



# Longreach School of Distance Education

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Queensland State School Reporting

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Department of Education and Training



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## School Overview

The Longreach School of Distance Education a Band 8 school which opened in 1987. The school caters for students from Prep to Year 10 and serves districts in Central Western Queensland as well as students further afield. The school provides a fully integrated distance education program to approximately 100 geographically isolated families and 160 children. Most of our families own or operate extensive sheep or beef properties. Distance Education is delivered through curriculum materials both digital and paper, daily telephone lessons with extensive information technology use, including web conferencing. These are supervised by a Home Tutor with support and professional assistance provided by the school. The issue that we address daily is overcoming restrictions that can happen with distance education to ensure our students receive the best education possible, so they all have the opportunity to achieve and realise their goals. The school provides outreach and inreach services to all families that include cluster days, home visits, sports skills days, culture workshops, swim camps, minischools and camps. Extra-Curricular activities are offered including a School Musical. These combine to add significant value to the lives of participating students who live in isolation from their peers. Longreach School of Distance Education is committed to providing every child with a comprehensive academic education in a supportive environment. Our program is aimed at students achieving sustained excellent academic results and to maximise the educational outcomes for every student. The school employs specific interventions to improve and maintain our excellent academic results and has measurable outcomes in the form of excellent NAPLAN results, school opinion survey and school internal monitoring data. Clear and explicit school targets for continual improvement have been set. An annual Home Tutor Workshop and follow up Home Tutor PD sessions ensures tutors have the necessary skills to implement the curriculum as the daily face of the schoolroom. Education is a team effort and our school community is like an extended family. It is the extra effort made by the staff, students, home tutors and parents that brings everyone closer together. At the Longreach School of Distance Education, we are a team who bring experience and enthusiasm to our role of providing quality education to meet the needs of all learners so they can engage in all opportunities and achieve their dreams and aspirations. We have a very strong school community where the partnership between students, parents, home tutors and school staff is highly valued. Our Vision is to provide 'Excellence in Education for Isolated Families' and our motto is 'Effort Conquers Distance'.

Imagine a classroom more than twice the size of Victoria, where the playground is as vast as the Outback and the partnership between home and school is legendary.

## Principal's Forward

### Introduction

Longreach School of Distance Education (LSODE) lives and breathes its vision of *Excellence in Education for Isolated Families*. Our Motto is "*Effort Conquers Distance*" and our school is committed to providing every child with a balanced education in a virtual and face to face environment. Our program is aimed at students achieving sustained excellent academic results and to maximise the educational outcomes for every student enrolled in our school.

The School Annual Report provides an overview of the Longreach School of Distance Education for the 2016 school year. It describes the unique characteristics of our school and its delivery of quality educational programs in a distance education setting. Student performance data in the form of key outcomes in the NAPLAN is included. Data relating to the school's staff profile and professional development priorities for 2017 is also included.

On behalf of the school leadership team I would like to say we are very proud of the achievements of our students, staff and Home Tutors outlined in this report. We plan to maintain our commitment towards continual improvement and look forward to even greater success in 2017.

A copy of this report is available on request. If you would like a copy, please contact the school.



## School Progress towards its goals in 2016

The key priority of the Longreach School of Distance Education is to continually support Home Tutors to implement the Australian Curriculum using the Individual Learning Materials. This was achieved by maintaining a strong focus on the school's four pillars of

- Quality Teachers
- Quality Instruction
- Individualised Learning and
- A Strong partnership between home and school.

### Improvement Agenda:

**School Targets-** as directly linked to the I4S

- Reading – All students reading at or above LSODE benchmarks. Every student will demonstrate a measured improvement in their reading in as indicated by the selected diagnostic assessment tool. Any students not achieving at benchmark will have a plan of support in place
- Writing - paragraphing. By term 4, 90% of students achieve year level expectations in paragraphing
- English and Maths- 85% of students achieve a C or better in English 95% of students receive a C or better in Maths
- Spelling- 70% of students spelling at or above chronological age

