**School vision statement**

We will lead learning and undertake an enabling role in building the capacity of teachers to cater for the needs of students with complex reading difficulties.

We will strive to be a learning organisation for rural and remote communities through building relationships within and across our multidisciplinary teams and with our partnerships with schools, students and families.

We will assist students to be confident and independent learners who thrive and extend their potential. This will be demonstrated by improved reading outcomes and curriculum access, positive engagement and self-efficacy.

**School context**

Palm Avenue School (PAS) is a specialist school within the New South Wales Centre for Effective Reading (CER). PAS is part of a state-wide service provision and has close links with the Learning and Engagement Directorate. PAS provides support for primary-aged students with complex reading difficulties by working with the student’s home school to develop specific strategies to support students and their teachers.

Students attending the NSW CER are referred from government and non-government schools in rural and remote areas of New South Wales. Students referred to the CER are experiencing severe literacy difficulties, have shown lack of progress in previous reading interventions and often have associated difficulties such as with memory, attention, strategy knowledge and use, and with receptive and/or expressive language. PAS operates in 3 locations – Dubbo, Wagga Wagga and Westmead with an additional CER location at Royal Far West School, Manly. Members of the Child Development Unit (CDU) at Children’s Hospital Westmead provide specialised assessment for students where a confounding medical condition may be suspected. Multi-disciplinary teams comprise a special education teacher, an educational psychologist and a speech pathologist. The team gathers existing data about the student including previous assessment reports and information provided by the school and family. The assessment is tailored for each student.

The multi-disciplinary assessment team at Westmead also includes neuropsychologists and paediatricians. PAS and the NSW CER support students, parents, teachers and whole-school planning by providing assessment, intervention and focused professional learning.

**School planning process**

School planning entailed thorough preparation in learning about the new approach; considering reforms; identifying current research and discussion at both the executive level and through identified teams. The implications for our unique setting both as a process and product were carefully considered resulting in the development of an Action Plan to lead and manage the school plan and reporting. A presentation to share with staff was developed to build their understanding and capability around the new school planning process.

Internal reviews of current self-evaluation processes were undertaken and advice was sought from the Learning and Engagement Directorate to ensure appropriate alignment and levels of consultancy. Stakeholders and staff have been invited to engage in the school planning process in various ways. The previous school plan was carefully analysed for strengths and areas for improvement based on school data. Collation of all sources of data has identified emerging local needs and global issues.

Emerging needs and issues have allowed us to reflect and articulate three strategic directions. These directions encompass the dreams for the future and purpose of Palm Avenue School and how we will add value to our work supporting students with complex reading difficulties in rural and remote schools in NSW.

PAS has defined improvement measures for each strategic direction and the purpose, people, processes, products and practices have been identified. These measures will be carefully tracked using implementation and evaluation milestones.
Purpose:
Students living in rural and remote areas including Aboriginal students are at a higher risk of experiencing difficulties in literacy than their counterparts in metropolitan areas.

Our purpose is to facilitate improved access to the service in order to address this imbalance.

This strategic direction links to the School Excellence Framework in the elements of Curriculum and Learning, Learning Culture and Effective Classroom Practice.

Purpose:
Educational communities require strong relationships inspired by a culture of collaboration, engaged communication, empowered leadership and organisational practice to improve student outcomes.

Our purpose is to function effectively across multiple sites with multidisciplinary teams.

This strategic direction links to the School Excellence Framework in the elements of Leadership, Collaborative Practice, Learning and Development and Management Practices and Processes.

Purpose:
Students experiencing complex reading difficulties require systematic and explicit teaching that at times may be qualitatively different from the regular classroom instruction.

Our purpose is to ensure that staff have current knowledge of research, skills in enabling technologies and expertise in their specialist areas.

This strategic direction links to the School Excellence Framework in the elements of Effective Classroom Practice and Professional Standards.
**Strategic Direction 1: Equity of Access**

**Purpose**

Students living in rural and remote areas including Aboriginal students are at a higher risk of experiencing difficulties in literacy than their counterparts in metropolitan areas.

Our purpose is to facilitate improved access to the service in order to address this imbalance.

**People**

**Students:**

**Staff:**

Develop leadership capabilities for staff participating in project teams through professional learning support and appropriate structures to support engagement.

Train AEOs to increase their skills and capabilities to support Aboriginal students and families in their local communities.

**Parents:**

Build awareness and understanding of the NSW CER processes and support to the parents of referred students.

**Community partners:**

Build awareness and understanding of the NSW CER processes and support for staff of eligible schools and associated personnel.

**Leaders:**

Enhance leadership capabilities for staff leading project teams through professional learning in the areas coaching, mentoring and feedback to develop skills in planning, monitoring and evaluation.

**Processes**

- Project team will focus on costing, viability and trialling of remote assessment technologies.
- NSW CER model, processes and associated research will be presented to key interest groups e.g. principals, learning and support staff, Aboriginal stakeholders, ICPA.
- Implement flexible and innovative use of AEO positions to improve access to our service for Aboriginal students, their families and schools.

**Evaluation plan:**

**Internal** – regular reporting against milestones by the leadership group; feedback from project teams, focus group sessions and staff surveys.

**External** - stakeholder surveys.

**Products and Practices**

- Average of 20% of ATSI students on caseload. Percentage goal is to increase to 25% by 2017.
- 10.6% of students from remote areas 4 and 5 on caseload (semester 1, 2014 data). Percentage goal is to increase to 20% by 2017.
- Percentage of new schools referring from the period of 2015 to 2017 will be 20% of caseload.

