

2015 Annual Report

Educational and Financial Reporting



Our Vision

The German International School Sydney enables your child to live a fulfilled life in tomorrow's modern, fast changing and challenging global society.

Our Mission

The German International School Sydney offers the highest quality co-education in a continuous bilingual and multi-cultural environment and is dedicated to developing the individual student's full potential.

We are committed to the best of German, European and Australian educational and cultural values mediated in a friendly and caring community.

We challenge our students to develop into responsible, reliable, competent and confident adults.

Our Values

We celebrate different cultures, opinions and standpoints.

We guide our children to appreciate openness, honesty and respect.

We aim for the highest educational quality standards.

We foster an atmosphere of peace and understanding amongst all of us.

We care for your child and provide a nurturing environment.

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Reporting Area 1: Message from Key School Bodies

The German International School Sydney hereby presents its Annual Education and Financial Report for 2015. Its purpose is to publicly disclose the school's educational and financial performance in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Government and NSW Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards.

GISS is based on the European tradition of education and operates as a "Local school with International education" from Preschool to IB Year 12. The educational concept offers a strong academic focus and provides an international campus with students representing over 20 cultures.

GISS is proud to announce academic excellence in several areas. The results of the International Baccalaureate in 2015 are the best in the school's history and far exceed the world average score.

Our Preschool holds an overall rating of "Exceeding National Quality Standards", which is only achieved by about 15% of children's services in NSW.

A standout feature of the school is the bilingual education, which enables the students to learn and communicate in different languages. This, in combination with the IB, boosts the opportunities for GISS graduates to study at elite universities worldwide.

Our students enjoy this international approach and being a part of a caring environment where students develop their individual talent in a supportive environment.

Bernd Winter

Chairman of the Board

Reporting Area 2: Contextual Information about the School and Characteristics of the Student Body

The German International School Sydney has been founded in 1989 to provide primary and secondary education. Growing over the years the School now offers a Preschool (for 3 to 5 year old children), and primary and secondary education leading to the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program in years 11 and 12.

The School is part of a network of 140 recognised German schools abroad. Although the majority of students have a German-speaking background, the School is home to students from many different backgrounds (more than 20 different nationalities), including Australians. About 40% of our students have been born in Australia.

Since 2008 the School is able to enrol students into Year 7 without prior knowledge of the German language. From 2015 onwards, students without prior knowledge of the German language are able to enrol in any class from Kindergarten to Year 11.

The School is registered with the NSW Board of Studies and fulfils at least the minimum requirements of the NSW curriculum. In the school's core strength areas – languages and science – the curriculum exceeds these requirements significantly.

In 2009 the School was awarded the quality certificate “Excellent German School Abroad” after an extensive review of the School's teaching practices and operation by an external committee of education experts.

Our Preschool holds an overall rating of “Exceeding National Quality Standards”, which it has been awarded in November 2013. The Preschool also is one of few early learning providers which is endorsed by the Little Scientists organisation for its focus on science education.

The School offers the German year 10 exams. In years 11 and 12 the School offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program since 2002. Depending on subject choice and language of instruction, students are able to achieve the bi-lingual diploma. The School does not offer the School Certificate or the HSC.

In August 2008 the School moved to its new premises in Terrey Hills. The new facilities include a purpose-built area for the Preschool, class-rooms for the primary and secondary school, specialist rooms for science, music and arts, sports hall, multifunction room. The German government contributed the majority of the funding required to build the new campus, about \$13m. In 2010 the School acquired additional land and with the support from the Australian Federal Government through its Building the Education Revolution program 2 additional buildings for classrooms and a library were constructed. The Government's contribution was \$850,000 towards the extension.

Characteristics of the Student Body

At census date the School had 272 students (excluding Preschool) of whom 146 were in primary and 126 in secondary school. In comparison to 2014 the enrolments increased in both primary and secondary school. The gender split is 53.3% boys and 46.7% girls.

The students come from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds. 82% have a background other than English. The students come from more than 20 different countries, with Germany, Australia, Switzerland, Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa and Austria being the biggest groups.

The school enrolls overseas students for primary and secondary years (a total of 15 overseas students were enrolled at census date). Senior overseas students are accommodated in host families.

Reporting Area 3: Student Outcomes in National and Statewide Tests and Examinations

2015 National Assessment Program - Literacy & Numeracy (NAPLAN) in Years 3, 5, 7, 9

In 2015 93% (2014: 96%) of our year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students participated in the National Assessment Program – Literacy & Numeracy (NAPLAN) test. Although we follow a German curriculum and the test is in English most students achieved above the national average in all aspects of the test.

