PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE
Building upon Merriwa ESC’s reputation as a great facility for students with special needs has again been very rewarding this year. Student success, as confirmed by achievement of individual outcomes, is due to the hardworking teams who ensured that all students were engaged in authentic and purposeful educational programs. It has been a productive year with many success stories to share, particularly in the development of skills in our focus areas of functional literacy and numeracy. Merriwa ESC has professional staff who work in collaboration with various therapists to ensure success for all students. We expect high standards in learning and behaviour and design programs to enable all children to achieve according to their capability.

The ESC has a substantial number of students in the junior grades and will have a significant focus on meeting sensory needs and learning through play based activities as outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework. The recent move into a dedicated learning block has allowed for a collaborative approach to teaching and learning. Students have the opportunity to participate in learning groups created across the Centre and build on their social skills. There is a greater sense of belonging and an increased opportunity to form friendship groups and buddy sessions.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to my dedicated staff for their outstanding efforts this year and to our parents and students whose positive contribution ensures that our Centre is such a vibrant place of community learning.

OUR SCHOOL CONTEXT
Merriwa Education Support Centre caters for children with a diverse range of intellectual and physical disabilities and is situated within the Merriwa Primary School. This model provides a least restrictive and age appropriate environment for the students in accordance with Social Justice. Individual learning programs are created to allow all students to participate in a curriculum that is designed to provide for their specific needs and are monitored by school administration, teaching staff, therapists and parents.

The highly dedicated, specialist staff takes pride in curriculum delivery and our inclusive programs and continue to ensure the provision of a safe, happy learning environment in which children are supported and encouraged to try their very best to achieve their individual goals. We work closely with our partner school offering reciprocal programs to mainstream students with particular learning needs. In return, students are integrated into mainstream classes to support the development of social and academic skills where it is considered to be beneficial and appropriate. System performance data show student attendance is within the acceptable range. Student behaviour is monitored effectively due to regular reflection on whole school Behaviour Management practices and, where necessary, the implementation of Individual Behaviour Management Plans.

MERRIWA ESC VISION STATEMENT
Our aim is to provide purposeful and relevant learning programs through high quality instruction and evidence based pedagogy in order to support each individual towards meaningful participation in their community. An outcomes focussed curriculum delivered in a supportive, safe, stimulating and inclusive learning environment ensures the development of academic, social, creative and physical skills while fostering independence in each child.

OUR BELIEFS AND VALUES
Merriwa ESC is guided by the core values of Learning, Excellence, Equity and Care and believes that all students are capable of learning.

- We support students by scaffolding concepts and adapting programs to give the best opportunities to grow in confidence and to achieve at a level that is developmentally appropriate.
- By providing a safe, welcoming environment with challenging and engaging programs the students are able to move along their continuum of learning.
- With encouragement and support, students are able to participate in all learning areas and achieve their individual outcomes with increasing independence.
- Opportunities to learn relevant life skills are provided to enable students to participate and contribute in the wider community with confidence and dignity.
- We ensure that teachers are held accountable for the progress of students in their care and the principal for overall performance of the Centre.
SCHOOL PRIORITIES
Numeracy, Literacy, Digital Technology and Social Skills are an ongoing focus of the Centre’s curriculum.

The Priorities for 2016 - 2019 are:
- Focus on Functional Literacy and Functional Numeracy with incorporated use of digital technology
- Development of Independence, Self-Management, Interpersonal and Social Skills
- Implementation of Alternative, Augmentative Communication
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing for Staff and Students

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS
The Merriwa Schools work in collaboration to ensure that all students are given every opportunity to succeed. We believe that positive behaviour is a key element of an effective school. Both schools utilise the Friendly Schools Plus program, we teach social skills and strive to ensure students meet the school expectations.

