



SIDRAH GARDENS SCHOOL

2024 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
Munir	Abdulhai	Member
Sarah	El Wazir	Member
Ramzi	Elsayed	Member
Zohra	Rashidzada	Member
Abdullah	Nouh	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
Ammar Haque	Head of Health and Outdoor Education
Yusser Al-Zubeidi	Teacher
Janine Hood	Teacher/ Student Counsellor
Belma Music	Teacher
Tasnim Alam	Specialist Teacher
Nasreen Chatili	Teacher
Shaheeda Abdulla	Teacher
Azka Inayah	Tacher Aide

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

BOARD CHAIRPERSON

RAMZI ELSAYED

On behalf of the Sidrah Gardens School Board, heartfelt appreciation is extended to staff, students, parents, and volunteers for completing another successful year — Alhamdulillah.

Key highlights of the year include:

- Continued growth in student enrolments and staffing
- Near finalisation of new classroom construction
- Significant financial growth, resulting in a substantial surplus

Sidrah Gardens remains distinct in its vision, philosophy, and approach. The collective efforts of staff, students, teachers, and parents are helping build a transformative and lasting legacy, inshaAllah.



Though the school is still in its early stages and faces ongoing challenges, these have been met with steadfast perseverance and prayer.

The selfless dedication of staff and volunteers, often unseen, is the foundation of continued optimism for the future.

Sincere thanks are extended to the school community and to current and former Board Members for their guidance and contributions.

We pray for continued success and growth, inshaAllah.

In prayer and peace.

Ramzi Elsayed
Board Chairperson

PRINCIPAL

LEYLA MOHAMOUD

As we enter our fourth year, we are delighted to share a significant milestone in the journey of our school, a time marked by purposeful growth, meaningful achievement, and the realisation of our founding vision.



We are especially proud to announce the completion of our new building, a beautifully designed space that reflects and supports the values and aspirations of our learning community. This expansion not only accommodates our growing student body but also enhances our capacity to deliver innovative and immersive learning experiences aligned with our educational philosophy.

Our community continues to flourish, welcoming a growing cohort of students who bring with them diverse talents, skills, and worldviews. This rich tapestry of perspectives strengthens the fabric of our school culture; one that champions inclusivity, mutual respect, and collaboration. Our dedicated educators remain steadfast in their commitment to nurturing each learner's individuality, ensuring that every child is empowered to thrive.

We continue to be guided by our core philosophy: cultivating a lifelong love of learning, nurturing intellectual curiosity, and promoting holistic development. Our curriculum and co-curricular offerings are thoughtfully crafted to foster creativity, critical thinking, and emotional resilience, essential capacities for navigating an increasingly complex world.

In alignment with our strategic goals, we have made deliberate investments in the areas of hands-on activities, permaculture and horsemanship and digital research. These enhancements equip our students with the tools and competencies necessary to engage meaningfully with the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Together, with unwavering dedication and shared purpose, we are building a dynamic, future-focused school community that remains deeply rooted in its values.

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'
- 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

In March 2024, we commenced construction of stage 2 of our masterplan, a double classroom pod with bathrooms, office space, outdoor classroom and sanctuary space. Completion of the project is expected in early 2025 which will allow for 2 additional classrooms.

