



SIDRAH GARDENS SCHOOL

2023 Annual Report Reimagining the Schooling Experience

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sidrah Gardens Australia respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our school stands. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging. We recognise the enduring connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country, culture, and community. Since 2022, Sidrah Gardens Australia has been proud to learn, work, and grow on Wurundjeri land, and we commit to fostering understanding and respect for all First Nations people.

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SCHOOL VISION & MISSION STATEMENT

SCHOOL VISION

Sidrah Gardens School aims to deliver a transformational educational experience that inculcates strong self-identity, upright character, intellectual integrity and spiritual development.



SCHOOL MISSION

Sidrah Gardens School is committed to the pursuit of excellence in an enriching, innovative and nurturing environment and is dedicated to empowering students with the knowledge, skills, dispositions and values necessary to achieve their potential and to contribute meaningfully to the Australian and global communities.

SCHOOL VALUES

Students and staff are encouraged to demonstrate **respect, empathy, integrity, perseverance, compassion, sincerity** and **service** in relationships with each other.

Respect: students will have a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements.

Perseverance: students will persist in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.

Empathy: students will have the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Integrity: students will exhibit the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles

Compassion: students will be sympathetic and concerned for the sufferings or misfortunes of others.

Service: students contribute and act to make a difference in the world.

Sincerity: students communicate and act in accordance with their feelings, beliefs, thoughts, and desires.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sidrah Gardens is set on 22 acres of densely vegetated land at the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges with ponds, creeks and wildlife. The site was picked out as fulfilling a key objective of the school. That is, to incorporate a rich outdoor environment as a key component of the school's curriculum. Nurturing and taking care of the local environment, as well as wildlife and farm animals, will play a major part in developing life skills and building character.

Learning opportunities are plentiful when nature is used as a point of reflection and a source of creative inspiration. Learning by doing enhances the retention of knowledge and builds the resilience and responsibility of students in their journey of learning. Students at Sidrah Gardens will be given the opportunity to take responsibility of initiatives such as an active permaculture, farm animals, harvesting, rejuvenation of natural habitats, managing water and electricity resources etc.

This understanding is also reflected in the architecture of the classrooms, where students have access to an array of materials, resources and equipment and prominent access to outdoor learning spaces.

In 2018, research and consultation began on the development of an Islamic Educational Philosophy that explores and defines key fundamental concepts relating to the purpose, objectives and meaning of Islamic Education. Further to this, the development of the school's pedagogical principles (teaching practices) as a practical implementation of the school's philosophy will also subsequently be developed.

One of the key distinguishing features of the school's approach to learning is the recognition that as part of the rich Islamic Scholarly Tradition, worldly sciences were not segmented and secularized. That is, worldly sciences were always used as a means to reflect on the perfection of the Creator and were seen as interrelated. Hence, as part of our research and development of the Sidrah Gardens curriculum, extensive work will be put into re-establishing the relationship between sciences such as Math and Physics and the development of a student's understanding and connection with Allah ﷻ.



GOVERNANCE

Sidrah Gardens School is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by the school board. The Board is responsible for property management and also sets the strategic

direction of the school. They oversee the school management, financial operation, the safety and welfare of students and staff, and the education programs and policies. The Board includes three elected Parent Representatives. The Board meets at least eight times each year and has at least one Annual General Meeting The Operational matters of the school are delegated to the Principal.

COMPANY MEMBERS

FIRST NAME	SURNAME	MEMBER
Nail	Aykan	Member
Mohamed	Abdulhai	Member
Aymen	Hag	Member
Leyla	Mohamoud	Member
Fawaduddin	Abro	Member
Munir	Abdulhai	Member
Dr. Salah	Ibrahim Jimi	Member
Sarah	El Wazir	Member
Ramzi	Elsayed	Member
Neda	Khan	Member
Zohra	Rashidzada	Member

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

The school is managed daily by the school Principal and General Manager as well as a team which includes the following members:

Leyla Mohamoud	Principal
Sumaya Asvat	Vice Principal
Mohamed Abdulhai	General Manager
Jashinta Budhi-Darma	Office Manager
Salim Mouladawila	Team Leader
Ammar Haque	Head of Health and Outdoor Education
Yusser Abou-Zebeid	Teacher
Sarah El Wazir	Teacher/ Student Counsellor
Belma Music	Teacher
Tasnim Alam	Specialist Teacher
Nasreen Chatili	Teacher

ISV Independent Schools Victoria

Sidrah Gardens School is a member of Independent Schools Victoria (ISV).