Our whole school reward system is focussed around embracing the following expectations:
- I am respectful
- I am friendly
- I am positive
- I achieve

SCHOOL PLANNING 2015
The planning cycle begins in term 4 with all staff reviewing the school operational plan. Teachers’ reflections on learning programs and analysis of student progress data against IEP specified outcomes drive the review. The new plan is then drafted and finalised in term one the following year. The budget is framed and funds allocated to support each learning program and identified priority areas. Our comprehensive self-reflection and planning processes lead to a positive and self-critical school culture striving for on-going improvement. Learning programs evolve as continuous teacher reflection on student performance drives pedagogy more responsive to student needs.

It is our aim to continue to provide all our students with a positive learning environment through an energised staff who seek new challenges within the curriculum, providing explicit teaching and instructional strategies in the classroom.

PROGRAM AND STUDENT LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS OF 2015
We successfully provide a learning environment that supports students with diverse learning needs to develop the academic, creative, physical and social skills that will enable them to participate in, and actively contribute to, the wider community.

Having an excellent relationship with our host school Merriwa Primary School, we are able to promote shared values of learning, excellence, equity and care.

We are proud to highlight the following achievements:
- Provision of a secure, safe and positive environment.
- Specially trained and highly skilled staff.
- Highly successful Early Intensive Intervention Program for Kindy and Pre Primary students with Autism diagnosis.
- The development and successful implementation of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Discrete Trial Training.
- Innovative teaching strategies adapted to suit individual learning styles.
- Explicit teaching which contributes to the progress of students in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
- Priority given to enable each child to access learning towards reaching his/her potential.
- The provision of an individualised Education Plan for each child, developed in close consultation with parents.
- Small classes with a high staff/student ratio providing individual and small group instruction when required.
- Effective ‘play-based’ learning strategies.
- A school priority of Health and Wellbeing has led to an increase in community based activities to enhance student wellbeing, mental health and ultimately, resilience.
- Creation of positive Home / School links through various communication strategies.
- Excellent community access and independent living programs.
- Collaboration with Merriwa Primary School in providing integrated learning programs across all learning areas.
- A strong commitment to the use of technology aided instruction.
- Learning with Information Communication Technology which includes Interactive Whiteboards, Computers and iPads across all curriculum areas.
- Successful use of Mini Schedules, Alternative Augmentative Communication tools and visual learning tools.
- Continued use of sensory programs.
- Reverse integration opportunities for Merriwa Primary School students.
- Innovative collaboration with WCIT, ECU and UWA in providing practice placements for pre-service Education Assistants and Teachers.
STUDENT PARTICIPATION

Participation at Merriwa ESC is reasonable for a centre with a large number of students with major medical issues. In 2015 the attendance rate percentage was affected by student absence due to their medical needs and hospital stays. Students considered at risk of poor attendance are monitored to encourage better outcomes and more regular participation where possible. Generally, the attendance rates indicate that the school provides an appropriate and stimulating curriculum which is valued by our parents and caregivers.

Attendance Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance Category</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>WA Public Schools</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicated</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>14.7%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
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Attendance Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance Category</th>
<th>School</th>
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<th>WA Public Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>null%</td>
<td>92.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
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<td>2015</td>
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<td>92.7%</td>
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STUDENT ENROLMENTS

Student Numbers (as at 2015 Semester 2)

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<tr>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Kin</th>
<th>PPR</th>
<th>Y01</th>
<th>Y02</th>
<th>Y03</th>
<th>Y04</th>
<th>Y05</th>
<th>Y06</th>
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<td>Full Time</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Note: The Kin Full Time student figure represents the Full Time Equivalent of the Part Time students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kin</th>
<th>PPR</th>
<th>Pri</th>
<th>Sec</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kin</th>
<th>PPR</th>
<th>Pri</th>
<th>Sec</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Aboriginal</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Semester 2 Student Numbers

'LEARNING FOR LIFE'
MERRIWA ESC STAFF
The school has an experienced and dedicated teaching and non teaching staff. All teachers meet the requirements necessary to teach in government schools and are registered with the Teacher’s Registration Board. All staff have a current Working With Children card as is the requirement for employment in Government schools.

