

Penrith South Public School

2019 Annual Report



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2019 is provided to the community of Penrith South Public School as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

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Message from the principal

It has been a fantastic year for the Penrith South Public School community. We continued implementing a variety of innovative strategies to engage our students and support the professional learning and quality teaching of our staff. Our staff are reflecting on their own practice and analysing student achievement data to target specific learning needs of individuals and groups of children.

Staff worked collaboratively with Instructional Leaders who provided professional learning and shoulder to shoulder differentiated support. Our Year 1 teachers joined our Kindergarten teachers in implementing the Language, Learning and Literacy research-based intervention program.

Our Penrith South community assisted us in a variety of fundraising initiatives and along with the support and financial contributions from our P&C we were able to continue making improvements to our school site. This included the construction of a new covered walkway providing much needed shelter for students, staff and parents. We look forward to continuing to add to this in the coming years.

Our Kitchen Garden program was developed and has been an enormous success. Students were involved from the beginning of the program including the construction of the garden beds, planting, watering and picking produce to use in their very own cooking lessons. We have received wonderful feedback from students, staff and parents regarding the implementation of our Kitchen Garden program and we are excited about how we can continue developing it into the future.

Our school has committed to enhancing a broad range of visible learning practices targeting the academic success of all our students. I look forward to continuing the work outlined in our 2018–2020 School Plan and talking with our students, staff and community about the quality teaching and learning we offer at Penrith South Public School.

School background

School vision statement

Every child's journey at Penrith South Public School is one of purpose, high expectations, dignity and options.

School context

Penrith South Public School is a growing school located in Western Sydney with a current enrolment of 515 students. 12% of students identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and 19% are from an EAL/D background. There are 22 classes which include 19 mainstream classes and 3 support classes.

The staff are dedicated professionals who are committed to providing high quality, engaging literacy and numeracy programs.

The school is part of the Phase 2 Early Action for Success Program and strives to provide quality professional learning for staff to ensure a high standard of education for all students. The school uses QTSS and Equity funding to employ K–2 and 3–6 Instructional Leaders. School priorities include building strong foundations in literacy and numeracy and closing the gap on disadvantage. There is also a commitment to student wellbeing across the school. Penrith South Public School is devoted to promoting Aboriginal Education and continuing to develop a great sense of cultural pride.

The school has a strong Sports and Creative and Performing Arts culture engaging in a variety of successful programs to improve student learning and wellbeing outcomes. The school actively implements Positive Behaviour for Learning and is embedding the Bounce Back program, promoting resilience and a safe and respectful learning environment. Penrith South Public School has a proud history of strong links to the local community.

Self-assessment and school achievement

This section of the annual report outlines the findings from self–assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self–assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The Framework is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our school plan and annual report.

Our self–assessment process will assist the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/school-excellence>

In Learning, the school continued its work in the Equity Strategies and Wellbeing Projects. The school used Aboriginal Equity funding to employ a staff member one day per week to focus on improving the outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The school staff continued to analyse student data results to recognise the individual needs of students who required extra support. In the domain of Learning the school is Sustaining and Growing.

In Teaching, the focus has been quality teaching practice and the development of highly effective units of work. The school used QTSS funding to employ Instructional Leaders K–6 to lead teachers in evidence based practices. The curriculum review team continued its robust review of units of work to ensure programming reflected NESA requirements and school priorities. In the domain of Teaching the school is Sustaining and Growing.

In Leading, the school continued to develop leadership capabilities among staff. Teachers were provided opportunities to lead whole school programs and drive teams to improve educational outcomes for students. Induction and accreditation processes were further refined to ensure staff are provided with current information and support around the accreditation process. The school used feedback from staff and the community gathered in the 2018 School Customer Service 360 Reflection Toll to refine processes and procedures in administration. In the domain of Leading, the school is Sustaining and Growing.

Strategic Direction 1

Learning

Purpose

The shared belief that all students can achieve high standards given the right support and sufficient time underpins the work we do. We are striving to ensure **every** student is engaged, challenged and on a continual learning journey. Teachers build relationships and use information about individual student capabilities, backgrounds, interests and needs, to support wellbeing and engagement in learning.

Improvement Measures

27.4% of students in top two bands for Numeracy and 39.7% of students in top two bands for Reading.

