

SASY



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Endorsed by Chief Executive,
Karen Taylor and Board Chair,
Rob Snowdon on 12 May 2026

SPECIALISED ASSISTANCE SCHOOL FOR YOUTH

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OUR VISION

To create a caring environment, where disengaged young people, with complex needs, are reconnected through holistic educational experiences that improve wellbeing and reignite their interest in learning.

BUILD. GROW. CELEBRATE. CREATE. EXPLORE.

Build community through kindness and connection.

Grow as lifelong learners.

Celebrate every step.

Create safe spaces, welcome every voice.

Explore with curiosity, act with purpose.

OUR VALUES



A YEAR IN REVIEW



STUDENT OUTCOMES

● Making Progress Towards Learning Goals	87%
● Making Progress Towards Wellbeing Goals	93%
● SACE Graduates Transitioning Into Work / Study	100%
● New Enrolments	80
● SACE Graduates	15
● Students Moved Into Work / Further Study	45
● Apprenticeships	38

WHAT WE DO

Specialised Assistance School for Youth (SASY) is a fee free independent secondary Special Assistance School (SAS) operating specifically for disengaged young people who have complex needs between the ages of 13 and 25.

We offer a safe place for young people to reignite their learning through Holistic Practices that support their health and social emotional wellbeing as the pre-cursor to personal growth and community engagement.

SASY is innovative in its practice, flexible and responsive in its delivery, and focuses on providing an environment which enables young people to recognise and achieve their potential.

SASY recognises that wellbeing influences learning, and meaningful learning enhances wellbeing, which is why education and wellbeing are deeply intertwined throughout all programs.

We believe that all young people have the right to learn and to be supported with personalised care, fair assessment, collaborative and individual learning programs, practice critical and creative thinking, find their voice, and actively engage in the community as an individual with a positive sense of self.

We acknowledge that academic and personal growth best occurs in a safe and supportive environment where physical, emotional, cognitive and behavioural development is supported as part of a holistic learning approach.

CHAIR / CE REPORT

DEAR SASY COMMUNITY

We are pleased to share the 2025 Annual Report for Specialised Assistance School for Youth (SASY).

2025 had many highlights, including our first SASY Community Activity Day (CAD) at Thorndon Park, amongst other successful events like R U OK Day, Senior School Event at the Adelaide Convention Centre, and the annual Celebrate showcase event. There were many proud moments for our young people, including members of our Ice Hockey team, The SASY Assassins, attending Government House where they delivered a speech to the Governor about the impacts of the Ice Factor program and the many young people who exhibited artwork in SALA in August.

Other notable achievements include SASY's first ever cookbook 'Power Up' being launched in Term 4, the new Art kiln being fired up, and our new branding and website being unveiled in Term 3.

A significant highlight of 2025 was the construction of the new Middle School Campus, opened in January 2026. These examples are just some of the many achievements seen throughout 2025 that demonstrate the depths of success and impact that SASY has had this year.

We recognise that success looks different for every young person at SASY and are proud of all young people who have moved through SASY.

Whether that was trying a program for the first time, meeting new people, achieving SACE, making a friend, gaining employment, completing a program, or simply just showing up at school after a period of being at home, we extend our congratulations to all SASY students and acknowledge the challenges that must be overcome to get here today.

We also acknowledge the incredible passion and commitment of our staff, who have supported our students' education and well-being. They have offered engaging and personalised programs and support to all students and meet them where they are at, day to day. This requires enormous adaptability and planning, and we are grateful for their care, skills, and positive impact.

SASY would not be where it is without the support and generosity of its stakeholders, partners, and broader network. To those who have funded our programs, provided advice or support, or engaged with our students and staff this year, thank you for enriching our school offerings.

SASY is a community, and one we are proud of. We look forward towards SASY's next chapter of growth, which aims to help more young people.