## NAPLAN Targets

- 100% at NMS all year levels, all domains
- 40% of students in year 3, 5 and 7 reading in the U2B and 25% of year 9
- 33% of students in year 3, 5 and 7 writing in the U2B and 25% of year 9
- 33% of students in year 3, 5 and 7 numeracy in the U2B and 25% of year 9

**Priority Areas of Development** (*Operational or organisational e.g. Behaviour, Pedagogy, Well-being, Partnerships*)

- Spelling – implement Spelling Mastery
- Number Facts – implement Numeracy Passport
- Reading- continue to refine programs
- Writing – paragraphing
- Student well-being and resilience
- Home Tutor Partnership

## Future Outlook

AREA	TARGET
Reading	90% students at or above LSODE benchmarks
English	85% students achieve a C or better
Maths	95% students achieve a C or better
NAPLAN	100% students at NMS
	50% students in years 3,5 & 7 and 25% in year 9 in U2B - Reading
	33% students in years 3,5 & 7 and 25% in year 9 in U2B for writing and numeracy

- Continue instrumental music online trial
- Continual improvement of the ILM and alignment of on-air and field service program.
- Cater for non GI enrolments
- Prep – small schools project

# Our School at a Glance

## School Profile

<b>Coeducational or single sex:</b>	Coeducational
<b>Independent Public School:</b>	No
<b>Year levels offered in 2016:</b>	Early Childhood - Year 10
<b>Student enrolments for this school:</b>	

	Total	Girls	Boys	Indigenous	Enrolment Continuity (Feb – Nov)
<b>2014</b>	157	84	73	5	92%
<b>2015*</b>	166	94	72	6	88%
<b>2016</b>	154	86	68	2	81%

Student counts are based on the Census (August) enrolment collection.

\*From 2015, data for all state high schools include Year 7 students. Prior to 2015, only state high schools offering Year 7 had these students included in their counts.

In 2016, there were no students enrolled in a pre-Prep\*\* program.

## Characteristics of the Student Body

### Overview

The majority of students are enrolled from geographically isolated locations across Central Western Queensland, with the balance from across the state and some travelling overseas. The worst drought in recent history is having an impact on rural families enrolled with the school. Many were forced to leave their properties in search of alternate employment.

### Average Class Sizes

The following table shows the average class size information for each phase of schooling.

AVERAGE CLASS SIZES			
Phase	2014	2015*	2016
Prep – Year 3	10	10	10
Year 4 – Year 7	8	9	10
Year 8 – Year 10	3	4	4
Year 11 – Year 12			

\*From 2015, data for all state high schools include Year 7 students. Prior to 2015, only state high schools offering Year 7 had these students included in their counts.

## Curriculum Delivery

### Our Approach to Curriculum Delivery

The school offers a curriculum from eKindy and Prep to Year 10. Day to day lessons are co-delivered in the home by a Home Tutor and the school's teaching staff.

Our school provides students with a blended curriculum through a combination of paper and eLearn materials, daily on air lessons incorporating blackboard courses, use of web cams and Collaborate. This is further supported by daily telephone reading lessons and our comprehensive field service program.

The school has a coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that ensures consistent teaching and learning expectations. The plan has been developed and refined collaboratively to provide a shared vision for curriculum practice with teachers, support staff, Home Tutors and students. The school value adds to the curriculum materials by school wide implementation of several programs completed by the students.

Our field service program offers a range of events including clusters, Minischools, sports skills days, camps and carnivals where students, home tutors, parents and staff are able to meet and engage in a range of academic, sporting and social activities. These occur throughout the year in a range of geographic locations.

Our school is unique in that almost every geographically isolated student has internet access and can access to the school's computer hire scheme.

### **Co-curricular Activities**

At every Minischool teachers provided a varied range of opportunities for students to undertake extra curricula activities after school and in the evenings that they cannot normally access at home and that also maximises the face to face time students have with each other. These vary each Minischool and depending on the expertise of the staff and the available local activities in Longreach. This extra curricula activity, involving all students, staff and a large number of Home Tutors adds significant value to the lives of students who live in isolation to their peers. Every two years the school has a whole school full-scale production, musical. Our students also have the opportunity to be part of District and Regional sporting teams. Students in years 5 & 6 take part in an excursion to Canberra and the snow every second year. Secondary students take part in a careers excursion to Townsville.

