



# ST LUCY'S SCHOOL

Excellence in education for children with intellectual disabilities

6 April 2018

## Leading Sydney special needs school announces major growth vision

St Lucy's School, responsive to the needs of families since 1938, is redeveloping its facilities and expanding to become a K-12 school for 240 students with disabilities by 2024.

On Thursday 5 April, at a special event for families and specials friends, the school gave an update about the St Lucy's Master Plan for the school's main campus in Wahroonga.

St Lucy's is committed to continuing to provide 'excellence in education for students with disabilities' as a Catholic School in the Dominican tradition. The move toward a K – 12 education is in response to the 'call' of families for a Catholic secondary education as part of St Lucy's inclusive community.

The proposals will deliver new classroom buildings, a basement carpark with secure parent drop-off points and new landscaping. This will enable the school to increase the current enrolment from approximately 110 to 240 students, by 2024 (not including satellite classes).

Building on its mission to recognise the potential of each student, the school will continue to deliver imaginative education, which includes a strong emphasis on independence and community participation. The proposals have been progressed in direct response to feedback from families, including for secondary years provision, which have been expressed over many years.

Upgrading existing school buildings is an important objective. Despite the many excellent facilities the school enjoys, some classrooms from the 1970's are no longer ideal for their purpose. The proposed facilities will create a more modern learning environment that meets the diverse needs of students far more effectively.

St Lucy's aspirations to grow to Year 12 are longstanding but securing additional government funding and the acquisition of neighbouring land are key factors in enabling the school to move ahead with its vision for longer-term growth. It can now commit to offering places for Year 7 in 2019 (subject to NESA and local Council approval) as it grows to become a fully K – 12 School.

David Raphael, Principal of St Lucy's School, said:

*"This is an incredibly exciting time for St Lucy's and we are delighted to be able to say more about the Master Plan. Our vision has been warmly welcomed by many families, including those who already know about the great benefits of a St Lucy's education and those who seek places.*

*"It is also very important to say that St Lucy's has been at the heart of the local community in Wahroonga for decades and we value our relationships with neighbours and the wider local community. With that very much in mind, we are committed to continuing engagement and look forward to being able to say more over the coming months."*



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Kylie Grey, President of St Lucy's Parents and Friends Committee, said:

*"It's giving students better classrooms and more space to learn in. It's giving them the best so that they can be their best – they deserve it."*

Marie MacDermid, a parent, said:

*"Every morning the staff, including the Principal and Deputy, are waiting to welcome the children to school – it's like coming home to family. When your child is vulnerable you want to know they are safe and cared for by committed, dedicated staff who give everything. Now my child can remain a part of that family."*

Randall Mettam, also a parent, added:

*"It was amazing news for us – we were at a crisis point at our child's last school – it's hard to describe the anxiety. For us, finding St Lucy's was as if we found the end of the rainbow, but we were already thinking about what we would do after St Lucy's – now the school has responded and there is an obvious place for our child."*



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## Notes:

1. St Lucy's began in 1938 when the Dominican Sisters established a school for blind children at Homebush. The school relocated to Wahroonga in 1959.
2. It has three satellite classes – two at St Joseph's, Narrabeen for Kindergarten and Year 1 students and one at St John's, Narrabeena for Year 4/5/6 students preparing for secondary years of school.
3. St Lucy's is currently undertaking registration/accreditation with NESA (the NSW Education Standards Authority previously known as BOSTES) for new years of secondary schooling in readiness for 2019. In anticipation that this application will be approved, St Lucy's will offer places to Year 7 students in 2019, with a view to being a K-12 school in 2024.
4. The expectation is that Development Applications submitted in late 2017, for six and eight Billyard Avenue, will be approved shortly and this will lead to the first phase of redevelopment works for the new facilities. There is also a Development Application with Ku-ring-gai Council for an adjacent site to this, allowing educational use of land and associated facilities at No. 10 Billyard Avenue.
5. The introduction of secondary years provision is not dependent upon the approval of further Development Applications.
6. Students come from all over Sydney, including: Central Coast, Northern Beaches, North Shore, Western Sydney, and the Hills.
7. As is now the case across K-6, provision has been made for families in financial need to access partial or full bursary support for tuition fees and uniform costs for Years 7 – 12.

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