



2025 Annual report



Message from key bodies

Chief Executive – Chris Rehn

One of the greatest joys of leading NextSense is knowing that our people aren't just having a positive and lasting effect on people's lives in Australia, but they are playing a major role improving outcomes across the world for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or have low vision.

In 2024, we celebrated the opening of our new centre for innovation at Macquarie Park in Sydney. A building that exemplifies our ambition to open our doors to others, share what we know with others, and just as importantly learn from others and implement that fresh knowledge into everything we do. Building on this momentum, in 2025 we launched our strategic horizons of:

- Enhanced outcomes and access for more people
- Innovation-led best practice
- Influencing the global position.

Through NextSense Institute, we are preparing the next generation of teachers, allied health professionals, researchers, and innovators of tomorrow through our postgraduate and continuing professional education offerings.

Our school, which supports children with hearing and vision loss, benefited in 2025 from a significant, generous grant from the J & K Wonderland Foundation. This helped our education team make measurable progress in building sustainable, inclusive, and mentally healthy learning communities, and ensured students, staff, and families felt supported, connected and empowered to flourish.

We will continue to grow our influence into 2026 and beyond because for 165 years NextSense has never stood still.



Chris Rehn
Chief Executive

Head of School – Antonella Dolores

Twenty twenty-five has been a year of collaboration, growth and achievement across the NextSense School Sign Bilingual Program. At the heart of our work is a commitment to providing students with rich opportunities to learn through both Auslan and English while fostering a strong sense of identity, belonging and connection to the Deaf community. Meaningful outcomes are achieved when families, educators, allied health professionals and the wider NextSense community work together with shared purpose.

There is a well-known saying that it takes a village to raise a child, and at NextSense that village is evident every day. Through our Sign Bilingual approach, students are empowered to develop confidence and competence in Auslan while building the literacy, learning and independence skills needed to engage successfully with the world around them. Our strong partnerships with families ensure that communication and learning goals are reinforced across home and school settings, creating the best possible outcomes for every student.

Throughout 2025, we strengthened teaching and learning through evidence-informed practices that recognised the language and communication needs of our students. Auslan remained central to classroom learning, social interactions and school events, providing authentic opportunities for students to communicate, collaborate and express themselves. Staff worked together to ensure learning programs were responsive, accessible and aligned with individual goals.

In literacy, students developed vocabulary, comprehension, reading and writing skills through explicit teaching, flexible learning groups and targeted interventions that supported meaningful connections between Auslan and English. In numeracy, the introduction of the NextSense Numeracy Interview provided valuable insights into students' mathematical thinking and informed targeted teaching to support growth and achievement. The assessment also highlighted opportunities for further refinement, which will guide our work in 2026.

Student wellbeing remained a key priority. Building on the Be You Wellbeing Framework, we focused on emotional literacy, resilience and positive relationships. Through wellbeing lessons, circle time and daily interactions in Auslan, students strengthened their ability to understand and express emotions, advocate for themselves and build meaningful connections with others.

The achievements we celebrate extend well beyond academic outcomes. Our students continue to demonstrate resilience, curiosity, independence and pride in their communication. Their growth reflects the dedication of our staff, the commitment of families and the strength of the partnerships that support every child to thrive as a confident communicator, successful learner and valued member of the Deaf and wider communities.



Antonella Dolores
Head of School Services

Students

Twenty twenty-five was a fun and exciting year for us. One of our favourite experiences was performing with the NextSense Signing Choir at Olympic Park. We signed A Million Dreams in front of lots of people. We felt nervous before going on stage, but we were also very proud. The audience cheered for us, and afterwards we enjoyed yummy pizza for dinner.

We also participated in the Athletics Carnival at the park. We had lots of fun running in our races and cheering for our house teams. Our house colours are Pattison (red), Barwick (yellow) and Betterridge (green). Pattison won the carnival, and we were all very excited because they are a great team.

Another highlight was our whole-school excursion to Sydney Zoo. We were very excited on the bus ride and enjoyed learning about Aboriginal hunting and food gathering. We explored the zoo and saw many animals. We even matched some of the animals to our class names, including Quokka, Koala, Snake, Lizard and Kangaroo.

