



NextSense School
Spoken Language Program



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, consolidation, and growth across the NextSense School Spoken Language Program School community. At the centre of all we do is a shared commitment to each child and the belief that meaningful outcomes are achieved when families, educators, allied health professionals, specialist services and the wider NextSense community work together with purpose and trust.

There is a well-known saying that it takes a village to raise a child, and at NextSense that village is real. Across our school community, we share a collective responsibility for supporting each student's learning, wellbeing, communication, and independence. When we work together with shared goals and high expectations, we create meaningful opportunities for growth and success.

Throughout 2025, our focus was on strengthening collaboration in practice through improved communication, aligned teaching approaches, and targeted interventions that responded directly to student need. A key priority was refining our evidence-informed literacy and numeracy programs to ensure teaching remained personalised, explicit and responsive.

In literacy, we strengthened our flexible grouping model, enabling students to participate in targeted reading, phonics, spelling, and comprehension instruction across different learning groups. This approach maximised explicit teaching while supporting student engagement and confidence.

In numeracy, we introduced the NextSense Numeracy Interview, an assessment tool designed to provide deeper insight into each student's mathematical thinking and number understanding. The data enabled staff to identify specific learning gaps and implement targeted daily interventions.

As a result, students demonstrated strong growth across foundational numeracy skills, counting strategies, additive thinking, and mathematical language. However, the student interviews demonstrated to us the gaps in our design and we look forward to further developing the tool in 2026.

Student wellbeing also remained a significant focus throughout the year. Building on the Be You Wellbeing Framework and Mentally Healthy Communities domain, we prioritised emotional literacy and supported students to better understand, express, and regulate emotions. Circle Time and explicit wellbeing lessons strengthened peer connection, empathy, emotional vocabulary and social understanding across the school.

The growth we have witnessed this year extends far beyond academic achievement. Our students continue to demonstrate resilience, courage, adaptability, and growing independence each day. Their progress reflects the expertise and dedication of our staff, the commitment of families and the strength of the partnerships that support every child.



Antonella Dolores
Head of School Services

Students

Twenty twenty-five was an exciting and rewarding year at NextSense School Spoken Language Program. We had many opportunities to learn, perform, explore, celebrate and connect with one another through a wide range of learning and community experiences.

One of our biggest highlights was being invited to perform in Auslan at the Zing Activ Showcase in Term 1. We proudly performed A Million Dreams at the State Sports Centre in front of an audience of around a thousand people. It was an exciting opportunity to build our confidence and showcase our communication skills. Later in the year, we participated in a dance program with Zing Activ, learning new routines and working together as a team while expressing ourselves through movement, facial expressions and gestures.

A whole-school excursion to Sydney Zoo gave us the chance to see amazing animals, learn new Aboriginal words and share our observations with friends and teachers. That term we also enjoyed a fun Easter Egg Hunt organised by volunteers from Pfizer, complete with a special visit from the Easter Bunny. These experiences encouraged curiosity, teamwork and plenty of smiles.

Throughout the year, we participated in memorable events including National Simultaneous Storytime, our Athletics Carnival and R U OK? Day activities. These events supported our learning while helping us develop important skills such as literacy, resilience, sportsmanship, kindness and understanding the importance of looking after our own wellbeing and supporting others.

Another special occasion was celebrating 50 years of partnership with Qantas Pathfinders. It was an honour to be part of this memorable event and recognise the individuals and organisations whose ongoing support makes such a positive difference to our school community.

We feel proud of everything we achieved in 2025. It was a year filled with learning, laughter and adventure, where we grew in confidence, friendships and embraced new opportunities. The memories we made and the experiences we shared will stay with us.





School features

NextSense School Spoken Language Program is an independent school catering for students from Kindergarten to Year 6 who are hard of hearing. The school has a strong reputation for delivering high-quality, innovative teaching and learning programs, with a continued focus on developing spoken language, communication and student independence.

Our purpose-designed learning environments and facilities are carefully developed to optimise listening, communication, access, and engagement across all areas of school life. Students are taught by specialist teachers with qualifications in sensory education, working within a collaborative model that includes consultation with allied health professionals such as speech pathologists, audiologists, occupational therapists and psychologists. This holistic approach ensures each student is supported to achieve their individual learning and wellbeing goals.

In 2025, our Spoken Language Program was included in the renewal process for 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 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 NextSense School Spoken Language 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.