During the course of the year student enrolments increased and staff numbers fluctuated to accommodate the growing student numbers. Due to the transition of Year 7 students to Secondary school our overall staff numbers were affected in 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Teaching</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical/Admin</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All staff, teaching and non-teaching, participated in a wide range of relevant professional learning throughout 2015.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY

A focus on establishing consistency with whole school assessment allows staff to track student progress over time. Each student is assessed for literacy and numeracy skills in Term 1 and again in Term 4. In 2015 the average scores calculated from the ESC students tested, shows an improvement from Semester 1 to Semester 2 in literacy and numeracy assessments. Assessment data is stored in a student tracking file to illustrate student achievement and progress but also to identify areas of concern. The ‘Special Education Needs Assessment Tool’ (SENAT) documents are also utilised to assist staff to plot student levels and provide information for staff in subsequent years.

![Sutherland Phonological Awareness Test B](image)

![MESC NUMBER KNOWLEDGE TEST SCORES - 2015](image)
ROOM 6a
Early Intensive Intervention Program
This year all the children have worked really hard on all of their discrete trials and independent work. Throughout the year the students developed in confidence, it was excellent to see their personalities grow.

The Kindy students learnt about environmental sounds and the variety of sounds, speed and volume of musical instruments. We practised the sequence of stories and counted out objects related to the books read. The pre-primary students put on a play for Mrs Macri where we were the story characters. We learnt a lot about letter sounds and how to turn them into small words and progressed to writing sentences.

Many concepts were learned using toys and objects related to our chosen themes. We were able to illustrate concepts including tall and short, big and small, long and short.

Student progress has been very encouraging with successful transition for our pre-primary students into their mainstream classrooms.

ROOM 24
Year 3 to Year 4
Room 24 has had a wonderful year with a class full of very talented children. There has been a range of activities, from fun sensory science experiments to the exciting ‘AQWA’ excursion. Over the past year, the children have worked extremely well on their individual programs, developing their fine motor skills, writing, learning individual sounds, blending and segmenting words, oral language and maths skills.

Throughout the year, the children become good friends. They liked working in a group and at the round table and always celebrated their classmates’ successes. The children especially enjoyed learning through the use of the interactive whiteboard, singing songs of the days of the week, months of the year and the ‘Colour’ song with actions or dancing.

Apart from working hard on their individual work trays, the children developed skills throughout the year in building, cooking and creating models.

The children would often listen to opera music while resting after strenuous activity. We engaged in various activities to learn self-regulation techniques, including yoga and relaxation.

ROOM 26
Kindy to Year 2
Throughout the year we have enjoyed learning about farm animals and we were lucky to observe chickens hatching from their eggs. We learned all about minibeasts and had an awesome time searching for worms in the garden and building our own ant farm in the class. Students had a lovely day visiting AQWA looking at, and touching different types of sea animals as part of our marine animals theme. Our students also helped take care of our class pets, Charlie and Lola the hermit crabs. Our Jungle theme incorporated a visit to Perth Zoo. It was great to be able to see some of the animals that we were discussing, in real life.

We were very fortunate to have had access to Butler College’s hydrotherapy pool in both Terms 3 and 4. Our students looked forward to travelling on the bus and exploring the water during these sessions. It is rewarding to see that the students’ confidence in the water has increased over the two terms.

In partnership with Malibu Education Support School we have been working hard on implementing Alternative Augmentative Communication in our classroom. The aim of which is to give every student in our class a means to communicate their wants and needs. The students have responded well to the implementation of communication tools and are now expressing when they are hungry, how they are feeling and the activity that they would like to do.
ROOM 27 Year 4 to Year 5

The students have worked hard across all of the learning areas, especially in literacy and numeracy. They should be very proud of their achievements as staff certainly are.

The students enjoyed Community Access visits to Ocean Keys Shopping Centre, Joondalup Shopping Centre and a special Christmas experience in the city. They have learnt so many new skills on the outings, including travelling on public transport, ordering morning tea, locating different stores within the centres and purchasing groceries for our cooking lessons.