BOARD CHAIRPERSON

RAMZI ELSAYED

On behalf of the Sidrah Gardens School Board, I offer the heartiest salutations to staff, parents, volunteers and students for completing another successful year, Alhamdulillah.

It has been a most fruitful year of learning, improvement, and expansion. Highlights of the year include:

- Controlled growth in student numbers & staff.
- Commencement of new classrooms, build and establishment of interim facilities.
- Financial stability and achievement of modest financial surplus.



The school is proudly unique in its vision, philosophy, setting and approach.

All stakeholders, from staff, students, teachers, and parents, play a pivotal role in creating a legacy that is transformative, groundbreaking and enduring.

The school is still in its infancy with many current and future challenges. However, by the grace of Allah, we have been able to address these through perseverance and prayers.

The dedication of staff, volunteers and teachers needs to be acknowledged and commended. The often-hidden sincere sacrifices and efforts made by this team is why I am firmly optimistic for the future ahead.

On behalf of the SGS board, a sincere prayer of gratitude to the staff, students, teachers, volunteers and parents for their continued support and dedication to the school.

I wish to thank my fellow Board Members (both current and past) for all their contributions and guidance. We pray for continued and greater success in the future.

In prayer and peace

Ramzi Elsayed
Board Chairperson

PRINCIPAL

LEYLA MOHAMOUD

As we enter our third year, we are excited and proud to share updates on the growth and progress of our school. This milestone marks significant steps toward bringing our vision, into practice embracing our philosophy, and executing our strategic plans.



Our school community has grown, welcoming an increasing number of students who bring varied skills, talents and perspectives. This growth enriches our educational environment, fostering a culture of inclusivity and collaboration. Our dedicated staff continue to provide an engaging education environment, nurturing each student's unique potential.

We remain determined and committed to our core philosophy: fostering a love for learning, encouraging critical thinking, and promoting holistic development. Our curriculum and extracurricular activities are to inspire curiosity, creativity, and resilience, to help our students with the skills needed for success.

Strategically, we have focused on enhancing technology for coding and research skills to our programs. These initiatives support our goal of providing a well-rounded education that prepares students for future opportunities.

Together, we are building a vibrant and dynamic school community that stays true to our vision and philosophy.

Warm regards,

Leyla Mohamoud

Principal

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (2023-2027)

Sidrah Gardens School has set Strategic Priorities for the year. Employees work towards achieving the Strategic Priorities and evaluate their processes and outcomes every term.

Our site:

- Source funding required to secure and develop our site and establish safety grounds and classrooms.
- Wellbeing programs to be established.
- Mental Health sessions to commence and training teachers.
- Apply for government grants to extend the outdoor teaching facilities.M
- Hold fundraising events and identify key communities that can provide patronage and support.

Our people:

- Identify qualified and experienced staff to hire, including like-minded individuals to manage and teach at the school.
- Establish an open, transparent, and inclusive culture that enables us to work towards our shared vision.

Our students:

- Implement a holistic curriculum and pedagogy underpinned by reflective teaching practices.
- Provide a rich learning environment that instils a love of learning and provide our students with the tools and capabilities to be positive contributors to Australian society.
- Incorporate experiential and outdoor learning and sustainable living into our teaching methods.

Our community:

- Tread lightly, engage positively and strive to maintain positive relationships with our local neighbours.
- Foster a warm, supportive community that is socially and culturally rich, where families and neighbours are regularly encouraged to participate in events, festivals, discussions and workshops.