All students achieve expected growth in particular students from an Aboriginal background

There is an increase in student wellbeing and engagement.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Moving the Middle Targeting improved results in top two bands of NAPLAN. Staff engage in targeted and differentiated professional learning driven by student progress and achievement data and supported by IL's and AP's.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">All teachers attended Corwin professional learning on Visible Learning with the Jamison Learning Community. Executive attended two evidence into action professional learning days with executive from learning community schools. In consultation with Staff, students and community Learner qualities were selected to begin rolling out to students and school community in 2020.Teaching Sprints were rolled across stages to target specific areas of need based on student assessment data. Target groups of students were identified through pre assessment and their progress was monitored over a five weekly cycle with the aim of moving the middle students.	\$7,600

Process 2: Equity Strategies Draw on research to implement differentiated teaching and learning programs and tailored interventions for students identifying as EAL/D, from Aboriginal backgrounds and those with a disability to meet learning needs.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The MiniLit program was run twice over the course of the year for four students in Stage 1 and four Students in Stage 2. Nine students were identified to participate in Reading Recovery. These programs showed an improvement in the Literacy Skills of targeted students.The SLSOs were given training in the MultiLit program. This allowed targeted intervention in reading to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students, seeing improvement in results and engagement.	\$64,000

Process 3: Wellbeing Whole school integrated approach to student wellbeing ensures every student is known, valued and cared for.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">81% of students in Years 4–6 feel they have an adult at school who consistently provides encouragement and that they can turn to for support and advice. This is an increase of 3% from 2018.88% of students feel they have friends at school they can trust and who encourage them to make positive choices, which is 35% higher than the state average.	\$12,000

Strategic Direction 2

Teaching

Purpose

Teachers are empowered and take personal responsibility for identifying, understanding and implementing the most effective literacy and numeracy teaching methods. Teachers use reflective practices and sophisticated analysis of data to assess and plan for the ongoing learning of each student. Assessment, planning and accountability practices are reviewed and revised regularly ensuring the highest quality teaching and learning programs are in place in every classroom.

Improvement Measures

An increased number of teachers report their skills and knowledge have improved and they feel empowered to be better teachers.

All teachers efficiently use quality assessment tools and data for, of, and as learning.

Teachers access and participate in reviewing units of work for all KLAs.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Early Action For Success Instructional Leaders assist all teachers to understand and explicitly teach numeracy to students at all levels of achievement, with success that can be measured by improved student progress and achievement data.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">ES1 teachers continued implementing Language, Learning and Literacy (L3) training to improve effective literacy teaching practices. Year One teachers also began their L3 training and implemented these pedagogies in their daily literacy sessions.The "Words Their Way" spelling program continued to be implemented across Years 1–6 to strengthen the students' developing skills in word study.Number Talks were introduced in all classrooms K–6. Instructional leaders worked with classroom teachers to demonstrate effective Number Talk practices.	\$334,700

Process 2: Assessment 'for, as and of' Learning Implement high quality tools, systems and practices that support the teaching and learning cycles.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">K–2 teachers implemented the L3 program to successfully collect and analyse data to give effective, point in time feedback for student improvement. Assessments were also used to identify student progress over a five week basis.Teachers collected and analysed data using the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT). This data was used to inform teachers of students' current point of need and where to next.	\$11,500

Process 3: Leading Curriculum Curriculum and pedagogy are robustly reviewed ensuring every classroom is a highly effective learning environment.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">School leaders attended Leading Curriculum Monitoring professional learning to gain further understanding of NESA cyclical monitoring requirements.Staff were involved in routine curriculum reviews and analysis of teaching and learning programs each term and the evaluation of units of work.	\$500

Strategic Direction 3

Leading

Purpose

To ensure that community confidence in the school is high, school leaders support the highest levels of learning and have a commitment to fostering a culture of high expectations. A rich orientation and PDP process ensures all staff are highly trained and well supported in their work. There is a school wide approach to improving customer service that underpins school improvement and professional effectiveness.

Improvement Measures

School plan is effectively implemented and effects improvement.

All staff take personal responsibility to maintain professional standards.