We have been on amazing and informative excursions to ECU Science Day, Buckingham House, AQWA and Perth Zoo. Buckingham House allowed the students to step back in time and participate in hands on activities. The ECU Science Day provided students with an opportunity to learn about protecting the earth as well as interacting with some amazing animals. AQWA, travelling under the sea and seeing the animals the students had been researching this year was a fantastic way to end term 3. Our visit to Perth Zoo was most enjoyable with so many memories created.

Yoga has been another fantastic experience for the students. They thoroughly enjoyed their weekly sessions and have begun using the techniques in class at different times.

Most importantly students have worked hard at forming positive relationships with both their peers and the staff alike.

ROOM 23 Year 5 to Year 6

Students and staff have worked hard and have all been so adaptable to change. Due to an increase in student numbers the senior class was reorganised into two classes to begin Semester Two. The aim was to provide an opportunity to prepare students who were transitioning to high school.

In Term 3 the senior class theme focussed on Space. Students learned about different planets but importantly, about earth. Topics included how gravity works and the different types of light sources that can be used. Students learned about who we are and the community we live in and then linked this to protective behaviours to enable them to identify the difference between someone we know and a stranger.

The final term was dedicated to preparing for the next step in life, which is transitioning to high school. Although the students were initially a little anxious they were also very excited to start at their new high school. Transition days to Butler College assisted with alleviating anxiety and provided an opportunity to meet new friends. A three day activity camp allowed the students to face their fears. The students were able to crawl through tight tunnels, rock climb, go down the flying fox, slide down the waterslides but most of all they all enjoyed dark light where they could team up against the teachers.

During this busy semester the students visited AQWA, The Zoo and Perth City while also rehearsing for the ESC assembly. All the students played an important part in the assembly and showed fantastic leadership qualities.

ROOM 25 Year 2 to Year 4

Throughout the year we have grown as a class working on developing our independence and building true friendships. We had a fantastic term learning about Transport, building recyclable vehicles, and catching public transport.

Our sporting timetable was busy with intern swimming, hydrotherapy and two Sports Carnivals - one at Beldon ESC with other ESCs and another with our primary school peers.

Our ‘Under the Sea’ theme incorporated ‘Pirates’. We had so much fun learning about different sea creatures and dressing up as pirates. The excursion to AQWA was interactive allowing the students to feel the different textures of the sea creatures. Students incorporated mathematics, learning to use ‘Positional Language’ and loved doing a range of hands on activities - enjoying a treasure hunt to find jewels and chocolate coins.

For our theme on the ‘Rainforest’ students were involved in a number of science investigations - planting seedlings and watching them grow, looking at different textures and the layers of the Rainforest. This culminated in a visit to the Zoo.

Staff are so proud of the students and the progress they have made. Together as a class we built a positive classroom environment and established great relationships.

‘LEARNING FOR LIFE’
PREPARATION FOR HIGH SCHOOL

Parents and students of Year 6 are invited to tour the local high schools in readiness for their transition to secondary schooling. This allows families to make informed decisions about the most appropriate placement for their child. Four graduating students enrolled at Butler College for Year 7 2016. All students were excited and well prepared to transition into this next phase of schooling and staff wish them well for the future. Transition programs assist both parent and child to feel at ease and become familiar with their new surroundings. In 2016 students in Year 6 will participate in various transition activities in order to prepare them for secondary school. Merriwa ESC students may attend either Butler College or Belridge SHS ESC.

PROGRAMS FOR MAINSTREAM STUDENTS

Students in our partner school who required extra assistance in numeracy and literacy attended classes in the ESC throughout 2015. Students enjoy the small group setting and make steady progress as a result. These reciprocal programs are highly effective and are mutually beneficial for the ESC students and their mainstream peers. The joint classes provide opportunities for all students to develop and practice their social and interpersonal skills. In 2015 senior students had a greater opportunity to integrate with their Year 6 peers as they prepared for an inclusive graduation from Primary School.