In August, we attended the Deaf Festival at Olympic Park. There were so many people there. Our school performed on stage, and although we felt nervous, we were proud to represent NextSense. We also enjoyed visiting the food stalls and seeing the NextSense stall.

We loved participating in Tae Kwon Do lessons during the year. It was a lot of fun, and we enjoyed learning new skills and staying active.

We have had a wonderful year full of learning, performing, sport and exciting experiences together.





School features

The NextSense School – Sign Bilingual Program is an independent school that caters for children from Kindergarten to Year 6 who are deaf. The school has a strong focus and reputation for quality, innovative teaching and learning across all areas of the curriculum, as well as the ongoing development of through the air language.

The school is designed to ensure a student has access to our high-quality curriculum in an inclusive environment. Students are taught by specialist teachers with a Master of Disability Studies and who are native/near native Auslan signers, interpreter level or fluent in Auslan.

Our holistic approach to education allows teachers to consult with occupational and speech therapists, audiologists and educational psychologists. With a highly motivated and committed team, this program nurtures and supports each student to reach their goals.

In 2025, our NextSense School Sign Bilingual Program was included in the renewal process for NSW Education Standards (NESA) registration as a Special School – School of a Kind, which was successfully approved. This achievement reflects the expertise, professionalism, and dedication of our staff in delivering highly specialised and individualised educational programs for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

This year also saw the development and launch of our new school website, designed to promote our school, showcase our facilities and specialised programs, and celebrate the exceptional teaching, learning, and support provided across our community. The website reflects our commitment to accessibility, communication, and sharing how we support students to learn, connect and thrive.

How we promote respect and responsibility

The wellbeing and pastoral care at the NextSense School Sign Bilingual Program aspire to enhance the wellbeing of students, staff and parents within our school community. Student wellbeing, learning and safety are reinforced by policies, procedures, resources, communication and values that create a safe and inclusive learning environment and positive and caring relationships.



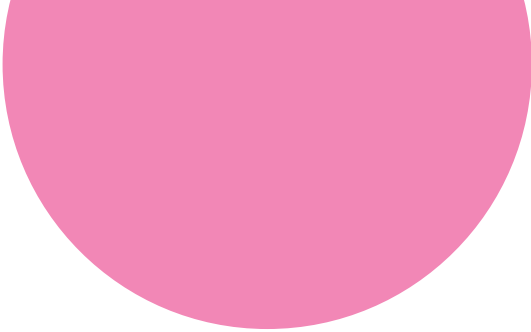
Wellbeing programs in 2025 included:

- Conducting our annual professional development for all staff on the Child Safeguarding Framework and the Code of Conduct
- Building on an organisation initiative for staff, 'Incredible Colleagues', which focused on building relationships
- Implementing our mentally healthy continuum, with a focus on emotional literacy
- Implementing Circle Time at the beginning of the school day
- Holding school holiday camps
- Engaging staff, students and parents in the Be You Wellbeing Survey to respectfully gather diverse perspectives, identify opportunities for growth, and inform actions that strengthen a mentally healthy school community
- Celebrating and acknowledging hearing awareness events, for example, school founders' day, Auslan Day and World Hearing Day
- Celebrating R U Ok? Day and acknowledging Anti Bullying Week
- Building reciprocal relationships with external Deaf agencies to support our students and families, including the Museum of Contemporary Art and Australian Nuclear Science Technology Organisation (ANSTO)
- Introducing opportunities to live out the school's values of empowerment, communication, community, collaboration and integrity.

An ongoing focus on building social and emotional skills is a priority in each child's Individual Education Plan. These plans can also include the transition to high school or into mainstream schooling.