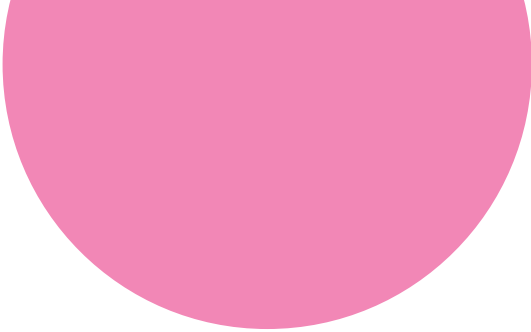
Wellbeing programs in 2025 included:

- Conducting our annual professional development for all staff on the Child Safeguarding Framework
- Refreshing our staff on our Code of Conduct
- Building on the continuation of an organisation initiative, 'Incredible Colleagues', with a focus 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 like school founders' 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 Museum of Contemporary Art and Australian Nuclear Science Technology Organisation (ANSTO)
- Creating 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 dedicated collaborative planning time and support from the Leaders of Pedagogy and Diverse Learning Teacher to analyse student data and develop responsive teaching and learning programs • Strengthened data-informed literacy practices through the use of benchmark assessments, including York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension (YARC), PM Running Records and consistent teacher judgement moderation in writing each term • Conducted collaborative case management meetings to identify targeted literacy goals and implement differentiated programs that addressed individual student learning needs • Monitored student progress through data walls and ongoing assessment, demonstrating a general trend of improvement in literacy 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 Spoken Language Program to guide teaching, learning, student support and continuous improvement • Fostered collaborative professional practice through regular data analysis and curriculum discussions, strengthening shared responsibility for student outcomes • Supported students to achieve individual learning goals through differentiated teaching and responsive programming informed by ongoing assessment data • 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 assessment tool aligned with the Numeracy Learning Progressions to strengthen whole-school assessment practices and identify students' next steps for learning • Numeracy and reading data walls were established and reviewed each term to monitor student progress and inform targeted instructional decisions • Numeracy intervention programs and differentiated learning groups were implemented to address identified learning needs and improve student engagement and achievement in numeracy • Fortnightly Collaborative Professional Learning Team meetings, professional learning and coaching supported staff to analyse data, moderate assessments and refine evidence-informed teaching practices.



Priority	Key actions
Continue to develop reciprocal partnerships to support school and families	• Strengthened partnerships with organisations including ANSTO, Fire and Rescue NSW and the Museum of Contemporary Art to enrich student learning through cultural, safety, art and science-based experiences • Provided opportunities for students to connect with Deaf role models, fostering identity, belonging, aspiration and engagement with the Deaf community • Delivered parent workshops focused on literacy development and transition to high school, strengthening family engagement in student learning • Expanded community engagement through the Educational Services Art Show and established 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 for teachers to enhance teamwork, curriculum consistency and the sharing of effective practice • Implemented learning walks and coaching processes to promote reflective practice, professional growth and continuous improvement in teaching.
Develop students' social emotional literacy	• Developed a whole-school wellbeing action plan to strengthen student wellbeing, engagement and connectedness across the school community • 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 wellbeing awareness and reinforce key concepts of the Mentally Healthy Continuum • Completed a Be You wellbeing review, incorporating feedback from students, staff and parents to inform future wellbeing priorities and practices.