NAPLAN & ACADEMIC PROGRESSION

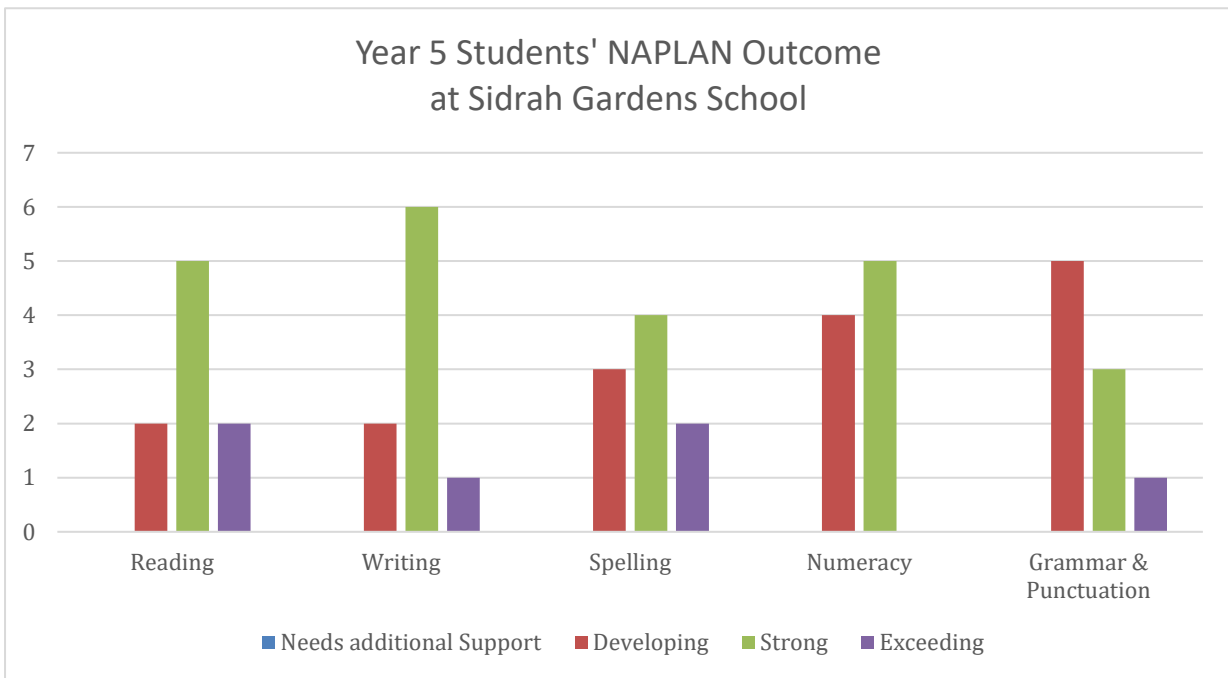
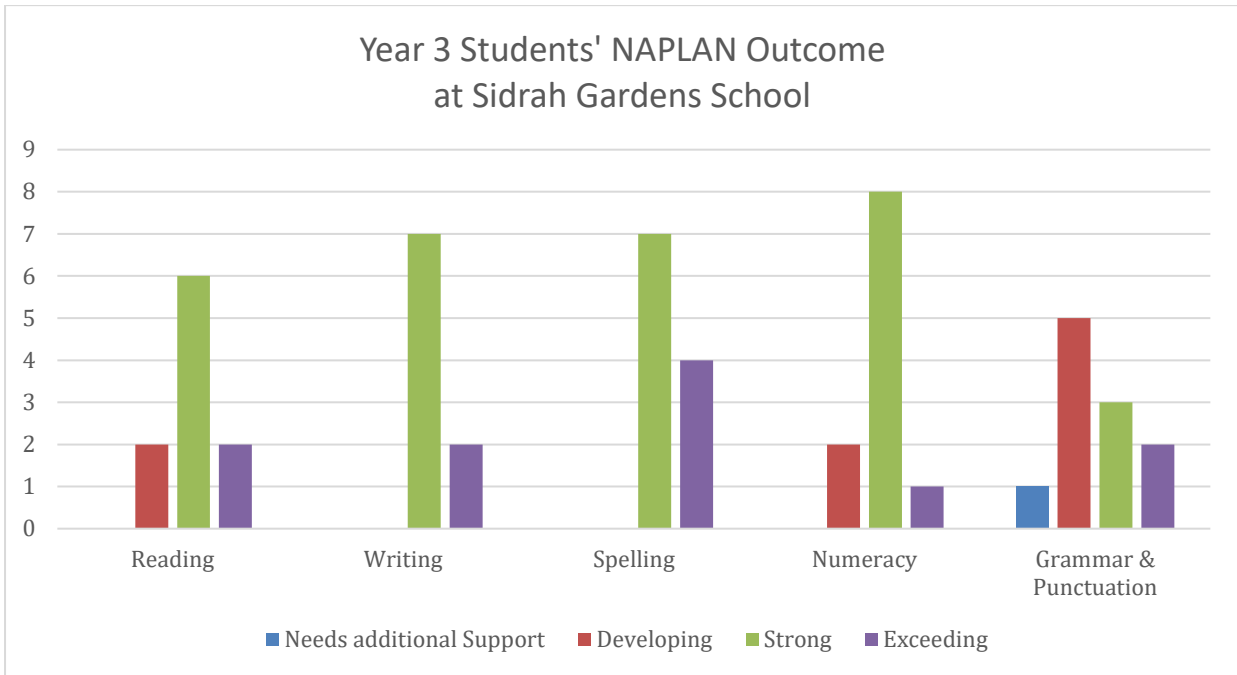
We are proud to share that 2024 marked a significant improvement in both participation and performance in NAPLAN at our school. Unlike the previous year, students from both **Year 3 and Year 5** participated in the assessments—and they performed exceptionally well across all areas, with **notable achievement in writing**.

