

Annual Report





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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge and pay respects to the Ngandowal and Minyungbal people of the Bundjalung nation, the traditional owners of the land upon which we live and learn within the caldera of Wollumbin. The Small School seeks to support the Uluru Statement from the heart, especially the Makarrata Commission, to assist in a fair and truthful relationship building process with our First Nation community.

Artwork created by students at The Small School

At The Small School we acknowledge the traditional

respects to their Elders, past, present and future.



Owners, the Bundjalung people, of this land. We acknowledge their

connection to land, water, ways, sky and their culture. We pay our



Theme 1

Context

Message from the Chairperson, School Board

As I reflect on the year, it strikes me that the old adage, 'it takes a village to raise a child', applies not only to parenting but also to schooling. Throughout 2025 our 'village' has continued to grow, strengthened by the many people and organisations who have contributed to the life of The Small School. From the micro to the macro, every contribution has helped shape the experiences of our students.



Recognition and thanks must go to the Building Grant Authority for supporting the purchase of our current school buildings and helping secure the long-term future of the school. This stands alongside an equally heartfelt thank you to our local IGA store manager, Mark, who generously donated everything needed for a sausage sizzle so our Year 9 and 10 students could fundraise for their inaugural winter camp. Partnerships with organisations such as OzHarvest have enabled students to explore sustainable cooking and reducing food waste, while The Family Centre has supported our students through resilience workshops that build skills for responding to natural disasters. Together with the many volunteers, families and local businesses who continue to support us, these partnerships remind us that education is strengthened when a community comes together.

The Board has continued to focus on ensuring that The Small School remains well governed and well positioned for the future. This year

marked an important step in the school's journey with the successful registration of our Year 11 program and approval to commence Year 12 in 2027. Alongside this, the Board has continued to oversee the strategic development of the school through leadership growth, planning for our future facilities and careful financial stewardship. In a year where many schools have experienced increasing financial pressures, we are proud to have maintained our commitment to keeping school fees as accessible as possible while continuing to invest in student wellbeing, leadership and the future growth of the school.

Another important part of any village is its leaders. I am delighted to welcome Jess Macpherson to the school's leadership team, alongside Katie Power and Emma Wappett, whose commitment and expertise continue to strengthen the school. I also warmly welcome Michelle Bullmore and Rowan Forster to the Board. Their knowledge and experience complement those of our existing directors and will help guide the school through its next stage of development. I would also like to sincerely thank every member of our Board for the time, care and thoughtful governance they have contributed throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge Carla, and our dedicated teachers and mentors whose passion and commitment continue to bring the school's vision to life each day. Their work, together with the ongoing support of our families and wider community, has enabled The Small School to continue growing while remaining true to the values on which it was founded.

As Chair, I feel confident about the future of The Small School. 2025 has been a year not simply of growth, but of strengthening the foundations that will support the school for many years to come. It is a privilege to witness our community working together in this way, and I look forward with great optimism to the opportunities that lie ahead.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Amie'.

Amie Green | Chairperson

Theme 1: Context

Message from the Principal

As I reflect on 2025, it feels like a year in which The Small School's educational philosophy became more clearly defined and deeply embedded across all aspects of school life. While we continued to grow as an organisation and prepare for the future, equal attention was given to refining our approach to teaching and learning, strengthening student wellbeing and leadership, and ensuring that our daily practices continued to reflect our commitment to personalised, democratic and child-centred education.

One of the most significant milestones this year was our successful registration to commence Year 11 in 2026, together with approval for Year 12 in 2027. This represents the culmination of a substantial body of work undertaken over a number of years and provides a strong foundation for the next stage of the school's development. Throughout the year we continued designing a senior program that reflects the distinctive philosophy of The Small School, with an emphasis on individual learning pathways, authentic assessment, project-based learning and meaningful preparation for life beyond school.

Throughout the year we also continued to refine our approach to teaching and learning. Our whole-school themes provided opportunities for students of all ages to explore significant ideas from multiple perspectives, while many of the programs and traditions that have become part of the rhythm of school life continued to deepen and evolve. Termly Immersion Days were introduced, providing students with uninterrupted time to engage in deep, child-led inquiry around each term's theme. These experiences allow teachers to observe emerging interests and strengths while giving

students the time and autonomy to pursue meaningful and joyful learning. Alongside Sustaining The Small School, Personal Interest Projects, Electives, camps and excursions, they reflect our belief that meaningful learning grows through curiosity, authentic experiences, democratic participation and strong relationships.



