Our school at a glance

Minerva school is a school for specific purposes for students in years 3-12. Our school motto “Making the student with special needs a successful part of the community” underpins our daily programs as we endeavour to do just that, prepare the student for life within the community.

Every student at Minerva has individual learning needs. We provide varied teaching and learning experiences so that each child may reach their full potential. The use of alternate activities and programs to enhance engagement has seen positive outcomes for the students.

Work experience, integration, interschool sport and a new sensory garden are some of the ways in which we motivate our students whilst they attend to the Board of Studies K-6 and Life Skills syllabus.

We have strong links to the community through our association with rotary and the parent community. It is through these relationships that we are able to expand the resources we have so as to support the key learning areas.

Significant programs and initiatives

In 2012 Minerva School addressed all areas of the DEC K-6 Curriculum and 7-12 Life Skills Curriculum.

Student achievement in 2012

All Minerva students have an Individual Learning Support Plan jointly developed in collaboration with the class teacher, parent/carers and relevant personnel. Students work at their own rate within the framework of the Board of Studies K-6 and 7-12 Life Skills curriculum.

Messages

Principal’s message

This report provides our whole school community with a range of information and data on school achievements, initiatives for the 2012 school year. It also reports on student achievement in a range of areas.

The 2012 school year was a busy and rewarding year for both students and staff. The year began with the Sydney Opening of the School Year honouring Local Heroes. Harry Jessep our long standing volunteer was nominated as our Local Hero. The school captain gave a speech and presented Harry with a certificate and bouquet of flowers in recognition of his ongoing dedication to the students and staff at Minerva.
Our school continues to be recognised in the community as one with a good reputation for high standards and expectations. We were thrilled to be nominated and receive an award from Sydney Region Public Schools for ‘Outstanding School Achievement’.

There was again pleasing growth for our school in terms of academic and vocational student achievement, curriculum development and delivery, student leadership and successful transition to work programs.

The staff work hard to instill in our student body a love of lifelong learning and students who strive to become successful members of the community. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff at Minerva School for their commitment and dedication to the students.

I would also like to thank our parents, carers and community members who continue to give generously of their time and expertise. The P&C have been a wonderful support to the school and their contributions are valued by the whole school community.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self–evaluation process and is balanced and genuine account of the school’s achievements and areas for development.

Fiona Young, Principal

P & C message

Your 2012 Minerva P&C committee members are: Christine and Peter Damcevski, Christine Farrell, Deb Hunt and Rosemary Connor.

We wish to thank Minerva parents, family and friends and our community supporters for your continued support throughout the year.

The P&C is proud of its achievements in 2012 and highlights included:

*2012 DEC Sydney Region Awards winner-Minerva School for outstanding student outcomes, nominated by P&C. An outstanding achievement, and a first for an SSP school,

*P&C paid $4,000 towards the purchase of an interactive whiteboard, installed in Miss Diane’s room,

*Woolworths and Coles vouchers. P&C Members networked within the wider community to maximise our efforts. As a result thousands of dollars of resources will be used by our children in their classrooms in 2013 and beyond. A truly outstanding effort!,

*P&C BBQ to farewell Mr Geoff at Gunamatta bay, free social event for families,

*P&C using funds from Mr Geoff to purchase and assemble trikes, and purchase helmets.

*Easter, Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Christmas raffles /stalls continued to both raise money and provide a fun activity for our students,

*Year 12 jerseys and Year 12 Formal paid by P &C,

*P&C organised flowers for Miss Sue, in appreciation for her hard work and support towards families, as Office Administration Manager,
*P&C and School working collaboratively to gain Tax deduction status for contributions to the school and we can now actively support Minerva teachers to apply for a larger range of grants and donations,

*P&C donated $200 to Students Rep Council (SRC) in recognition of their contribution to school fundraising activities,

*P&C BBQ, Open Afternoon, free social event for families,

*P&C organised a ‘Thank you’ morning tea for Minerva staff in appreciation of their hard work and dedication, and as in past years, your P&C donated the trophies at this year’s Presentation Day.