The results from both cohorts reflect the impact of our focused approach to literacy and numeracy, and the commitment of our teachers to provide high-quality, differentiated instruction. The outstanding performance in writing is particularly encouraging, showcasing our students' growing confidence, creativity, and ability to express ideas with clarity and purpose.

Beyond NAPLAN, we continue to track student progress through a range of internal assessment tools, ensuring that learning is consistently monitored and supported. Parents were actively involved in three formal parent-teacher meetings throughout the year, as well as a student-led conference, reinforcing the strong partnership between families and educators.

As we look to the future, we aim to sustain this momentum by further supporting our students' academic growth and expanding participation in national assessments. The 2024 results are a testament to the collective effort of our students, staff, and families—and we look forward to building on this success in the years ahead.

SCHOOL ASSESSMENTS (NAPLAN)



PARENTS FEEDBACK

At Sidrah Gardens School, we deeply value the role of parents as essential partners in the educational journey. One of our guiding principles is to actively involve parents in decision-making processes, provide regular and transparent feedback on their child's learning, and share curriculum information and school policies. These practices are designed to foster a collaborative, trusting, and supportive environment that promotes student well-being and academic success.

Recognising that education is most effective when schools and families work together, we have implemented several initiatives to deepen parental engagement:

- **Parent Communication Forums:** We hold four formal meetings each year, one per term—where parents are invited to meet with school leadership. These sessions serve as a platform for parents to provide feedback, engage in open dialogue, and contribute meaningfully to the development of school policies, programs, and strategic directions.
- **Parent Workshops and Education Sessions:** To empower our families with knowledge and tools to support their children both academically and emotionally, we have introduced workshops led by educators and child development specialists. These sessions cover a range of topics, from understanding the curriculum to supporting learning at home.
- **Addressing Generational Trauma:** As part of our holistic approach to education, we are working in collaboration with a qualified psychologist to deliver a series of workshops designed to help parents understand and respond to the impact of generational trauma. These sessions aim to raise awareness, promote healing, and support the creation of nurturing home environments that align with the values and emotional needs of our students.

At Sidrah Gardens, we are committed to building a thriving school community in which parents are not only informed but are genuinely involved in shaping the educational experience. Through these collaborative efforts, we continue to ensure that every child is supported to reach their fullest potential—academically, emotionally, and spiritually.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

At Sidrah Gardens School, we are proud to be an Australian educational institution that wholeheartedly upholds the values enshrined in the Australian Government's *Affirmation of Democratic Principles and Practices*. These principles, respect for the rule of law, elected government, individual freedom, equal rights for all, and freedom of religion and speech, are not merely theoretical statements. They are actively lived and reflected in our school culture, curriculum, and community engagement.



These values are clearly articulated in our key school publications, including our Website, Newsletters, Parent Curriculum Guide, and policy documents, and are intentionally woven into the everyday life of the school.

More than just a statement, our commitment to democratic values is brought to life through our inclusive, participatory school culture. Our school calendar is rich with events and experiences that foster belonging, shared responsibility, and civic engagement:

- School Productions (e.g., The Play) provide students with opportunities to express themselves creatively, work collaboratively, and develop confidence and leadership skills. These events also serve as a celebration of student voice and talent, reinforcing the democratic ideal of self-expression.
- Community Working Bees are an embodiment of collective action and service. They demonstrate the value of cooperation, contribution to the common good, and environmental responsibility, hallmarks of a strong democratic society.
- Festivals and Cultural Celebrations are held throughout the year to honour the diversity of our community, promote mutual respect, and create space for shared joy and understanding. These events highlight the importance of freedom of belief and inclusivity, central to both our faith-based values and the broader democratic framework of Australian society.

At Sidrah Gardens, we believe that education must prepare students not just for academic success, but also for active and responsible citizenship. By embedding democratic principles into both the structural and cultural life of the school, we are cultivating compassionate, thoughtful, and engaged individuals who contribute meaningfully to their communities and the wider world.

PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

At Sidrah Gardens School, we are committed to fostering a meaningful and informed partnership with our parent community, recognising that parental engagement is vital to every child's academic, emotional, and spiritual development.