SENSORY LEARNING AREAS

Various funds including grants by the Department of Education, Disabled Children's Foundation and P&C fundraising efforts, assisted the Merriwa Schools to provide students with a shaded Sensory Playground which is well utilised by students in the junior year levels. Careful consideration was made at the design stage to ensure an inclusive play area which accommodates students with disabilities and special needs. Further fundraising occurred throughout the year to provide shade cover over an existing playground and allows students in the ESC to develop their physical skills. Considerable work was undertaken in the ESC covered outdoor learning area to achieve another area for sensory activity. Ground markings to engage students in play based learning, a trampoline compound and sensory wall hangings are available to all students as an alternative learning environment. Students with Autism have found this area to be particularly engaging. A dedicated classroom provides opportunities for Sensory Play and is utilised by students who prefer the quiet surroundings.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION FOR SPELLING

All students from Year 3 to Year 6 across the Merriwa Campus have been engaged in Spelling Mastery sessions with very pleasing results over the past 3 years. This initiative has been made possible due to the involvement of staff from the ESC who are utilised to facilitate small groups for the ESC and Primary School. Students are assessed to determine appropriate groups and participate each morning for intensive sessions. Students who do not meet the skill requirements of this program are provided small group instruction in the Language for Learning or Phonemic Awareness programs.

CURRICULUM AREAS

Standardised testing, classroom based assessments and whole school testing requirements are administered early in Term 1 and again in Term 4 to determine the student’s baseline and to follow incremental progress annually. Diagnostic assessment tools inform teaching and learning programs. Each student has an education program designed to meet their individual need with a focus on the student’s level of ability, provides a challenge and allows for successful achievement of goals. During 2015, MESC trialled the ABELWA assessment tool with pleasing results. We look forward to the system wide availability of this tool as SCSA endorse the program during 2016.

ENGLISH

Merriwa ESC has recently implemented a Whole School Literacy Plan which incorporates departmental requirements for early years learning. The policy refers to curriculum guidelines and the Special Education Needs Assessment Tool (SENAT) while incorporating the Letters and Sounds program which focusses on a syntheitic phonics approach to teaching reading and writing. The majority of MESC students are in Phase One of the program, however some of our senior students are moving into Phases Two and Three. 90% of students assessed on the Sutherland Phonological Awareness Test showed stability or an improvement in understanding these basic skills throughout the year. Teachers use an explicit teaching approach, drills and hands on learning tasks to develop these fundamental skills of literacy.

‘LEARNING FOR LIFE’
MATHEMATICS
Throughout 2015 curriculum leaders developed the MESC Numeracy Plan having attended workshops through WAPPA, based on the philosophies of Dr Paul Swan. The whole school approach ensures that students practise basic skills in Numeracy. Capable students were assessed in a 1:1 situation on the Number Knowledge test to determine their level of ability and the diagnostic tool allowed staff to identify learning gaps. A program of drills, hands on learning using concrete and abstract materials, explicit teaching and regular revision is implemented in all classrooms. Teachers work collaboratively to ensure all students are catered for at their level of ability. Each class has a Maths Kit of resources to ensure consistent delivery of concepts from class to class, year to year. In 2015, 76% of students assessed using the Number Knowledge test demonstrated stability or improvement in their application and understanding of mathematical concepts. With the introduction of a whole school approach, I expect to see improved results in 2016.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY
Each classroom in the ESC has an Interactive Whiteboard installed and a set of iPads to facilitate access to ICT across all learning areas. Regular use of computers, online learning programs, interactive boards, iPads and apps, cameras and software motivates and engages students to participate in their learning programs in all areas of the curriculum. Staff are able to participate in professional learning modules to develop their skills in utilising technology for the benefit of students.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION
COMMUNITY ACCESS AND RECREATION
A strong emphasis was placed on teaching social competencies and developing skills required to attend the recreation and community access programs. Community access is the basis of our Life Skills program for many students. They are actively involved in various visits within the local community and are taught to use public transport utilising SmartRider cards and to access public facilities in a safe and semi-independent manner. Students enjoyed regular trips to shopping centres and to the local library. It is encouraging to witness improvements in confidence, consideration of others and their awareness of personal safety develop. Special thanks go to our local IGA, Ocean Keys and Lakeside Shopping Centres for their support of our centre.

