



Avalon Public School Annual Report 2020

President's Report

Well, I can't say I'll be sad to see the end of 2020. It's certainly not been the year that we were expecting or hoping for.

The first 6 weeks started as usual and we achieved a lot in a short space of time. Our 2 new canteen managers had settled in and were making great improvements to the operation. Uniform sales were significant with over \$13,000 taken in one day and the new POS system was working well and had improved efficiency. OOSH child numbers were also significant with around 80 students for some sessions with others on the waitlist. Garden Club had also hit the ground running and we held the first of what we hoped would be many working bees at the end of February.

The P&C Executive had met to discuss roles and responsibilities for the year and I was working with Employure to implement updated contracts and job descriptions for our employees as well as conduct a WHS audit of the uniform shop, canteen and OOSH space.

Lastly, we held a morning tea open to all to brainstorm and discuss options for fundraising and social events for the year including re-vamping the Mother's and Father's Day stalls. The ideas and enthusiasm that flowed from that meeting were exciting and we were looking forward to turning some of those ideas into reality.

Then COVID hit and our priorities changed... The focus switched to protecting and supporting our business areas and our employees. I am so proud with the way the P&C Executive and Sandra Skelly managed this process. We were quick to react and work through possible scenarios and options to support our staff as well as understand the financial impact so that when the school did have to close its doors to the majority of students and our income streams and work for our employees dried up, we could reassure them all that they would continue to be supported.

Our engagement with Employure also became hugely important in assisting us to navigate through the initial confusion of the JobKeeper program before we received clarity from the government. Although, we were finally reimbursed by the ATO, the upfront cost of JobKeeper was \$30,000 every 4 weeks – a significant commitment. JobKeeper was replaced by a different childcare subsidy by the government in July and JobKeeper for all other employees ceased at the end of September.

The way that all our businesses and the Band committee stepped up to ensure continuity during this year has been nothing short of incredible. I couldn't be prouder of all employees, managers and volunteers in how they have kept going despite different and significant challenges being thrown at them weekly, if not daily. The creativity and ingenuity in keeping the band program running and the canteen, uniform store and OOSH open and ensuring that we could continue to provide services to our students and community has been outstanding.

Fundraising activities were curtailed this year but again with some creativity and leadership from Mel Dalton, we were able to run a successful Father's Day stall and raised over \$4000. This was our only fundraising event for the year.

Moving into Term 4, it has been good to see some light at the end of the dark tunnel that was 2020 with the restrictions easing. All our programs and businesses have weathered the storm and we are well-placed both financially and structurally for 2021.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the School Executive for the continued and wonderful support of the P&C. I would like to thank all our employees for their hard work, dedication and commitment, all community members who have held a position of responsibility across one of the areas this year. It's certainly not the year we were anticipating and their leadership has been exceptional.

Special mention and thanks must go to those parents who are stepping down from their committee role at the end of 2020:

Pete Edwards – P&C Treasurer, Emma Wake – P&C Secretary, Jess Robertson – Band President, Leanne Austin – Band Treasurer, Natascha Lansdell – Dance Convenor



Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped in some capacity – canteen, Father's Day stall, band parent, uniform store etc. We appreciate your time and support. Special recognition and mention must go to Vanessa Edwards. Not only did she have the role as Dance Convenor for a number of years, but she also has earned her nickname as a 'Super Volunteer'. Over the 12 years she has had a child at this school, she could be relied on to step up and help no matter what and often at short notice. We are so grateful and we will miss her commitment and her regular attendance and input at P&C meetings.

To the P&C Executive and Sandra Skelly, our bookkeeper, I thank you for your support, advice and counsel. Thank you to Pete Edwards who is stepping down after 2 years in the role. His wisdom, pragmatism and sense of humour has made working together a pleasure.

Lastly to the school community as a whole, thank you for your wonderful support of the P&C and Avalon School, it is deeply appreciated and never taken for granted!

Steph Stoddard - President

Treasurer's Report

As some of you know, I'm relinquishing the role of Treasurer at this meeting. After our family's wonderful association with Avalon Public School that has lasted 12 years and our 3 children all having successfully and happily graduated and gone on to High School – it's time for me to pass the baton after 2 years in the role.

I'm very pleased to say that, despite the obvious problems we've all faced, particularly in the last year with the lack of ability to fundraise, the P&C Funds remain in a very healthy position. Hopefully, we'll be able to resume fund raising this year again?

Our major capital spend project being the new OOSH building will obviously need significant funding at some time in the (hopefully) near future and it seems after a lot of meetings and discussions in the last couple of years that Government funding and support has now, unfortunately, been withdrawn. This means the P&C will almost certainly need to fund the project entirely or, at least plan and budget that way, and we've therefore set that budget at \$350,000. This is obviously a huge cost to us and we'll need to carefully consider additional funding projects in the future. It's been a pleasure to be able to contribute in a small way in this role and to be able to give back to our wonderful school.