The average performance of Year 3 was substantially above the national average in all of the assessment areas (reading, persuasive writing, spelling, grammar & punctuation and numeracy).

The average performance of Year 5 was above the national average in 3 of the 5 assessment areas (reading, persuasive writing and grammar & punctuation). It was close to the national average in spelling and numeracy.

The average performance of Year 7 was substantially above the national average in 2 of the assessment areas (reading and grammar & punctuation). It was above the national average in 2 assessment areas (spelling and numeracy). It was close to the national average in persuasive writing.

The average performance of Year 9 was substantially above the national average in 4 of the assessment areas (reading, persuasive writing, grammar & punctuation and numeracy). It was close to the national average in spelling.

Overall, the student's results in the NAPLAN tests were substantially above the national average in 11 of the 20 assessment areas, above the national average in 6 and similar to the national average in 3 assessment areas. Given the high number of students with a language background other than English (82%) this is an excellent achievement.

A more detailed view of the results can be obtained from the MySchool website: www.myschool.edu.au.

While the NAPLAN tests provide a good measure for a student's proficiency in the key areas of literacy and numeracy, it is the School's policy to continue to provide a broad education and a holistic view to a young person's development. Other than familiarising the students with the specific format of the NAPLAN tests the School does not specifically prepare the students for these tests.

School performance in the International Baccalaureate Diploma May 2015 examinations

In May 2015, approximately 141,800 students registered for the IB Diploma worldwide. At GISS, all seven of our Class of 2015 graduates were awarded the IB Diploma, resulting in a pass rate of 100%. Of these seven diploma graduates, four students (57%) attained the Bilingual Diploma.

The minimum pass score for the Diploma to be awarded is 24, the maximum score is 45. Our IB Diploma average score, calculated to include the retake exams in November 2015, was 36.60, which is the highest average score achieved at the school to date (world average score was 29.88).

In addition, two of our graduates received Distinction Awards from the Australasian Association of IB Schools (AAIBS) for scoring 40 or above on their Diploma; one of them scored 40 and the other scored 42. Furthermore, in an unprecedented first for GISS, all of our graduates received Merit Awards for scoring the highest grade of 7 in a subject, and/or an A for their Extended Essay and/or Theory of Knowledge Essay.

Reporting Area 4: Senior Secondary Outcomes

In 2015, 100% of the Year 12 cohort attempted and 100% attained the IB Diploma.

Reporting Area 5: Professional learning and teacher standards

Teaching Standards:

The following overview of teaching staff excludes teachers working in our Preschool. The list includes teachers who are teaching non-Board of Studies curricula.

Category	Number of Teachers
Teachers who have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines, ¹	33
Teachers who have qualifications as a graduate from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications, or	0
Teachers who do not have qualifications as described in (a) and (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context ²	0

¹ 23 teachers obtained their teaching qualifications from an overseas higher education institution (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, UK); 5 teachers, including the principal, are seconded by the German government.

² All teachers in the third category (c) have been employed due to their expertise in the content areas.

With 7 exceptions all teachers employed by the School have 5 or more years experience in teaching.

Professional Learning:

In 2015 the majority of the professional learning undertaken by teachers was in the following areas:

IB training (external)

Australian curriculum (external)

Competency-based teaching, assessment, and reporting (internal)

Content and Language Integrated Learning (internal)

One of the development priorities is the development of a curriculum for learning methods. It is progressively developed and rolled out. Experience with the first roll-out was used to refine the approach.

The total spent on teacher's professional training in 2015 was \$ 49,512. All teachers participated in at least 2 professional trainings throughout 2015.

Reporting Area 6: Workforce Composition

In 2015 the School employed 33 teachers for primary and secondary school (25 female, 8 male), 5 teachers for the Preschool (all female) and 10 non-teaching staff (7 female, 3 male). None of the staff members has an Australian indigenous heritage.

The retention rate of staff members was 82% with the average employment time 5 years and 8 months. Since 5 teachers (including the principal) are seconded from Germany for a prescribed period of time, there is on average 1 of these teachers returning to Germany each year. However, in 2015 none of the seconded teachers returned to Germany.