**Products:**

- Increased percentage of isolated and ATSI students accessing the NSW CER
- Use of technology for remote assessment of students by teachers, speech pathologists and psychologists to support isolated families to access the service
- Schools accessing the NSW CER for the first time
- Ongoing development of promotion and marketing packages to be delivered to key personnel across the state

**Practices:**

- Trained AEO from the local community actively supporting families of referred students and directly supporting these students in their home school.
- Increased skills and capabilities of trained AEO will enable ongoing support of all Aboriginal students and families in their local communities
- Establishment of regular liaison links with key groups to promote the service and enhance commitment by referring schools

**Improvement Measures**

- Average of 20% of ATSI students on caseload. Percentage goal is to increase to 25% by 2017
- 10.6% of students from remote areas 4 and 5 on caseload (semester 1, 2014 data). Percentage goal is to increase to 20% by 2017
- Percentage of new schools referring from the period of 2015 to 2017 will be 20% of caseload
## Strategic Direction 2: Organisational effectiveness through collaborative relationships

### Purpose

Educational communities require strong relationships inspired by a culture of collaboration, engaged communication, empowered leadership and organisational practice to improve student outcomes.

Our purpose is to function effectively across multiple sites with multidisciplinary teams.

### People

**Students:**
Students with identified needs are provided with strategies to enhance their well-being.

Increased student involvement in surveys, VCs and monitoring activities.

**Staff:**
Engage all staff in personalised professional development through a range of strategies that focus on feedback, self-evaluation, collaboration and a sharing of professional practice.

**Parents:**
Work together with PAS, CDU and home school staff to establish an optimal climate for their children’s learning.

**Community partners:**
Work together with ICPA and other stakeholders to establish a culture of leaning and care for our students and their families.

**Leaders:**
Enhance leadership capabilities for staff leading project teams through professional learning in the areas coaching, mentoring and feedback to develop skills in planning, monitoring and evaluation.

### Processes

- Investigate and develop flexible service delivery options to cater for diverse needs of students.
- Investigate and develop improved levels of support for families pre-visit.
- To develop a comprehensive database to track student progress and analyse trends in student data.
- Enhance sound financial management approaches to maintain optimum standards in staffing and student offerings, of facilities and resources based on LSLD, LMBR and RAM reforms.
- Systems established for collation and online storage of approved evidence based resources.

### Products and Practices

- 100% of students, parents and carers felt very strongly supported by the pre-visit processes.
- 100% of administration, teachers and executive staff are successfully implementing LMBR.

#### Products:

- Digital resources developed to better prepare students and families for undertaking a multidisciplinary assessment.
- Management system established for collation of pre and post student data and survey data.
- LMBR architecture, systems and services enhance student learning and school financial operational effectiveness.
- Streamlined online resource library.
- Develop a more innovative, agile and flexible service deliveries to better meet the needs of students and schools.

#### Practices:

- Staff responds flexibly to student well-being needs through SALM software, tracking data, allocation resources through a single budget funded directly through a new resource allocation model (RAM) using LMBR.

### Improvement Measures

- 100% of administration, teachers and executive staff are successfully implementing LMBR
- 100% of students, parents and carers felt very strongly supported by the pre-visit processes.
Strategic Direction 3: Currency in evidence-based practices

**Purpose**

Students experiencing complex reading difficulties require systematic and explicit teaching that at times may be qualitatively different from the regular classroom instruction.

Our purpose is to ensure that staff have current knowledge of research, skills in enabling technologies and expertise in their specialist areas.

**People**

**Students:**
Students with identified needs are provided with strategies to enhance their well-being.

**Staff:**
Develop capabilities for staff across PAS in the areas of evidence based quality reading instruction. This will include planning for skill development for staff to design and implement appropriate Plans for Reading Intervention.

**Parents:**
Parents/carers are provided with resources and strategies to support students in the home environment. Parents will engage with their children’s learning in the Centre’s programs.

**Community partners:**
Enhanced capability to support students with complex reading difficulties through differentiated professional learning.

**Leaders:**
Enhance leadership capabilities for staff leading project teams through professional learning in the areas of coaching, mentoring and feedback to develop skills in planning, monitoring and evaluation.

**Processes**

- Multidisciplinary working parties develop resources to cater for identified needs of referred students and provide professional learning for CER and school staff.
- Implement improved performance management processes for staff that align with professional standards and with the school plan.
- Develop individual professional learning plans explicitly targeted at developing teacher, speech pathologist and senior psychologist capacity to cater for learner diversity and enhance leadership capability.
- Engage staff in professional learning for new syllabus implementation and National Teaching Standards.

**Evaluation plan:**

**Internal** – regular reporting against milestones by the leadership group; feedback from project teams, focus group sessions and staff surveys.

**External** - stakeholder surveys.

**Products and Practices**

- 100% of teaching staff maintain current or achieve higher accreditation.
- There is an increase in NSW CER website hits from 6171 in 2014 to 10 000 by 2017.
- 100% schools with students identified as having learning needs in vocabulary will participate in Vocabulary training modules.

**Products:**

- Develop and publish a series of factsheets and webinars. These could include topics such as anxiety and spelling to support students in primary school settings.
- Develop and implement training modules on vocabulary development for staff of caseload schools to be delivered by hub speech pathologists.
- Systems organisation to track and monitor performance and development process of all staff is implemented.

**Practices:**

- Implement Great Teaching, Inspired Learning initiatives by reviewing leadership framework to ensure alignment with system priorities and AITSL requirements.
- Integration of accreditation/registration requirements into professional discussions as part of evidence for professional and leadership development.
- All staff are actively engaged in the accreditation/registration process.

**Improvement Measures**

- 100% of teaching staff maintain current or achieve higher accreditation
- There is an increase in NSW CER website hits from 6171 in 2014 to 10 000 by 2017
- 100% schools with students identified as having learning needs in vocabulary will participate in Vocabulary training modules