As the school has evolved, so too has our leadership. During 2025 we expanded our capacity to support students, staff and families through new leadership roles and strengthened wellbeing structures. Our mentor program has become increasingly embedded in the daily life of the school, complementing the work of classroom teachers by providing students with additional opportunities for connection, guidance and individual support. These developments have strengthened our ability to respond to students' academic, social and emotional needs while ensuring that relationships remain at the heart of everything we do.

Our community also came together throughout the year to celebrate many of the traditions that have become an important part of life at The Small School. The Mini Fete, our whole school performance of The Snow Queen, Wear It Yellow Day and numerous community events once again provided opportunities for students to demonstrate creativity, responsibility, service and collaboration. These shared experiences continue to strengthen the sense of belonging that makes our school community so special.

Theme 1: Context

I would like to sincerely thank our dedicated teachers and mentors for the professionalism, generosity and care they bring to the school each day. I also thank our families for the trust they place in us and for the genuine partnership they bring to their children's education. Most importantly, I thank our students. Their curiosity, kindness, creativity and willingness to embrace new experiences continue to shape the unique culture of The Small School and remind us why this work is so worthwhile. Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our Board members. Their commitment to the school, thoughtful leadership and support throughout the year have been deeply appreciated. While much of the Board's work is undertaken quietly behind the scenes, their governance, guidance and willingness to thoughtfully work through both

opportunities and challenges together provide invaluable support to me as Principal and contribute greatly to the continued strength of our school.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains unchanged: to know every child well, to foster genuine relationships, to provide learning that is meaningful and deeply personal, and to nurture a school community where every young person feels known, respected, challenged and able to contribute in their own unique way.



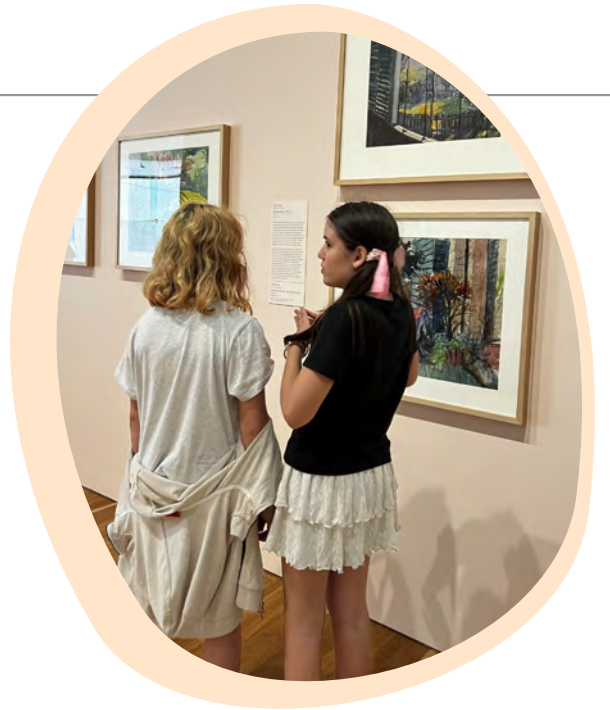
Carla Wilson
Principal



Theme 2

Outcome and Results

NAPLAN information for The Small School can be viewed at www.myschool.edu.au



Theme 3

Staffing



Teacher Accreditation

Level of Accreditation	Number of teachers
Conditional	0
Provisional	0
Proficient	8
Highly Accomplished Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0
Lead Teacher (voluntary accreditation)	0

Workforce Composition 2025	Number of teachers
Teaching staff	8
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	5.8
Non-teaching staff	14
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	7

No staff identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander during the 2025 reporting period.

Theme 4

Attendance

Management of Non-Attendance

Early intervention is the most effective way to resolve irregular attendance.

Early intervention strategies are informal and carried out by the classroom teacher with parents. Early intervention strategies include checking for and responding to the following possibilities:

- Checking for any peer or classroom related issues or transport barriers
- Checking for learning difficulties and investigating teaching approaches
- Offering for the child to be supported by the Student Wellbeing Worker
- Developing a transition plan which includes parents being able to stay with their child at school for a period of time.

Teachers report any early intervention approaches to the Principal who will follow up with the family if these approaches are not successful and attendance does not improve. These strategies will be captured in a student's Individual Support Plan. More formal approaches to non-attendance include providing parents with an attendance report with a written request for attendance improvement. This can be followed by a face-to-face meeting with parents and Principal in an Attendance Improvement Meeting. The attendance improvement requirements will be recorded in the Individual Support Plan. Adherence to an Individual Support Plan can be a condition of enrolment.