### **How Information and Communication Technologies are used to Assist Learning**

The use of computers and associated Information and Communication Technology is integral to the delivery of Distance Education programs. All students enrolled at LSOE either own a computer or access the school computer hire program. Every student every day will use some form of ICT.

All on air lessons are delivered using both telephone and internet - iConnect, providing real-time, dynamic engaging and interactive lessons for all students.

With on-line delivery of interactive learning opportunities the school is a School of the Future providing students and home tutors with world class educational services. Within years it could be expected that all of our primary school programs will be delivered on-line bringing almost an end to the use of paper-based materials which have been used for decades.

Some travelling families and those without internet service are still able to access paper materials with digital backup.

## **Social Climate**

### **Overview**

Our Vision is to provide "Excellence in Education for Isolated Families" and our Motto is "Effort Conquers Distance."

Our school is a very friendly family oriented school which is characterised by traditional rural values and progressive thinking. Data collected in the School Opinion Surveys indicate that a very high percentage of parents and students believe that LSOE is a "good school."

The nature of the school and the on-air program means that our teachers are 'in' every family home every day. In order for us to live our vision there must be an honest and productive working relationship between the teacher and the home tutor. This contributes to a very positive school climate. 100% of parents reported their child is getting a good education at this school.

We have an active, supportive and caring school community that recognises and values the strength of the partnership which exists between students, home tutors, parents and the staff. The school enjoys a strong degree of parent participation in planning and review processes through the Parents' & Citizens' Association. Open parent forums conducted each term on-air and face to face are a popular and successful means of involving the community in consultation throughout the school.

The School Chaplain is in integral part of our school and operates on-air program as well as joining in all field service events. The Parent Liaison Officer also plays a pivotal role in the relationship between home and school particularly in this time of drought.

## Parent, Student and Staff Satisfaction

### Parent opinion survey

Performance measure			
Percentage of parents/caregivers who agree# that:	2014	2015	2016
their child is getting a good education at school (S2016)	95%	100%	97%
this is a good school (S2035)	98%	100%	100%
their child likes being at this school* (S2001)	95%	100%	97%
their child feels safe at this school* (S2002)	98%	100%	100%
their child's learning needs are being met at this school* (S2003)	95%	96%	91%
their child is making good progress at this school* (S2004)	93%	100%	97%
teachers at this school expect their child to do his or her best* (S2005)	95%	100%	94%
teachers at this school provide their child with useful feedback about his or her school work* (S2006)	88%	100%	94%
teachers at this school motivate their child to learn* (S2007)	88%	96%	97%
teachers at this school treat students fairly* (S2008)	98%	88%	94%
they can talk to their child's teachers about their concerns* (S2009)	95%	96%	94%
this school works with them to support their child's learning* (S2010)	90%	92%	94%
this school takes parents' opinions seriously* (S2011)	93%	100%	97%
student behaviour is well managed at this school* (S2012)	98%	96%	100%
this school looks for ways to improve* (S2013)	98%	100%	97%
this school is well maintained* (S2014)	98%	100%	97%

### Student opinion survey

Performance measure			
Percentage of students who agree# that:	2014	2015	2016
they are getting a good education at school (S2048)	100%	100%	100%
they like being at their school* (S2036)	100%	100%	100%
they feel safe at their school* (S2037)	100%	100%	100%
their teachers motivate them to learn* (S2038)	100%	100%	100%
their teachers expect them to do their best* (S2039)	100%	100%	100%
their teachers provide them with useful feedback about their school work* (S2040)	100%	97%	100%
teachers treat students fairly at their school* (S2041)	100%	100%	94%
they can talk to their teachers about their concerns* (S2042)	98%	97%	97%
their school takes students' opinions seriously* (S2043)	97%	100%	97%
student behaviour is well managed at their school* (S2044)	100%	97%	97%
their school looks for ways to improve* (S2045)	100%	100%	97%
their school is well maintained* (S2046)	100%	100%	97%
their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things* (S2047)	100%	97%	100%