Reporting Area 7: Student Attendance and Retention Rates and Post-School Destinations in Secondary Schools

Student Attendance 2015

Year 1:	93.6%
Year 2:	93.2%
Year 3:	94.6%
Year 4:	94.0%
Year 5:	95.0%
Year 6:	95.2%
Year 7:	95.6%
Year 8:	95.9%
Year 9:	96.1%
Year 10:	96.8%

95.0 % of students attended school on average each school day in the year 2015 across years 1 to 10. This was lower than the daily attendance in 2014 (97.5%) and 2013 (96.3%). In this context it has to be noted that the small class size in some years has a significant impact on the attendance rate (e.g. if just 1 of 10 students in a year is sick, the attendance drops to 90%).

Management of non attendance

The School implements policy and procedures for the management of student's non attendance. Parents / Guardians are called if a student fails to come to class without prior notification from the parents. The School requires written explanation from a student's parents about the reasons of an absence and the School follows up where such written explanation is not received.

Additional procedures are in place to monitor the attendance of overseas students on student visa, which may have their visa revoked if attendance falls under a limit.

Retention Rates in Secondary School

The actual retention rate is calculated by taking the roll of students for an initial year and deducting all students who are not on the roll for a later year. The following case identifies the number of students who were enrolled in year 10 who have continued to year 12 at our school.

Years compared	Yr 10 total enrolment on census date	Yr 12 total enrolment on census date	Yr 10 enrolment at census date remaining in Yr 12 on census date	Retention rate
2004/2006	11	10	10	91%
2005/2007	9	11	9	100%
2006/2008	17	7	7	41%
2007/2009	5	7	5	100%

Years compared	Yr 10 total enrolment on census date	Yr 12 total enrolment on census date	Yr 10 enrolment at census date remaining in Yr 12 on census date	Retention rate
2008/2010	8	12	8	100%
2009/2011	12	12	9	75%
2010/2012	18	11	9	50%
2011/2013	12	12	9	75%
2012/2014	17	8	6	35%
2013/2015	10	7	5	50%

Note: The increase in enrolments from Year 10 to Year 12 is related to overseas students who come to the School for the IB Diploma Program in Years 11 and 12. The significant drops in 2006/2008, 2010/2012, and 2012/2014 was due to a large number of students moving overseas or changing school at the end of Year 10.

Post-School Destinations

Based on the information provided to the school when students leave they do so because of family circumstances (returning to Germany) or to pursue employment or vocational training.

Students who left school at the end of Year 12 following the completion of their school education continued on to University or TAFE. All students who left the School after Year 10 continued their secondary education at another school (predominantly overseas).

Reporting Area 8: Enrolment Policies

- 1.1. GISS enrolment is coordinated by the Registrar.
- 1.2. Applications for enrolment must be submitted using the official forms, meeting all requirements (as per 1.3), including supporting documentation, payments, signatures, etc.
 - a. An application is considered 'received' by the school on the date all requirements are met. Once 'received' the application will be processed and can be taken into account for GISS planning (not before).
 - b. No commitments of GISS are made before the application is 'received' as planning depends on factors that GISS can't influence.
- 1.3. Enrolment requirements:
 - a. For students to have the full benefit of the school's academic program, certain language skills in either English and/or German are a prerequisite.
 - b. Students may be required to provide evidence of language proficiency. The School reserves the right to perform its own assessment.
 - c. An offer of enrolment may be conditional on the student attending additional language classes outside of normal school (cost not covered by school fees), if the school deems this necessary.
- 1.4. The following age limits apply for enrolments:
 - a. Preschool students must be at least 3 years old;
 - b. Kindergarten: must be at least 5 years old on 30 January of the year Kindergarten commences; students who turn 5 years before 30 June of the year Kindergarten commences, may be accepted (parents can apply for early enrolment and the student is assessed by GISS).
- 1.5. Three times during the year, received applications are reviewed to inform school planning (31 March, 31 May and 31 August). GISS aims to complete the respective planning cycle within a month (including Board discussion) – with information on results/enrolment status as per 1.9 going to parents
 - a. in the first week of May,
 - b. in the first week of July and
 - c. in the first week of October.
- 1.6. Transition from 'Pre-School to Kindergarten' and 'Year 6 to Year 7' requires confirmation of continuing enrolment from parents to allow for school planning. This confirmation is to be requested from parents by 1 March and confirmation is to be received by GISS by 31 March (for the respective planning cycle).
 - a. Current Pre-School and Year 6 students are guaranteed a place, if their confirmation is received by 31 March.
 - b. Where confirmations are not received by 20 March, the GISS registrar follows up with parents individually to ensure the request has been received and the potential implications of missing the 31 March deadline are understood.
 - c. A transition fee will be charged and will be non-refundable if student does not transition.
- 1.7. GISS aims to process urgent applications (immediate school starts within the following 2 months) in between these dates. Though depending on the context, including other applications received, GISS might not be able to confirm enrolment and commencement date immediately.
- 1.8. Student applications at these review dates are prioritised by the date the application was 'received' (refer to 1.2.a), according to the following prioritisation (from first to last priority):