We wish to acknowledge our hard working school staff for their quality programs, innovative methods and care shown to our children. In a school this size, teacher’s wear many hats. Our children enjoy band, dance, cooking, art, industrial arts, buddies, life skills, community access etc. Such a varied curriculum makes school life interesting and is a good balance to the literacy and numeracy curriculum.

We look forward to what will hopefully be a very productive 2013. Please, should anyone be interested in helping the P&C in any capacity, your input is most welcomed. We invite anyone to come to our meetings next year, as new ideas are most welcome. It’s a great way to make a difference and support your child’s school.

Christine Damcevski
on behalf of Minerva P&C Association

School context

Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student enrolment profile

Minerva SSP provides an education for students with mild and moderate intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, autism and challenging behaviours. As a special school, students enrolled at the school must be placed through the Regional Placement Panel process and not directly by the school. The maximum enrolment is 63, due to the high support needs of our students.

A table of our school’s enrolment profile over the last five years is displayed immediately below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student attendance profile

Management of non-attendance

Student non-attendance is managed by;

- Teachers recording absences in class rolls
- Communication Books
- Phone
Post-school destinations

Post school option discussions begin as soon as possible in the students schooling so as to map the path they are likely to take once formal schooling ceases.

During Year 12 each student’s transition to a post school environment is supported throughout the year and this is supplemented by the EXPO that is held at a range of other schools and community venues.

There were 6 students in the graduating class of 2012. One student enrolled at St George TAFE in Term 2. One student entered a community participation program. One student began a transition to work program at Civic Industries, three students enrolled in 2013 NOVA Transition to Work Program. One Year 10 student was accepted into Loftus TAFE computer course.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

All of the Year 12 students attained their Higher School Certificate Life Skills. The students participate and work towards the life skills outcomes stated in each of the curriculum areas.

One student completed Certificate 1 Retail TVET (discrete) – Gymea TAFE.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

In 2012 99% of Year 12 students attained the Higher School Certificate Life Skills.

Staff establishment

Staff information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SSP Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP Teacher of Emotional Disabilities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP Teacher of Mild Intellectual</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP Teacher RFF</td>
<td>0.672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP Careers Advisor</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSP Unique/Emergency Supplementation</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Teacher Entitlement</td>
<td>10.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>11.279</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce.

Minerva School does not currently comprise of any members of staff who are from an Indigenous background.

Staff retention

During 2012 one classroom teacher fulfilled the role of Relieving Assistant Principal, Term 1 for the substantive Assistant Principal who was on leave.

The School Administration Officer was appointed by merit selection to another school at the end of Term 2. This position was filled by merit selection and was taken up from the beginning of Term 3.

There were no other staffing changes during 2012.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meets the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. All full and part-time teachers have either a Degree or Diploma in Education. Teachers are encouraged to undertake further training to enhance professional development.
### Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### New Scheme Teachers

New scheme teachers must meet the NSW Institute of Teachers’ accreditation requirements and achieve a standard of Professional Competence within a timeframe.

There are currently two New Scheme Teachers working at Minerva school. These teachers have met with their supervisors regularly over the course of 2012 in order to seek guidance and mentoring in their teaching. Minerva School provides a supportive environment for new teachers and prides itself on producing teachers that are competent and skilled in the area of special education. Both teachers have since completed their accreditation folders, one teacher having been approved at Professional Competence in 2012, and one teacher awaiting feedback.

As New Scheme Teachers, they have also been encouraged to regularly attend a variety of courses for professional development. After receiving their certificates of accreditation they will be working towards accruing 100 hours of professional development to maintain their status.

### Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>84537.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>101395.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>73274.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>15996.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>4282.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>4488.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>283975.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Expenditure</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching &amp; learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key learning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracurricular dissections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual relief teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-operated canteen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Balance carried forward** | 89908.45 |

A full copy of the school’s 2012 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2012

Achievements

Literacy and Sensory Integration

The focus for 2012 was to continue the graded Reading and Spelling programs. Student results at the end of 2012 showed the majority of students had achieved improvements in reading ages. Data showed continued growth in the streamed spelling groups. Reading and Spelling groups will continue in 2013.

Another focus area was enhancing and building sensory programs to meet the diverse needs of the students. The Sensory Garden was expanded in 2012 and has continued into 2013.