## Staff opinion survey

Performance measure			
Percentage of school staff who agree# that:	2014	2015	2016
they enjoy working at their school (S2069)	97%	90%	100%
they feel that their school is a safe place in which to work (S2070)	100%	97%	100%
they receive useful feedback about their work at their school (S2071)	97%	73%	97%
they feel confident embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across the learning areas (S2114)	91%	89%	89%
students are encouraged to do their best at their school (S2072)	97%	87%	100%
students are treated fairly at their school (S2073)	100%	97%	100%
student behaviour is well managed at their school (S2074)	100%	93%	100%
staff are well supported at their school (S2075)	91%	86%	97%
their school takes staff opinions seriously (S2076)	88%	85%	97%
their school looks for ways to improve (S2077)	94%	87%	100%
their school is well maintained (S2078)	100%	93%	100%
their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things (S2079)	97%	87%	100%

\* Nationally agreed student and parent/caregiver items

# 'Agree' represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement.

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

### Parent and community engagement

The very nature of Distance Education involves parents directly in delivering their child's education. Home Tutors (usually a parent or a governess) work in partnership with their class teacher to provide an effective and safe learning environment to teach their students. For this to occur seamlessly there is regular contact with Home Tutors. Procedures are in place to encourage a school-wide, shared responsibility for student learning and success, and to encourage the development of a culture of continuous improvement.

Delivery of curriculum occurs through print and digital material, on air programs and through face to face contact during Field Services.

Home Tutor Workshops are an annual three-day event where the school runs sessions to provide the Home Tutors with skills they need every day to teach their child in the school room. The majority of students have their mothers as the daily face of their education as their Home Tutor, therefore to ensure that our students are receiving the best education possible, it is essential that we continue to provide high quality professional development and skills to our Home Tutors to give them the necessary skills and confidence to deliver quality education to their children. We acknowledge the importance of Home Tutors as partners and as facilitators in the educational process. Through the Home Tutor Workshop we encourage Home Tutors to work with teachers to maximise learning outcomes.

The skills obtained by the Home Tutors enable them to continue to develop our students through a differentiated framework, where our aim is to develop the whole child to their full potential, while embracing geographic isolation.

The school community is incredibly strong with an enthusiastic and active P&C association who develop their own programs and agendas to support the school.

### Respectful relationships programs

The school has developed and implemented programs that focus on appropriate, respectful and healthy relationships. These are delivered during face to face opportunities as well as over the air. Students are taught about respectful behaviours and relationships in all situations. There is a culture of no put downs and respecting everyone's opinion in the school.

## School Disciplinary Absences

The following table shows the count of incidents for students recommended for each type of school disciplinary absence reported at the school.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY ABSENCES			
Type	2014*	2015**	2016
Short Suspensions – 1 to 5 days	0	0	0
Long Suspensions – 6 to 20 days	0	0	0
Exclusions	0	0	0
Cancellations of Enrolment	0	0	0

\* Caution should be used when comparing post 2013 SDA data as amendments to EGPA disciplinary provisions and changes in methodology created time series breaks in 2014 and 2015.

\*\*From 2015, Exclusion represents principal decisions to exclude rather than recommendations for exclusion. From 2015 where a principal decided not to exclude, a small number of recommendations for exclusions have been counted as a long suspension. Exclusions, Cancellations and Long & Charge Suspensions may be upheld or set aside through an appeals process.

## Environmental Footprint

### Reducing the school's environmental footprint

The school continues to be mindful of its environmental footprint. Energy efficient light bulbs and ceiling fans are installed throughout the school.

Effective water practices such as dripper systems are used. Drought years impact significantly on the school grounds and immediate environment. The school holds a competition on alternate years to create recyclable indestructible plants rather than have pot plants around the school. This proved popular with school families. A new air conditioning system has been fitted recently and this should help alleviate some of the electricity bill

ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT INDICATORS		
Years	Electricity kWh	Water kL
2013-2014	264,177	0
2014-2015	281,454	
2015-2016		2,957

The consumption data is compiled from sources including ERM, Ergon reports and utilities data entered into OneSchool by each school. The data provides an indication of the consumption trend in each of the utility categories which impact on the school's environmental footprint.