Community satisfaction is equal to or greater than previous year.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Leadership Pipeline Professional learning develops educational leadership, management, and leadership attributes and facilitates whole school improvement. Teachers have opportunities to lead whole school programs and to participate in networks that help obtain higher levels of accreditation.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Executive staff attended National Corwin Conference providing professional development in the school priority areas of visible learning practices and student engagementTwo staff members participated in Art of Leadership professional development targeting the development of explicit leadership qualitiesVarious leadership opportunities made available to lead implementation of curriculum, relieve as an executive member and shadow executive staff to further develop knowledge and skill of aspiring staff membersStaff worked on continuum of learning projects with local high school to develop networking opportunities for staff and increase learning opportunities for students	\$22,500

Process 2: Induction and Accreditation School based policies, systems and procedures engage all staff and encourage and support all staff to be their best.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">All teaching and non-teaching staff have Professional Development Plans in place, which are reviewed and adjusted throughout the year.Professional learning budget has been spent developing staff capabilities, with a focus on school and student outcome improvement.The school Induction and Orientation documents were reviewed and updated with the latest school systems and processes for new staff.	\$0

Process 3: Excellence in Administration Implement the Excellence in Administration Framework to improve service delivery to students, families and communities.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tell Them From Me Parent Survey results indicate a 4% increase in families feeling welcome at our school, which is above the State average.	\$3,800

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Low level adjustment for disability	\$173,557	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Learning and Support Officers were used flexibly to support high needs students both in the classroom and playground. • Individual Education Plans were developed in consultation with parents for all students with identified needs and were implemented and regularly reviewed. • Procedures for the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data were further refined.
Support for beginning teachers	\$18,399	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early career teachers were provided with additional release and allocated time with a mentor. • Extra time was allocated to early career teachers for report writing • Allocated support and professional learning ensured quality practice from early career teachers.
Aboriginal background loading	\$62,591	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment of an Aboriginal Education Teacher (AET) one day a week to help coordinate, initiate and oversee all aspects of ATSI educational programs. • Implemented the MultiLit program to targeted and identified students of greatest need, which have shown significant growth in improving Reading outcomes. • Employment of Aboriginal Education Officer to teach cultural lessons and activities linked to History scope and sequence, school wide, improving engagement and Aboriginal perspectives.
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	\$96,791	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school used QTSS funding to release the Stage Two and Stage Three Assistant Principals for one day a week to carry out Instructional Leader work with their stage teams. • Instructional Leaders provided whole staff and individual professional learning, and support for teachers, analysed student data and worked with teachers to reflect on and continue development of quality teaching practices.
Targeted student support for refugees and new arrivals	\$1,401	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualised programs, focusing on Literacy skills supported our thirty–nine EAL/D students. This support was given in class, in small groups and individual withdrawal. • All of our EAL/D students were an important part of our Harmony Day celebration. • Parents of our EAL/D students were invited to a networking afternoon tea with a focus on how to support their children in Mathematics.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Boys	252	268	266	272
Girls	228	245	241	251

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019
K	94.6	96.6	93.8	92.6
1	94.5	94.6	92.9	92.8
2	94	94.1	94.4	90.3
3	94.7	93.6	93.5	92.4
4	94.7	94.5	92.4	91
5	93.5	93.3	93.2	91.7
6	94.4	92.4	93.6	91.3
All Years	94.4	94.2	93.4	91.8
State DoE				
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019
K	94.4	94.4	93.8	93.1
1	93.9	93.8	93.4	92.7
2	94.1	94	93.5	93
3	94.2	94.1	93.6	93
4	93.9	93.9	93.4	92.9
5	93.9	93.8	93.2	92.8
6	93.4	93.3	92.5	92.1
All Years	94	93.9	93.4	92.8

Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school has a big impact on longer term outcomes for children and young people. When a child is not at school they miss important opportunities to learn, build friendships and develop their skills through play. Regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between schools and parents. By working together we can have a positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

Our teachers promote and monitor regular attendance at school and all our schools have effective measures in place to record attendance and follow up student absences promptly. They are guided by the School Attendance policy which details the management of non-attendance.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	5
Classroom Teacher(s)	20.8
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0.63
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	1
Teacher Librarian	1
School Counsellor	1
School Administration and Support Staff	6.96
Other Positions	1

*Full Time Equivalent

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce composition

The Department actively supports the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees through the use of identified positions, scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2019, 3.9% of the Department's workforce identify as Aboriginal people.

Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2019 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.30%	7.20%
Teachers	3.30%	2.90%

Note 1 – The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014–17 introduced an aspirational target of 1.8% by 2021 for each of the sector's salary bands. If the aspirational target of 1.8% is achieved in salary bands not currently at or above 1.8%, the cumulative representation of Aboriginal employees in the sector is expected to reach 3.3%.