School targets were addressed by:

- All teaching and School Learning Support Staff participating in online courses.
- Numeracy resources were constructed for whole school implementation.
- Maintaining Spelling groups.
- Development of online learning practices and digital learning resources such as blogs and wikis to support literacy and numeracy development and engagement.

Sport

Sport is a significant program within the school. Below is a list of activities coordinated throughout 2012.

The annual Whole school combined Swimming Carnival was held at Sutherland Aquatic Centre. Other participating schools were Engadine & Endeavour.

A Whole school Combined Athletics Carnival at Wararatah Oval Sutherland with participating schools from Engadine, Endeavour & Sir Joseph Banks.

7 primary students attended the DEC – 10 day Intensive Swim Program at Sutherland Aquatic Centre.

A Special Olympics Soccer Tournament was held every Monday in Terms 2 & 3 at Endeavour HS. Other participating schools were Endeavour, Engadine, James Cook & Sir Joseph Banks. The Minerva team went through undefeated in their Division.

Class C&D participated in a sailing program run by volunteers from “Sailability” at Kogarah Bay Sailing Club.

Students competed in the Sydney East Regional and NSW Combined High Schools (CHS) Swimming Carnivals at Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre and 2 students competed in the Sydney East Regional and NSW Combined High Schools (CHS) Athletics Carnivals at Sydney Olympic Park. One student won a Bronze medal in the Javelin. Other events entered were the Discus, Shot Put, Long Jump & 100m sprint.
The School Sport program was supported by grants received through the Active After School Community (AASC) program.

This program supported:

* Surf Survival conducted by Council Lifeguards at Cronulla Surf Living Club.

* Swimming at Sutherland Leisure Centre

Three other sport programs were delivered by outside coaches at Minerva; United Taekwondo - Marshall Arts; Term 2 & 3, Got Game: - Multi Ball Skills & Games; Terms 2, 3 & 4 and Hey De Ho Music - Dance & Movement; Terms 2, 3 & 4.

Academic

NAPLAN

Minerva school supported parent requests, whereby two Year 7 students and one Year 9 student attempted NAPLAN 2012

Literacy-NAPLAN Year 7

Two students attempted the Literacy- Year 7 - NAPLAN

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 7

Two students attempted the Numeracy Year 7 - NAPLAN

Literacy-NAPLAN Year 9

One student attempted the Literacy- Year 9 - NAPLAN

Numeracy – NAPLAN Year 9

One Year 9 student attempted the Numeracy Year 9 - NAPLAN

RoSA

One student attained their RoSA, Record of School Achievement, Year 10 Life Skills in 2012.

Higher School Certificate

Five students attained their Higher School Certificate, Life Skills in 2012.

Significant programs and initiatives

In 2012 Minerva School addressed all areas of the DEC K-6 Curriculum and 7-12 Life Skills Curriculum.

- Literacy and Numeracy
- Aboriginal education
- Multicultural education
- Environmental education

Other programs offered included;

- Inter-school sporting competitions
- Swim School
- In - School and Community work experience programs
- Community Participation programs

Aboriginal education

Minerva school is committed to promoting the educational achievements of all indigenous students and to enhancing the knowledge and understanding of all students about Aboriginal Australia. Each class teacher has incorporated into their class programs activities and initiatives aimed at raising this awareness in 2012. Aboriginal readers were purchased to supplement the reading resources. These are accessed by all students.
During NAIDOC week in July, all students were engaged in a range of activities based on Aboriginal art and culture. The students were able to replicate a variety of aboriginal paintings using materials from the surrounding gardens such as pebbles, bark and coloured chalk. Art work also included painting the Aboriginal Flag, paper didgeridoos, boomerangs and dot symbol art. Students work was displayed around the school.

The Aboriginal grandfather of one of our students is always invited to support his grandson in delivering ‘Acknowledgement of Country’ at official school gatherings such as Presentation Day. The Aboriginal mural covering the length of a brick wall facing the internal playground continues to be a feature within the school.