HEALTHY LIVING AND HYGIENE
All students participated in our Healthy Eating program and class groups were involved in shopping and food preparation as part of the curriculum. This gave all students an opportunity to understand and make healthy food choices. Breakfast Club was available on three mornings per week and Foodbank provided the students with fruit each week. Our school Chaplain is recruiting volunteers in order to provide Breakfast Club each morning in 2016.

FITNESS
Fitness and sporting activities provided a well-rounded Health and Physical Education experience for all students who participated in the minimum requirement of 2 hours of physical activity each week. Graduating students participated enthusiastically in a social Dance Program during Term 4. The Combined ESC Athletics Carnival is a highlight every year and was again well attended during Term 3. Intern Swimming lessons with mainstream peers or Hydrotherapy sessions for higher needs students were offered during the year. Through the Sporting Schools initiative we were provided funding to offer Yoga/Gymnastics classes during Semester 2. This was enthusiastically received and will continue into 2016.

INTERPERSONAL/ SOCIAL SKILLS AND BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT
Students benefited from both ESC and mainstream programs throughout 2015. ESC students have the opportunity to integrate with their mainstream peers in appropriate subject areas, at assemblies and incursions and in the playground. This helps to build social skills for all students on the Merriwa campus.
All staff are informed, as required, of various health concerns of our students so that they are familiar with the health and behavioural needs of all students in the ESC. Capable students participate in weekly lessons on Protective Behaviours to assist in preparing them to be independent in their community.
The Merriwa Schools adhere to a Positive Behaviour Management approach, where students are rewarded for following the school expectations: I am respectful, I am friendly, I am positive and I achieve. Students are publicly recognised at assemblies when they demonstrate these expectations. Rewards with include certificates, ribbons, invitation to special reward day events and the Principal’s morning tea each term. Parent/Carer, staff, school Psychologist and various agency workers are invited to discuss strategies to support students with challenging behaviours. Where necessary, an individual plan to manage behaviour is created and implemented with consistency at school and at home. There is an expectation of shared partnership between home and school where open communication is valued.

‘LEARNING FOR LIFE’
INTEGRATED STUDIES
The ESC supports an integrated curriculum which provides opportunities for students to explore Aboriginal and Cultural Education, Science, Health, Humanities and Social Sciences and Technology and Enterprise through practical hands-on activities. The integrated approach allows teachers to program in ‘Themes’ and to incorporate the topic across all learning areas throughout the term.

THE ARTS
Students are able to access the primary school specialist programs including music, and to participate in whole school assemblies, incursions and performances with their mainstream peers. With much practice and loads of enthusiasm the students performed at, and conducted, their assembly item during term 4. Staff and Parents were very proud to see the students getting so involved and contributing with such energy and confidence.

LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH
AUSLAN (Australian Sign Language) and KeySigns are used across the Centre as a strategy to facilitate communication. Signing supports Teaching and Learning strategies, particularly with non verbal and ESL students where a visual prompt is able to support student outcomes. Students are taught to use gestures and facial expressions to assist them in communicating their needs. Staff attended workshops to assist with the teaching of sign language during 2015 and have expressed interest in further study in this area for 2016.
Merriwa ESC is working in collaboration with Malibu School to provide Alternative, Augmentative Communication (AAC) for students who have difficulty accessing conventional communication techniques. This initiative began mid 2015 and will continue as a priority area in 2016.

EARLY INTENSIVE INTERVENTION PROGRAM
Merriwa ESC is one of 12 schools in WA that provide an intensive learning program utilising the Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Discrete Trial Training techniques for Kindy and Pre-Primary children with an Autism diagnosis.
The objective of the two year program is to prepare students for mainstream inclusion from Year 1. The small groups are staffed to accommodate up to 6 students at each year group. A close partnership is formed with the local school to ensure a smooth transition during Pre-Primary and ultimately for Year 1.

AGENCY SUPPORT
Merriwa ESC works closely with various agencies to ensure successful outcomes for students. Staff incorporates strategies recommended for individual students by their therapists. We welcome the support from Disability Services Commission and Therapy Focus- Speech Therapist, Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist; Ability Centre and SENSES who support our students with disabilities.
The Education Department provides student support to schools through SSEN: Schools of Special Education Needs- Disability, Sensory, Medical and Mental Health. These services are utilised and greatly appreciated by staff at Merriwa ESC.
Another agency with which we have built a mutual partnership include the Independent Living Centre, their library of resources has been well used by our students. We continue to work closely with WCIT and ECU and benefit from the enthusiasm and developing expertise of pre service teachers and education assistants.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT
Parents provide great support to the various ESC programs and are invited to participate in the development and endorsement of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for their child and to participate in teacher/parent meetings to discuss semester reports.
A combined School Council is made up of ESC and Mainstream staff and parents who endorse our plans, policies, fees and charges and the school budget. Information gained from parents through informal feedback help staff to modify and improve our teaching and learning programs. Interested community members are encouraged to join our School Council.
Merriwa Schools pride themselves on school/home partnerships and encourage all parents to make arrangements to discuss concerns with their child’s teacher. We also encourage the use of our Communication Book / Student diary strategy to facilitate regular contact between school and home. The combined schools P&C support our school through fundraising initiatives.
Students from various universities and WCIT were given the opportunity to complete their practicum assessments with the expert guidance and mentoring from our staff. Our regular team of relief staff ensured the continuity of programs and have developed positive relationships with staff and students in the ESC. We thank them for their loyalty.
We extend our sincere thanks to our wonderfully supportive community.

‘LEARNING FOR LIFE’
Although only 8 families responded to our Community Survey, the feedback has been quite positive. Our parents often speak informally to the classroom teachers and with the Principal about their concerns. Overall there is a high satisfaction rate among our school community in regards to the programs MESC provide, the communication channels, the management of the school and the standard of education their child receives.
## FINANCES 2015

**Merriwa ESC**  
Financial Summary as at 31 December 2015

### Revenue - Budget vs Actual

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue - Budget vs Actual</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue Source</strong></td>
<td>$000</td>
<td>$000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary Contributions</td>
<td>$600.00</td>
<td>$360.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charges and Fees</td>
<td>$3,600.00</td>
<td>$3,056.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Allowances</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Contributions</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$271.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising/Donations/Sponsorships</td>
<td>$722.00</td>
<td>$722.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt Grants</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other State Govt Grants</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth Govt Grants</td>
<td>$281.00</td>
<td>$250.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trading Activities</td>
<td>$18.00</td>
<td>$24.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$148,158.00</td>
<td>$148,249.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Transfers</td>
<td>$25,833.00</td>
<td>$25,833.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$196,317.00</td>
<td>$198,481.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening Balance</td>
<td>$24,642.00</td>
<td>$24,642.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Funds Available</strong></td>
<td>$221,959.00</td>
<td>$223,123.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Current Year Actual Revenue Sources

- Voluntary Contributions: 21%
- Charges and Fees: 18%
- Government Allowances: 2%
- NSW Contributions: 1%
- Fundraising/Donations/Sponsorships: 11%
- Debt Grants: 3%
- Other State Govt Grants: 2%
- Commonwealth Govt Grants: 1%
- Trading Activities: 1%
- Other: 5%
- Internal Transfers: 9%

### Expenditure - Budget vs Actual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>$3,460.00</td>
<td>$1,429.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leases</td>
<td>$4,150.00</td>
<td>$3,677.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>$450.00</td>
<td>$345.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research/Development</td>
<td>$9,040.00</td>
<td>$9,040.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Works</td>
<td>$25,833.00</td>
<td>$25,832.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets and Resources</td>
<td>$74,881.00</td>
<td>$56,189.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Services</td>
<td>$13,226.00</td>
<td>$6,357.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Specific Programs</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trading Activities</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary Pool Payments to Central Office</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$ -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$14,384.00</td>
<td>$13,513.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfers to Reserves</td>
<td>$82,000.00</td>
<td>$82,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>$211,167.00</td>
<td>$170,113.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Cash Position as at:
- **Bank Balance**: $106,005.00
**FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

*We have an ongoing focus in building Merriwa ESC’s capacity to ensure success for all students and endeavour to realise this through:*

**High Performance and Care** - At Merriwa ESC we value the benefits of clear expectations for students and staff. A consistent approach to student management and lesson delivery are paramount in achieving required outcomes. Staff are provided opportunities and training to develop strong teams and to build respectful relationships. We have high expectations for our students and believe that all students have the capacity to learn. Our strategic and operational plans are produced through a collaborative process. All staff are involved in the delivery of programs and have been provided information of the contents of the school plans. These are revised and modified annually to suit the student cohort.

**Effective Leadership and High Quality Teaching** - All staff, including the leadership team are encouraged to be life-long learners and are provided with quality Professional Learning opportunities relevant to the priority areas of our school. Teachers are required to use explicit teaching in their lesson delivery and are offered training opportunities to up-skill. It is of utmost importance to establish a staff of skilled experts who have experience and knowledge in working with students with disabilities. Staff are required to abide by the Department Code of Conduct, ethical decision making and professional behaviour standards. Performance Management is ongoing with teaching staff being assessed against the AITSL standards and non-teaching staff against their job description (JDF).

**Managing Attendance and Student Engagement** - We can appreciate and acknowledge the difficulties our families contend with in their daily lives, and understand the issues they face in ensuring their children attend school regularly - particularly when students are faced with serious medical complications. However, we will follow up absences and keep in touch with our families. Case conferences are held for each family throughout the year, and more regularly when required, to ensure effective communication and support is received.

**FOCUS AREAS FOR 2016 TO 2019**

A consistent approach to the teaching and learning processes in Literacy and Numeracy is paramount in ensuring success for all students. Collaborative planning and development of whole school plans in these curriculum areas has been fundamental in ensuring consistent practices and shared understanding.

**Functional Literacy**
- Establish literacy skills by focusing on phonemic awareness and developing student knowledge of letter sounds.
- Adhering to the MESC Literacy plan which is developmental and guided by the requirements of the Australian Curriculum, Early Years Learning Framework and Kindy Guidelines, Special Education Needs Assessment Tool and K-6 Syllabus.
- Incorporating the Letters and Sounds program which has a strong focus on synthetic phonics.

**Functional Numeracy**
- Establish numeracy skills to enable students to recognise numbers and number patterns, colours and shapes, and to have a basic understanding of time and money concepts.
- Adhering to the MESC Numeracy plan which is developmental and guided by the requirements of the Australian Curriculum, Early Years Learning Framework and Kindy Guidelines, Special Education Needs Assessment Tool and K-6 Syllabus.

**Learning with Information and Communication Technology**
- Explicitly teach ICT skills utilising computers, iPads and associated apps and online learning programs.
- Incorporate learning technologies across all learning areas to enable independent and purposeful use.

**Independence, Self-Management and Interpersonal Skill Development**
An ongoing focus on building the capacity of our students to become independent in their daily lives through:
- Explicitly teaching skills to foster and promote independence in everyday situations.
- Consolidating an understanding of values and learning to take responsibility for one’s own behaviour.
- Learning the fundamentals of healthy eating and personal hygiene.
- Provision of real opportunities for students to effectively integrate into society and demonstrate their independence in community settings.

**Alternative, Augmentative Communication**
We will continue to investigate tools and techniques that will enable students with complex communication needs access to a variety of strategies, such as: gestures, signing, symbols, pictures, communication aids and computers to improve the ability to communicate their needs and wants.

**Emotional Health and Wellbeing - Students and Staff**
Staff and students will be provided with strategies to develop resilience, confidence and the ability to reach their potential.

*LEARNING FOR LIFE*