2025 priority areas for improvement

Priority	Key actions
Continue to build staff capacity to deliver high-quality differentiated literacy programs	• Provided teachers with collaborative planning time and support from the Leaders of Pedagogy and Diverse Learning Teacher to analyse student data and design responsive learning programs • Strengthened literacy assessment practices through the use of York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC), PM student Running Record recordings and moderation of writing to ensure consistent teacher judgement each term • Conducted collaborative case management meetings to establish targeted literacy goals and implement differentiated support for individual students • Monitored literacy growth through data walls and ongoing assessment, informing instructional decisions and demonstrating overall improvement in student outcomes.
To strengthen a culture of shared responsibility and reflective practice across the school, ensuring that continuous internal improvement leads to sustainable growth in student achievement	• Strengthened a culture of data-informed practice across the Sign Bilingual Program to guide decision-making and continuous improvement in teaching, learning and student support • Fostered collaborative professional practice through regular data analysis and curriculum discussions, promoting shared responsibility for student outcomes • Supported students to achieve individual learning goals through differentiated teaching and responsive programming informed by ongoing assessment • Maintained consistent assessment, tracking and reporting processes through the implementation of the assessment scope and sequence and whole-school data systems to monitor progress and identify learning needs early.
Develop a numeracy assessment tool Kindergarten – Year 6	• The Leader of Pedagogy and Leader of Research collaboratively developed a Numeracy Interview Assessment Tool aligned with the Numeracy Learning Progressions to strengthen whole-school assessment practices • Established and reviewed a numeracy data wall each term to monitor student progress and inform instructional planning • Implemented targeted numeracy intervention programs and differentiated learning groups to address identified needs and improve student achievement • Strengthened staff capability through fortnightly collaborative professional learning team meetings, professional learning and coaching focused on effective numeracy teaching and data-informed practice.



Priority	Key actions
Continue to develop reciprocal partnerships to support school and families	• Strengthened partnerships with like-minded organisations including ANSTO, Fire and Rescue NSW and the Museum of Contemporary Art to enrich student learning through science, health, safety and creative experiences • Connected students with Deaf role models to foster identity, belonging, aspiration and engagement with the Deaf community • Delivered parent workshops focused on literacy, wellbeing and transition to high school, enhancing family engagement in student learning • Expanded community connections through the Educational Services Art Show and collaborative discussions with Macquarie University to explore future parent engagement initiatives.
Build a culture of collaborative professionalism	• Delivered AWARE workshops to strengthen staff wellbeing, respectful workplace relationships and confidence in managing challenging conversations • Provided collaborative planning opportunities to enhance curriculum consistency and the sharing of effective teaching practices • Implemented learning walks and coaching processes to build reflective practice and support continuous improvement in teaching.
Develop students' social emotional literacy	• Developed a whole-school wellbeing action plan to strengthen student wellbeing, engagement and connectedness • Embedded Circle Time into daily routines to build students' social and emotional literacy, communication skills and sense of belonging • Implemented the Mentally Healthy Continuum to support students in recognising emotions, developing self-regulation strategies and understanding mental wellbeing • Engaged students in R U OK? Day activities to promote help-seeking, connection and wellbeing awareness • Conducted a wellbeing review using Be You surveys, incorporating feedback from students, staff and parents to inform future wellbeing priorities and initiatives.