Note 2 – Representation of diversity groups are calculated as the estimated number of staff in each group divided by the total number of staff. These statistics have been weighted to estimate the representation of diversity groups in the workforce, where diversity survey response rates were less than 100 per cent. The total number of staff is based on a headcount of permanent and temporary employees.

Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority, and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working With Children Check clearance.

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice.

Professional learning includes five student-free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and/or system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non-teaching staff in line with school and departmental priorities.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2019 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	442,018
Revenue	5,623,956
Appropriation	5,366,842
Sale of Goods and Services	17,053
Grants and contributions	236,529
Investment income	3,332
Other revenue	200
Expenses	-5,558,829
Employee related	-4,969,645
Operating expenses	-589,184
Surplus / deficit for the year	65,126

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

Financial summary - Equity loadings

The equity loading data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' line item of the financial summary above.

	2019 Approved SBA (\$)
Targeted Total	839,280
Equity Total	580,095
Equity - Aboriginal	62,591
Equity - Socio-economic	313,456
Equity - Language	30,491
Equity - Disability	173,557
Base Total	3,421,630
Base - Per Capita	126,226
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	3,295,404
Other Total	517,896
Grand Total	5,358,900

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

School performance - NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

From 2018 to 2021 NAPLAN is moving from a paper test to an online test. Individual schools are transitioning to the online test, with some schools participating in NAPLAN on paper and others online. Results for both online and paper formats are reported on the same NAPLAN assessment scale. Any comparison of NAPLAN results – such as comparisons to previous NAPLAN results or to results for students who did the assessment in a different format – should be treated with care.

NAPLAN Online

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to myschool.edu.au to access the school data. As schools transition to NAPLAN online, the band distribution of results is not directly comparable to band averages from previous years. While the 10 band distribution available to schools who completed NAPLAN online is a more accurate reflection of student performance, caution should be taken when considering results relative to what was formerly a six band distribution. As the full transition of NAPLAN online continues, the most appropriate way to communicate results for NAPLAN online is by scaled scores and scaled growth. This is the reporting format agreed by state and territory education ministers, and is reflected on the [myschool](https://myschool.edu.au) website.

Literacy

In 2019 the number of Year 3 students in the top 2 bands in Writing, Spelling and Grammar & Punctuation increased from 2018. 39% of our Year 3 students scored in the top 2 bands in Reading. In Year 3 Writing, 35% scored in the top 2 bands, which is an increase of over 5% from 2018 results. The number of Year 5 students in the top 2 bands in Reading was above the Statistically Similar School Group. In Year 5 Writing there was a decrease in the number of students in the bottom 2 bands of 13%.

Numeracy

In Numeracy, we had an increase of Year 3 students in the top 2 bands of 7% from 2018. 40% of Year 5 students scored a Band 6 or above for Numeracy.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year, schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and staff. This year the school community was surveyed using the Tell Them From Me Survey. Their responses are presented below.

- Parents acknowledge that the school promotes a positive learning environment and high expectations for behaviour.
- Parents feel that the staff at our school encourage their children to do their best at school.
- 92% of students report that they try hard to succeed in their learning.
- Most students report that their classroom instruction is well organised, with a clear purpose and immediate feedback to help them learn.
- The majority of students reported that they felt proud of their school
- Teachers at our school work collaboratively to develop engaging learning opportunities.
- Teachers collaboratively set goals with students and monitor the progress of those goals using timely and effective feedback.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal Education Policy

The responsibility for enacting the Aboriginal Education Policy rests with all Departmental staff. The policy should underpin and inform planning, teaching practice and approaches to educational leadership in all educational settings.

Evidence of effective implementation of the policy included:

- Establishing, building and strengthening relationships with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal people and communities.
- Providing, in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, education which promotes quality teaching, is engaging, and is culturally appropriate and relevant.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.
- Implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways for all Aboriginal students in a school culture of high expectations.

There has been a significant sense of achievement and pride of, and amongst, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students at Penrith South Public School. This has been achieved by establishing a strong focus on quality programs and the use of experienced outside agencies that help develop authentic and deeper understanding of the significant role Aboriginal culture has in Australia amongst staff, students and the broader community. Our numbers of ATSI students enrolled at our school have grown significantly.