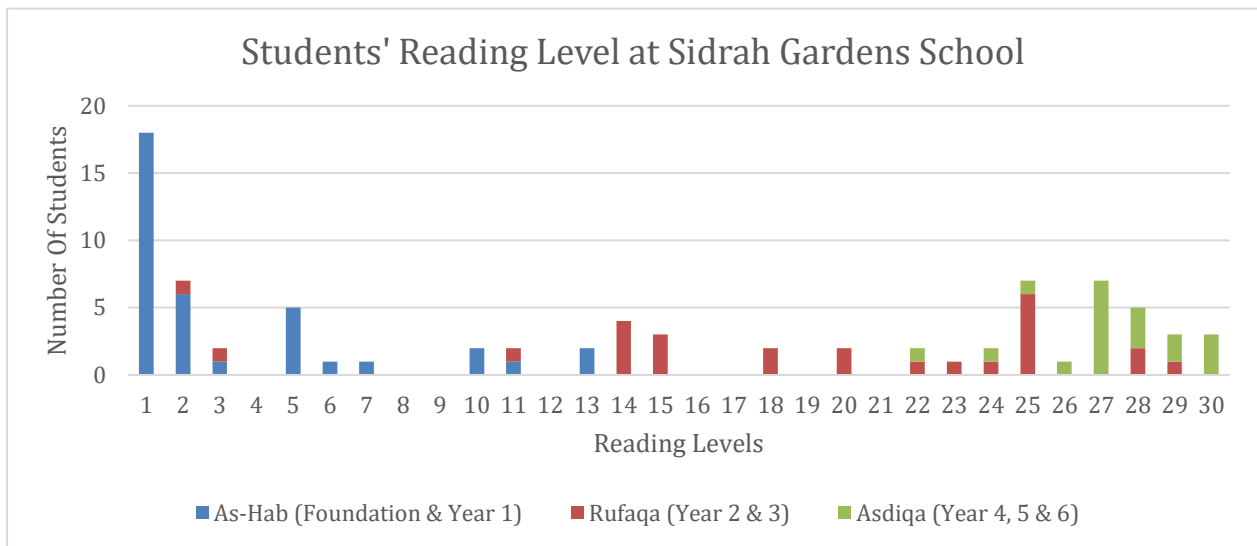
OUR BUILDING PROGRAM

End of 2023, we received building funds to commence stage one of the building project, which consist of double classroom pods. This process will take 4 months, and were successfully awarded a \$1.7M grant to build our first set of classrooms.

NAPLAN & ACADEMIC PROGRESSION

In 2023, we had two students participate in Naplan in Year 3 and didn't have Year 5. Nevertheless, the school continued to track students' progress by utilizing other forms of internal teachers' assessments and parents were involved in three main parent teachers' meetings and a student led conference. We aim to have more students to be involved in Naplan in the year 2024.

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT



PARENTS FEEDBACK

One of Sidrah Gardens School's principles is to involve parents in decision-making processes, provide regular feedback on their child's learning, and communicate curriculum information and policies. These practices aim to foster a collaborative environment that supports student success and ensures that parents are well-informed and engaged in their child's education.

At Sidrah Gardens School, we recognize the crucial role parents play in the educational process. To ensure meaningful involvement, we have implemented several strategies:

Parents communication: We have established four meetings per year, one meeting per term to meet regularly with school administration to discuss and provide input on school

policies, programs, and initiatives. The parents ensure that parents have a voice in shaping the direction of the school.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Sidrah Gardens School is an Australian school and upholds the values expressed in the Australian Government-issued 'Affirmation of Democratic Principles and Practices', which is published in many of our school publications, including the Website, Newsletters, Parents curriculum guide, etc.



PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

In Term 1, the school conducted a professional development session for parents on sex education presented by a psychologist. The parents were appreciative of the number of strategies and support they learnt and information about how to approach and educate their children around the topic. In addition, we organised parent meetings to share and explain the school philosophy and assessment programs to ensure that all parents understood the school's expectations and methods of assessments. Following that, we provided parents with information about "Trauma" and how it can affect their parenting ways. Programs are explained to parents, and new initiatives are introduced and discussed. Parents are invited to express their specific concerns or queries, and relevant staff endeavour to elaborate on and discuss them. In Term 2, our school curriculum consultant presented the school model and explained new or new-to-parent initiatives and programs. Parents are very positive and supportive of these sessions. The school also welcomes the sometimes-robust discussion of policy details that might have been misunderstood or require reconsideration or fine-tuning by the school.