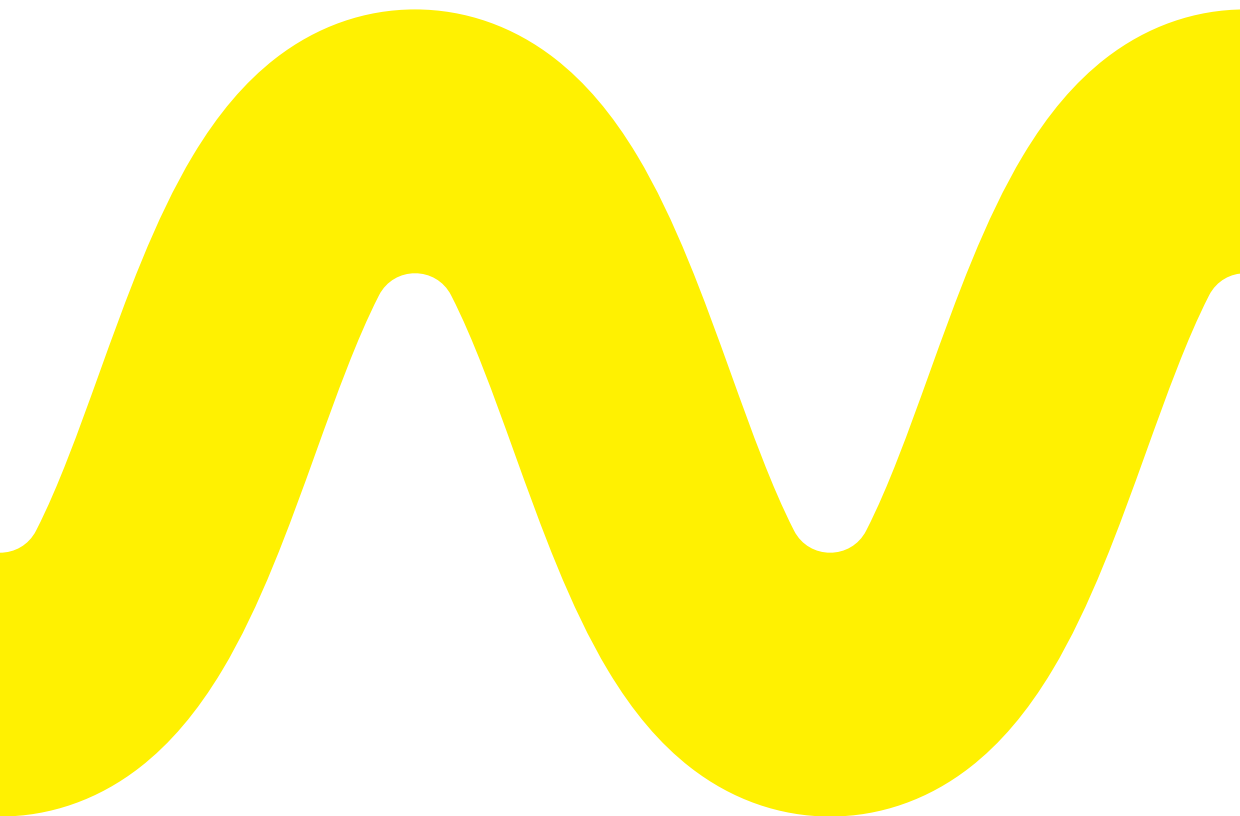

Outcomes and results

Students in Years 3 and 5 participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). The purpose of NAPLAN is to provide information to parents and schools about the achievements of students in literacy and numeracy. NAPLAN supports the school to identify a student's area of strengths and need and supports teachings in developing intervention strategies.

This year two students from Year 5 participated in NAPLAN. These two students participated in Numeracy, Reading, writing and Conventions of Language assessments with appropriate ACARA approved adjustments, including Auslan support.

Student outcomes in standardised national literacy and numeracy testing for NAPLAN results are available on the [My School website](#).

One student achieved within the middle 60 per cent of participating students in Numeracy.



Staffing

Staffing profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2025:

Total number of staff	9
Number of fulltime teaching staff	3
Number of part time teaching staff	3
Number of non-teaching staff	3

The table below identifies teacher accreditation:

Level of accreditation	Number of teachers
Conditional	0
Provisional	0
Proficient	6
Highly accomplished	0
Lead	0

All teachers at our school, whether they are casual, temporary, or permanent, possess the necessary approval to teach defined by the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004 (NSW). Furthermore, our entire staff, including teachers, hold a valid NSW Working with Children Check clearance and have undergone a criminal history clearance, so we can provide a safe and secure environment for our students.

All our teaching staff have pursued or are currently undertaking specialised teaching qualifications in addition to their initial teacher qualifications. We value the continuous professional development of our staff and actively monitor their accreditation status. We support our staff in seeking higher levels of accreditation, fostering a culture of ongoing growth and expertise within our school community.

The NextSense School Sign Bilingual Program is committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse and welcoming community for both students and staff. We value and respect people of all faiths, cultures, and backgrounds, and encourage suitably qualified applicants from all backgrounds to apply for positions within our school.

At the time of reporting, no staff members had identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Our school remains committed to promoting equity, inclusion and cultural responsiveness across all aspects of our community.