I'd like to thank all the P&C Committee, but in particular Steph for her dedication, leadership and support. Sandra for all her help and support behind the scenes and to Andy for making it such an easy and enjoyable working relationship between the school and the P&C.

Pete Edwards - Treasurer

Out of Hours School Care (OOSH)

Like everyone else the children and OOSH crew have had an interesting year. We closed our doors the week before the April holidays to all but essential workers. We were not open for vacation care in April but Sarah and Karen took the opportunity to participate in a couple of online courses relevant to COVID.

On our return to Before and After school care our staff worked shorter and less shifts due to us having less children to accommodate and to keep ourselves and the children safe from close contact. We are pleased to report that not one staff member suffered even a cold over that time.

We are now back to full staff capacity and our numbers are averaging around the 60 mark each afternoon and 40ish in the morning. We are looking forward to increasing this next year and hope to be able to give our staff further shifts.

Our Summer program is on the website and we have started taking bookings for the holidays and for 2021. We are currently sitting at around the 55 - 60 mark for After school care for 2021.

We would all like to take the opportunity to thank the P & C for their support during this last year and look forward to 2021.

Karen Gill – Manager OOSH

Dance

- All dance groups were formed after auditions early in Term 1. However, due to COVID-19, no performances were able to go ahead.
- All families received a refund of \$160 in Term 3.
- The balance of bank account is \$3,915. \$3.5K will be transferred to the school to use towards the performing arts as agreed at a previous P&C meeting.
- Dance costumes have been paid for and will be used in 2021, therefore we should still have surplus funds in the account once fees are paid next year.
- A new Dance convenor will need to be appointed for 2021

Natascha Lansdell – Dance Convenor



Band Program



Last night (3/12/20), we should have been celebrating the BIG BAND BASH. Instead, we are collating recordings and videos of our wonderful bands so that we can still share with you how much they have achieved in the strangest of years. We are hoping that we can provide you with the link to view by the end of next week so keep a look out!

We are very proud of how well Avalon Band Program weathered the COVID storm. Somehow, we managed to keep going and keep our students learning. We have all had to be flexible, resilient and supportive and our young musicians have demonstrated many of these qualities this year. It has been a tough year for band but there have been lots of wonderful moments too. I certainly have many funny stories and touching ones as well, to take away from band in 2020. We have also managed to attract very strong interest in Training Band 2021 with close to 60 students applying. This means that we have been able to continue with the implementation of a plan for 2021 that has been in the making for many years. This is very exciting news!

Most similar sized schools to Avalon have a 4-band program and for good reason. It is the very best way to sustain a strong program and maximise the experience and learning opportunities for students. In 2021 we will move to this model and have bands based primarily on year groups but with the flexibility to offer extension and/or support based on individual student needs. Each band will be slightly smaller initially than if we continued under the 3-band structure, which will enable us to really target individual development. Due to our strong numbers, we are still able to create 4 balanced teams and we anticipate that over time this new structure will further limit the number of students who leave the program before they complete Year 6.

Throughout Term 4 I have been undertaking a review of each student. Charles, Rachel and I have carefully considered how we can best support each musician in our program in 2021. Our goal is to give each individual the best development opportunity. You will receive a letter of offer for 2021 for your child including comments. It will indicate which band they have been placed in for next year. The majority of students will be with their age/friendship group but there are a few students that we will place in alternative bands for various reasons. Certainly, extension of advanced students is a consideration but also identifying which environment we think will be most beneficial to each student's development at this time. I can't think of a single student in the program this year that has not thrilled us with their progress and we feel very lucky to be able to shape things to benefit them in this way. We are very happy to answer any queries you may have about this as we have thought carefully about every musician in our care.

REHEARSAL TIMES

Training Band: (Year 3 beginners in 2021) Monday & Wednesday 8.25am- 9.20am.

Concert Band: Monday & Wednesday 7.20am for 7.30am start.

Senior Band: Tuesday & Thursday 8.25am- 9.20am

Performance Band: Tuesday & Thursday 7.20am for 7.30am start.

Our plans for 2021 include many performances and our fabulous band camp. Looking forward to a fantastic year. Thank you to our amazing band committee who worked tirelessly to help Charlie and I keep the program alive. Special thanks to our outgoing band committee members who have given us the most professionally run program I have ever known. Thank you to Sam Bateson for her unwavering support. Thank you to our wonderful Year 6s who stayed strong. We will miss you so much but look forward to hearing great things of you all.