In Term 1, the school hosted a professional development session for parents on child development education, led by a qualified psychologist. The session was well-received, with parents expressing deep appreciation for the practical strategies, psychological insights, and supportive approaches shared. Many felt empowered by the guidance on how to better understand, support, and communicate with their children on complex developmental issues.

Alongside this, we conducted comprehensive parent meetings to introduce and explain the school's philosophy, assessment frameworks, and curriculum direction. These sessions ensured that families were well-informed about the school's expectations, learning methodologies, and the educational journey their children are undertaking. Special emphasis was placed on understanding the Victorian Curriculum Standards in relation to each child's age and developmental stage, and how this intersects with Child Safe policies and parenting approaches in a contemporary educational context.

We believe that informed parents are empowered parents. Therefore, programs and new initiatives are always explained in detail, with space for parents to express concerns, seek clarification, and engage in thoughtful dialogue with relevant staff. We actively welcome these conversations, even when robust, because they reflect the shared commitment of our school community to continually refine and improve the educational experience.

In Term 2, our curriculum consultant presented a detailed overview of the Sidrah Gardens educational model, unpacking both established and new initiatives. These sessions not only clarified the pedagogical thinking behind our programs but also reinforced transparency and trust. Parental feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many valuing the opportunity to gain deeper insights into how and why their children are learning in the way they are.

A core objective of all parent sessions is to strengthen alignment between home and school, ensuring that families are well-equipped to support their children in line with our shared values, vision, and learning goals.

To further support communication, Semester Reports (issued at the end of Terms 2 and 4) are closely tied to parent/student/teacher interviews. We dedicate a pupil-free day for these interviews to maximise accessibility for all families. Evening sessions are offered to accommodate working parents, and follow-up interviews are arranged where needed to ensure no family misses out. Interview participation consistently exceeds 99% across all year levels, reflecting the high value our community places on collaborative engagement. Parents frequently express a strong sense of satisfaction with the process and the deepened understanding it brings to their child's learning journey.

At Sidrah Gardens, we do not view parents as passive observers but as active partners in shaping the educational experience. Through open dialogue, shared understanding, and

joint commitment, we continue to build a school culture that places children at the centre, supported by a unified and empowered community.

STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES

In addition to the formal semester reports issued at the end of Terms 2 and 4, students participate in a student-led conference, during which they present their Reflective Portfolios. These portfolios showcase a curated collection of their work, linked to their personal learning goals and reflections. Students take ownership of the process, inviting their parents, guiding them through the displayed work, and sitting down to engage in a meaningful dialogue about their learning journey, challenges, and growth.

Parents consistently report being deeply moved by the intimacy and authenticity of these conferences, noting the unique insight it provides into their child's mindset and progress. Students' confidence, self-awareness, and communication skills are clear during these sessions, and their ability to articulate the significance of their learning is truly impressive.

To further support communication and ensure accessibility, parent/student/teacher interviews are scheduled alongside reporting periods. A pupil-free day is dedicated for these interviews, with evening appointments offered to accommodate working families. Make-up sessions are also arranged to ensure that every family can meet with teachers. Participation rates exceed 95% across all year levels, reflecting the high value placed on collaborative engagement within our school community.

At Sidrah Gardens, we do not view parents as passive observers but as active partners in shaping the educational experience. Through open dialogue, shared understanding, and joint commitment, we continue to build a school culture that places children at the centre—supported by a unified and empowered community.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION

At Sidrah Gardens, Outdoor Education is not a supplementary program, it is an integral part of our holistic approach to learning, grounded in the belief that meaningful growth happens when students are immersed in authentic, lived experiences within the natural world.

Outdoor Education at our school is founded upon the principles of experiential learning, environmental stewardship, spiritual reflection, and personal development. Rooted in both Islamic values and contemporary educational research, the program is designed to nurture the whole child, intellectually, emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually.



Learning Beyond the Classroom

While much of traditional education takes place within four walls, Outdoor Education at Sidrah Gardens invites students to step outside, literally and metaphorically. By engaging in structured learning experiences in forests, gardens, riversides, and other natural settings, students encounter challenges and opportunities that a conventional classroom cannot offer.

These experiences include:

- Navigating through bush trails
- Observing natural cycles and ecological systems
- Working collaboratively in team-building activities
- Practicing reflection and mindfulness in nature
- Participating in seasonal planting, harvesting, and permaculture-based tasks
- Engaging with Indigenous and Islamic perspectives on land, responsibility, and gratitude

THE ARTS

At Sidrah Gardens School, we are committed to delivering an authentic and dynamic Visual Arts Program that inspires creativity, fosters artistic skill, and nurtures self-expression. Through a carefully designed curriculum, students are provided with opportunities to explore and develop their abilities in drawing, painting, printmaking, construction, and clay modelling.