## School Funding

### School income broken down by funding source

School income, reported by financial year accounting cycle using standardized national methodologies and broken down by funding source is available via the *My School* website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

To access our income details, click on the *My School* link above. You will then be taken to the *My School* website with the following **'Find a school' text box**.

## Find a school

Sector:

Government

Non-government

Where it states '**School name**', type in the name of the school you wish to view, select the school from the drop-down list and select <GO>. Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to confirm that you are not a robot then by clicking continue, you acknowledge that you have read, accepted and agree to the **Terms of Use** and **Privacy Policy** before being given access to the school's *profile* webpage.

School financial information is available by selecting '**School finances**' in the menu box in the top left corner of the school's profile webpage. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of income by funding source.

## Our Staff Profile

### Workforce Composition

#### Staff composition, including Indigenous staff

2016 WORKFORCE COMPOSITION			
Description	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	27	15	0
Full-time Equivalent	24	11	0

#### Qualification of all teachers

TEACHER* QUALIFICATIONS	
Highest level of qualification	Number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school
Doctorate	0
Masters	2
Graduate Diploma etc.**	6
Bachelor degree	17
Diploma	2
Certificate	

\*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

\*\*Graduate Diploma etc. includes Graduate Diploma, Bachelor Honours Degree, and Graduate Certificate.

## Professional Development

### Expenditure On and Teacher Participation in Professional Development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2016 were \$ 43 444

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

- Writing – continuation 7 Steps
- Numeracy Passport
- Reading skills through the Reading Centre
- Digital Technology
- IMPACT

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2016 was 100%

## Staff Attendance and Retention

### Staff attendance

AVERAGE STAFF ATTENDANCE (%)			
Description	2014	2015	2016
Staff attendance for permanent and temporary staff and school leaders.	98%	97%	98%

### Proportion of Staff Retained from the Previous School Year

From the end of the previous school year, 84% of staff was retained by the school for the entire 2016.

## Performance of Our Students

### Key Student Outcomes

#### Student Attendance

##### Student attendance

The table below shows the attendance information for all students at this school:

STUDENT ATTENDANCE 2016			
Description	2014	2015	2016
The overall attendance rate* for the students at this school (shown as a percentage).	100%	100%	100%
The attendance rate for Indigenous students at this school (shown as a percentage).	100%	100%	100%

\*The student attendance rate is generated by dividing the total of full-days and part-days that students attended, and comparing this to the total of all possible days for students to attend, expressed as a percentage.

The overall student attendance rate in 2016 for all Queensland SDE/EU/SP schools was 100%.

AVERAGE STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATE* (%) FOR EACH YEAR LEVEL													
Year Level	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
2014	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2015	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
2016	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

\*Attendance rates effectively count attendance for every student for every day of attendance in Semester 1. The student attendance rate is generated by dividing the total of full-days and part-days that students attended, and comparing this to the total of all possible days for students to attend, expressed as a percentage.

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

### Description of how non-attendance is managed by the school

Non-attendance is managed in state schools in line with the DET procedures, *Managing Student Absences and Enforcing Enrolment and Attendance at State Schools* and *Roll Marking in State Schools*, which outline processes for managing and recording student attendance and absenteeism. Our very close relationship with our families ensures maximum attendance

## NAPLAN

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are available via the My School website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

To access our NAPLAN results, click on the My School link above. You will then be taken to the My School website with the following **'Find a school' text box**.

### Find a school

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Suburb, town or postcode

Sector:

Government

Non-government

Where it states **'School name'**, type in the name of the school you wish to view, select the school from the drop-down list and select <GO>. Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to confirm that you are not a robot then by clicking continue, you acknowledge that you have read, accepted and agree to the **Terms of Use** and **Privacy Policy** before being given access to the school's *profile* webpage.

School NAPLAN information is available by selecting **'NAPLAN'** in the menu box in the top left corner of the school's profile webpage. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.

## Conclusion

Our school offers high quality education for students from all parts of the country. Families in Western Australia, ACT, New South Wales and other parts of Queensland have chosen Longreach School of Distance Education as a school of choice based on the results we achieve, the support we provide and our ability to meet individual needs.

As the number of geographically isolated students steadily increases, we look forward to welcoming more students from across the country to be part of our school.