Professional learning

Professional learning is aligned with our school’s strategic direction priorities. The ongoing professional development of each staff member is highly valued. Professional learning may be NSW Education Standards Authority accredited, or it may be elective, which is identified by the teacher. Professional learning at our school can take many forms including whole-day staff development days, conferences, curriculum or disability specific and a range of professional learning programs offered by the NextSense Institute.

The school leadership team, along with Head of Education and Head of Organisation Development, takes responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating staff professional learning. Staff through their professional growth plans take responsibility for their ongoing professional development. All staff have been involved in professional learning opportunities during the year relating to student learning and wellbeing.

Summary of professional learning

All staff participated in the development and implementation of an annual Professional Growth Plan (PGP) aligned with the school's Annual Improvement Plan. Professional learning throughout the year focused on strengthening staff capacity to improve student outcomes, support wellbeing, build partnerships and foster a culture of collaborative professionalism. Staff engaged in regular staff development days, fortnightly staff meetings, Collaborative Professional Learning Team (CPLT) meetings, coaching, mentoring and reflective practice.

Term 1

Professional learning in Term 1 focused on establishing the school's strategic priorities and strengthening high-quality teaching, assessment and collaborative practices. Staff participated in annual safeguarding and Code of Conduct training, developed the 2025 Annual Improvement Plan and engaged in professional learning focused on building trust and collaborative professionalism. Teachers strengthened their skills in literacy assessment through York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC) training, reading data analysis, writing moderation and intervention planning. Staff also established professional growth plans and refined processes for data analysis, case management and parent engagement.

Term 2

Term 2 professional learning focused on staff wellbeing, mathematics instruction and strengthening assessment practices. Staff participated in the Incredible Colleagues program and Be You wellbeing training, reinforcing the importance of collective responsibility for wellbeing. Professional learning enhanced teachers' understanding of mathematics progressions, data analysis and targeted intervention planning. Staff further developed their skills in literacy assessment, Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) processes, report writing and parent communication, while continuing to use student data to inform teaching and learning programs.

Term 3

Professional learning in Term 3 centred on curriculum implementation, data-informed practice and continuous improvement. The term began with mid-year reviews of the Annual Improvement Plan and professional growth plans supported reflection, coaching and ongoing professional growth. Staff prepared for the implementation of the new Science syllabus and participated in professional learning focused on evidence-based literacy and numeracy practices. Through analysis of writing samples, reading assessments, Progressive Achievement Test in Mathematics (PAT) Mathematics data and Through the Air Language (TTAL) assessments, teachers refined intervention strategies and program planning.

Term 4

Term 4 professional learning focused on evaluation, differentiation, reporting and future planning. Staff participated in professional learning related to the Human Society and Its Environment syllabus, inclusive teaching practices and student differentiation. Ongoing analysis of literacy and numeracy data informed planning, assessment moderation and reporting processes. Staff also engaged in wellbeing training, reviewed progress against the Annual Improvement Plan and completed program evaluations to inform priorities for the following year. First aid training and transition planning further supported staff readiness for 2026.

Curriculum, learning and teaching

The school delivers an educational program aligned with the mandatory syllabuses set by the NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) for primary education. Teachers use the syllabuses to design learning programs that ensure consistency, coherence and continuity across stages of learning. Cultivating a collaborative culture provides us with the opportunity to utilise the expertise of all staff and work towards a focussed collective purpose.

Teachers work collaboratively drawing on the diverse skillsets of staff across the NextSense organisation to plan, program and evaluate all aspects of teaching and learning.

Throughout 2025, staff engaged in extensive curriculum development and professional learning to strengthen teaching and learning across all key learning areas. A significant focus was placed on developing scope and sequences for the new Science and Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) syllabuses and deepening staff understanding of curriculum content.

Staff also continued to deepen their understanding of the NSW Mathematics syllabus through the use of the Mathematics Progressions, enabling more precise identification of student learning needs and the development of targeted teaching strategies. This work supported a more consistent and evidence-informed approach to numeracy instruction across the school.