One of the major aims of the parent sessions is to educate and inform parents about the school's philosophy and vision. This will help parents work with their children to make informed choices in relation to the teaching and learning approaches and teacher expectations.

Reports received at the end of 2 and 4 are also specifically directed towards parent/student/teacher interviews, and a pupil-free day is scheduled to provide every opportunity for all parents to see every teacher of each child. Interviews are scheduled into the evening to provide for working parents, and catch-up interviews are provided to ensure maximum availability. Interview take-up rates exceed 95% for every year level and parents

generally report a high degree of satisfaction with the process and the opportunities for engagement with their children’s learning that the interviews provide.

STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES

In the student-led conference, students produce a Portfolio of work that showcases their learning and then invite their parents to a presentation of their Portfolio. After conducting their parents through the discussion of the work on display, students sit in conference with their parents to discuss their own work and the meaning it has for them. Parents report being very pleased with the intimacy of this presentation and the insight into their own child’s learning it provides. Students’ confidence and competence in presenting their work is very impressive.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

What is outdoor education at Sidrah Gardens? Experiential learning within natural environments aims to cultivate positive connections with oneself and others while fostering personal growth and enhancing overall well-being. The program engages students in practical and active experiences in natural environments and settings and typically takes place beyond the school classroom. In these environments, students develop the skills and understanding to move safely and competently, valuing a positive relationship with natural environments and promoting the sustainable use of these environments.



THE ARTS

At Sidrah Gardens School, we aim to deliver an authentic and engaging Visual Arts Program that enables students to develop skills in drawing, painting and printmaking, construction and clay modelling.

By enabling students to experiment with a broad range of materials and styles, we endeavour to nurture individual expression and creativity, cultivate aesthetic awareness and develop an understanding of the elements and principles of art and design.

PRACTICE PRINCIPALS

The school has set Strategic Priorities (as mentioned above) from which Practice Principals have been derived including Priority 4 – ***To ensure improved student, parent and***

teacher satisfaction. *‘To foster positive outcomes in all interactions by promoting a prompt and caring response, good communication and a respectful manner.’* Staff are reminded of the Practice Principals at every Staff Meeting, and they appear at the top of every Staff Meeting Minutes that are distributed to staff.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Throughout 2023 the vast majority of students have maintained an attendance rate of over 90%.

Year 2023	Semester 1 (%)	Term 3 (%)	Year 2023 (% Average)
YEAR 1	84.55%	91.50	88.02
YEAR 2	90.31	93.55	91.93
YEAR 3	89.91	94.05	91.98
YEAR 4	85.71	91.77	88.74
YEAR 5	93.88	96.95	95.41

STAFF

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

All teachers must have current Registration with the Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT) and it is renewed annually. Teaching and non-teaching staff have current police checks, and all non-teaching staff have Working with Children checks. Staff are provided with Anaphylaxis management training twice each year, and First Aid training and/or upgrades are provided annually. SGS teaching staff have a minimum three-year University Degree and a Teaching degree or diploma. All staff engage in ongoing professional development and attend courses, seminars and workshops on an ongoing basis to maintain their professional skills.

STAFF ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

At the end of 2023, SGS employed 5 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers and 4 (FTE) General Staff. The average number of personal sick leave days (sick, cares, OPL leave) taken per staff member in 2023 was 5 days. The staff turnover rate for the 2023 school year was 55% (5 staff members).

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SGS is committed to encouraging and supporting the continuing professional development of its staff. Staff members at SGS will undertake ongoing professional learning that contributes to increased expertise and improved practice with the goal of improving student learning outcomes. Teachers are responsible for determining their professional learning within the context of their professional career development needs, performance appraisal outcomes, and strategic priorities of the school. The school ensures the provision of Professional Development through the allocation of direct funding for staff to attend and participate in both internal and external professional development activities.

PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

As far as possible, professional development activities at SGS are guided by the following general principles:

- Demonstrate a focus on teacher growth and extending professional knowledge
- Develop a culture of collaboration and collective responsibility for the development of effective teaching practices and improved student achievement
- Extend a teacher's professional learning and capacity in relation to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST)

Professional development and learning are delivered through various modes, both formal and informal.

These activities include:

- School-based curriculum days and briefings
- Professional conferences, seminars, workshops and networks
- Collaborative planning and teaching
- Induction of all new teaching staff
- Performance
- Online learning and structured professional reading
- Peer observations
- Professional Learning Teams



STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

All staff are expected to participate in school-based professional learning and development activities. In 2023, staff were involved in a range of professional learning activities, including:

- Information sessions for all staff on building a whole-school-model of discipline and behaviour management
- In-service for all staff on the Vision and Philosophy of the school
- Thrass – Spelling & Phonics approach
- In-house Inquiry-Based Learning session

STAFF PROFESSIONAL APPRAISAL

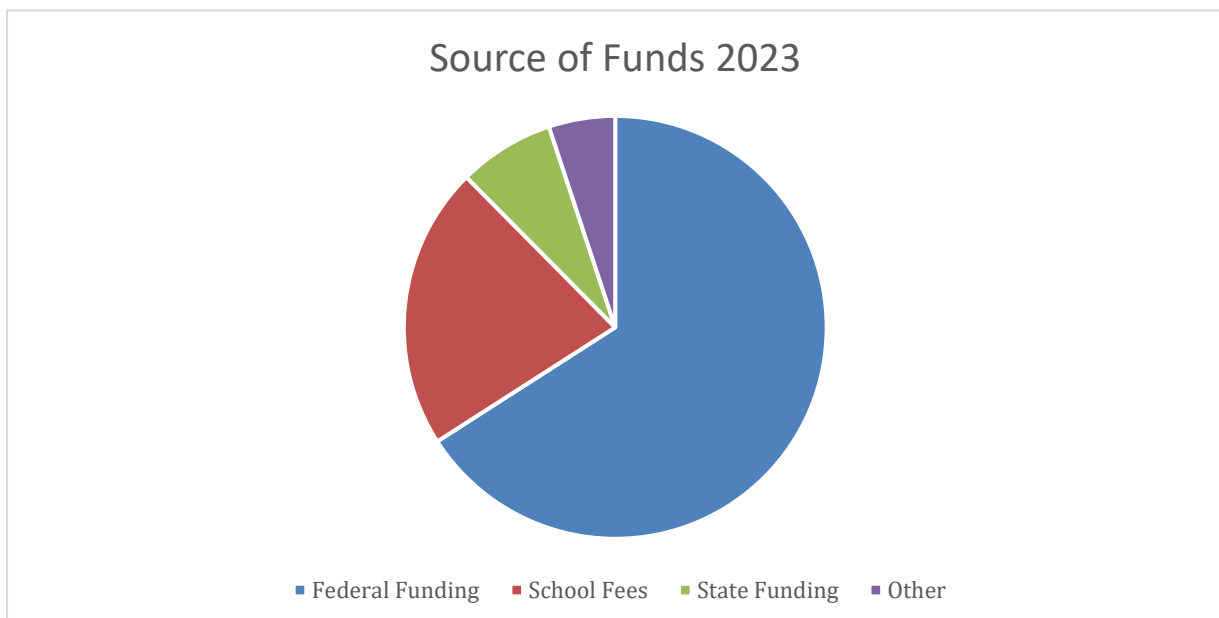
All staff undergo ongoing performance feedback based on their set goals for the year. Performance is carried out primarily by a senior teacher and principal. Teachers are continuously provided feedback and support.

- Planning and Preparation
- Management of the Learning Process
- Assessment and Testing
- Professional Practice
- Leadership in Position of Responsibility (POR)

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FUNDING SOURCES

The graph below displays funding sources for the year ended 31 December 2023



EXPENDITURE

The graph below displays expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2023

ENROLMENT & REGISTRATIONS