- a. Existing students (Playgroup, Preschool to IB) have priority and are considered enrolled for all years as applicable to them (refer to 1.6 for additional requirements).
- b. Siblings, if a sibling is enrolled or once it has been offered a place.
- c. Children of GISS alumni, if a parent has been enrolled at GISS.
- d. Company sponsored GISS students
- e. Students of GISS employees.
- f. New GISS student.

1.9. Student enrolment, including enrolment status

- a. After completion of the assessment, the School will: offer a place; or offer a place on the waiting list; or decline to accept the application for enrolment. Should a place be offered, a Letter of Offer of Enrolment will be sent for completion and payment of the Enrolment Fee will be required. Enrolment is only completed if the Acceptance of Offer is returned and the Enrolment Fee paid within the period of offer as stated on the Letter of Offer of Enrolment.
- b. If a student receives a place on the waiting list, the student will be considered for an offer, as per the waiting list, when the number of students falls under expanded/target class size. The student can then decide to join immediately or within the timeframe suggested by the school. If the student has been offered a place and does not start with the next school year, it will be removed from the waiting list and the application will be cancelled. The same applies if no decision has been made by the parents four weeks after the place has been offered.
- c. If any student declines an offered place, the application will be cancelled. In these cases a new application and application fee is required should they wish to re-apply. Any application priority for a child is lost and the student is considered a 'new GISS student'.

1.10. By signing the application form parents / guardians have to confirm that all information provided are complete and correct, especially in regards to disclosure of medical and other considerations for inclusion. Failure to fully disclose all information requested with the application may result in the School declining, delaying or terminating a student's enrolment.

Reporting Area 9: Other School Policies

A. Policies for Student Welfare

The School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which:

- minimizes the risk of harm and ensures students feel secure
- supports the physical, social, academic and emotional development of students
- provides student welfare policies and programs that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development

Within the totality of the School's policies the following policies relate to student welfare

Policy	Changes in 2015	Access to full text
Child Protection Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none">- definitions- legislative requirements- prevention strategies- reporting and investigation- documentation	Policy reviewed and updated	School Intranet
Anti-Bullying Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none">- definitions- prevention strategies- responsibilities- discipline measures	Nil	School Intranet
WH&S Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none">- safety of school grounds- emergency procedures	Nil	School Intranet

B. Policy for Discipline

Students are required to abide by the School's rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the School. Where disciplinary action is required penalties imposed vary according to the nature of the breach of discipline and a student's prior behaviour.

The full text of the School's discipline policy and associated procedures is provided to all members of the School's community through staff handbook, school intranet, newsletter and during the induction process.

The School expressly prohibits corporal punishment and does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administration of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the School.

C. Policy for Complaints and Grievance Resolution

The School's policy for dealing with complaints and grievances includes processes for raising and responding to matters of concern identified by parents, students or staff. These processes incorporate appropriate principles of procedural fairness.

The full text of the school's policy and processes is available on the school's intranet and published in the School's newsletter on a regular basis.

Reporting Area 10: School Determined Priority Areas for Improvement

Achievements of priorities identified in the School's 2014 Annual Report:

Area	Priorities	Achievements
Teaching and Learning	Monitor curriculum and student performance during transition of school year; Implement CLIL strategies in all classes	Ongoing – adjustments made during 2015 where required Implementation commenced
Student Achievements	Improve student achievements in NAPLAN with focus on spelling	Results in spelling have improved
Facilities and Resources	Review IT strategy and develop replacement program for DER-funded computer	deferred to 2016
Staff Development	Focus on training on CLIL, internal differentiation and IB curriculum changes	Internal and external training
General	Support all students during transition	Task force in place and operating

2016 Priority Areas for Improvements:

Area	Priorities
Teaching and Learning	Continue to monitor curriculum and student performance during transition of school year; Strengthen CLIL strategies in all classes
Student Achievements	Improve student achievements in NAPLAN with focus on all areas due to transition
Facilities and Resources	Review IT strategy and develop replacement program for DER-funded computer Extension for more General Learning Areas
Staff Development	Focus on training on CLIL, internal differentiation, methodologies and IB curriculum changes
General	Support all students during transition

Reporting Area 11: Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

Respect and Responsibility

The German International School Sydney wants all students to recognise that they are valued and integral parts of the school community, with parents and staff providing the care and support that engender self esteem, mutual respect and responsibility.

In the year 2015 the school again participated in an interschool program where students from our school and other Sydney based international schools jointly attended classes and cultural activities which allow them to get to know each other from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds and beliefs. The program has greatly assisted in promoting respect for the individual and the rights of others.

The German International School Sydney maintains a good relationship with most of the international schools in the greater Sydney area. Athletics, Soccer, Cross Country and Swimming carnivals see children of different cultural backgrounds interacting.

Charity work is undertaken throughout the year and forms an important part of the broader values program. Money raised through the work is distributed to a variety of charities. The school has "A girl and her world" as its major charity – this charity aims to support girls in the Pacific Islands to gain a school education.

Reporting Area 12: Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The School adheres to an 'Open Door' policy and welcomes parents to become involved in the operations of the school (Parents Representative Council). The level of parental involvement is high. The Principal is made aware of concerns or needs through regular discussions with the PRC. Regular meetings take place each month.

The school commenced the implementation of feedback mechanisms from the students to the teachers in mid 2011. After an evaluation of this approach in mid 2012 the program has been fully implemented with minor changes and became a permanent part of our feedback culture.

An annual satisfaction survey was conducted among the parents since late 2011. In general the satisfaction level of parents with the School is high. Areas for improvement have been identified (with the majority relating to facilities and communication) and working groups were established to make recommendations on how to make improvements.

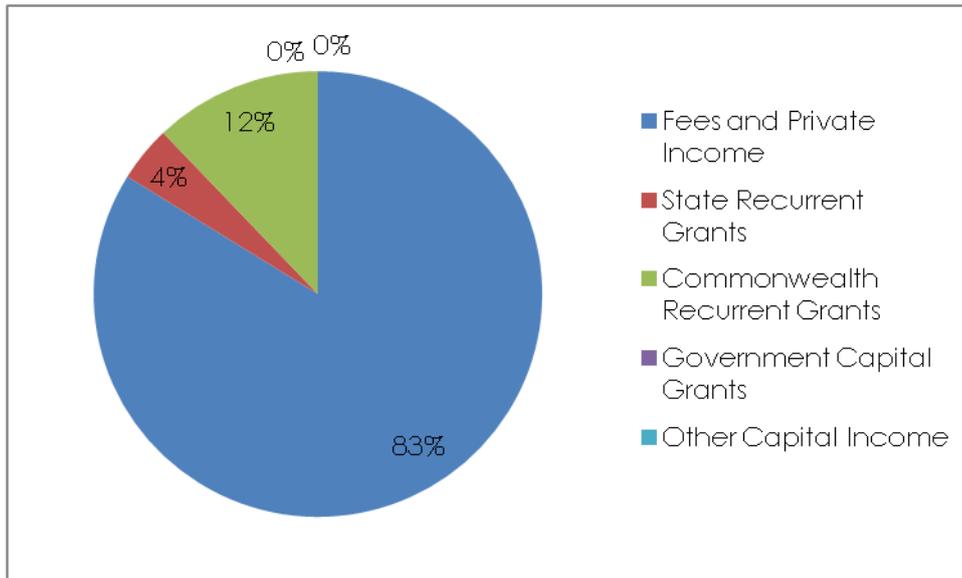
The more intimate environment at the school allows us the opportunity to probe student satisfaction. Students meet at Student Representative Council meetings to discuss issues that may affect their welfare.

The German International School Sydney promotes an open dialogue with staff and provides staff with every opportunity to express themselves on any number of issues. All staff members are valued and respected highly. The morale of staff is high. Formal meetings of each staff member with their manager (the principal or the business manager) are held at least once a year.

The Principal interviews parents when undertaking enrolments and when leaving the School. Questions asked focussed on level of satisfaction, perceived areas of improvement and communication.

Reporting Area 13: Summary Financial Information

Graphic 1: Recurrent / Capital Income for Financial Year 2015:



Graphic 2: Recurrent / Capital Expenditure for Financial Year 2015:

