in 2014 to support students displaying at risk behaviours.

School priority 1

Embedding the social and emotional learning programs across the site.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Implementation of the Four Rooms of Change into the school program with regular reviews,
- A sample evaluation of the Four Rooms program revealed that 49 students were happy to share their feelings at Stewart House but only 40 would share in the home school with their known peers,
- Staff presented workshops at the Australian Special Education Conference and the Aboriginal Studies Association Conferences.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Training all residential supervisors in the theory for the Four Rooms of Change,
- School staff will support supervisors to implement the Four Rooms of Change program and develop the resources to set it up in each cabin,
- Student evaluation on larger scale,
- Networking with other schools to provide professional learning on the Four Rooms of Change program.

School priority 2

Using technology across the site to replace written documentation.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Student information is entered into a common database by all staff on site. Proformas include student information, health, behaviour, student reports and maintenance reports,
- Database established on Stewart House server with computers connected in the

school, charity, medical rooms and all dormitories,

- Professional learning in accessing common database,
- Reviewing and revising formats of files to enhance data sharing and collection of student information.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Improved reporting to school principals,
- Data for networks groups used to review placement of groups in 2015.

School priority 3

To develop a personalised learning plan (PLP) in social and emotional skills to improve liaison with home schools for students at risk.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- PLP proforma was developed but was too time consuming to complete and send. An alternative system was investigated.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- A report is sent to the student's home school principal following discharge or persistent misbehaviour. This information is copied from the database and includes observed behaviours, our behavioural targets and the strategies for management of misbehaviour and/ or homesickness.

Indigenous games with Balgowlah Heights P.S.



Coalition of Knowledge Building Schools

Stewart House School has been a member of the Coalition of Knowledge Building Schools since 2006. This group is comprised of five bodies including; principals from the Department of Education and Communities, the Independent School System, the Tertiary Institutions including Sydney and Macquarie Universities and Cultural groups such as Taronga Park Zoo, the Mitchell Library and the Australian Museum. Members meet on a rotating basis at member schools and present to the group on innovative practices in their schools or on opportunities for participation for students in activities at the Zoo or Museums.

Coalition meeting at Sydney University



Professional learning

Staff attended a range of professional learning activities during the year.

All staff

- WHS, Child Protection, Code of Conduct, First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis, Asthma,
- Disability Standards for Education,
- Bus training,
- The Four Rooms of Change,
- KidsMatter,
- Aboriginal programs.

Individual teachers

- Computer coordinators meetings,

- Working with children who have experienced trauma,
- Courses for teachers with the implementation of the National Curriculum,
- Mental Health Issues,
- DSM 5,
- Non Violent Crisis Intervention,
- Live Life Well,
- CV writing,
- Aboriginal Cultural weekend,
- Caring for Country.

Variety Fund Raiser



About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes.

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