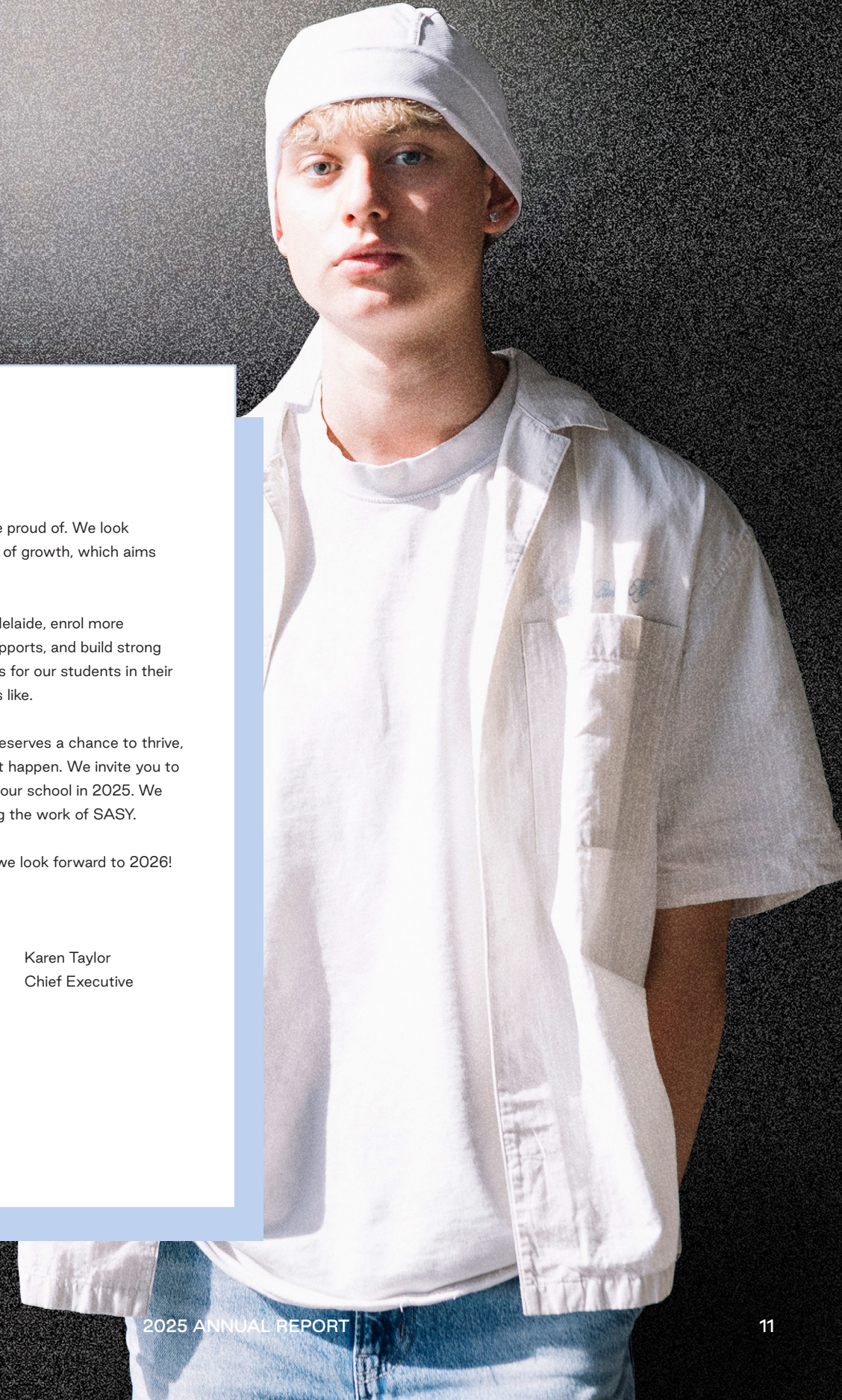
We plan to expand our presence in Adelaide, enrol more students, offer more programs and supports, and build strong partnerships that provide opportunities for our students in their chosen pathways, whatever that looks like.

We believe that every young person deserves a chance to thrive, and we will keep working to make that happen. We invite you to read this report and learn more about our school in 2025. We hope that you will join us in celebrating the work of SASY.

Thanks again to our community, and we look forward to 2026!

Rob Snowdon
Chair

Karen Taylor
Chief Executive





Dr Maria La Pietra PhD
Founding Director • 2016 -Present

Thriving in a holistic and collaborative learning environment focused on transition and outcomes, Maria co-founded SASY in 2016 to assist disengaged youth in realising their true potential.

She is highly regarded and well networked in her field, as recognised through her relationships and memberships with Australian Vocational Education & Training Professionals Association, Australian Association for Flexible and Inclusive Education, Wellbeing Australia, Australian & New Zealand Mental Health Association, Blue Knot Foundation and the Youth Work Association.

Maria aims to bring improvement through practical, theoretical and collaborative knowledge, developing evidence-based strategies and recommendations for educators and others in learning environments supporting young people with trauma.



Rob Snowdon OAM
Chair • 2019 -Present

Rob is an experienced Chair, Director and leader, who has developed his leadership, management and governance skills and experience in a wide range of industries.

He has spent nearly 40 years in senior management and leadership roles and has been involved with or on boards for over 25 years. Rob has vast experience in both not-for-profit and for-profit organisations and has been heavily involved with various charities for many years.

Rob is currently a Director of The Quadriplegic & Paraplegic Association of SA, a Director of Port Adelaide Football Club, Chair of Power Community Limited and is the past Chair of both the Country Fire Service Foundation and the Astera Group. He is the Principal of Rob Snowdon Advisory, which provides advice to various organisations and individuals and is an AICD Company Director's course graduate.

Rob was also awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 2024 King's Birthday Honours for services to the community, and to Australian rules football.



David Martin
Deputy Chair • 2020 -Present

David Martin, Consultant at (formerly Managing Partner of) Finlaysons Lawyers, and formerly President of Urban Development Institute of Australia (SA) and a life member of that Association. In his extensive legal career, David specialised in property and development law, aged care and retirement villages.

David has played a key role in landmark projects across South Australia and nationally. In addition to his legal expertise, David possesses wide general commercial knowledge and expertise, and a deep understanding of governance, risk and compliance. He has previously been a member of the Boards of several schools/colleges, and numerous local, State and National level sporting organisations.

David is currently the Chairman of the Board of Southern Cross Care (SA, NT & Vic) Inc (SCC), the largest aged care provider in South Australia, and has been a valued member of that Board for over 15 years. He is also a member of several of the SCC Board's Subcommittees.



Helen Platell
Director • 2020 -Present

Helen is an Education specialist and Solicitor with extensive knowledge in Education Law from a broad base of experience in the industry. As a former School Principal, Teacher, Parent and current School Board Director, she has dealt with educational compliance issues, employment, governance and policy development. She brings a no fuss practical approach to the SASY Board with wellbeing as an essential core value.

Helen is a Teacher and School Administrator of more than 20 years. She completed a Juris Doctor from Notre Dame University Fremantle, a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice with distinction from The Australian National University and was admitted as a legal practitioner to the Supreme Court of Western Australia in 2016.

Helen is a Family Law specialist working as the Principal Director of Calm Law. She assists families experiencing relationship breakdown to address the issues faced by the children in the family. She actively works with the parents to create a positive co-parenting plan going forward.



Lloyd Doddridge
Treasurer • 2020 -Present

Lloyd is currently the Chief Operating & Financial Officer with the Australian Red Cross, and in 2024 was the Chief of Future Directions.

He has a range of transformative strategic commercial skills acquired with globally recognised brands such as Penfolds and GM and strategic financial roles in global Media and Communications.

A career working both in Australia and internationally he has dedicated his skills to supporting talented people create successful organisations.

As a senior leader, he is viewed as measured, collaborative and ethical whilst holding high expectations of performance in complex environments. His leadership style reflects strong values and respect for the individual.



Dr Joseph Magliaro AM PhD FCCLP FCOP
Director • 2020 -Present

Dr Magliaro gained registration with the South Australian Psychological Board in 1990. In 2006 Dr Magliaro completed his doctoral dissertation at the University of South Australia.

Dr Joseph Magliaro is a full member of the Australia Psychological Society and a Fellow of both the College of Clinical Psychologists and the College of Organisational Psychologists.

In June 2011 Dr Magliaro was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours for services to community health through the provision of psychological intervention and support programs and support to personnel in the emergency services.

In 2020, Dr Magliaro was appointed to the Board of Directors of Specialised Assistance School for Youth (SASY), with the specific focus to working collaboratively within SASY and developing strategies to address the mental health of SASY young people.

Dr Magliaro in 2023 was awarded the Australian National Emergency Medal for the provision of mental health services during the 2019-2020 Bushfires and the COVID pandemic.



Sean Kelly
Director • 2020 -Present

Sean has extensive experience at Board and Senior Executive levels in Commonwealth and State Governments and the private sector, predominantly in the energy industry.

His expertise includes business and financial strategy, governance and risk, customer service, people and culture, business transformation and regulation.

Sean is a fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and considers access to education, whether that be trade, vocational or academic as fundamental to an individual's wellbeing and life opportunities.



Carolyn Grantskalns OAM
Director • 2024 -Present

Carolyn joined the Board of Directors at Specialised Assistance School for Youth (SASY) in 2024. Carolyn has extensive experience in the education sector and has had a significant impact on the industry during her time as an educator, Principal, leader and Board Member of multiple organisations.

She is currently the Presiding Member of the Teacher Registration Board of SA, a Trustee of the History Trust of SA, Chair of Suneden Specialist School Board, a Council member of the St Peter's Cathedral Council, a Fellow of the Australian College of Educational Leaders and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. SASY is privileged and proud to have a prolific leader and expert join the Board.



The Board continues to consider future options and the growing demand for schools such as SASY, to support disengaged young people.

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED SUBJECTS

EIF

61

English

98

Numeracy

32

AIF

07

Students Achieving VET Certificate Contributing to SACE

94

PATHWAYS

Senior School is delivered over three years, giving students the time and flexibility to transition into pathways that are meaningful and achievable. These include SACE, VET, apprenticeships, employment, further study, and community or industry engagement. In 2025, SASY continued to strengthen its commitment to student success through a wide range of pathway initiatives.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN A SNAPSHOT

Pathway / Course Referral Meetings Providing individual guidance and tailored career planning.	73
Short Courses & Accredited Units Equipping students with practical, job-ready skills.	56
Industry Immersion Activities Offering real-world exposure across diverse sectors.	44
Certificate II / III Completions & Apprenticeships Supporting formal qualifications and trade pathways.	38
Additional Engagements Including business workshops and career-focused events to life skills workshops.	60

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

In 2025, several key initiatives were implemented to further improve the pathways offered to young people in Senior School.

These initiatives were:

Employment & Industry Futures (EIF) Program

A new framework designed to strengthen transition pathways and connect students with employment opportunities.

Senior School Pathway Agreement

Formalised structures to ensure clarity and consistency in senior school progression.

Transition Kit

A practical resource supporting smooth movement from middle to senior schooling.

IMPACT OF PROGRAM

The Senior School pathway program ensures that our young people have agency in their learning, equipping them with life skills, confidence, and meaningful experiences that set them up for success when they leave school. The impact of the program includes:

Broader Career Exposure

Students explored multiple industries, enabling informed decision-making.

Enhanced Employability Skills

Accredited courses and hands-on training improved job readiness.

Stronger Industry Partnerships

Collaborations with businesses and training providers created authentic learning experiences.

Improved Transition Support

Structured programs and resources guided students through key educational stages.

Positive Outcomes

Increased completion of certifications and apprenticeships reflects strong progress toward long-term career goals.

Student Stories

What I like about SASY is the connections I can make with friends. I feel I am treated with respect by staff. I feel seen as a person rather than a child. SASY provides opportunities for better connections with other students, and I feel like I am having conversations with staff rather than being told what to do.

– TJ

I struggled to make friends at my previous schools and was being bullied a lot. At SASY I felt welcomed, and arriving at SASY is a similar feeling you get as a “kid at Christmas”. I don’t have to put any effort in to fit in, I am accepted as I am, and there is no expectation to be any different from who I am.

– Hope

SASY is the place I need to be to grow, and it is comforting to know I have time at SASY to do that. SASY has supported me with putting safe boundaries in place to protect myself and others. I can express who I am. I love SASY!

– Ariella

I don’t have to wear uniform but can wear comfortable clothes. There is flexibility and choice at SASY. SASY also encourages self-expression. I get to make friends and speak to staff when I need to. The programs have variety, they are small group, and there are plenty of outings.

– Ryuu and Kai

OUR PEOPLE



RECRUITMENT

New Staff Hired in 202514



DEMOGRAPHICS

First Nations

10

Female

122

Male

58

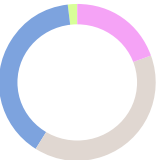
Non Binary

25

STAFF

Our staff work side by side with young people, each playing a pivotal role in the varying stages of a young person’s life at SASY. Our team is made up of Youth Workers, Teachers and Administrative Staff. SASY employs qualified, registered Teachers who work within the AITSL teaching standards. Our high level of Teachers and Youth Workers on the floor is what makes SASY unique and enables our team to provide a high level of wraparound support to our young people.

2025 TEAM DEMOGRAPHICS



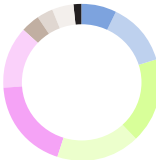
	Administrative Staff
	Teaching Staff
	Youth Workers/Support Staff
	First Nations Staff

STUDENTS

Our students typically come to us disengaged with complex challenges such as trauma, mental health, homelessness, family breakdowns, substance abuse, financial instability, learning difficulties or other life experiences that act as barriers to successful engagement in traditional school settings.

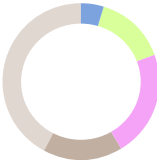
Young people come to us at varying stages of life and we meet them where they are at. SASY’s average attendance rate in 2025 was 43% and the school remains committed to a supportive, holistic approach to re-engaging young people back into education.

STUDENT AGES



	13 Years Old
	14 Years Old
	15 Years Old
	16 Years Old
	17 Years Old
	18 Years Old
	19 Years Old
	20 Years Old
	21 Years Old
	22+ Years Old

YEAR LEVELS



	Year 8
	Year 9
	Year 10
	Year 11
	Year 12

TEACHING & LEARNING FRAMEWORK

In 2025, SASY delivered and implemented The SASY Way Teaching and Learning Framework, strengthening SASY's holistic educational approach that places wellbeing and learning at the centre of every student experience. The framework prioritises connection, safety, and strong relationships as the foundation for engagement, recognising that young people learn best when they feel supported, respected, and understood.

Through flexible, trauma informed, and restorative practices, learning is personalised to meet each young person where they are at. Experiential and meaningful learning opportunities are delivered alongside integrated wellbeing support, enabling students to build confidence, agency, and a renewed connection to education. This framework facilitates positive outcomes for young people by re engaging them with learning and supporting pathways beyond school.

At SASY,

Wellbeing

+ Education

= Learning

The SASY Teaching & Learning Model:

Student Centred & Strengths Based
Learning builds on each young person's interests, goals, and prior experiences.

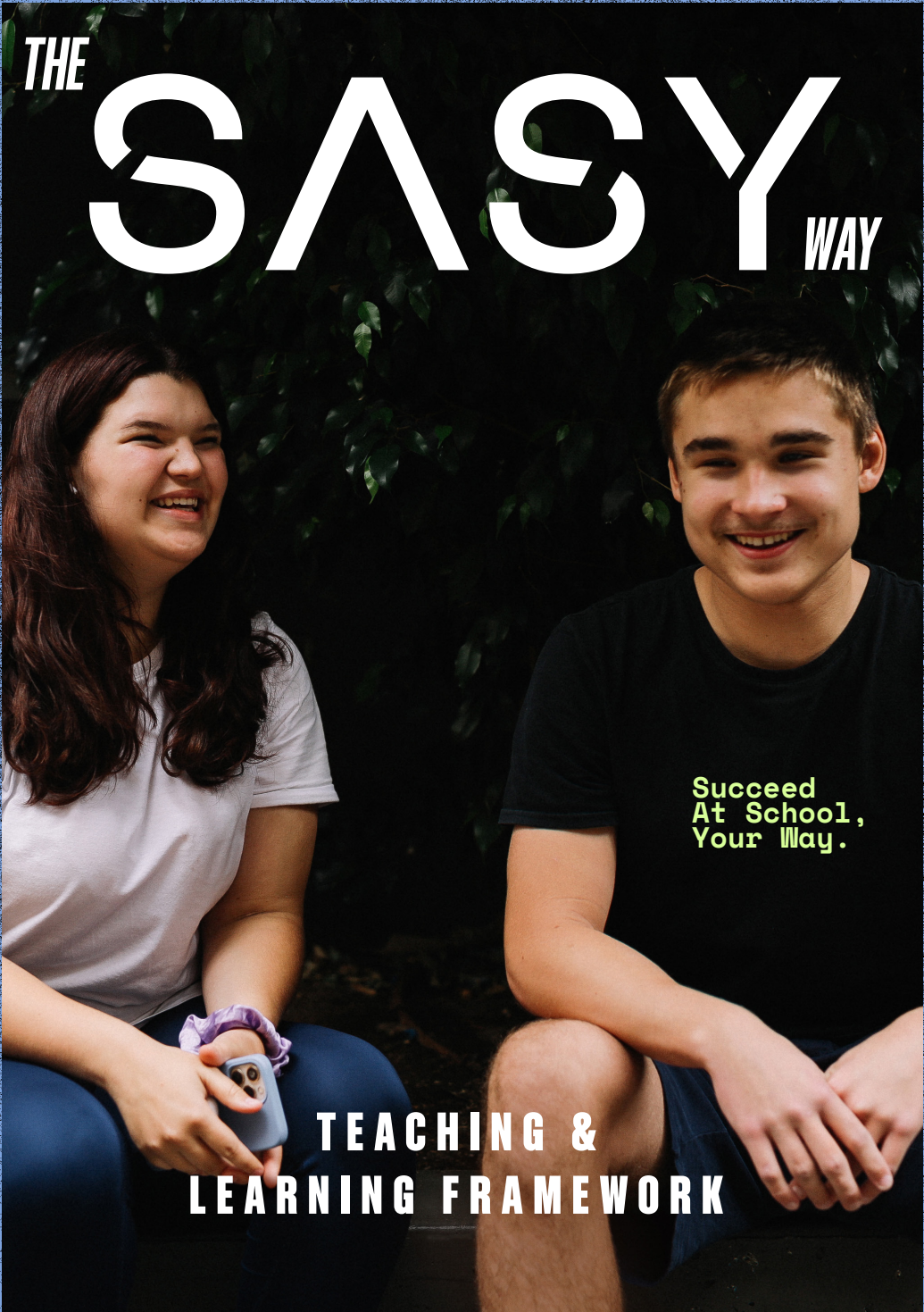
Flexible & Personalised
Programs adapt to where students are at, rather than expecting students to fit traditional structures.