By engaging with a broad range of materials, techniques, and artistic styles, students are encouraged to experiment, reflect, and respond creatively to the world around them. Our program aims to cultivate a deep appreciation for the elements and principles of art and design, while supporting the development of aesthetic awareness, visual literacy, and individual artistic voice.

Through this process, students not only build technical proficiency but also gain confidence in expressing their ideas and emotions, laying the foundation for lifelong engagement with the arts.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Throughout 2024 the vast majority of students have maintained an attendance rate of over 90%.

YEAR 2024	Semester 1 (%)	Term 3 (%)	Year 2024 (% Average)
YEAR 1	94.82	90	92.41
YEAR 2	93.64	89.72	91.68
YEAR 3	96.01	92.86	94.44
YEAR 4	92.92	90.53	91.73
YEAR 5	91.36	86.61	88.98
YEAR 6	94.19	97.92	96.06

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 2024, SGS employed 6.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers and 3 (FTE) General Staff. The average number of personal sick leave days (sick, cares, OPL leave) taken per staff member in 2024 was 7.5 days. The staff turnover rate for the 2024 school year was 9.5% (2 staff members).

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

At Sidrah Gardens School (SGS), we are committed to fostering a culture of continuous professional growth and reflective practice among our staff. Ongoing professional learning is recognised as a vital component in enhancing teacher expertise and ensuring high-quality teaching and learning across the school.

All staff are encouraged and supported to engage in professional development that aligns with their individual career aspirations, performance appraisal outcomes, and the strategic priorities of the school. Teachers are expected to take ownership of their professional learning journey, identifying areas for growth that will positively impact both their practice and student outcomes.

SGS actively facilitates access to professional learning opportunities through the allocation of dedicated funding, enabling staff to participate in a wide range of internal and external professional development programs, workshops, and conferences. This investment reflects the school's belief that the continued development of its educators is essential to achieving excellence in teaching and learning.

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 at Sidrah Gardens School are expected to actively engage in ongoing, school-based professional learning and development activities as part of their commitment to continual growth and excellence in teaching practice.

In 2024, staff participated in a diverse range of professional learning opportunities designed to enhance both pedagogical knowledge and student support strategies. These included:

- Whole-school information sessions on Student Wellbeing, focusing on proactive strategies to support the emotional, social, and psychological needs of students.
- Professional development on Form Design, aimed at strengthening the integration of visual and spatial elements within the curriculum.
- Workshops on Child Development, exploring key developmental stages and their implications for differentiated teaching and learning.
- A targeted session on Inquiry-Based Learning, promoting the development of student agency, curiosity, and deeper engagement with the learning process.

These professional learning initiatives reflect the school’s commitment to equipping staff with the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the diverse needs of learners and to uphold the school’s educational vision and philosophy.

STAFF PROFESSIONAL APPRAISAL

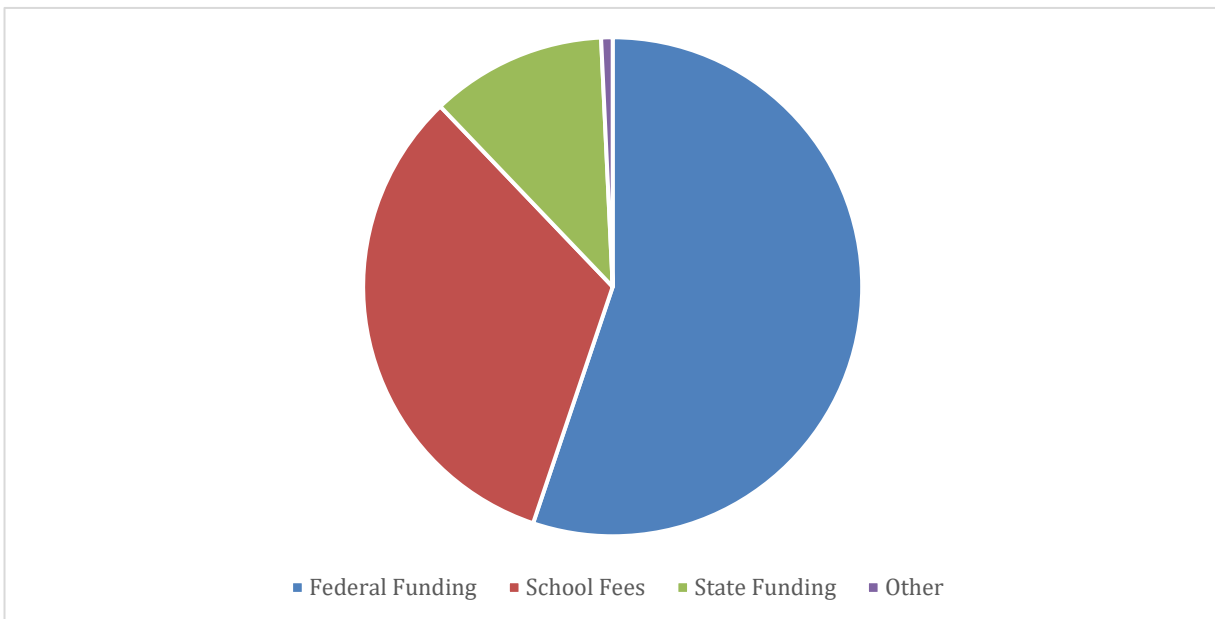
All staff undergo ongoing performance feedback based on their set goals for the year. Performance is carried out primarily by a senior teacher and principal. Teachers are continuously provided feedback and support.

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

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

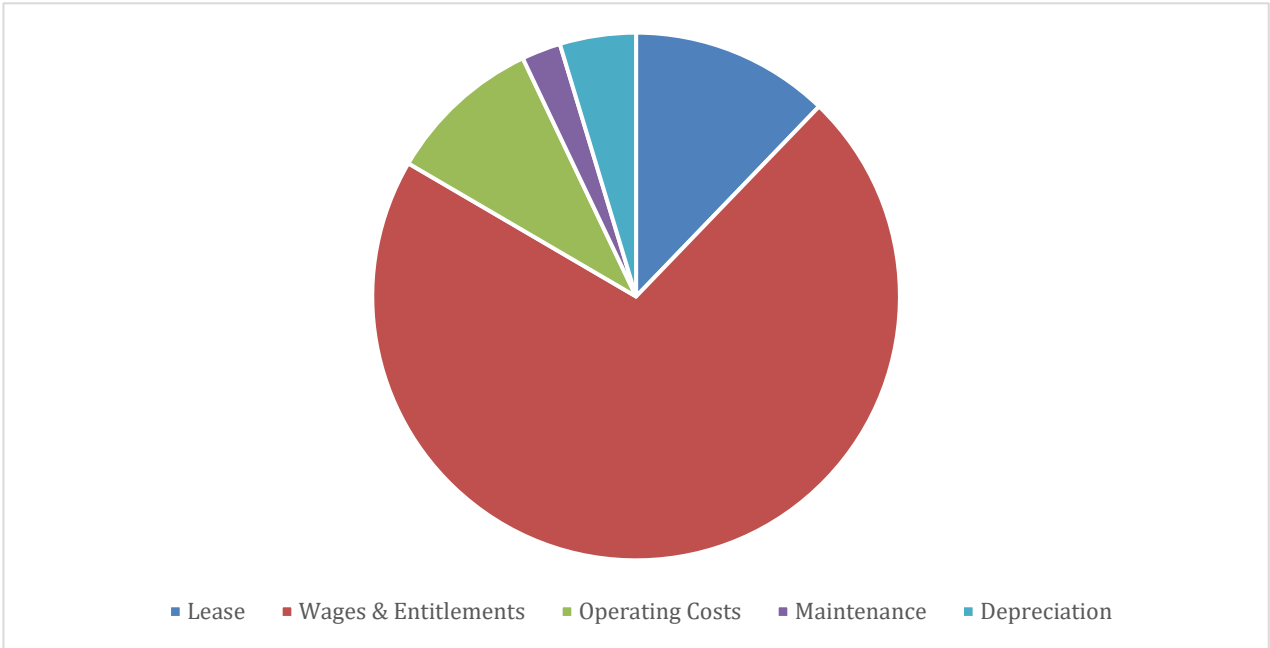
FUNDING SOURCES

The graph below displays funding sources for the year ended 31 December 2024



EXPENDITURE

The graph below displays expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2024



ENROLMENT & REGISTRATIONS

Enrolments increased in the year 2024 to a total of 83 students.