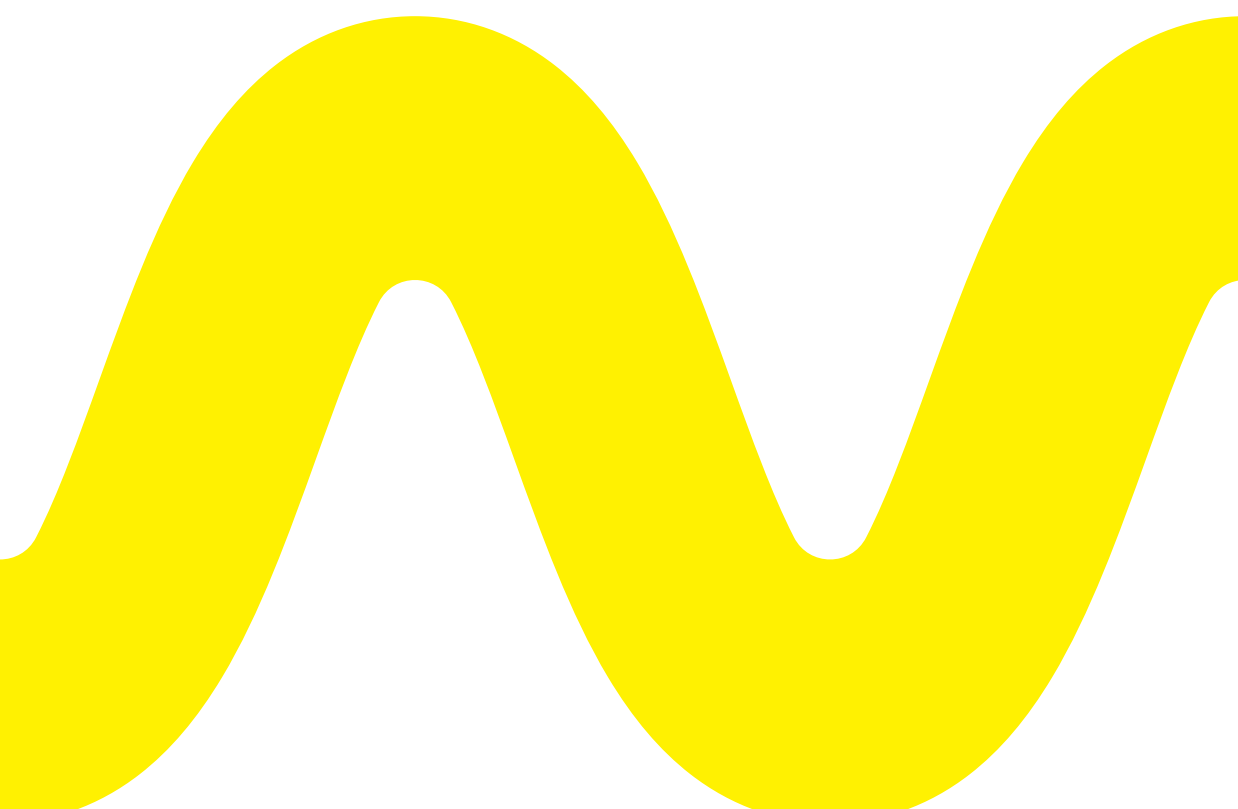

Outcomes and results

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 nine students participated in NAPLAN – three students from Year 3 and six students from Year 5. These nine students participated in Numeracy, Reading, writing and Conventions of Language assessments with appropriate ACARA approved adjustments.

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

Across 20 examination instances, students achieved results within the middle 60 per cent of the assessed cohort. One student achieved exceeding for reading and another student achieved exceeding for spelling. Many students achieved 'Strong' across the exams: three in numeracy, three in reading, four in writing, four in spelling and two in grammar.



Staffing

Staffing profile

The following information describes the staffing profile for 2025:

Total number of staff	15
Number of fulltime teaching staff	3
Number of part time teaching staff	4
Number of non-teaching staff	8

The table below identifies teacher accreditation:

Level of accreditation	Number of teachers
Conditional	0
Provisional	0
Proficient	7
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 Spoken Language 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 (NESA) 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 take responsibility for their ongoing professional development through their professional growth plans. 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. It 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 twenty-four students enrolled, seventeen boys and seven girls with 80 per cent of our students coming from a language background other than English.

Student attendance rates

The average student attendance rate for 2025 was 85 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
83.5	93	69	82	88	93	86

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 measures 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.



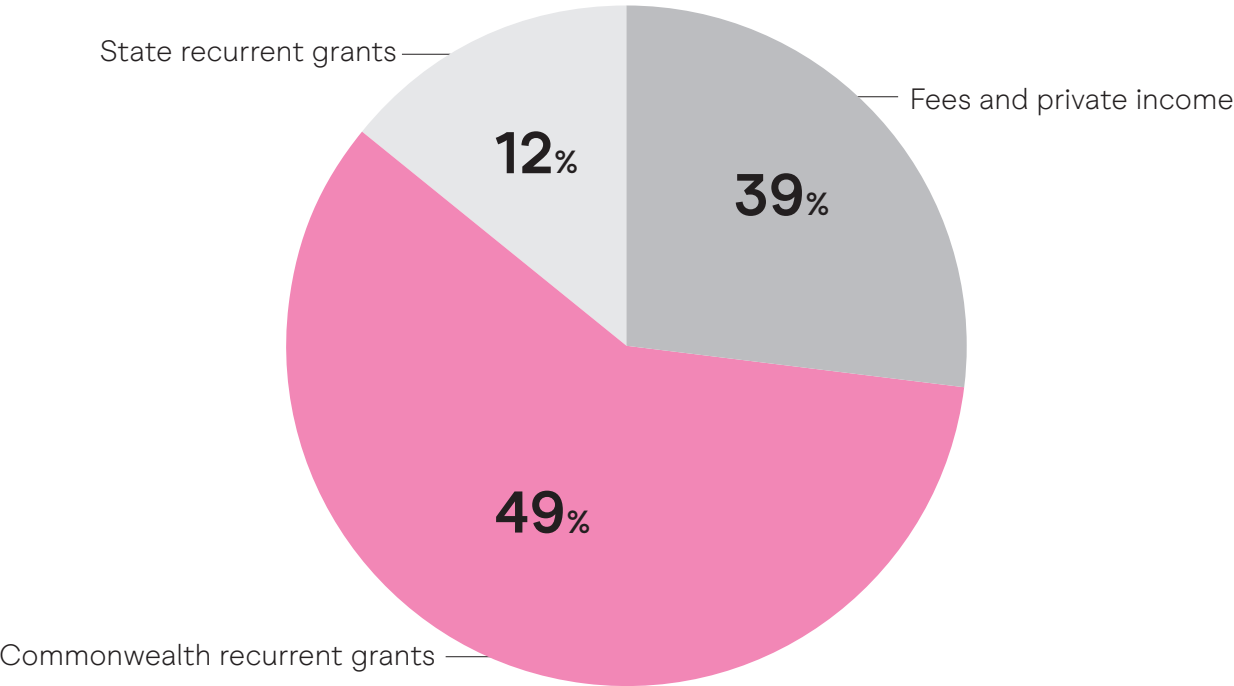
Financial information

School financial information for the 2025 year is detailed below:

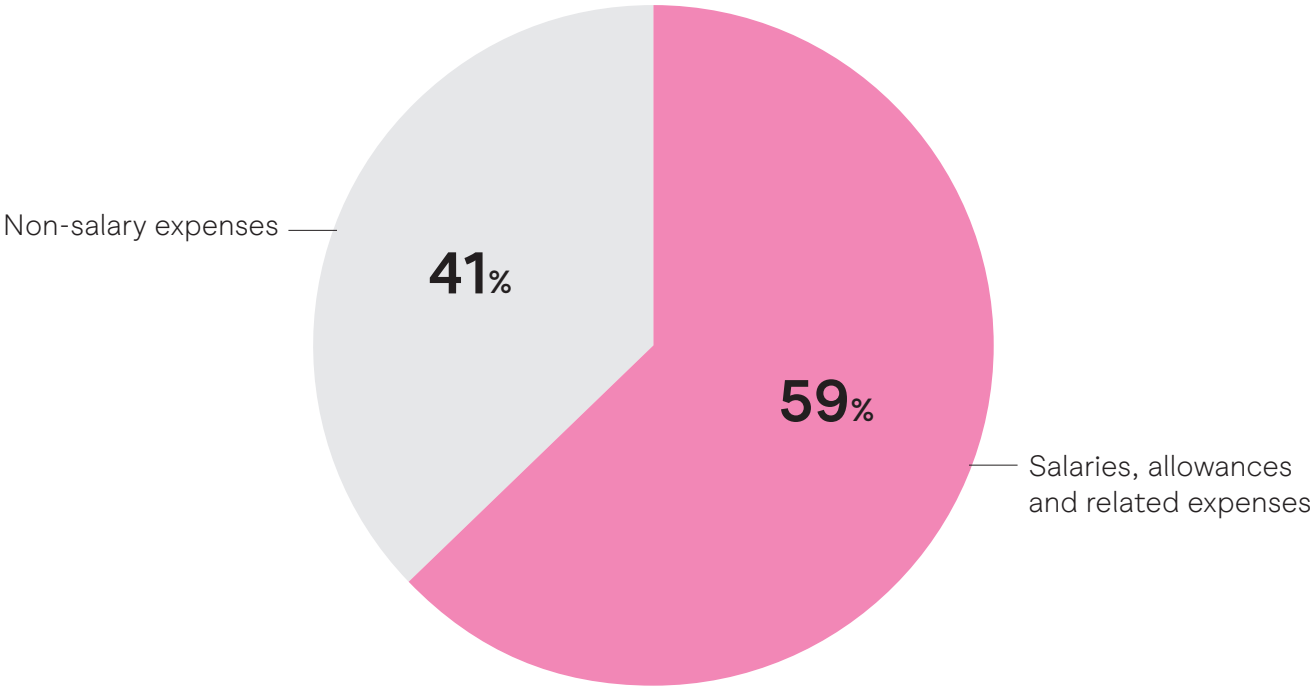
Income and Expenditure Statement – Year Ended 31 December 2025

Description	\$ AUD	
Income		
Fees and private income	936,051	39%
State recurrent grants	279,862	12%
Commonwealth recurrent grants	1,164,527	49%
Total Income	2,380,440	100%
Expenditure		
Salaries, allowances and related expenses	1,415,493	59%
Non-salary expenses	964,947	41%
Total Expenditure	2,380,440	100%

NextSense School 2025 Income



NextSense School 2025 Expenditure



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