To further strengthen assessment practices, staff collaborated to develop a K–6 Numeracy Interview Assessment Tool aligned with syllabus outcomes and the mathematics progressions. The tool provides teachers with a consistent framework for monitoring student growth, identifying next steps in learning and informing differentiated teaching and intervention practices. Together, these initiatives have strengthened curriculum implementation, assessment and student learning outcomes across the school.

In 2025, the school concluded the Be You Mentally Healthy Communities – Connect Domain, strengthening connections across the school community. Staff, students and parents participated in wellbeing surveys, providing valuable feedback to inform future planning.

Staff wellbeing was supported through the AWARE Framework, while professional learning strengthened staff capacity to engage in productive conversations about student learning and programming. Students developed their emotional literacy and self-awareness through the implementation of the Student Mentally Healthy Continuum, supporting positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

Attendance

Student profile

The school caters for students in Years K – 6. Students attending this school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities. Our school has seventeen students enrolled, six boys and eleven girls with 100 per cent of our students coming from a language background other than English.

Student attendance rates

The average student attendance rate for 2025 was 84.48 per cent. Attendance rates disaggregated by year group are shown in the following table.

Attendance percentage rates by year group

Kindergarten	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
57	83	93	92.5	92.3	90.6	83

Managing student non-attendance

Ensuring regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between parents and school, as we recognise the positive impact it has on supporting our students. We foster a collaborative approach where teachers and parents work together to promote and monitor regular attendance.

We have implemented effective measures to accurately record attendance and promptly address student absences. The school has established structures and policies to ensure strict compliance in tracking and improving student attendance, and all staff are well-informed about the attendance policy and their role in monitoring student attendance.

The school utilises the Compass Education School Management System that enables us to promptly address daily non-attendance. Our class teachers and administrative staff diligently record follow-up information for tracking purposes. It is through these measures that we strive to maintain a high level of student attendance.

We remain committed to working closely with parents and implementing strategies to improve attendance rates and ensure that every student can fully engage in their education.

The school will continue to prioritise the importance of regular school attendance for the academic and personal development of our students.

The school rigorously implements policies and procedures for the management of nonattendance. All cases of unsatisfactory attendance and unexplained part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly.

School policies



The following school policies are publicly available on the website:

- Enrolment policy
- Child protection policy (Safeguarding policy)
- Anti-bullying policy
- Discipline policy
- Complaints policy (Feedback policy)

School policies

Stakeholder satisfaction

The views and contributions of all stakeholders in education – including parents, students, and teachers – are not only appreciated but actively encouraged. Their input plays a vital role in shaping strategies aimed at enhancing student outcomes. At the heart of our approach is the belief that each stakeholder brings a valuable and unique perspective. This year, the school has taken proactive measure to strengthen and maintain this collaborative process.

Parent satisfaction

In 2025 parents participated in online parent forums, parent information sessions and surveys for wellbeing and an end of year review. From our Be You Wellbeing Survey, feedback from families reflected positive perceptions of the school's inclusive culture, respectful relationships and commitment to student wellbeing. Families recognised the strong partnerships between home and school, and the support provided to students and their wellbeing needs. Survey responses also highlighted opportunities to strengthen communication about wellbeing initiatives and supports, while continuing to encourage conversations about children's strengths, resilience and emotional wellbeing at home.

Our end of year parent survey responses were overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the school's inclusive culture, commitment to student wellbeing and strong partnerships with families. Parents reported feeling involved in their child's learning, goal setting and progress through the Individual Education Plan process and acknowledged the realistic expectations set for students. Families also valued the safe, supportive environment provided by the school. Feedback identified opportunities to further strengthen communication, support transitions in mainstream schools and pathways beyond primary school and continue working collaboratively with families to meet the diverse needs of students.

Students

Student opinions were collected through a variety of methods. School assemblies have a dedicated segment where a school problem is voiced, and the students voice their opinions and solutions. The students provided ongoing feedback regarding the playground, games, rules and fair play.

Our student Be You survey results highlighted a strong sense of belonging, safety and support across the school. Students reported feeling respected, included and valued, with 100 per cent indicating that differences are celebrated and that they are treated with respect. Most students also reported knowing who to ask for help and feeling supported by staff. Feedback identified opportunities to further strengthen emotional literacy, resilience, confidence, problem-solving and help-seeking skills, which will remain key areas of focus in our wellbeing programs.