Experiential & Applied
Particularly in Middle School, learning is hands on and connected to real world contexts while aligning with the Australian Curriculum.

Relational & Collaborative
Dialogue, reflection, and shared problem solving are valued, enabling students to learn with and from others.

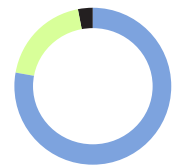
Teachers work as facilitators of learning, guiding inquiry and skill development, while Youth Workers provide integrated wellbeing support within learning spaces, ensuring a consistent and coordinated response to student needs.

Overall, the framework provides a coherent, values-driven model that aligns pedagogy, wellbeing and community to meet the needs of young people for whom traditional education has not worked, enabling them to succeed at school in their own way.



SASY FINANACIALS

INCOME



Federal Gov Grants	78%
State Gov Grants	19%
Other	3%

EXPENSES



Staff	69%
Infrastructure	15%
Wellbeing & Curriculum	5%
Other	11%



SINCE 2016

9 YEARS

780 YOUNG PEOPLE

95 SACE GRADUATES

100s OF MEANINGFUL PATHWAYS

OUR JOURNEY

Our Partners + Supporters



CORE FUNDING

As a fee-free school, Commonwealth and State Government funding are an invaluable resource to SASY. With this funding, we have been able to provide our students with a range of programs and support that enable them to engage, learn and connect.



DONATIONS

SASY has been privileged to receive philanthropic and corporate donations from external parties this year. These contributions allow our school to offer extra-curricular supports to our students that aren't possible through Government funding alone, but are vital to continuing the high level of holistic care & opportunities that we provide. SASY would like to extend a heart felt thank you to the following organisations:



Day Family Foundation

KEY PARTNERS

Throughout 2025, SASY had ongoing key partnerships with multiple organisations who we would like to thank, as their contributions have enabled SASY's positive impact to grow:



IN-KIND DONATIONS

We also received generous in-kind donations from members of our community, and in particular we would like to acknowledge:



THE FUTURE IS YOUNG PEOPLE

Having 15 students graduate, and 59% of leavers engage in positive pathways such as further work or study from the 2025 cohort are incredible achievements for our young people.

They have overcome insurmountable challenges to achieve these successes, and this milestone is indicative of the resilience, hard work, determination and growth that our young people have shown this year. SASY is on the cusp of exciting new opportunities as we head into our tenth year.

As we look to the future, SASY aims to broaden its reach and re-engage more South Australian young people in education and reignite their interest in learning.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

FINANCIAL STABILITY

Optimise eligible funding and establish new partnerships. Effectively and ethically manage and maximise our resources to grow our impact for young people.

POSITIVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

To reconnect young people in need, developing holistic wellbeing, lifelong learners, and reigniting one's meaning and purpose.

ENHANCE PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Embody our vision and values to attract, develop and retain staff in a safe and caring workplace.

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Manage risk and compliance and deliver best practice Board and organisational governance.

GROWTH

Work towards establishing SASY as a multi-site school across Adelaide metro, addressing more students in need.

SASY

SPECIALISED ASSISTANCE SCHOOL FOR YOUTH

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**Succeed
At School,
Your Way.**

We acknowledge the Kaurna people as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters of the Adelaide region and we pay respect to Elders past and present.