Grade	Whole year attendance rates for 2025 by year level
Kindergarten	84.56%
Year 1	88.01%
Year 2	87.83%
Year 3	87.70%
Year 4	86.16%
Year 5	90.68%
Year 6	86.67%
Year 7	86.02%
Year 8	75.00%
Year 9	87.90%
Year 10	78.22%
Whole year attendance rate for the whole school (K- Year 10)	85.34%

Theme 5

School Policies

The Small School's policies can be found at www.thesmallschool.org.au/policies-procedures

- Enrolment Policy for Families
- Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Complaint Handling Policy



Theme 6

Stakeholder Satisfaction

Transparent processes and stakeholder feedback continue to strongly influence the way decisions are made at The Small School.

Teachers actively seek parent feedback throughout the year, particularly in relation to the needs and progress of individual students. Formal opportunities for parent feedback include Hopes and Concerns meetings for new students, Parent Information Sessions held in Terms 1 and 3, and twice-yearly three-way conferences involving parents, students and teachers. These processes are complemented by ongoing communication between families and staff throughout the year.

Student voice remains central to decision-making at The Small School. Teachers actively seek student feedback through classroom discussions and other age-appropriate forums. Students are encouraged and supported to express their ideas, contribute to decisions that affect school life and participate in democratic processes through the Student Council and other whole-school discussions.

Staff at The Small School continue to work within a collaborative and respectful professional environment where many decisions are made collectively through staff and planning meetings. Teachers are recognised as expert professionals and are supported through a culture of openness, professional trust and shared responsibility.



During 2025, the school continued to invest in strengthening its leadership capacity to provide additional support for teachers, foster professional collaboration and promote staff wellbeing. Feedback from staff is sought through annual staff reviews and regular professional discussions throughout the year.

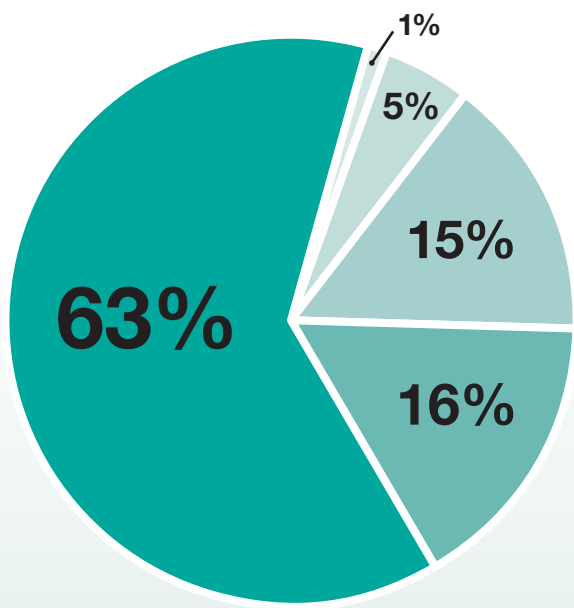
The Small School continues to experience low staff turnover. While working in schools is inherently demanding, staff satisfaction is supported by the school's collaborative culture, strong professional relationships and shared commitment to providing a high-quality education for every student.



Theme 7

Summary Financial Information

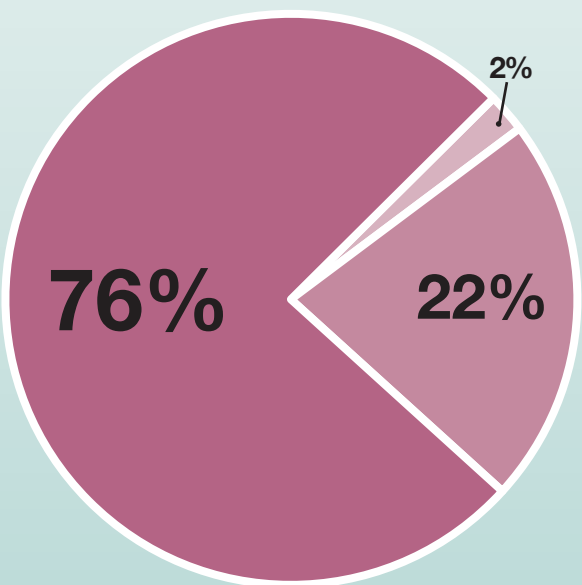
Recurrent / Capital Income



	Other Commonwealth Grants 1%..... \$16,188
	Capital Works Grant 5%..... \$88,320
	State Recurrent Grants 15%..... \$280,364
	Fees and Private Income 16%..... \$299,805
	Commonwealth Recurrent Grants 63%..... \$1,199,222

Total \$1,883,899

Recurrent / Capital Expenditure



	Non-salary expenses 22%..... \$428,203
	Capital expenditure 2%..... \$34,530
	Salaries, allowances and related expenses 76%..... \$1,483,638

Total \$1,946,371



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