Our End of year student survey feedback indicated that students feel safe, supported and connected at school. Many students identified positive friendships and demonstrated a strong sense of belonging within the school community. Students reported greater enjoyment and engagement in Mathematics than Literacy, while responses also highlighted opportunities to further strengthen emotional literacy and self-awareness. Students shared thoughtful ideas about improving their learning environments and playground spaces, demonstrating their willingness to contribute to school improvement. These insights will continue to inform future planning, student wellbeing initiatives and opportunities for student voice.

Teachers

All staff were encouraged to complete the PeoplePulse survey in 2025 to measure employee engagement and gather feedback on workplace culture and experiences. The results are used to inform strategic improvements aimed at strengthening organisational culture, trust and transparency.

Teachers identified a positive team culture, supportive leadership, helpful colleagues and a strong sense of purpose as key strengths of the school. Staff also valued the collaborative opportunities to work alongside fellow teachers and multidisciplinary professionals across the organisation in supporting student outcomes.

Feedback indicated that teachers would welcome additional opportunities for coaching, mentoring and professional growth, alongside a continued focus on educator wellbeing. These areas will help inform future planning and staff development initiatives.

Our staff Be You survey results demonstrated a strong commitment to creating a mentally healthy learning environment, with 100 per cent of respondents indicating confidence in supporting student wellbeing, teaching social and emotional learning skills, understanding their duty of care responsibilities and fostering inclusive practices. Staff identified further opportunities to strengthen trauma-informed practice, wellbeing communication pathways, student voice and leadership opportunities, and strategies that build student confidence and resilience. These findings will inform ongoing professional learning and wellbeing initiatives across the school.



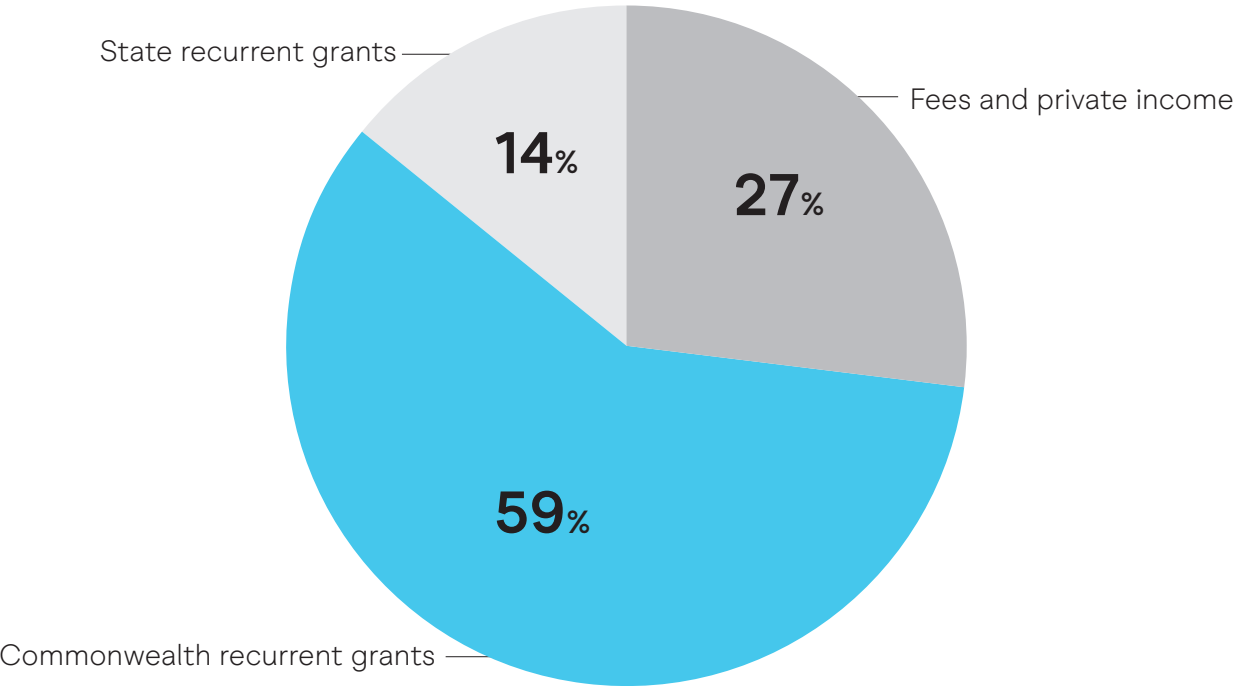
Financial information

School financial information for the 2025 year is detailed below:

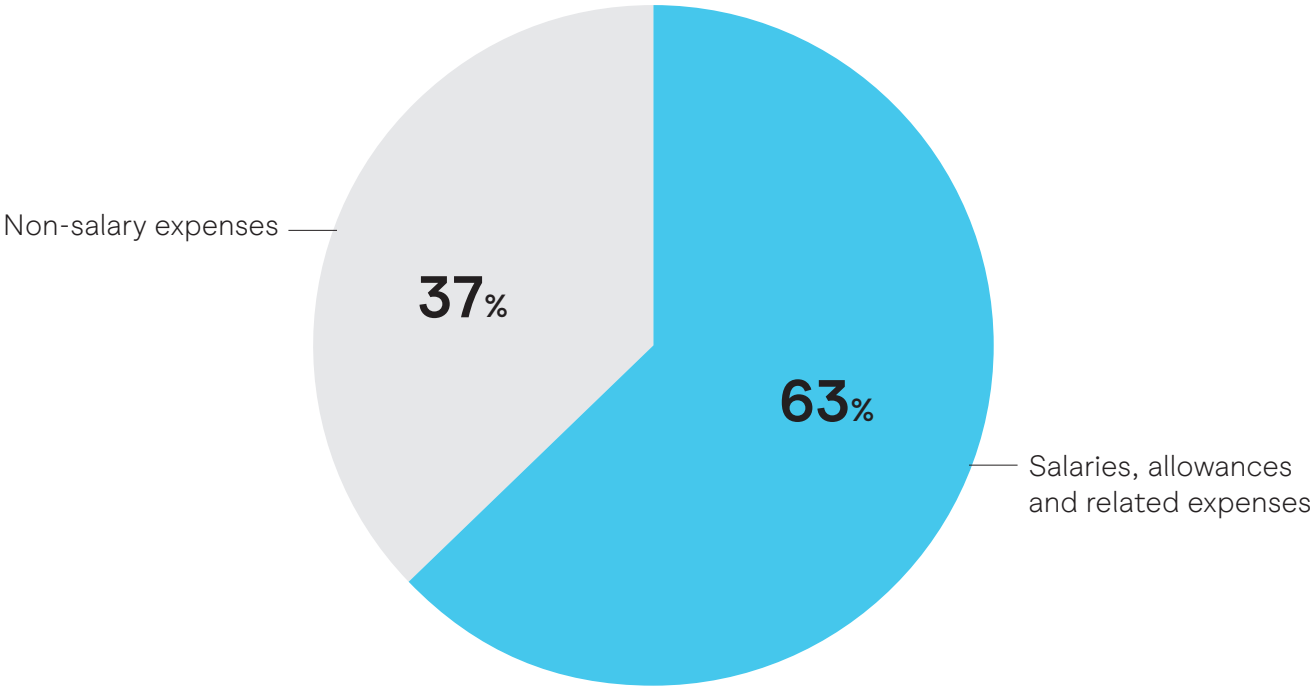
Income and Expenditure Statement – Year Ended 31 December 2025

Description	\$ AUD	
Income		
Fees and private income	434,282	27%
State recurrent grants	231,280	14%
Commonwealth recurrent grants	947,747	59%
Total Income	1,613,309	100%
Expenditure		
Salaries, allowances and related expenses	1,015,487	63%
Non-salary expenses	597,822	37%
Total Expenditure	1,613,309	100%

NextSense School 2025 Income



NextSense School 2025 Expenditure



NextSense School
Sign Bilingual Program

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