Bring on band in 2021!

Jess Robertson, Amy Young, Liv Smith – Band Presidents
Sarah Shaw – Director of Bands

Uniform

The Uniform Shop has been quite affected by COVID this year as we have had to significantly change our opening hours to ensure the safety of all of our students. This has led to more online orders being placed and less customers visiting the shop. However we have continued to provide a quality service and to be as accommodating to parents as possible.



We have also had delays with stock arriving from overseas which has been a bit of a challenge to manage although hasn't led to too much disruption in being able to offer stock to our customers.

The Square online ordering system has worked very well for us this year. We haven't managed to migrate our Flexischools service over to Square yet which was the intention this year but we have still noted great benefit from using the system. The lack of progression was largely due to COVID and difficulties with the Square system being managed from the United States.

New Supplier

We have started working with a new supplier this year, a local based company based in Brookvale, 'Profile Apparel'. They are able to offer us more favourable prices for our garments, storage of larger quantities of stock and a fantastic personal service. We are now sourcing winter tartan pants, our green and sport polos, summer dresses and school bags from them.

New Logo

There has been some inconsistency over the years with different variations of the school logo on different garments, so, before placing our new orders for this year we decided to agree a consistent logo with the School Exec team and the P&C. Our new logo items are currently in production and we look forward to their arrival!!

Statistics

There have been a total of 1,879 Flexischools orders this year. In store sales have dropped quite drastically from 367 sales in Term 1 to 77 sales in Term 3 and 43 sales in Term 4 to date. This has likely been due to the restricted opening hours due to COVID as well as seasonal variations in demand for uniform.

Kindy Orientation Video

As the Kindergarten Orientation in its traditional format had to be cancelled due to COVID, the uniform shop, with the help of some very eager and willing students, produced a video showcasing the uniform and providing information on how to order. This was aimed at helping new parents make informed choices about uniform without having to necessarily come into the uniform shop.

Kindy 2021 Opening Hours

To accommodate the new Kindergarten 2021 intake we have set aside 3 dates where parents can book an appointment through the [schoolinterviews.com.au](https://www.schoolinterviews.com.au) website to attend an appointment to browse and purchase uniform. This will avoid the usual lengthy queues we have had in the past and facilitate a safe and controlled environment for the large number of new starters to come through the uniform shop.

Plans for 2021

We hope to see a return to some degree of normality next year so that we can extend the opening hours and make it more accessible for parents. We also hope to move over from Flexischools to the online shop via Square to make purchases, stock control and stock management much more streamlined and efficient.

Mel Dalton – Uniform Shop Manager

Canteen

What an eventful year 2020 has been for us all!! Despite the challenges of the year we have had an exciting and fun time in the canteen.

For the first time the canteen has been officially named- Av-A-Bite, chosen by four year 5 students. We plan to have a logo developed and the name then painted on the wall above the canteen to give it a true identity.

Staff and Volunteers

In March we had Kirsty Van Der Wallen join the team on a Thursday and Friday, our busiest days. Kirsty has been a very welcome and valuable addition and we love working with her.

We have 3 regular volunteers who dedicate their time and love to the school. Marzie comes in to help with our hugely popular Waffle Wednesday. Annette joins us on a Wednesday morning and Vita helps out on crazy Friday's where she spends a ridiculous amount of time tending to the vast number of chicken goujon orders!

We put out an appeal to the school for volunteers and had a few people come in and help as a result, however we still would love, and need more regular helpers. We plan to work on this next year with setting up a roster and booking system to make communicating with volunteers an easier process.

Events

There have been a large number of events we have catered for this year, including:-

Swim carnival

Athletics carnival

Cross Country

Melbourne Cup buffet

Numerous staff functions

Purple ribbon day- \$650 proceeds from all the 'purple' items sold over the counter were donated.

Menu

Our menu has received an overhaul as we have introduced new items and removed less popular items, all whilst adhering to the Healthy Schools Canteen Strategy criteria. We have our popular daily specials, and many new and exciting recipes on our menu, including Spaghetti and Meatballs, Pasta Napolitana and San Choy Bow.

Our new morning tea option of the Munch Box and Yoghurt Crunch have been extremely well received. We have sold 400 munch boxes since introducing them in Term 3.

Birthday Bundles were introduced when it was announced that due to COVID restrictions, students could no longer bring in shared food from home. These have meant that students can continue to celebrate their birthday at school with friends. We have sold:-

116 icy pole packages which is a total of 3,320 icy poles!!!

34 muffin packages which totalled 940 muffins we made and decorated!!

Birthday Bundles have added a total of \$2170 to our income.

We are proud to be using local businesses for our 'bought in' food. We have developed a great working relationship with Patersons Pies, Wasabi, Amber Waves, The Cheer Factory and Feed Me Too Gluten free range. Our Butter Chicken from The Cheer Factory has proved a massive hit, selling a total of 691 portions!

Statistics

There have been a total of 27,970 orders to date this year, the breakdown of which is as follows:-

Term 1- 5104 orders

Term 2 - 5587 orders-(Covid closure affected)

Term 3 - 9629 orders

Term 4 - 7650 orders to date!!

This equates to over 1,200 items bagged per day.

Our over the counter sales have also rocketed with us being busy for the majority of the 45 minute lunch period where students are able to purchase from the canteen. In term 3 we banked \$12,902 in over the counter sales cash and term 4 to date we have banked \$9,230.

Fun Facts

27,400 goujons sold this year which equals 6850 orders!

4404 Frozen fruit cups through Flexischools alone, and possibly the same again in over-the-counter sales!!

Plans for 2021

Next June we are due to renew our Healthy School Canteen Strategy achievement certificate. This is a mandatory requirement for all NSW Government schools for all canteens to meet the requirements of the Strategy by adhering to the Food and Drink criteria. This is a big undertaking and requires us to resubmit our full menu to be assessed to ensure we are meeting the criteria in relation to every item and ingredient we use.

We also plan to work hard to recruit more volunteers to regularly help us in the canteen. This will include developing a full induction package for them as well as a system for recruiting and communicating with new and existing volunteers.

Mel West & Mel Dalton – Canteen Managers

GARDEN CLUB



Although it has been a difficult year in the face of COVID with restrictions initially in place limiting onsite Gardening capacity, Garden Club, in the last term especially, has been moving forward in leaps and bounds.

We have been involved with various Year 3 classes creating an amazing Garden out the front of M Block. Initially instigated by Sam Bateson with a small selection of plants donated by the Northern Beaches council, the project became a little bigger than either of us could have imagined. We now have planted out over 120 various native trees and shrubs. This has been a rewarding collaboration between Garden club, Teachers and Students. The engagement from students and pride that they feel in being a part of this project I feel has inspired Students to want to be able to do more outdoor learning at the School and makes them aware of the possibilities, especially visually when they can contribute in a positive way. Garden Club is currently awaiting for the arrival of some Laser Cut Corten Steel Kangaroo sculptures to be placed in the garden to add another visual dimension, a Gift from the P&C and Garden Club to the School.

Last week we planted out Mrs. Carlsson's memorial garden which has been widely received with thanks from various teachers.

We are currently working toward the completion of the front of the Hall School garden so that it will be ready in time for the Year 6 School formal. Another massive undertaking. All plants have been donated by the P&C.

The Bellevue Avenue Garden is still a work in progress, not forgotten. Vanda Skavaas won a \$2000 grant. The intention with the money is to buy a Wheelbarrow, some Subpods and a propagation bench. We are still finalising planting areas, this will then be able to be used by the school for outdoor activities and learning. Parents, Beki and Patrick Ross, have donated a Stainless steel kitchen sink which we are hoping to plumb in and use as an outdoor sink. All grey water would be returned to the garden beds. We are also looking at replacing the existing Garden shed with a larger one. Not only will this allow for tools and equipment to be stored safely it will also be waterproof, which the current one is not.

Today we also received a delivery from ANL. Part of the delivery is ALOT of potting mix to finish installing the remainder of the wicking beds, and of course the completion of a small picket fence now that a modified design has been decided upon. The delivery was also comprised of other product to be used around the school, such as some sandstone blocks to be used as a feature in the gardens.

The Awesome Outdoor Garden, which we won the \$30,000 grant for, will commence construction next week. This will take place out the front of N Block. We are hoping that, like the other amazing garden that the students were involved in, that they will be just as involved in creating this new space. Again, setback because of COVID haven't allowed any working bees on site. This is something that hopefully will be able to happen in the New Year. Until then, we will keep chipping away at it, it will be the main focus of Garden Club to get it completed and up and running as soon as possible so it can be opened up for Student use and for Teachers to be able to bring it into the curriculum early in the new year.

Garden Club would like at this point to extend a big thankyou to Sue Winstanley, Amber Almeling and Phil Perks for their outstanding generosity of time, support and physical grunt! In order for Garden Club to continue to flourish and grow, without them, none of this would be possible. Also a massive thankyou to P&C, Steph Stoddard, Andy Rankin, Lisa Weber, Al Moran and the Teachers at Avalon Public school who have put their trust in Garden Club, with enough foresight to imagine what we can achieve. We are looking forward to Growing in 2021!

Fiona Tobin – Garden Club