The school initiated many successful strategies and programs this year including:

- Developed Personalised Learning Pathways for every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student.
- Continuation of Penrith South Aboriginal Dance Group – "YENNAMA BUBUWUL"– (Walking Strong) –employing an Aboriginal cultural expert to teach the students a number of traditional and contemporary dances showcasing cultural performances during Education Week, NAIDOC and PLP Celebrations.
- Acknowledgement of Sorry Day Speech–11 Year anniversary through targeted teaching resources.
- Participation in the NAIDOC Cup which is an interschool sports gala day for ATSI students and their friends.
- Continued use of enclosed display cabinet for Aboriginal artefacts and further development of Aboriginal Education Learning Area in Library. "Birrong Corner" meaning Star Corner in Durag.
- NAIDOC Week celebrations engaging in a variety of learning activities and performances to further strengthen our understanding of Aboriginal culture.
- Professional development of staff in relation to Aboriginal Education Policy into Action and integrated Aboriginal knowledge into key learning areas.
- \$785 to the Indigenous Literacy Foundation through participating in the Great Book Swap.
- Participation in MURAMA – (YOUTH ECO SUMMIT) at Sydney Olympic Park where our ATSI students were engaged in authentic and highly engaging Aboriginal cultural activities.
- Data Analysis on attendance, Progressions, NAPLAN and class–based assessment data and presentation of results to staff for future directions

Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. Principals are responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. All schools have an Anti–Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

The school has a nominated Anti–Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) who educates and supports students and staff in applying the procedures for resolving incidents of racism within the school in a conciliatory, educative and respectful manner. There were no significant incidences of racism reported during the year.

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers address the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. Principals are responsible for ensuring that school policies, programs and practices respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school community, and provide opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes.

Multicultural perspectives are embedded in the school's teaching and learning programs. We have English units of work across all stages that focus on the themes of acceptance and belonging. In addition to this, our HSIE programs ensure that students develop knowledge, understanding and positive values relating to cultural diversity in our community. Our school community celebrates and participated in Harmony Day and NAIDOC activities in order to better understand and celebrate the cultural heritage of the families within our school community.

Other School Programs (optional)

Performing Arts

Penrith South was very active in Performing Arts in 2019. Our Stage 1, Stage 2 Stage 3 and Boys Dance Groups all performed at the Blue Mountains Nepean Dance Festival at the Joan Sutherland Centre. They also performed at school assemblies and concerts.

This year our School Band was made up of a variety of instruments, including flutes, clarinets, trumpets, euphoniums, baritones and drums. The band was made up of novice musicians from Years 3 to Year 6. After practicing continuously all year round, the band played at our assemblies and entertained our parents and community at our Parent Helper Morning Tea.

Our choir consisting of 35 students from Year 2 to Year 6 performed as part of the Massed Choir in the Penrith Valley Performing Arts Festival at the Joan Sutherland Festival. They also performed at school assemblies and Presentation Days.

Sport

In 2019, many opportunities were afforded our students across a wide variety of sporting arenas. We had students represent our school, Zone and Region in swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals. One of our students with a disability represented NSW at the National Athletics Championships in Hobart.

Students from Years 3–6 were given the opportunity to try out for PSSA sport. Students who were selected to be in a team, participated in the Penrith Primary Schools Sports Association (PSSA) competition. The school entered teams in softball, tee-ball, Blast Cricket, league tag, netball, soccer, AFL and rugby league. School sport was also offered with a wide variety of activities such as dance, ball skills, basketball, newcombe ball and soccer skills.

Penrith South implemented a whole school gymnastics program during which every class participated in an hour of gymnastics every week with stretching, core strength and balance the key focus of the program.

Kitchen Garden

2019 was the beginning of the kitchen garden program. John Lawton was brought in from Penrith Lakes Education Centre to mentor the assigned Kitchen Garden teacher in the growing of the garden and the cooking of the produce from the garden. The year started with planning and building the garden beds. In the meantime, lettuce and radish were grown in square containers so the cooking aspect of the program could take place.

Students were taught how to use equipment in the garden and how to use kitchen equipment before cooking. Rules were put in place to keep students safe in these two ventures. Students were told what needed to be done in the garden and were able to independently complete all jobs.

Students were actively involved in planting, tending and harvesting produce. They learnt about companion planting, pests and the best possible growing conditions.

The students responded well to the cooking program with many trying produce and recipes that they had never tried before. Parents asked for the recipes that were done in lessons so their children could cook at home for their families. These recipes were also put onto our website for families to use.

When extra produce was harvested the school sold it to the school community for a dollar coin donation, this was then used to get supplies for the garden.