**Multicultural education**

Minerva School is an inclusive environment where individual student differences are respected and valued. Whether that difference is a special need, individual belief system or country of origin all staff consciously strive to ensure all students receive an education and foster tolerance in a racism free learning environment which caters to individual cultural learning needs.

With the implementation of quality teaching practices our learning programs are culturally inclusive and address issues such as racism and discrimination. The learning programs include topics and experiences that are relevant to our students to increase engagement and connectedness to learning and the community. Diversity and cultural knowledge is recognised and valued at Minerva School.

**Other programs**

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

As part of our goal for future directions in 2012, we implemented a classroom-based component of work skills teaching and learning. The work skills centre was created to enhance the in-school work experience program across the whole school, catering specifically for the changing needs of the student clientele and providing an inclusive program for all students. Classes access this resource on a regular basis throughout the school year.

12 students participated successfully in the workplace learning program outside of school. Students participated for up to 21 weeks, several progressing from one stage of the program to another at the commencement of a second semester. This included the Minerva School Supported Group Workplace Learning (SGWL) at Civic Industries, Caringbah; and the Cross District Supported Work Experience Program (CDSWEP), at Petcare Taren Point, Lark Ellen Nursing Home Sutherland, and Coles, Hurstville – Westfield.

Two students participated in independent work experience in a range of areas including Hospitality, and Information Technology, one of these students progressed from a supported workplace site to an independent site. Their placements were successful with positive reports.
from employers reflecting on the skills they had learned and enthusiasm and interest shown.

One student working at a retail site with a supported work crew was undertaking work placement linked to her TAFE delivered Retail vocational education and training (TVET) course. This gave the student experiences designed to contextualise and practice the skills she had learned during her course and provided opportunities to develop and assess her achievement of competency in an authentic retail setting.

One student was accepted for a placement in a TVET course (TAFE delivered vocational education and training) - Business studies at St George TAFE for 2013.

Four students are eligible to be considered for placement in a 2014 TVET course.

Future directions
The structure of the workplace learning program must be flexible enough to meet the ever changing needs of our students. A continued focus on individualizing the workplace learning experiences of students will ensure that students’ workplace learning skills are maximized.

One Year 12 student completed the 2nd year a 2 year course: Certificate 1 Retail TVET (discrete) – Gymea TAFE.

Student Representative Council
The Student Representative Council plays an important role within the school community. The students voted in the school hall which reflected a real-life election. Most students were eager to be elected as they view these positions as having importance within the school. The elected students were encouraged to be good role models for their peers and were provided with many opportunities to drive initiatives within the school.

This year, the SRC has raised much need money for the school. The student representatives were involved in the organising of activities, the promotion of events, the collection of money and feedback to the school on their achievements. The money raised has gone towards the purchase of new blinds for the school hall.

The SRC have been heavily involved in the running of weekly assemblies. There have been many changes implemented in 2012 in an effort to increase engagement and to be more inclusive of a wider variety of students. Members of the SRC are now responsible for the running of assemblies including hosting the event and assisting with the power-point visuals on the Interactive White Board. This year’s presentation day was presented by our school captains and SRC representatives with great professionalism.

Progress on 2012 targets

Target 1
Improved Literacy, Numeracy and Aboriginal Education Outcomes for students
Our achievements include:

- Streamed spelling groups were assessed at the end of 2012. Groups will continue in 2013 due to documented evidence of improved student spelling outcomes.
- Documented data reflected improved reading skills in 56% of the student population.
- Naidoc Week was celebrated and students participated in a range of Aboriginal cultural activities.
- ‘Reading Eggs’, ‘Spell-o-drome’ and ‘Mathletics’ subscription continued across the school.
- All teaching staff completed ‘Count Me In too’ professional development
- Successful merger of the ICT centre and Library
- School Wiki and blogs expanded.
• Successful participation in the Sydney Region iPad trial 2012 specifically testing literacy and numeracy applications and their long term viability within the school setting.

**Target 2**

**Improve Teacher Quality by Building School Capacity**

Our achievements include:

• Three staff participated in TLSI Teacher Leadership for School Improvement
• Every Student Every School participation with 4 other SSP’s to develop an extensive resource to be implemented across the region
• Staff attended career development training and Executive staff participated in professional Leadership courses
• Increased focus for supervisors on mentoring their colleagues
• Classroom teachers were provided opportunities to relieve for Executives on leave
• Whole school professional development in Literacy and Numeracy

**Target 3**

**Improved environmental education of students and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.**

Our achievements include:

• New gardens have been established including expansion of the veggie patch.
• Blockout blinds fitted to the hall and 2 classrooms facing west
• Classes continue to use the recycling program with good success.

**School evaluation**

NSW public schools conduct evaluation to support the effective implementation of the school plan. In 2012 our school carried out evaluation of school planning to raise the profile of the school within the local and broader community.

To address this staff and the parent community agreed the School Brochure did not reflect the many changes throughout the school. A new brochure is nearing completion and is due for distribution in 2013.

Staff have continued to work closely with the P&C to provide detailed information via grant submissions and flyers to the local community about the school and its programs. This has led to an increase in community funding to support student programs such as the sensory garden and IWBs, a focus area of the 2012-2014 school plan.

**Future directions**

Maintain focus on improving sensory integration programs and resources. Continued professional development of the new curriculum and its implementation across the school in 2014. Increase community participation programs and work experience within the school.

**Professional learning**

Funding is received to support professional learning within the school. All staff are offered professional training within the school and externally. All staff are encouraged to select training opportunities that will enhance their skills and meet their professional goals.

Two teachers at the school were awarded their professional competence through the NSW Institute of Teachers.

Professional Development for staff throughout the year;

• Weekly staff meetings
• Weekly team meetings that support the School Plan and ongoing mentoring by Executive staff.
• 5 school development days per year.
• Professional development meetings with 4 other special needs schools to develop an extensive resource to be implemented across the region through the Every Student Every School initiative.
• asthma training,
• child protection,
• Laura did a master class workshop on Autism/Aspergers with Sue Larkey,
• Count me in too - Numeracy,
• Team Leadership for School Improvement K-12.
• inclusion for learners with speech, language and communication needs,
• regular information Computer Technology Training Days

School planning 2012—2014
The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department’s planning documents.

School priority 1
Improved Literacy, Numeracy and Aboriginal Education learning outcomes for students.

Outcome for 2012–2014
All students achieving appropriate outcomes in accordance with their individual learning programs.

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
• To increase the percentage of students achieving growth in reading and spelling ages.
• To increase the percentage of students achieving growth in numeracy outcome.
• Embedding the Aboriginal Education and Communities Policy across the curriculum.

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
• Professional development and implementation of new curriculum changes in English
• Modifications to literacy and numeracy programs to include the use of new technology and software to support individual literacy and numeracy goals
• Increase student engagement with the integration of technology in teaching and learning practices.

School priority 2
Engagement and Attainment

Outcome for 2012–2014
Increased participation and engagement levels across all KLAs including school centered work skills programs.

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
• To increase individual rates of student participation and engagement through collaboration and attainment
• To increase student retention rates in years 10 to 12 to 100% by 2014
• To decrease student suspension rates

Strategies to achieve these targets include:
• Continued expansion of sensory garden underway
• The ICT centre was successfully merged with the school library.
• Professional development on the new Australian curriculum
• A range of activities developed to support the In-School Work Experience Program.
• Continue investigation and implementation of online learning practices and digital learning resources
• Two additional IWBs installed into classrooms
• Establishment of a dedicated music room for access by all students.
• Expand sensory integration programs across the school.
• Continued development of the restructured living and work skills centre
• Consolidation of interagency support and development of proactive strategies.
About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

Mrs F Young, Principal
Ms T Gocher, Assistant Principal
Mr R Hely, Assistant Principal
Ms K Shacallis, Assistant Principal
Teaching Staff; Ms M Cooney, Ms L Gaunt, Mr A Kartsonas, Mrs J Marshall, Mr C Sinton, Ms D Slater and Ms C Wemyss.

School contact information

Minerva School
Eton Street SUTHERLAND 2232
Ph: 02 9521 3433
Fax: 02 9545 3316
Email: minerva-s.school@det.gov.au
Web: www.minerva-s.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 5616

Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at: