

learning links



Helping Kids Learn



**2020/21**

# IMPACT REPORT





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We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands, waterways, and skies across Australia. We thank Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for sharing and caring for the land upon which we live, work, learn, and play. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

## YOUR IMPACT: 2020/21 YEAR IN REVIEW

**A sincere thank you for your generosity over the past year. With your help, Learning Links was able to provide invaluable support and create significant impact for many thousands of children at a time of unprecedented need.**

The year was challenging for our community and for the children and families Learning Links serves. With lockdowns and restrictions disrupting children's education and affecting their wellbeing, many children and young people will need extra support in the years to come to help them to get back on track.

For Learning Links, in 2020/21, the main aim was to make sure we continued to provide high quality support to families and children through multiple channels whilst raising awareness of the challenges that affect children with learning difficulties. We championed evidence-based maths and literacy supports and advocated for increased access to assessments and psychology supports as part of mental health reforms.

The pandemic was also challenging for our organisation as income streams were affected. We welcomed the inclusion of charities in the government financial support schemes and are immensely grateful to our many funding partners who continued to support our important work, even when they themselves were impacted. As a result, Learning Links emerged from the year financially in a healthy position, helping to support the organisation through the most recent lockdown and into the future.

The Learning Links team finished the year on a high note. We are proud of our efforts to strengthen our operations during the pandemic and of the substantial progress made as we implemented our new strategic plan. Our "Impact for Kids" strategy is ambitious and, with a focus on product innovation, digital transformation, and community engagement, will see us triple the number of children we help each year. Last year, we reached close to 5,000 children through our services and programs and over 2,500 professionals thanks to our new online learning programs. These digital programs empower classroom teachers and allied health professionals with skills and strategies to provide evidence-based supports and create impact for children at a greater scale.

Thankfully, the Learning Links team was also able to come through this past year with our positive culture intact and our families and children feeling well supported. This was reflected in our clients' rating of our services as our Net Promoter Score increased from 55.8% in 2019 to 63.4% in 2020 placing us in the 'excellent' category. We saw equally high satisfaction from our staff with 93% feeling well supported by their manager and 92% expressing that the future for Learning Links was positive.

What we achieved over the past year was possible because of the commitment of so many generous people like you. We thank all the children and families, the schools, corporate partners, philanthropic and club partners, supporters, volunteers, staff, and the Learning Links Board. Thank you to our patrons Her Excellency Margaret Beazley Governor of NSW and Mr Wilson, and to our local MPs who continue to support our work in local communities. Thank you also to Dharawal Elder Uncle Dr Shayne Williams and Kamilaroi woman and consultant Lana Leslie who supported us on a cultural education journey as we started to develop our first Reconciliation Action Plan.

As we emerge from the pandemic, what we have learnt will serve our organisation well into the future. Resilience, creativity, trust, and collaboration are key to achieving our mission: To provide children and young people who have difficulties learning with the skills, services and family support that will enable them to realise their potential.

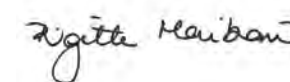
We look forward to working with you to help bring our mission to life and empower children to learn and live a life unlimited by circumstance.



**Gregory Wallace**  
Chair




**Birgitte Maibom**  
CEO





# OUR COMMITMENT TO HELPING KIDS LEARN AND THRIVE

## OUR VISION

A community where difficulties learning are no longer a barrier to a fulfilling life.

## OUR MISSION

To provide children and young people who have difficulties learning with the skills, services and family support that will enable them to realise their potential.

## OUR PURPOSE

To prevent learning difficulties from causing disadvantage by offering evidence-based services and advocating to inform government policies. To collaborate with the sector to make sure we contribute effectively to the system.

## OUR VALUES

### Empowerment

We are resourceful, accountable, and proactive, using our initiative to achieve positive change and outcomes.

### Collaboration

We value teamwork and the strength that comes from diversity and from joining forces to make a difference.

### Excellence

We are professional, competent and driven, striving always to be the best we can be, in everything we do.

### Integrity

We are reliable and dependable, and guided by our moral compass at all times.





# ABOUT LEARNING LINKS

**Learning Links exists to give children the best start in life. We support children and young people to overcome challenges at a vital stage of their development and empower them to reach their full academic, social and wellbeing potential.**

Learning Links was established in 1972 by parents concerned about the lack of appropriate education and support services to meet their children's needs. Today, our focus is on providing these crucial services and preventing learning difficulties from causing disadvantage. We work in close collaboration with schools, early childhood settings, teachers, allied health professionals and families to help children with learning disabilities and difficulties to learn and live life to their full potential.

Learning difficulties do not refer simply to struggles with numeracy and literacy, they also include the difficulties many children face in learning the essential social and life skills they need to grow and thrive. Children with learning difficulties are often anxious, lack confidence, have behavioural issues, trouble communicating, making friends, and building strong relationships. They may have diagnosed conditions such as ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), dyslexia, dyscalculia, fine and gross motor delays and speech and language delays.

Learning Links believes every child deserves the very best opportunity to learn and live a full, rewarding life, unlimited by circumstance. We work with children and families to unlock

their unique talents, foster individual strengths, ignite a passion for learning and support children to fulfil the dreams they have for themselves.

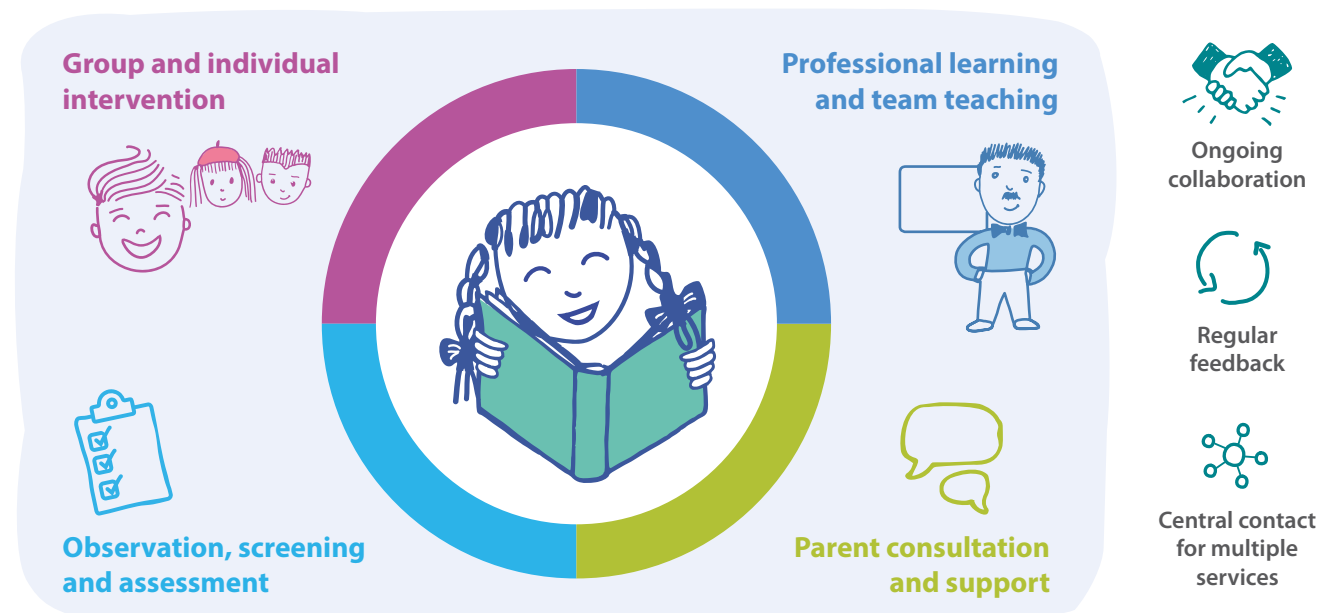
Learning Links' specialist educators, psychologists, speech therapists and occupational therapists work on a one-to-one or group basis to provide the support each child needs to develop vital speech, language, literacy, and numeracy skills, along with practical life-skills and strategies that build their confidence, expand social skills, and enhance emotional wellbeing.

Learning Links also operates an award-winning inclusive preschool and supported playgroups that promote and teach the social, academic and life skills that set young children up for life and ongoing learning.

We are increasingly working with a growing number of teachers across Australia to help them empower children in their own classrooms to learn and succeed alongside their peers.

Learning Links' support is tailored so that each child and family receive the help they need, at their own pace, in the way that works best for them. This tailored and personalised approach inspires and generates results, builds confidence, and ensures each child feels empowered to believe in themselves and their ability to learn, grow and fulfil their individual dreams and aspirations.

## OUR INTERVENTION MODEL





# HOW WE ARE TRANSFORMING LIVES

## THE CHALLENGE

**Up to 15% of children are affected by learning difficulties and disabilities.<sup>1</sup>**

- There is little financial assistance available for many of these children to access the extra supports they need.
- Our education system is struggling to cope with the complexity of the challenge and may lack the expertise to know what to do.
- Many children fall through the gaps and fail to reach their full learning, social and wellbeing potential.



- These children are at risk of mental health issues, unemployment and incarceration causing significant economic cost to our community.
- There is a strong correlation between disadvantage and learning difficulties – without early intervention and support it is more difficult to participate and achieve success in our society.



## RESOURCES

**Expertise and experience from over 49 years of supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and establishing inclusive learning environments.**

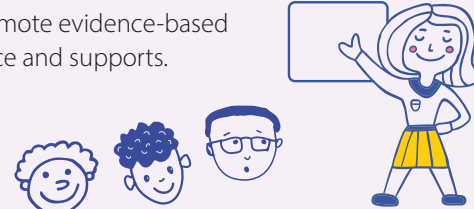
- 215 staff, including specialist educators and teachers, speech and occupational therapists and psychologists.
- 187 dedicated volunteer Reading and Counting Buddies to help children through playful and evidence-based programs.
- Strong, ongoing support from many loyal funders and partners across business, clubs, government and not-for-profit agencies.



## INTERVENTIONS

**Evidence-based programs and interventions including early childhood education, literacy, numeracy, psychology, speech and occupational therapy.**

- Assessments to determine children's learning needs.
- Inclusive education and interventions that are playful and engaging, set high expectations and reinforce what is possible.
- Parent support programs, advice and workshops.
- Learning and development for teachers, allied health and other professionals.
- Raising awareness with government and our sector to promote evidence-based practice and supports.



## OUTCOMES

**Children are better able to keep up with their peers at school and reach their full learning, social and wellbeing potential.**

- Children make measurable gains with literacy and numeracy.
- Children have improved social, emotional and behavioural skills that support their education and wellbeing.
- Children and parents feel more empowered and confident about their learning.
- Professionals feel empowered to better teach and support children with additional needs, and their families.
- Children are better able to participate in mainstream schooling and activities.



## IMPACT

**More children gain the necessary literacy, numeracy, social and interpersonal skills required to complete education.**

- Children can better realise their full potential and therefore lead a more fulfilling and productive life with suitable employment and better mental health.
- Parents and families are happier and more productive when their children are able to contribute to society and fulfil their potential.
- The cycle of disadvantage due to learning difficulties and disabilities may be broken.



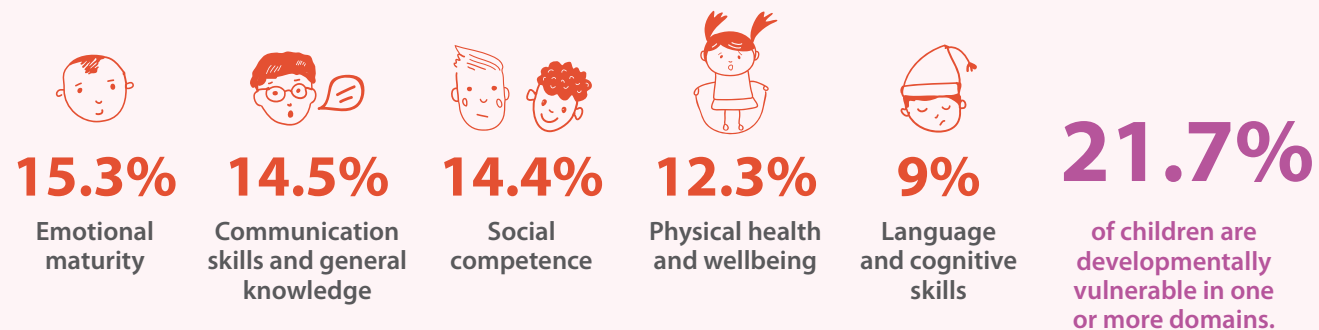
<sup>1</sup> DSM5, 2013



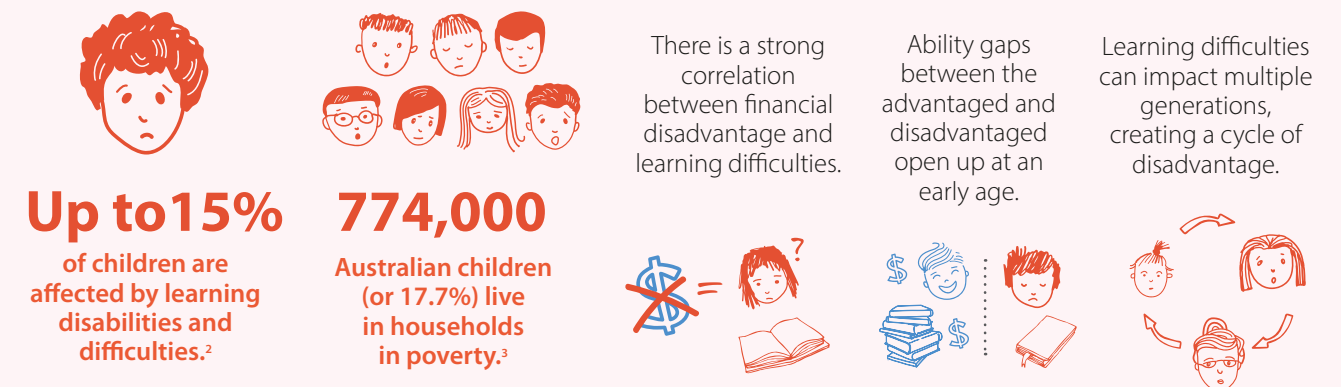
# THE CHALLENGE FACING CHILDREN

## THERE ARE EARLY WARNING SIGNS

Many children entering school are already developmentally at risk in the following skill domains:<sup>1</sup>



## LEARNING DIFFICULTIES ARE COMMON



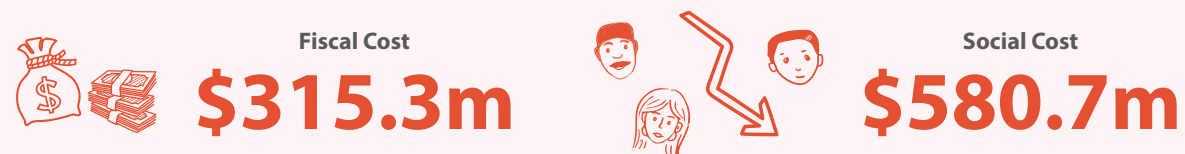
**TOGETHER WE CAN BREAK THIS CYCLE!**

The financial support available to help families is minimal. Learning Links supports families and communities by providing the specialist interventions required to help these children reach their full potential.

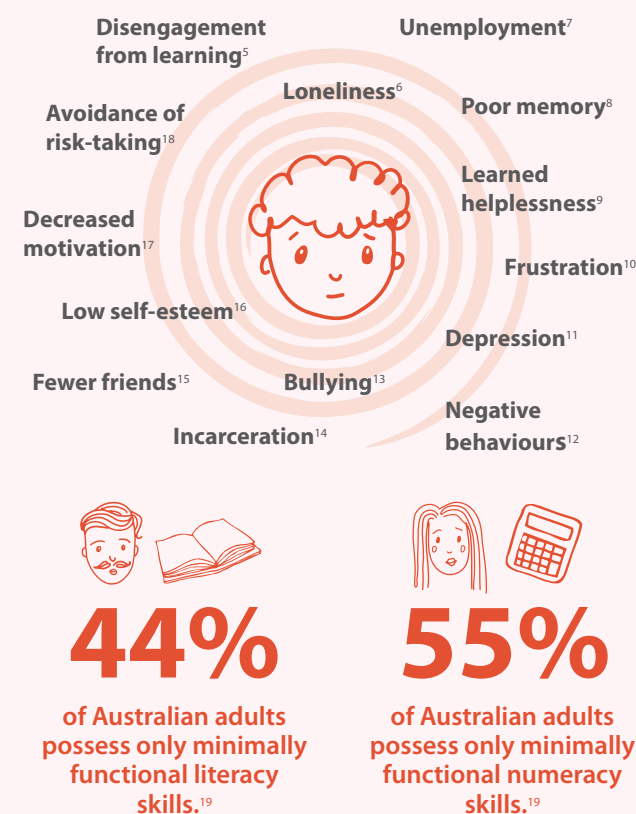


## LEADING TO SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC COSTS

The annual cost of all early school leavers is:

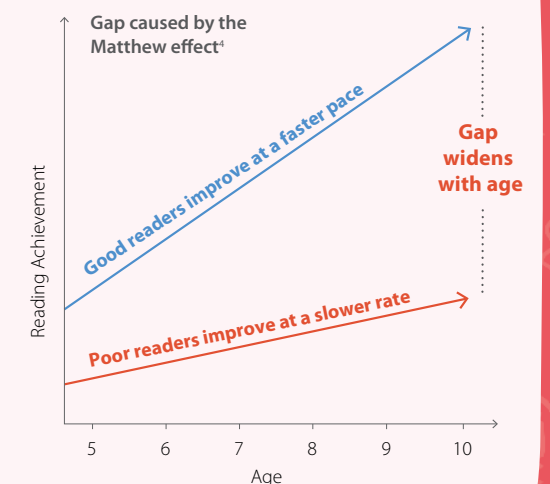


## THERE ARE LONG-TERM IMPACTS



## AND WITHOUT INTERVENTION

If children don't acquire the necessary skills at an early age, the gap between them and their peers widens as they get older.



<sup>1</sup> Australian Early Development Census, 2018; <sup>2</sup> DSM5, 2013; <sup>3</sup> Australian Council of Social Services and UNSW Sydney, 2020; <sup>4</sup> Stanovich, 1986; <sup>5</sup> Rowe, 2006; <sup>6</sup> Carter et al., 2006; <sup>7</sup> ABS 2012; <sup>8</sup> Hay et al., 2005; <sup>9</sup> Firth et al., 2007; <sup>10</sup> Watson, 2005; <sup>11</sup> Carter et al., 2007; <sup>12</sup> Rowe, 2006; <sup>13</sup> Carter et al., 2006; <sup>14</sup> SPELD NSW, 2011; <sup>15</sup> Carter et al., 2006; <sup>16</sup> Nalavany & Carawan, 2011; <sup>17</sup> Watson, 2005; <sup>18</sup> Twomey, 2006; <sup>19</sup> Program for International Assessment of Adult Competencies PIAAC – ABS, 2012; <sup>20</sup> Lamb & Huo, 2017.



# HOW WE'RE HELPING KIDS LEARN



We're proud to work with our community partners to help make a difference for children and families in their local area.



## AWARD WINNING COLLABORATIONS

Learning Links attended the annual ClubsNSW Clubs and Community Awards where we were nominated as Finalists for two awards. The night brings together clubs, charities and social impact organisations from across the state to recognise and celebrate the outstanding social contributions made by clubs in their local communities.

Learning Links was honoured to win the 'Clubs in Collaboration Award', a submission put forward by Dooleys to recognise and celebrate 27 Western Sydney clubs who are wonderful supporters of Learning Links. Over the last 12 months, these 27 clubs have helped us to support almost 630 children in over 20 Western Sydney schools.



Our Speech Therapy program at Cammeray Public School, funded by Norths Collective, was recognised in the Education category for supporting children to transform their education outcomes. For the past eight years, we have been working with Norths Collective at Cammeray Public School, and over this time have helped over 250 children develop confidence and proficiency in their speech and language development.

We are very proud of the programs and partnerships we have with clubs and schools across NSW and were humbled to hear club representatives speak so highly of Learning Links and the difference we make for children and families in their local communities.





## OUR CULTURAL EDUCATION JOURNEY

Learning Links has embarked on a formal cultural education journey to help facilitate reconciliation and institutional integrity by developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

A RAP is a strategic document that will support our organisation to work harmoniously with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and provide a framework to support the national reconciliation

movement. The RAP will include practical actions that drive our contribution to reconciliation both internally and externally in the communities in which we work.

We formed a RAP Working Group which meets regularly to define our reconciliation journey and oversee the implementation of our RAP. Following completion of the first stage in our reconciliation journey, our RAP Reflect Plan will be submitted to Reconciliation Australia for endorsement.

Developing a RAP will support Learning Links to turn our good intentions into action by formalising our organisation's commitment to reconciliation. It will enable our staff to develop greater cultural awareness and professional development practices that will strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. This in turn will ensure more effective and relevant service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families. As an organisation working towards a just, equitable and reconciled Australia, it is vital to Learning Links that we can ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have the same educational opportunities and choices as non-Indigenous children.



## LEARNING LINKS' ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Since 2018, Learning Links has been working in collaboration with experts in Aboriginal education – including the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG), local AECGs and NGROO Education – to develop and deliver literacy and numeracy programs that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at a vital stage in their development.

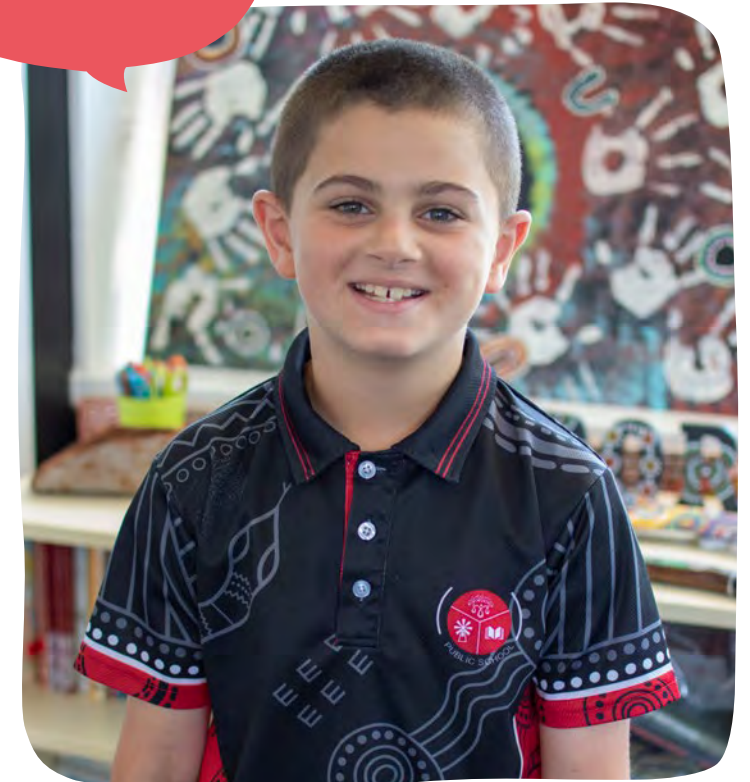
The NSW AECG is recognised by the NSW Department of Education as the peak community advisory body on Aboriginal Education at all levels and stages of planning and decision making. Learning Links believes our programs can help bridge the gap between Indigenous school students and their non-Indigenous peers through early intervention and collaboration with these communities.

Thanks to funding from generous supporters, including the Rali Foundation, CommBank Staff Foundation and the James N Kirby Foundation, we partnered in 2020 and 2021 with the Liverpool local AECG to deliver innovative early intervention programs for Aboriginal children in Years 1–4 at three priority schools in Liverpool. The program is based on a proven model of intervention to build the children's capabilities and confidence in the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy. The program targets professional development and learning for the Aboriginal Education Officers and Learning Support Officers at the schools. This broadens the impact and long-term outcomes realised and ensures that future students will have the opportunity to access an enhanced

"It helped me do more words and put them together."



"Keep on going and keep on trying and then you'll get better at it."



level of skills and understanding of the teachers and support staff working with them.

Over a period of nine months, we have seen that participating children achieved average learning gains of 16 months in reading accuracy and 21 months in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Maintaining these vital foundational skills will empower these children with the tools and skills to reach their individual potential.

Thanks to our ongoing partnership with local AECGs, Learning Links is able to identify and support priority schools in need and support Indigenous children through culturally appropriate targeted interventions. To date, we have supported 57 Aboriginal children in their first step towards realising significant education outcomes. We look forward to being able to expand this successful program with the help of our generous funders in order to extend the program across more schools and communities.

"We have seen amazing results! Students are confident, there has been an improvement academically, and there has also been an improvement in their wellbeing."

– Ashcroft Public School Principal





## HOW LEARNING LINKS IS HELPING WITH THE COVID CATCH-UP

**The COVID pandemic has impacted almost every aspect of our lives, and children's education has been no exception.**

The disruptions to face-to-face learning have affected students' progress, with students from disadvantaged backgrounds suffering disproportionately, and those who were already behind, falling even further behind their peers.

Evidence showed that students who are already behind experience less motivation to learn and tend to access less assistance from their parents than their more advantaged peers. Other common issues include poorer access to technology and a home environment that is often less conducive to learning compared to most of their advantaged peers. While most students recover quickly when they return to normal schooling, disadvantaged students need extra support to catch up.

After the first COVID lockdown in 2020, it was important for Learning Links to address the urgent and increased education and wellbeing needs of children. A major Australian and New Zealand education survey by Pivot, of over 3,500 teachers and school leaders, revealed that the three top concerns teachers had for students were children's social isolation, a decrease in student wellbeing and learning loss.<sup>1</sup>

As an organisation we adapted to help as many children as possible who had fallen even further behind due to remote learning and missed tutoring, therapy, and psychology support

services. Thanks to support from our generous funders and those who share Learning Links' mission, we were successful in supporting an increased number of children to access subsidised support across one or more programs.

In response to COVID, we provided our allied health and education services online. This not only allowed us to continue to reach existing clients, but also opened new opportunities to support children and families who could not access our services previously.

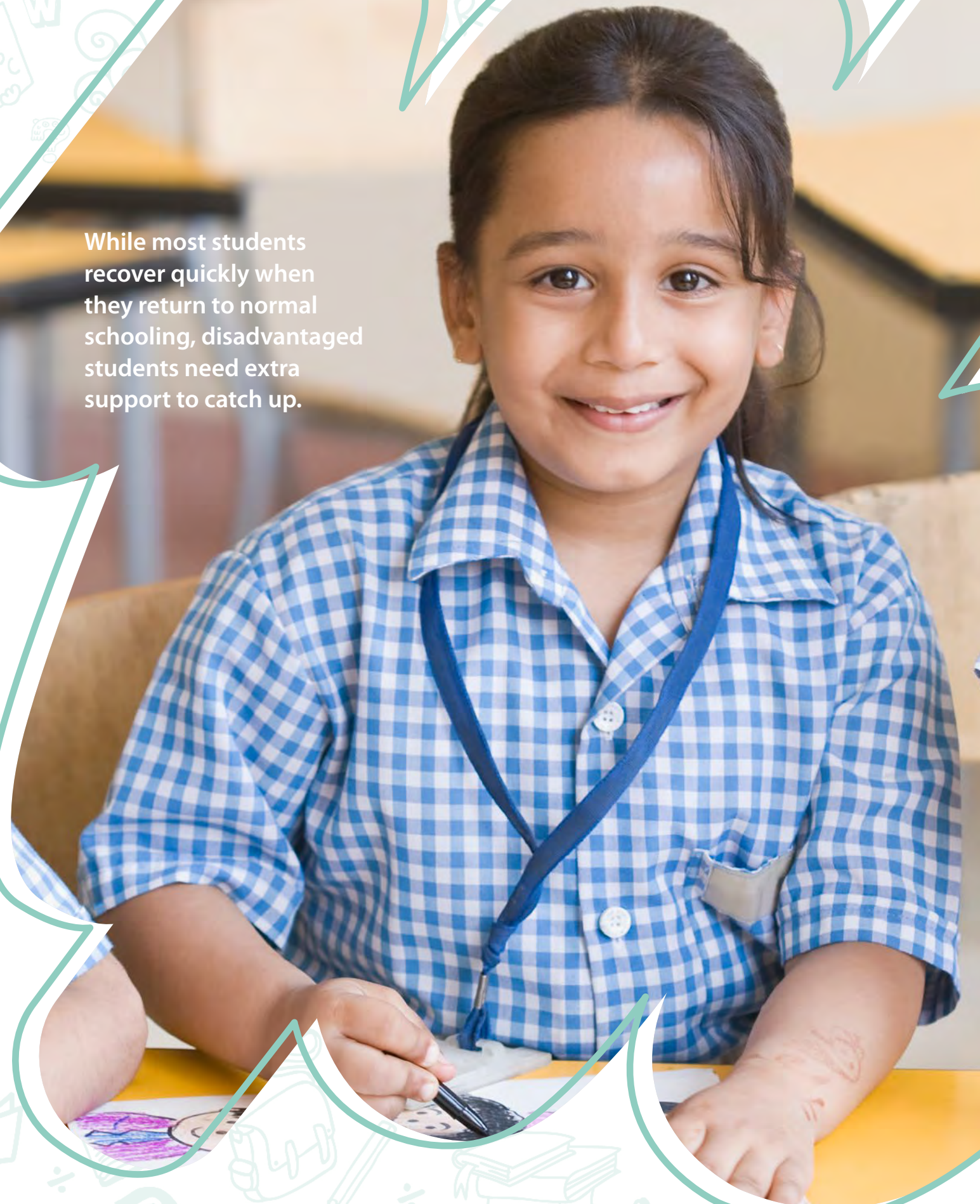
We also developed a new webinar series which was launched at the start of 2021. These webinars aim to support and upskill education professionals, psychologists, therapists, and parents. The new webinars have enabled us to share our expertise interstate and overseas.

Through COVID, maintaining our own staff's professional knowledge and the quality of the programs we deliver has been vital and we therefore moved our own professional development workshops to an online format. This allowed us to ensure reliable and regular training of our staff to increase expertise in their fields and build confidence in their work.

Despite the ongoing effects of COVID, we are confident that the way we have, and continue to evolve, as an organisation enables us to play an important role in the COVID catch-up children face.

<sup>1</sup> Flack, C. B., Walker, L., Bickerstaff, A., Earle, H., & Margetts, C. (2020). Educator perspectives on the impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning in Australia and New Zealand. Melbourne, Australia: Pivot Professional Learning.

While most students recover quickly when they return to normal schooling, disadvantaged students need extra support to catch up.





# THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

We simply could not deliver our services to children and families without our funders and supporters. We are very grateful for your generosity.

Today in Australia there is little government funding for learning difficulties, and we are thankful for the generous support of our funders, volunteers and community partners who enable us to conduct many of our programs free to children and families.

## Corporates and Foundations Registered Clubs



A Sweet Helping Hand  
Adobe Employee Community Fund  
Banktech  
BSG Australia  
Christmas in The Hills Committee  
Count Charitable Foundation  
Deafness Foundation  
FICAP  
James N Kirby Foundation  
Lonsec  
Sydney Community Foundation  
Sydney Water

## Volunteers and Pro Bono Support

David Williams (Kurtis Paige Initiatives), Jan Colley, Julie Ducrou, Kristy Peacock-Smith (Bird and Bird Lawyers), Tessa Lau



## northcollective



Ashfield Catholic & Community Club  
Ashfield RSL Club  
Auburn Soccer Sports Club  
Bargo Sports Club  
Berkeley Sports Club  
Bexley RSL Club  
Blacktown Workers Club  
Cabra-Vale Diggers  
Campbelltown Catholic Club  
Campbelltown Golf Club

Canada Bay Club  
Canley Heights RSL & Sporting Club  
Castle Hill RSL Club  
Chatswood RSL Club  
Chester Hill RSL & Bowling Club  
Club Burwood  
Club Liverpool  
Club Rivers  
Club Ryde  
Club Wyong (Mounties Group)  
Collegians Wollongong  
Cronulla RSL Memorial Club  
Dapto Leagues Club  
The Groundz, Dapto Showgrounds  
Dooleys Regents Park Sports Club  
Doyalson-Wyee RSL Club  
Forestville RSL Club  
Helensburgh Tradies  
Hornsby RSL Club  
Ingleburn Bowling Club  
Kingsgrove RSL Club  
Lakemba Club  
Lantern Club  
Liverpool Catholic Club  
Magpie Sports Club  
Magpies Waitara  
Maroubra Seals Club  
Merrylands RSL Club  
Moorebank Sports Club  
Mounties  
Panthers Penrith Leagues Club  
Parramatta Leagues Club  
Penrith RSL Club  
Petersham RSL Club  
Pittwater RSL Club  
Ramsgate RSL Memorial Club  
Richmond Club  
Rules Club Wagga Wagga  
Springwood Sports Club  
St Johns Park Bowling Club  
St Marys Rugby League Club  
The Juniors Kingsford  
The Shellharbour Club  
Tradies Gynea  
Wallarah Bay Recreation Club

Wallsend Diggers  
West Pennant Hills Sports Club  
Windsor Leagues Club  
Wyong Golf Club  
Wyong Rugby League Club

**Government Partners**  
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications  
Bayside Council  
Canterbury Bankstown Council  
City of Ryde  
Department of Social Services  
Georges River Council  
Inner West Council  
NSW Department of Education  
NSW Department of Family & Community Services

**Community Partners**  
Alex Hawke MP – Federal Member for Mitchell, David Coleman MP – Federal Member for Banks, Mark Coure – State Member for Oatley, A1 Bakery, Allowah Children's Hospital, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Cabramatta Public School, Cabramatta SaCC, Connect Child and Family Services Katoomba, Disability Macarthur, EarlyEd, Georges River College – Oatley Senior Campus, Glen Innes Severn Council, Gunnedah Early Childhood Intervention, HIPPY Australia, HIPPY Fairfield, Lakemba SaCC, Liverpool local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Lugarno Lions, Luke Priddis Foundation, McCallums Hill Public School, Muddy Puddles Batemans Bay, Multicultural Health Service – Fairfield, Noah's Inclusion Services, NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Parenting Research Centre, Riverwood Public School, Riverwood Library, Sanctuary Point Connect, St George Men's Shed, Swansea Baptist Church, The Smith Family

## WHAT OUR STAKEHOLDERS SAY

"My child has changed so much in so little time sometimes I still can't believe it."



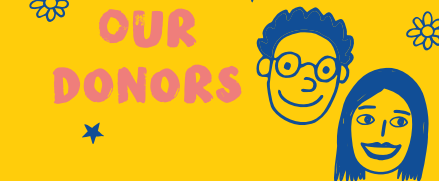
### OUR FAMILIES

"Thank you for a memorable and valuable year of learning for my son. All the teachers have been wonderful, supportive role models, and we cannot thank them enough for their kindness and knowledge in guiding him through the year before he starts big school."



92% of our families would recommend Learning Links to others.

"We are so proud to do our bit to drive positive change in the lives of those children. Together, we are making a real difference."



### OUR DONORS

"We can't thank Learning Links enough for the wonderful support you give our school. Again, our students' results have shown that with good intervention programs progress can be made."

### OUR SCHOOLS



"A range of talented and experienced staff who are generous with their time and effort, and willing to share their expertise. The overwhelming feel of the office is positive, and kindness and tolerance abound so it's a nice place to work."



### OUR STAFF

90% of our staff would recommend Learning Links as a place to work to their family, friends and professional networks.

"I feel extremely privileged to volunteer for Learning Links' Reading for Life program and would love to do it again. So much fun and the children really enjoy it too – the highlight of my Monday!"



### OUR VOLUNTEERS

92% of our "For Life" volunteers are very satisfied with their experience.



# PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

## CLUBS

Thanks to generous funding, volunteering, and growing partnerships with clubs across NSW, Learning Links has been able to deliver teacher professional development, parent programs and critical psychology, speech therapy and specialist education programs to large numbers of children at the heart of local communities.

Thanks to clubs across NSW in 2020/2021:



"The relationship between our club and Learning Links has only grown from strength to strength. It started with Charity Housie sessions, which still run today, and progressed to support through our ClubGRANTS because we could see the tremendous community value of the work Learning Links does for our local schools, teachers, children and families."

- CEO, Ingleburn RSL Club



"Volunteering for Learning Links is a real highlight of the year for our employees. It provides such a fun and valuable team experience for us to connect with our local communities and allows us to make a real and personal impact in our Corporate Social Responsibility priorities."

- Head of Business Operations, CMC Markets



## CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Learning Links partners with corporates and organisations on value aligned programs and projects to provide long-lasting opportunities to children facing challenges at a vital stage of their educational and social development.

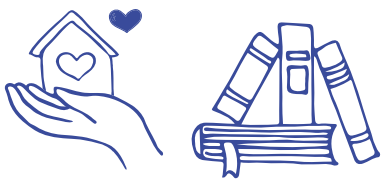
This year, our special appreciation and thanks goes to organisations whose employees have volunteered their time as Learning Links 'Reading Buddies' or 'Counting Buddies' and to CommBank who have helped us to support over 400 children and teachers through teacher professional development, literacy, numeracy, and Aboriginal Education Programs. We are also delighted to be celebrating our fifth year in partnership with CMC Markets who have done much to support children with their numeracy during this time.



Sponsor a program

Volunteer

Give through workplace giving



## TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

This year, funding from Trusts and Foundations has greatly accelerated Learning Links' mission to provide more children who have difficulties learning with the skills, services and family support that will enable them to realise their true potential.

Our special thanks goes to the Bennelong Foundation, the Sydney Community Foundation and the James N Kirby Foundation who have funded vital literacy and numeracy programs and supported our commitment to Aboriginal education. We are also grateful to the Deafness Foundation who are currently supporting our work to make our Parents as Case Coordinators program accessible to parents and community members with hearing impairment.

"We have many wonderful, long-term partnerships with Trusts and Foundations and that really makes a difference to the support we can provide to children, families and communities who need it the most. The life-changing results our evidence-based programs achieve speak for themselves and the varied expertise of our professionals enables us to make positive impact in the area that means the most to our partners."

- Head of Fundraising, Learning Links



"Our family is so grateful for your support, and I cannot thank you enough for the changes we are seeing in our daughter. She's improving with every session and the confidence gained is spilling over into so many other areas."



## PERSONAL DONATIONS

Thanks to personal donations made this year, we have been able to support many children and young people through Learning Links' Disadvantaged Kid's Fund.

Thanks to supporters, like you, our psychologists, speech therapists and education specialists can reach children who, without your support, would not be able to access the critical interventions they need and deserve.



ALL

donations support children to learn and live a life unlimited by circumstance.





# OUR COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION AND IMPACT



In 2020/2021, Learning Links provided therapy, education and support services to:



**4,857**  
Children



**3,091**  
Families



**138**  
Schools and Communities



**2,522**  
School, Allied Health and Other Professionals

**401**

Children received inclusive educational care through our Preschool, Prep 4 Preschool™ and Out of School Hours care services.

**1,355**

Children with conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and ADHD participated in programs to improve literacy and numeracy.

**707**

Children were assessed to determine their strengths and needs and to provide families with guidance regarding the support required and potential funding schemes.

**263**

Children and families in disadvantaged communities were assisted with specialist intervention and support.

**2,472**

Professionals, including allied health, teachers, and early childhood educators, were provided with specialist knowledge and skills in children's learning, development, and family support.

**1,619**

Children received therapy to develop communications, language, sensory, fine and gross motor skills.

**1,438**

Children with social, emotional, and behavioural concerns were provided with support to reduce anxiety, build confidence, self-esteem, and stronger family relationships.

**1,279**

Parents and carers were provided with specialist knowledge and skills in children's learning, development, and family support.

**50**

Provisional psychologists gained expertise and skills working with children and families to fulfil the requirements to become fully registered.

**26**

Indigenous children participated in a tailored literacy and numeracy program developed in partnership with NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group to improve their long-term outcomes.

**3,805**

Children, parents and professionals were able to access services via additional online channels ensuring ongoing support and accessibility now and into the future.

**431**

Children with disabilities received therapeutic support under the NDIS to develop functional skills for independence and meaningful community participation.



# LIFE-CHANGING PROGRAMS



**Reading for Life®** is an evidence-based program that provides one-on-one support to primary school children with reading disorders, including dyslexia.

The program is delivered by volunteer "Reading Buddies" at school or in the home. Children who participate are tested both at the beginning and end of the program to measure the impact of the intervention.

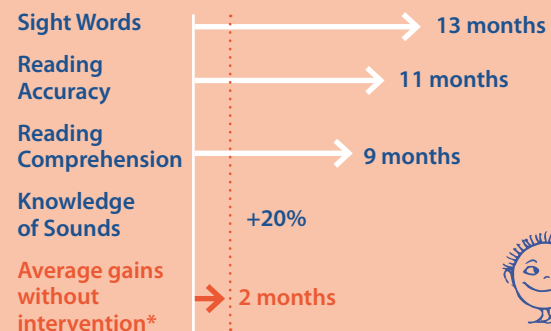


**19** Schools  
**459** Children  
**117** Volunteers

## AVERAGE READING PROGRESS

by children with reading difficulties (15-week program)

### WITH READING FOR LIFE



**Counting for Life®** is a program that trains volunteers to work with children at their school to improve their numeracy, self-esteem and confidence.

The volunteer "Counting Buddies" visit the children once a week for 10 weeks and guide them through a semi-structured program which contains a variety of fun activities and games to encourage children's engagement and interest while building their numeracy skills and boosting self-esteem.

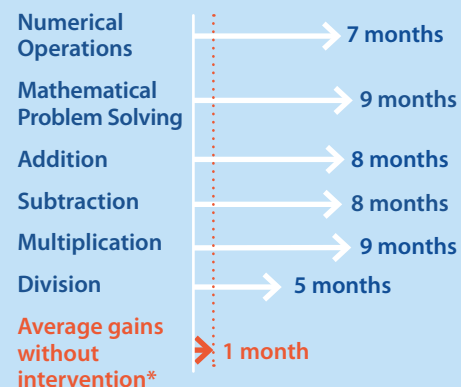


**15** Schools  
**321** Children  
**70** Volunteers

## AVERAGE NUMERACY PROGRESS

by children with numeracy difficulties (10-week program)

### WITH COUNTING FOR LIFE



## LITERACY AND NUMERACY SESSIONS

Learning Links runs specialist individualised literacy and numeracy classes, with personal assessments to evaluate each child's progress.

Sessions are conducted by education specialists on an individual basis at our centres or within school settings. Sessions are tailored to engage the individual learner, using evidence-informed programs.



**322** Children attended our tailored literacy and numeracy classes.

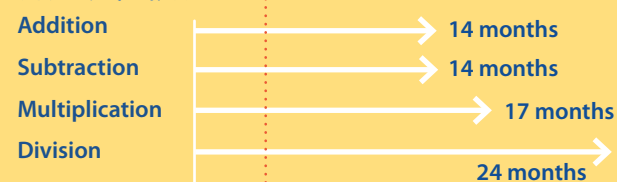
## AVERAGE LEARNING GAINS

by children with learning difficulties (8-month program)

### LITERACY SKILLS



### NUMERACY SKILLS



Average gains without intervention\* → 4 months

\*On average it is estimated that a child with learning difficulties learns at half the rate of their peers

Children with learning difficulties have been shown to make only a six month improvement for each year they attend school, while their peers progress a full twelve months\*. This gap in attaining skills in core literacy and numeracy becomes more significant with age.

Our Education Support programs help children over an eight month period of intervention. During this time period, participating students are achieving average gains of up to 24 months in foundation skills for literacy and numeracy. This wonderful achievement helps us to continue to work towards breaking the cycle of disadvantage.

\*Thompson, 1990;  
Wheldall & Beaman, 1999



# WHAT WE ACHIEVED TOGETHER THIS YEAR



Learning Links works in communities across Sydney and NSW to help children and families improve their learning and wellbeing. Increasingly we are extending our reach nationally via our specialist online programs, interventions and supports.

Here are some of the key highlights and achievements from across our organisation in 2020/21.

## PSYCHOLOGY

Our Educational Psychology team conducts cognitive and academic assessments to understand a child's overall learning and social abilities, strengths and support needs. To gain a detailed understanding of a child's reading, writing and maths skills, additional assessments are also available for dyslexia, dyscalculia, memory, Autism Spectrum Disorder, ADHD, and adaptive behaviour. Through the assessment process, Learning Links assists parents to identify their child's challenges and strengths, and the types of support they would benefit from at home and school to assist their learning and development. Our psychology services also provide essential support to children and their families who struggle with emotional, social and behavioural development which can impact on learning. We utilise a range of evidence-based therapies including Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Play Therapy to address anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, poor social skills, and attention and behavioural difficulties.

### Highlights include:

- We continued to expand our online psychological therapy services, enabling us to reach children and families across Australia.
- We expanded our Psychology in Schools program to provide social skills and individual counselling services in schools.
- We expanded the services offered by our provisional psychologists to include psychological therapy, assessments, and group programs.

## SPEECH AND OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Our dedicated team of speech pathologists are passionate about supporting children with communication difficulties. Our therapists deliver evidence-based interventions in our centres and through online service delivery. We also make a big impact for school age students by working within school communities. Our therapists work with school staff to assess and identify children with communication difficulties and help them to reach their social and academic goals.

Learning Links speech pathologists identify and support children with all aspects of their communication skills. This can include understanding and using language so they can understand what others say to them; expressing themselves clearly with speech sounds and vocabulary; using language skills to interact with friends; fluency skills; speech sound clarity; and literacy skills.

Occupational therapists help children understand and work with their bodies so they can perform the basic life skills and tasks required of them at home and school. Our small but energetic Occupational Therapy team provide assessments and intervention at our Peakhurst and Oatley centres and in the Preschool to encourage the development of fine and gross motor skills, self and body awareness, sensory processing, visual perception, and motor integration.

### Highlights include:

- Our team continued to provide online service delivery, which allows flexibility and consistency of service for many families.
- We established a team of speech pathology supervisors. These experienced clinicians provide clinical support to our whole team to ensure that children and families are receiving the best quality services.
- We started new programs in several schools and had many of our current schools increase their days of support to help provide services to more children. In total, we worked in over 20 schools across Sydney.





## EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

**Our Educational Support programs are delivered by a team of highly qualified education specialists who work with children who have learning difficulties including ADHD, dyslexia and dyscalculia.**

They provide specialist interventions across all areas of literacy and numeracy. Sessions are conducted on an individual or small group basis at our centres or within school settings. Every child attending our program receives an initial screening assessment upon entry, which identifies their specific needs and informs parents and teachers to collaboratively develop an individualised learning plan for the child. Weekly activities during sessions are focused on building confidence and experiencing success in the areas that will have the biggest impact on literacy and numeracy development. Our education specialists tailor each session to engage the individual learner, utilising iPads and other digital technologies, hands-on materials and carefully sequenced activities to facilitate learning. All programs are evidence-based and supported by the multidisciplinary team at Learning Links. Regular progress reports are provided throughout the program to optimise educational outcomes.

### Highlights include:

- Our online services to students enabled us to support students across Australia. Families use this service when they cannot attend sessions in person or as a permanent arrangement for support. This has expanded our support to students who may not previously have been able to attend our centres.
- Online education sessions have created employment opportunities for education specialists who do not live near our centres, and we now have several staff who provide only online services to students. We look forward to expanding our workforce in this way.
- Most importantly, during a year of disrupted learning across NSW, students attending Education Support continued to improve in key areas for learning.

## CHARLOTTE, 11 YEARS OLD

**By Charlotte's mum**

When Charlotte started school, we knew that she had a few social and emotional issues, but we soon realised that she also struggled with reading and writing. By Year 2 she was continuing to fall behind in her reading and we had her assessed by a psychologist. Charlotte was diagnosed with ADHD, anxiety, dyslexia, and expressive language difficulties. Being a teacher, I was aware of most of the difficulties that Charlotte was experiencing, and I was in constant communication with her teachers. But even then, there were still some things that I didn't know and needed support navigating the best way to help her.

Learning Links was recommended to us by her psychologist, and I had also heard of them from an ABC documentary I had seen called 'Kids on Speed?', in which one of their staff featured as an educational expert. I was focused on trying to get Charlotte help from someone who had experience with dyslexia, and when she was in Year 2, we enrolled her in speech therapy and education support sessions with Learning Links.

Since attending Learning Links, Charlotte has gained so much confidence in herself and her own abilities. She can now read and write at the level expected for her age. She still struggles with certain things, but she is developing the skills to work independently through any difficulties she encounters. She has also gained more confidence in expressing herself and communicating clearly.

She works hard in all areas of school and has especially proven this during the period of home learning due to COVID. She tackled it with an amazing attitude and effort and has shown such an improvement in her independence when it comes to learning from home.

"My reading and spelling has improved. I like going to Mary because she is nice. She is a good teacher and she has really helped me with reading, writing and spelling. She helps me with little tricks to help me read and spell."

- Charlotte



Her attitude and her will to succeed would not be possible without the confidence she has gained through her hard work in sessions with Mary, one of Learning Links' education specialists. Since the first COVID lockdown in 2020, Charlotte has been doing her educational support sessions online. The flexibility to transfer to online support sessions during this time has been a great help to our family and has allowed me to support her two siblings while she learns. Things like homework are less stressful than they used to be, and her improvements have lowered my anxiety about her learning outcomes for the future. As a family this is a huge relief and means we have one less concern to worry about.

We are so proud of Charlotte and what she has achieved. She has a great attitude towards her learning. Now when she struggles with something she perseveres and tries her best. She has developed a love of reading and discovered the spark that is ignited when you get lost in the characters of a story!



## PARENTING PROGRAMS

### HIPPY

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is based on evidence that children's earliest and most powerful learning comes from their family. Encouraging literacy and numeracy in early childhood sets children up for success in learning. Starting the year before their child starts school, families access this structured, free, home-based program over two years. The parents work through weekly or fortnightly play-based educational activities with their children, with trained home tutors supporting parents and families to learn about children's development and engagement in educational activities to enable school readiness. The program also offers individual parents and carers a supported pathway to employment and local community leadership. Learning Links conducts HIPPY Cabramatta and HIPPY Riverwood through funding from the Brotherhood of St Laurence. The program is supported by HIPPY Australia.

#### Highlights include:

- HIPPY Cabramatta was invited to continue the Age 3 Demonstration Project for another year, following HIPPY Australia successfully securing philanthropic funding from the James N Kirby Foundation for 2021. The 2021 enrolment of 11 families brings the total number to participate over the two years to 19.
- HIPPY Home Tutors and parents engaged in a range of learning activities including parenting courses, webinars, and accredited TAFE courses. Professional development activities were accessed via a combination of online and face-to-face delivery options.
- 51 families across the two sites completed the two-year program, with a total 180 children and families attending the graduation events conducted at the end of 2020.
- COVID-19 saw us respond quickly to the changes required and successfully deliver the program virtually to families with the support of HIPPY Australia.



### MYTIME

The MyTime group program is funded nationally and supported by the Parenting Research Centre. It provides facilitated peer support for parents, grandparents, and carers of children 0-18 years with a disability, developmental delay, or chronic medical condition. MyTime provides invaluable emotional and practical support to parents and carers, with participants accessing a range of specialist supports across the areas of disability, self-care, family support and parenting.

#### Highlights include:

- 12 MyTime groups in the Learning Links coalition delivered 656 hours over 314 sessions to 183 MyTime members.
- The MyTime MyPlace pilot program, which offered the program through online delivery, continued from May to December 2020, delivering twelve sessions to eight members. Members who participated in the pilot program reported an average increase in personal capacity of 51% when asked to rate themselves on statements such as I have access to the information and materials that I need; I am aware of the services and support available to me; and I feel connected to other parents and carers.





## EARLY EDUCATION AND LEARNING

### PRESCHOOL

Our inclusive Preschool provides children, aged three to six years, and their families, with a learning community that values and promotes diversity of culture, language, ability and experience. All children are supported to participate in a wide range of experiences and play opportunities appropriate to their needs and developmental stage. Children are encouraged to explore, investigate and enjoy learning within our caring and nurturing environment. Our professional transdisciplinary staff includes early childhood teachers, educators, speech therapists and an occupational therapist.

#### Highlights include:

- The Preschool continues to operate at 100% occupancy, with a growing waiting list and consistent demand from families. All children enrolled met the Department of Education's priority enrolment guidelines featuring children in their year before school, children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and/or children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- Learning Links Preschool maintained its National Quality Standard (NQS) overall rating of EXCELLENT as rated by ACECQA, receiving a perfect score in all seven quality areas.
- The Zones of Regulation program (adapted and modified for our Preschool) has been implemented by the Educational Team to all class groups. The program was adapted to support children's emotional regulation difficulties and to provide staff and families with strategies and information to support their children's regulation, learning at home and in their early learning settings.
- All children in the Preschool participated in the Handwriting Without Tears program with a focus on 'Mat Man' to support their pre-writing and drawing development and skills. As the program progressed children were introduced to letters and numbers through a multisensory approach including building the letters and numbers out of the wooden pieces or playdough, or writing them on a slate board.
- All children participated in the Play and Learning to Socialise (PALS) program, complementing the Zones of Regulation program, to support their ability and confidence to interact and communicate socially with other children and adults.

### HOLLY, 3 YEARS OLD

#### By Holly's mum

We became aware at the 20 week scan that Holly wasn't growing as well as expected and, not long after, she was diagnosed with intrauterine growth restriction, or IUGR. Despite extensive testing, specialists have never discovered why Holly has slow growth. She is the size of an average 18-month-old at almost 4 years old.

Since birth, Holly has been found to have a range of medical conditions, including a genetic condition called Dup15q Syndrome that comes with a lot of unknowns. She has hypotonia (decreased muscle tone), laryngo-tracheomalacia (soft cartilage of the upper larynx which causes airway obstruction) and cataracts. She is hypermobile which means her joints bend further than they are supposed to, and as a result she tires easily. She also needs ongoing monitoring of her heart and liver. Last year Holly was also diagnosed with global developmental delay following DSM-IV assessment.

We are huge advocates for early intervention, having had an older child who needed various therapy supports and, as we knew Holly would be delayed in a lot of her developmental milestones, we started physiotherapy, OT and speech therapy for her when she was only a few months old. She has had an amazing team supporting her and they have helped her to reach a lot of her milestones at the same time as her peers. Her stubborn determination has also played a big part in this!

We made sure that Holly was put on the waiting list for Preschool at Learning Links as soon as she was born. Her older brother also attended the Preschool so we knew how great it would be for Holly. She started there this year and has already made some beautiful friendships. She talks about her preschool friends and recognises them in the street which is so wonderful! She will be lucky to start school with a lot of her friends in 2023. The Preschool team is truly amazing, they are so thorough and always



have Holly's best interests at heart. She slotted in so easily and her preschool days are her favourite days of the week.

She has weekly sessions with the Preschool OT and speech therapist. Her speech continues to be delayed in both expressive and receptive language, although she's coming along in leaps and bounds. Her vocabulary range, sentence structure and confidence are growing. She has just started to copy her name which also makes me so proud.

Holly's confidence and ability to communicate has improved so much and this helps us immensely as a family. She is often called a baby out in public, and she now responds by talking to the person instead of lashing out and screaming and that makes a huge difference.

This year Holly has learnt to jump! This was one of her NDIS goals and she achieved it after six months at Learning Links. She is so happy and has progressed so much, we really couldn't be happier.





## VINAYAK, 3 YEARS OLD

By Vinayak's mum

Vinayak's father and I moved to Australia from overseas and we spoke only Bengali at home for a long time, so Vinayak had little exposure to English in his first few years. We grew concerned about a few things including his communication skills, attention span and social skills. His language skills were delayed, and some speech sounds were distorted.

Vinayak started the Learning Links Prep 4 Preschool™ program in early 2020, a few months before he turned two. Since joining he has made amazing progress. He is now more confident and very talkative. He is able to talk in short sentences to tell us things he wants, as well as his ideas. At Prep 4 Preschool™ he can sit and pay attention during story time, and he loves puzzles, as well as singing and dancing. He has learnt how to take turns with his new playgroup friends, and he happily follows directions and moves well between activities.

Recently he has started to draw pictures which has made us really proud because this was not something he liked doing before. He also loves story time at home and tells his own stories to his sister.

I have participated in quite a few of the family workshops that Prep 4 Preschool™ runs including Bilingualism, Using Key Word Sign and Visuals, and Sensory Play. I have learnt a lot of new skills which have helped me to support Vinayak at home and this has really helped his progress.

Vinayak is now a lot more independent which has made a huge difference to our family life. Things are much more relaxing for me, and I have more time to do the things I need to do around the house and for the family.



## PREP 4 PRESCHOOL™ PLAYGROUPS

To enhance support for young children in the years leading up to preschool or centre-based learning, Learning Links' Prep 4 Preschool™ program was established at our Oatley centre in 2019 via Start Strong Pathways funding from the Department of Education. This funding supported early intervention playgroups for families who have a child aged from 2-4 years with a disability or additional need, or who are facing difficulties regarding their child attending an early learning service. The groups are facilitated by a transdisciplinary team of professionals including an early childhood teacher, educator, speech pathologist and occupational therapist. The supported playgroups offer a relaxed, safe, and engaging environment where play activities are tailored to enhance the development of each child and support their transition to centre-based learning.

### Highlights include:

- This program grew in 2020 to include two new sessions at Rockdale. There are now three sessions a week at Oatley and two at Rockdale.
- The Rockdale Prep 4 Preschool™ program is part of the Rockdale Community Hub. The program benefits from being part of a wider group of health and early intervention services delivered at a shared location where families feel comfortable. Based on an integrated team approach, the Community Hub supports Culturally and Linguistically Diverse children 0-4 years identified as being at risk developmentally.
- Families at both Prep 4 Preschool™ sites have participated in parent learning through guided presentations and workshops. The focus of these sessions has been based on parent requests and identified gaps in knowledge and skills to support the children's early learning.
- We received funding approval in May 2021 to deliver the program and its objectives for a further 12 months until June 30, 2022.

## OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE SERVICE (OOSH)

Learning Links was pleased to continue to operate the Out of School Hours Care service at McCallums Hill Public School in Roselands until the end of January 2021 when we made the strategic decision to exit this service area and focus on our core services of learning and wellbeing.

Across the 2020/21 period, the OOSH service was accessed by children of all ages and abilities, with funding secured on an individual basis for children who benefited from additional professional resourcing.

Learning Links values the opportunity to have worked with the McCallums Hill School community for six years and to have supported a large number of families and their children.

### Highlights include:

- During 2020/21 we supported:
  - 42 children enrolled in the Before School Care service
  - 80 children enrolled in the After School Care service
  - 55 children enrolled in the Vacation Care service
- We were pleased to be able to support children and families following the impact of COVID-19, with families accessing financial support via the Federal Government's Child Care Package until late 2020.
- The OOSH program enabled children to participate in a wide range of activities that reflected all outcome areas in the MyTime, Our Place – Framework for School Age Care in Australia and placed an increased focus on a range of activities and resources dedicated to prioritising children's physical and emotional wellbeing.





## WEBINARS AND WORKSHOPS

Learning Links offers high quality training to professionals through a range of online public and tailored professional development workshops and webinars. Professionals across early childhood, education and healthcare sectors access practical training that reflects current expert knowledge and industry standards. We provide relevant, innovative, and practical workshops and webinars which allow professionals working with children to build on their knowledge, skills and professional networks. Our team of professional presenters consists of highly qualified early childhood educators, teachers, psychologists, occupational therapists, and speech therapists.

The workshops typically run for four hours, are highly interactive and cap participant numbers to 30. Demand for our popular one-hour webinars continued to grow over the period, with registration numbers uncapped.

We also run funded workshops and webinars across a range of topics for parents.

### Highlights include:

- In response to demand, we developed a new webinar series which was launched at the start of 2021 for teachers, parents, psychologists, early childhood educators and speech and occupational therapists. All attracted large audiences with many being conducted over repeated sessions.
- Our "Identifying Dyslexia" webinar was the most popular professional development workshop delivered in 2020/21. This topic continuously drew large audiences, attracting a total of 370 participants over this period.
- Our "How to Diagnose Specific Learning Disorders" webinar was launched in February and was run three times in the period February to June, with the three sessions attracting an average 100 registrants per webinar.
- Our webinars attracted registrants from all states in Australia, as well as international audiences from New Zealand, Indonesia and South Africa.

### Workshops and webinars held:

- 17 free parent workshops with 538 registrants, funded by the NSW Department of Education.
- 4 free parent webinars with 174 registrants, funded by various clubs and foundations.
- 8 free Teacher Professional Learning workshops with 445 registrants, funded by various clubs and foundations.
- 7 public workshops for professionals with 97 attendees.
- 37 public webinars for professionals with 1825 registrants.
- 7 workshops tailored to meet specific needs of school and early childhood educators.
- A total of 80 online workshops and webinars were delivered, with a total of 3184 registrants.



## PETER, 9 YEARS OLD

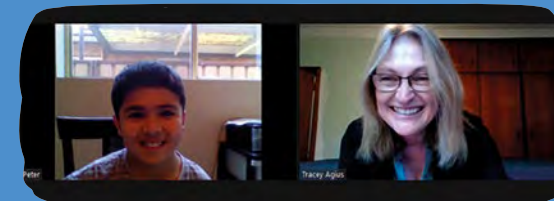
### By Peter's dad

When Peter started school, we noticed that he often tried to avoid doing his homework. After speaking to his teacher, we learnt that he also wasn't engaging in class as much as he should and instead chose to avoid asking or answering questions. His teacher suggested that he might benefit from joining a learning group at the school and start accessing support through intensive lessons in a smaller group. Some friends recommended we also enrol him at Learning Links for additional support because their son had attended Education Support classes there and had great success. We enrolled Peter with Learning Links and hoped for similar results.

Peter started one hour numeracy and literacy lessons with Tracey, an education specialist at Learning Links, three years ago. Over these past few years, his skills in both have improved greatly and he is now more confident in maths, reading, writing, speaking and comprehension. He happily participates in the classroom more and is not afraid of answering or asking questions.

We are so proud of the ownership Peter now has of his schoolwork. He is more interested in learning and his confidence all round has grown so much.

Peter is one of five kids, and he is now happy to engage with his younger siblings in reading and writing tasks. This not only makes our life easier, it's also something that, as his dad, I am proud and happy to see.







# MEET OUR TEAM



## PSYCHOLOGIST REGISTRATION PROGRAM

Learning Links offers an internship program for psychologists which meets the supervision and placement requirements for registration, as specified by the Psychology Board of Australia. The program takes a provisional psychologist on a one-to-four-year journey (depending on the chosen pathway) accessing individual supervision, group supervision and professional development. The provisional psychologists complete eight core competencies which include knowledge of the discipline, research, assessment, interventions and legal obligations. They also complete 17-34 hours per week placement with Learning Links or an external provider. Placement with Learning Links provides the provisionally registered psychologists with the opportunity to deliver psychologically based interventions and assessment services to children and families.

### Highlights include:

- We reviewed our group supervision topics to better cater to the registration needs of participating provisional psychologists.
- We expanded our team of supervisors to allow us to provide a wider range of expertise to provisional psychologists accessing our program.
- We offered nine provisional psychologists paid positions providing assessments, intervention services and training across our learning centres.

## CHARITY HOUSIE

Charity Housie is a key contributor of funds to Learning Links, supporting the organisation and its programs. Charity Housie is a Bingo game played on paper or by using electronic tickets. Players cross off numbers as they are called – the winner is the first player to mark off all required numbered spaces. This low-cost community game offers entertainment to patrons in licensed clubs with proceeds going towards charity organisations, including Learning Links. Learning Links leads the way in Charity Housie in NSW, running sessions in 35 clubs across Greater Sydney, Central Coast, the Illawarra Region and Wagga Wagga.

### Highlights include:

- The contribution from Charity Housie to Learning Links is significant. Our professional and hard-working team takes a customer-focused approach providing entertainment to patrons whilst raising funds for Learning Links. The team has also paved the way for collaboration with clubs around community-based programs that support children and families in their local communities.



# OUR BOARD



**Gregory Wallace**  
Chair

Greg was appointed as Non-Executive Director to the Learning Links Board in October 2012 and appointed Chair in November 2015. Greg is currently Distribution Lead for the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and is also a Non-Executive Director of Metro Tasmania Pty Ltd. Previously, Greg was a Program Director at Service NSW and the Business Lead for Digital Customer Information Services at Transport for NSW. Greg is an experienced senior executive with over 25 years of experience, including in senior marketing leadership roles at Telstra Corporation. He brings dedication, marketing and communications expertise to Learning Links and has a demonstrated passion for excellence in marketing and business. Greg is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



**Sarah Donald**  
Secretary

Sarah joined the Board of Learning Links as a Non-Executive Director in April 2015. She is currently serving as the Company Secretary and the Chair of the Governance and Risk Committee. Sarah is an experienced commercial lawyer with post graduate qualifications in contract law, risk management and corporate governance. Sarah has significant experience in private practice and currently leads a team of lawyers as the General Counsel for the Sunshine Coast Council. Sarah has a passion for the education sector and ensuring that all people have access to supportive learning environments. Sarah is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



**Clive Cuthell**  
Non-Executive Director

Clive was appointed to the Board of Learning Links in July 2017. He is the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee and the Property Development Committee. Clive is currently the CFO of Real Pet Food Company and prior experience includes global CFO at Nuplex Industries and five years with the global cement major, Holcim. With extensive experience in commerce and finance, both in Australia and internationally, Clive enjoys supporting and leading organisations through growth and change. Clive is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland and a member of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand. He is also a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



**Jackie Gambrell**  
Non-Executive Director

Jackie joined the Board of Learning Links as Non-Executive Director in 2019. She is a member of the Finance and Audit Committee. Jackie is an experienced senior executive having worked in strategic and operational roles in both the commercial and not-for-profit sectors. She has held positions at Macquarie Bank, Goodstart Early Learning and Black Dog Institute. She is currently General Manager for Tuberous Sclerosis Australia, a rare disease patient organisation. Jackie enjoys supporting organisations through growth and is passionate about social justice and high quality, evidence-based service delivery.



**Helen Hu**  
Non-Executive Director

Helen joined the Board of Learning Links in May 2017 and is a member of the Finance and Audit Committee. Helen is currently the CFO and Company Secretary for Grain Growers. She has previously worked for large universities and held senior executive roles in sports organisations. She has solid knowledge of corporate governance, regulation, risk management and has extensive experience in managing finance for not-for-profit and membership-based organisations. Helen is a Fellow Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia and New Zealand, a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and a graduate of the Governance Institute of Australia.



**Jennifer Wilson**  
Non-Executive Director

Jennifer joined the Board of Learning Links in July 2019. She is a member of the Governance and Risk Committee. Jennifer is an internationally recognised and awarded creative digital leader, Board member and strategic consultant with deep specialisation in mobile, apps, web, games, and social media; focussing on story and play to engage and grow audience. She is passionate about seamless engagement across multiple platforms and delivering measurable outcomes in the areas of healthcare, behavioural change, education, and consumer focussed entertainment. She currently provides creative strategic and commercial consulting solutions across a number of start-ups, is an active mentor, coach, and investor, and has keen interest in new developments in the creative/media tech landscape. Author of several papers and books as well as being a TEDx presenter, in 2013, Jennifer was awarded 'Outstanding Contribution to the Digital Industry' by the Australian Interactive Media Industry Association.



# OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM



**Birgitte Maibom**  
Chief Executive Officer

Birgitte started her career as a secondary language teacher and communications professional. She joined the not-for-profit sector in 1998 and has since enjoyed a successful career in leadership positions across children's services, disability, health and youth programs. Birgitte joined Learning Links in 2013 and became CEO in July 2015. Birgitte holds an MBA from Macquarie Graduate School of Management and executive education from Harvard Business School and INSEAD. Birgitte is a Graduate Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. In her role as Learning Links CEO, Birgitte is part of the Non-Profit Alliance and the Community Council for Australia. Birgitte is passionate about helping all children and young people achieve the best opportunities in life and serves on NFP boards as a volunteer.



**John McCormack**  
General Manager, Finance and Digital Transformation

John has a diverse skill set developed over 25 years in senior finance roles in a variety of SMB sectors and over 12 years in the NFP sector. He also brings experience in project management,

implementing IT software, infrastructure systems and facility management. John has a Bachelor of Business (Accounting) from the University of Technology Sydney and is a member of CPA Australia. John has a strong focus on optimising efficiencies by utilising a combination of leading-edge technology and streamlined business processes to help achieve strategic outcomes. John is committed to supporting the future of children with learning disabilities through the work of Learning Links.



**Simone Montgomery**  
General Manager, Client Services and Operations

With 30 years' experience working in the not-for-profit sector supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, Simone brings a breadth of experience which includes working with young people, incarcerated and diverse populations. Working in senior management roles in housing and mental health, she has spent her working life supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged communities across the lifespan to envisage and reach their goals. At Learning Links, she is dedicated to providing innovative, high-quality services for children and families, particularly those who struggle to learn and face disadvantage. Simone holds a Bachelor of Adult Education and a Masters in Social Development as well as qualifications in management and project management.



**Diane Peacock-Smith**  
General Manager, Service Quality, Risk and Compliance

Diane has worked in senior management positions in the NFP sector for over 25 years. She has a Graduate Diploma in Community Leadership, Masters Degree in Special Education, Diploma Special Education, BA Special Education, Diploma Business Management. Key achievements include the establishment and accreditation of a Best Practice Early Intervention Setting, co-writing a Functional Skills Curriculum (DET NSW) and being a Special Education Advisor on the inaugural ACARA Panel. Diane brings extensive experience and expertise in working across the education, health and community sectors to provide all children with access to education relevant to their individual abilities and needs.



**Don Tilley**  
General Manager, Funding and Partnerships

Don has had a distinguished and diverse career with senior roles in the corporate sector and as a retail business owner. He brings extensive experience and success in growing sales and the bottom line to his role at Learning Links. Don

has a Business Management degree and strong interest and expertise in business development and developing customer service excellence. Don was awarded an Australian Sports Medal for his services to junior sport and his strong commitment to supporting children is a key driver of his contribution to the future of Learning Links.



**Rachel Brodie-Browne**  
Head of Fundraising

Rachel has a wealth of knowledge working in not-for-profits in both the UK and Australia, with expertise in events, community fundraising and corporate partnerships. She has previously worked with children as a teacher and disability coach, as well as for the largest cancer research charity globally, leading marketing, fundraising and events strategies. Rachel has a deep desire to give all children the best start in life, no matter their circumstance. In her role as Head of Fundraising, Rachel is passionate about making our donors feel valued and introducing new funders to make a real and meaningful difference to the lives of children in Australia.



**Rachel Henze**  
Head of Marketing and Advocacy

Rachel has worked in a diverse range of B2C marketing communication roles for over 20 years, including FMCG, food and lifestyle. She brings a wide range of commercial experience with a strength in branding and creatively delivering fully integrated marketing strategies. Her experience in market research and digital communications supports her drive to gain a deeper understanding and connection with customers to improve their overall experience. Rachel is focused on raising awareness of Learning Links and feels a strong commitment to support families through their journey. Rachel holds a Bachelor of Communications (Marketing and Advertising).



**Dr. Samantha Hornery**  
Manager, Product Innovation and Education

Samantha is a primary and special education teacher who has worked in school and community settings teaching, developing, and managing educational programs for students with learning difficulties. She has extensive experience in the development

and implementation of professional learning opportunities for teachers and health professionals. Samantha appeared as an educational advisor in the ABC documentary, 'Kids on Speed?', supporting children with ADHD and their families. She completed her PhD evaluating Learning Links' Reading for Life Program and won the NSW Institute for Educational Research Outstanding Thesis in 2012. Samantha has been with Learning Links since 1999.



**Alex Taylor**  
Manager, People and Culture

Alex is a solutions-focused professional with experience working with large and medium-sized national and international businesses. Previous roles have included those in human resources, shared services, leadership, organisational development, and management. Alex has a Bachelor of Business, majoring in Human Resources, and a long history of working across and within organisations to solve complex business challenges, transform culture, optimise talent, and rethink ways of working. At Learning Links, Alex works strategically with the leadership team to plan for a bigger and brighter future for their talented workforce so they can continue the vital work of supporting children, families and communities across Sydney.



# OUR TEAM OF EXPERTS



**Liz Bell**  
Manager, Therapy

Elizabeth Bell is a qualified speech pathologist with 8 years' experience working with children with speech, language and communication needs. Liz manages a team of energetic speech pathologists and occupational therapists at Learning Links, works as a senior clinician at our Peakhurst centre, and provides supervision, mentoring and training to early career therapists. Liz is passionate about making the language of a speech pathologist accessible to parents and teachers, and is committed to translating the most recent evidence into clinical practice to ensure that children with communication difficulties are provided with the support they need to succeed.



**Michelle Button**  
Manager, Psychology

Michelle has over 19 years' experience working in educational psychology. She is an educational and developmental psychologist and a member of the College of Educational & Developmental Psychologists with the Australian Psychological Society. Michelle completed a Masters of Psychology majoring in Education and Development and a Masters of Education majoring in Special Education. She is an authorised supervisor allowing her to supervise provisional psychologists. Michelle's passion is helping children with learning difficulties and disabilities especially in assessment and diagnosis, as well as helping them access the social and emotional support they may need. Michelle joined Learning Links in 2005.



**Dr. Samantha Horner**  
Manager, Product Innovation and Education

Samantha is a primary and special education teacher who has worked in school and community settings teaching, developing, and managing educational programs for students with learning difficulties. She has extensive experience in the development and implementation of professional learning opportunities for teachers and health professionals. Samantha appeared as an educational advisor in the ABC documentary, 'Kids on Speed?'; supporting children with ADHD and their families. She completed her PhD evaluating Learning Links' Reading for Life Program and won the NSW Institute for Educational Research Outstanding Thesis in 2012. Samantha has been with Learning Links since 1999.



**Melissa Murphy**  
Manager, Early Childhood

Melissa has worked in the early childhood sector for over 22 years as an early childhood teacher, educational leader, preschool manager, playgroup manager and early childhood program manager. She has also worked as an academic for Western Sydney University, taught at the Sydney Institute of TAFE and delivered a variety of professional development workshops for early education professionals and families. Melissa holds a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood 0-8 years) and joined Learning Links in 2001. She has a passion for inclusion, strengths-based and family-centred practice, and expertise in working with children with diverse abilities.





# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
<b>Income</b>		
Income	\$17,800,125	\$15,965,732
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$17,800,125</b>	<b>\$15,965,732</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Expenses	\$17,012,642	\$15,934,825
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$17,012,642</b>	<b>\$15,934,825</b>
<b>Net surplus for the year attributable to members</b>	<b>\$787,483</b>	<b>\$30,907</b>
<b>Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to surplus or deficit</b>		
Gain on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	-	-
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income attributable to members</b>	<b>\$787,483</b>	<b>\$30,907</b>
<b>Where we obtained our income</b>		
Fee income for services	\$4,091,654	\$3,292,804
Grants, donations and other fundraising*	\$2,724,081	\$2,807,400
Charity Housie and Bingo**	\$8,838,995	\$8,301,273
Membership fees	\$9,099	\$6,015
Other income	\$2,136,296	\$1,558,240
	<b>\$17,800,125</b>	<b>\$15,965,732</b>
<b>How we applied our income</b>		
Human resources costs services	\$7,008,966	\$6,537,299
Charity Housie and Bingo**	\$7,779,843	\$7,297,915
Program costs	\$298,521	\$333,229
Support services and facility costs	\$1,925,312	\$1,766,382
	<b>\$17,012,642</b>	<b>\$15,934,825</b>

\* Includes Government Grants \$2,153,759, Non-Government Grants \$539,017 and Donations and other Fundraising \$31,305.  
 \*\* Charity Housie is a fundraising activity and community game similar to bingo where small cash prizes are paid out to participants. These prizes make up 75% of all income as regulated by NSW Government in the Community Gaming Act.

## Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash & cash equivalents	\$3,985,189	\$2,384,864
Trade & other receivables	\$401,337	\$653,375
Inventories	\$134,689	\$125,541
Other current assets	\$181,970	\$145,669
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>\$4,703,185</b>	<b>\$3,309,449</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	\$3,335,071	\$3,442,816
Right-of-use assets	\$845,484	\$1,181,558
Intangibles	\$66,510	\$128,343
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>\$4,247,065</b>	<b>\$4,752,717</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$8,950,250</b>	<b>\$8,062,166</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Trade & other payables	\$816,447	\$543,908
Contract liabilities	\$692,999	\$750,023
Lease liabilities	\$287,180	\$284,378
Employee benefits	\$602,576	\$489,591
Provisions	\$159,327	\$98,679
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>\$2,558,529</b>	<b>\$2,166,579</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Lease liabilities	\$687,526	\$993,623
Provisions & employee entitlements	\$106,041	\$91,293
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>\$793,567</b>	<b>\$1,084,916</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>\$3,352,096</b>	<b>\$3,251,495</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>\$5,598,154</b>	<b>\$4,810,671</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Reserves	\$2,362,747	\$2,362,747
Accumulated surplus	\$3,235,407	\$2,447,924
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>\$5,598,154</b>	<b>\$4,810,671</b>

A copy of the Detailed Financial Report and Auditor's Report will be sent to any member free of charge upon request.

# YOU CAN SUPPORT A CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT BY DONATING TO ONE OF OUR PROGRAMS TODAY



An evidence-based program for children in Years 2-4 who are falling behind in reading. This volunteer run program provides one-on-one weekly support for 15 weeks to children and is proven to increase children's literacy skills.



## EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

Our team of specialist teachers provide literacy and numeracy sessions for children and work collaboratively with families, schools and other professionals to address the road blocks that prevent children from learning at school.



## COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOLOGY IN SCHOOLS

Psychologists assist children with social, emotional and behavioural concerns which can impact on learning, friendships and daily life functioning. They provide assessments, specialist intervention programs and counselling.



A numeracy program for children in Years 3-5 who are falling behind in maths. This volunteer run program provides one-on-one weekly support for 10 weeks to children and is proven to increase children's numeracy skills.



## THERAPY IN SCHOOLS

Our speech or occupational therapists work with a primary school to build teachers' capacity to help children with learning difficulties. The therapist will work in the school for one day each week with children who require intensive support, helping them in the classroom on a group or one-on-one basis.



## DISADVANTAGED KIDS EDUCATION FUND

We provide essential support to disadvantaged children with learning difficulties including literacy and numeracy support, speech or occupational therapy and psychology-based services. Our aim is to ensure equity of access to support services to promote participation and inclusion in school and help each child reach their full potential.





# LEARNING LINKS CENTRES

## Alexandria

Support office  
Suite 3, Level 1 140 Bourke Rd  
Alexandria NSW 2015

T 02 8525 8250

E alexandria@learninglinks.org.au

## Bella Vista

6a/7 Meridian Place  
Bella Vista NSW 2153

T 02 8525 8260

E bellavista@learninglinks.org.au

## Gledswood Hills

Suite 7, Level 1 SOMA Wellness  
7 Gregory Hills Drive  
Gledswood Hills NSW 2557

T 8525 8270

E gledswoodhills@learninglinks.org.au

## Liverpool

Shop 2, 54-56 Macquarie St (North)  
Liverpool NSW 2170

T 02 8525 8280

E liverpool@learninglinks.org.au

## Oatley

Cnr Oatley Ave and Hurstville Rd  
Oatley NSW 2223

T 02 8525 8222

E mail@learninglinks.org.au

## Peakhurst

12-14 Pindari Rd  
Peakhurst NSW 2210

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## **Learning Links**

**ABN 71 097 577 636**

**Financial Report - 30 June 2021**



## **Learning Links**

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**Learning Links  
Directors' report  
30 June 2021**

The directors present their report, together with the financial statements, on the company for the year ended 30 June 2021.

**Directors**

The following persons were directors of the company during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

Gregory Wallace  
Sarah Donald  
Clive Cuthell  
Jackie Gambrell  
Helen Hu  
Jennifer Wilson

**Objectives of the Company**

The company assists children and young people who have difficulties learning by providing them with the skills, services and family support that enable them to reach their full potential. This includes:

- Establishing and operating programs which directly assist children who have learning difficulties, disabilities or developmental delays, and their families.
- Establishing and operating programs that support, educate and upskill professionals and families who assist children who have learning difficulties, disabilities or developmental delays.
- Establishing and operating early childhood programs which provide inclusion of children with special needs into early childhood settings.
- Increasing public awareness, understanding and interest in the special needs of children who have learning difficulties, disabilities or developmental delays.

**Principal activities**

The principal activity of the Company during the financial year was to help children who have disabilities, learning difficulties, and developmental delays to realise their full potential.

**Performance measures**

The Company assesses its performance using the following methodologies in order to ensure that the objectives of the Company are being met:

- Monthly financial reporting and analysis
- Accountability reporting to all major funding partners
- Comprehensive quality framework and systems with wide-ranging policies and procedures reviewed regularly
- Regular client and staff surveys
- Managing governance, compliance and risks
- Monthly monitoring of client numbers
- Reporting and monitoring of key performance indicators
- Dashboard reporting on a monthly basis

**Review of Operations**

The surplus of the Company amounted to \$787,483 (2020: \$30,907 surplus). A review of the operations of the Company during the financial year and the results of those operations found that during the year the Company continued to engage in its principal activity, the results of which are disclosed in the attached financial statements.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic that started in March 2020, the Company took decisive action to reduce costs and, in line with its strategy rapidly implemented a range of new online support services across all programs and services to enable families and children to access services from home. The new online services continue to run and are growing. Face-to-face services were gradually re-established from May 2020 and Charity Housie began running in a limited capacity from June 2020 when Clubs were allowed to reopen with continued restrictions on gatherings. Charity Housie did not return to pre-pandemic activity until January 2021 and in the six months to December 2020 revenue was down 33% compared to the same period a year earlier.

The Company was eligible to receive Government assistance through the JobKeeper program between July and December 2020. In the year ended 30 June 2021 the Company received \$2,117,700 from the JobKeeper program. The funds assisted the Company to retain and provide employment for all staff and to continue to provide services to children and families.



**Learning Links  
Directors' report  
30 June 2021**

At the date of this report the company has again been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic locking down Sydney from July to October 2021. During this time the company again reverted to online services to continue to support vulnerable children and their families. Funded programs continued to operate. The majority of Charity Housie activities stopped, and other fundraising activities continued as normal. The JobSaver subsidy provided by the NSW Government has supported the organisation to retain skilled and professional staff across all facets of the organisation.

Maintaining service provision and strong relationships with families, children, schools and supporters will be critically important as the economic and psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to be felt across the community. For children with learning difficulties and disabilities, the impact of the education disruption caused by COVID-19 will be felt for a long time and Learning Links is focused on helping these children to ensure that they do not get left behind and suffer long-term impacts.

Following a business review the Maroubra learning centre closed in December 2020. Customers continue to be supported through online channels and from other learning centres including the Alexandria centre. Staff have been relocated to other learning centres where demand is outstripping supply and also continue to support the schools in the Eastern Suburbs. The OOSH (Out Of School Hours) program at McCallums Hill ceased in January 2021 coinciding with the end of the licence contract. The decision was taken not to re-tender for this program and instead focus on growing services in core programs where demand is growing strongly. Neither of these changes will have a material impact on the operations.

**Subsequent Events**

The impact of the Coronavirus pandemic is ongoing. It is not practicable to estimate the potential impact, positive or negative, after the reporting date. The situation is continually developing and is contingent on measures imposed by the Australian government and other countries, such as maintaining social distancing requirements, quarantine, travel restrictions and any economic stimulus that may be provided. In response to the uncertainty caused by this pandemic, the Directors have strategically strengthened the overall balance sheet as well as focused on improving the Company's liquidity position. Notwithstanding macro-economic factors, the Company is maintaining a cash neutral forecast for the financial year ahead and expects a return to surplus in the short to medium term.

No other matter or circumstance has arisen since 30 June 2021 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the Company's operations, the results of those operations, or the Company's state of affairs in future financial years.

**Information on directors**

Name: Gregory Wallace  
Title: Chairperson  
Qualifications: Bachelor of Business (Business Management), GAICD  
Experience and expertise: Senior Executive - government and telecommunications

Name: Sarah Donald  
Title: Secretary  
Qualifications: Master of Laws, Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Business (Management), Grad Dip Legal Practice, GAICD  
Experience and expertise: Legal counsel

Name: Clive Cuthell  
Title: Director  
Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts (Hons.), Accountancy and Finance, CA, GAICD  
Experience and expertise: Senior Executive - multinational organisation in manufacturing, construction materials and property

Name: Jackie Gambrell  
Title: Director  
Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts (Hons.), Master of Business Administration  
Experience and expertise: Senior Executive - education and health-based not for profits

Name: Helen Hu  
Title: Director  
Qualifications: Bachelor of Arts, Master of Commerce, GAICD, GIA, FCA  
Experience and expertise: Senior Executive - member-based organisation, service sector and company secretary



**Learning Links  
Directors' report  
30 June 2021**

Name: Jennifer Wilson  
 Title: Director  
 Qualifications: GAICD  
 Experience and expertise: Specialist advisory roles in digital development and production; corporate management and advice

**Meetings of directors**

The number of meetings of the company's Board of Directors ('the Board') and of each Board committee held during the year ended 30 June 2021, and the number of meetings attended by each director were:

	Full Board		Finance and Audit		Finance and Audit		Governance and Risk	
	Attended	Held	Attended	Held	Attended	Held	Attended	Held
Gregory Wallace	7	7	4	5	4	4	4	4
Sarah Donald	7	7	-	-	4	4	4	4
Clive Cuthell	6	7	5	5	-	-	-	-
Jackie Gambrell	7	7	5	5	-	-	-	-
Helen Hu ^	3	7	2	5	-	-	-	-
Jennifer Wilson	7	7	-	-	4	4	4	4

Held: represents the number of meetings held during the time the director held office or was a member of the relevant committee.

^ Granted leave from July 2020 and returned February 2021

**Indemnifying Officers or Auditor**

The Company has indemnified the directors and executives of the company for costs incurred, in their capacity as a director or executive, for which they may be held personally liable, except where there is a lack of good faith.

During the financial year, the Company paid a premium in respect of a contract to insure the directors and executives of the company against a liability to the extent permitted by the Corporations Act 2001. The contract of insurance prohibits disclosure of the nature of the liability and the amount of the premium.

The Company has not, during or since the end of the financial year, indemnified or agreed to indemnify the auditor of the Company or any related entity against a liability incurred by the auditor.

**Proceedings on behalf of the Company**

No person has applied for leave of Court to bring proceedings on behalf of the Company or intervene in any proceedings to which the Company is a party for the purpose of taking responsibility on behalf of the Company for all or any part of those proceedings.

The Company was not a party to any such proceedings during the year.

**Members' Guarantee**

Learning Links is a Company limited by guarantee without share capital. In the event of the Company being wound up, each member undertakes to contribute an amount not exceeding any outstanding membership fees. As at 8 September 2021, there were 432 (30 September 2020: 528) members of the Company.

**Auditor's independence declaration**

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration is set out immediately after this Director's report.



**Learning Links  
Directors' report  
30 June 2021**

This report is made in accordance with a resolution of directors.

On behalf of the directors



---

Gregory Wallace  
Chairperson



---

Sarah Donald  
Secretary

20 October 2021



**AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 60-40 OF THE  
AUSTRALIAN CHARITIES AND NOT FOR PROFITS COMMISSION ACT 2012 TO THE  
DIRECTORS OF LEARNING LINKS**

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief during the year ended 30 June 2021 there have been:

- no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit; and
- no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



**William Buck**  
Accountants & Advisors  
ABN 16 021 300 521



**Domenic Molluso**  
Partner

Sydney, 20 October 2021

**ACCOUNTANTS & ADVISORS**

**Sydney Office**  
Level 29, 66 Goulburn Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

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Telephone: +61 2 8263 4000  
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**Learning Links**  
**Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2021**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2021</b> <b>\$</b>	<b>2020</b> <b>\$</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Fee income for services		4,091,654	3,292,804
Government grants	5	2,153,759	2,170,757
Fundraising - non-government grants	27	539,017	628,288
Donations		31,305	8,355
Housie income	25	8,838,995	8,301,273
Membership fees		9,099	6,015
Other income	4	2,136,296	1,558,240
		<u>17,800,125</u>	<u>15,965,732</u>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Human resource costs for services		(7,008,966)	(6,537,299)
Human resources costs for Housie & Bingo		(1,222,830)	(1,126,078)
Housie and Bingo other costs		(6,557,013)	(6,171,837)
Program costs		(298,521)	(333,229)
Marketing costs		(111,056)	(116,780)
Administration & office costs		(1,192,814)	(1,091,387)
Finance costs		(116,428)	(110,281)
IT Costs		(505,014)	(447,934)
Total expenses		<u>(17,012,642)</u>	<u>(15,934,825)</u>
<b>Surplus for the year attributable to the members of Learning Links</b>		<b>787,483</b>	<b>30,907</b>
Other comprehensive income for the year		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to the members of Learning Links</b>		<b><u>787,483</u></b>	<b><u>30,907</u></b>

*The above statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*



**Learning Links**  
**Statement of financial position**  
**As at 30 June 2021**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2021</b> <b>\$</b>	<b>2020</b> <b>\$</b>
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	3,985,189	2,384,864
Trade and other receivables	7	401,337	653,375
Inventories	8	134,689	125,541
Other current assets	9	181,970	145,669
Total current assets		<u>4,703,185</u>	<u>3,309,449</u>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	10	3,335,071	3,442,816
Right-of-use assets	11	845,484	1,181,558
Intangibles	12	66,510	128,343
Total non-current assets		<u>4,247,065</u>	<u>4,752,717</u>
<b>Total assets</b>		<u>8,950,250</u>	<u>8,062,166</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	13	816,447	543,908
Contract liabilities	14	692,999	750,023
Lease liabilities	15	287,180	284,378
Employee benefits	16	602,576	489,591
Provisions	17	159,327	98,679
Total current liabilities		<u>2,558,529</u>	<u>2,166,579</u>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Lease liabilities	18	687,526	993,623
Employee benefits	19	106,041	91,293
Total non-current liabilities		<u>793,567</u>	<u>1,084,916</u>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<u>3,352,096</u>	<u>3,251,495</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>5,598,154</u>	<u>4,810,671</u>
<b>Equity</b>			
Reserves	20	2,362,747	2,362,747
Retained surpluses		<u>3,235,407</u>	<u>2,447,924</u>
<b>Total equity</b>		<u>5,598,154</u>	<u>4,810,671</u>

*The above statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*



**Learning Links**  
**Statement of changes in equity**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2021**

	<b>Asset revaluation reserve \$</b>	<b>Retained profits \$</b>	<b>Total equity \$</b>
Balance at 1 July 2019	2,362,747	2,417,017	4,779,764
Surplus for the year	-	30,907	30,907
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	30,907	30,907
Balance at 30 June 2020	<u>2,362,747</u>	<u>2,447,924</u>	<u>4,810,671</u>

	<b>Asset revaluation reserve \$</b>	<b>Retained profits \$</b>	<b>Total equity \$</b>
Balance at 1 July 2020	2,362,747	2,447,924	4,810,671
Surplus for the year	-	787,483	787,483
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	787,483	787,483
Balance at 30 June 2021	<u>2,362,747</u>	<u>3,235,407</u>	<u>5,598,154</u>

*The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*

**Learning Links**  
**Statement of cash flows**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2021**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2021</b> <b>\$</b>	<b>2020</b> <b>\$</b>
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Receipts from customers (inclusive of GST)		15,434,615	14,725,564
Payments to suppliers and employees (inclusive of GST)		<u>(16,006,114)</u>	<u>(15,106,574)</u>
		(571,499)	(381,010)
		-	-
Government stimulus received		2,682,050	881,769
Interest received		9,656	22,317
Finance costs - AASB 16		<u>(89,995)</u>	<u>(92,779)</u>
Net cash from operating activities		<u>2,030,212</u>	<u>430,297</u>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Payments for property, plant and equipment	10	(161,784)	(65,258)
Payments for intangible assets	12	<u>(32,513)</u>	<u>(2,500)</u>
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(194,297)</u>	<u>(67,758)</u>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Repayment of lease liabilities		<u>(235,590)</u>	<u>(169,850)</u>
Net cash used in financing activities		<u>(235,590)</u>	<u>(169,850)</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		1,600,325	192,689
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		<u>2,384,864</u>	<u>2,192,175</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	6	<u><u>3,985,189</u></u>	<u><u>2,384,864</u></u>

*The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*



**Note 1. General information**

The financial statements cover Learning Links as an individual entity. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars, which is Learning Links' functional and presentation currency.

Learning Links is a company limited by guarantee.

The financial statements were authorised for issue, in accordance with a resolution of directors, on \_\_\_\_ October 2021. The directors have the power to amend and reissue the financial statements.

**Note 2. Significant accounting policies**

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

**New or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations adopted**

The company has adopted all of the new or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') that are mandatory for the current reporting period.

Any new or amended Accounting Standards or Interpretations that are not yet mandatory have not been early adopted.

**Basis of preparation**

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB'), the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and New South Wales legislation the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991, as appropriate for not-for-profit oriented entities.

*Historical cost convention*

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, except for, where applicable, the revaluation of financial assets and liabilities at fair value through profit or loss, financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income, investment properties, certain classes of property, plant and equipment and derivative financial instruments.

*Critical accounting estimates*

The preparation of the financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the company's accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements, are disclosed in note 3.

**Revenue recognition**

The company recognises revenue as follows:

*Revenue from contracts with customers*

Revenue is recognised at an amount that reflects the consideration to which the company is expected to be entitled in exchange for transferring goods or services to a customer. For each contract with a customer, the company: identifies the contract with a customer; identifies the performance obligations in the contract; determines the transaction price which takes into account estimates of variable consideration and the time value of money; allocates the transaction price to the separate performance obligations on the basis of the relative stand-alone selling price of each distinct good or service to be delivered; and recognises revenue when or as each performance obligation is satisfied in a manner that depicts the transfer to the customer of the goods or services promised.

Variable consideration within the transaction price, if any, reflects concessions provided to the customer such as discounts, rebates and refunds, any potential bonuses receivable from the customer and any other contingent events. Such estimates are determined using either the 'expected value' or 'most likely amount' method. The measurement of variable consideration is subject to a constraining principle whereby revenue will only be recognised to the extent that it is highly probable that a significant reversal in the amount of cumulative revenue recognised will not occur. The measurement constraint continues until the uncertainty associated with the variable consideration is subsequently resolved. Amounts received that are subject to the constraining principle are recognised as a refund liability.

**Note 2. Significant accounting policies (continued)**

*Sale of goods*

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised at the point in time when the customer obtains control of the goods, which is generally at the time of delivery.

*Rendering of services*

Revenue from rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the services to the customers.

*Grant revenue*

Grant revenue is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income when the Company obtains control of the grant and it is probable that the economic benefits gained will flow to the Company and the amount of the grant can be measured reliably.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before the Company is eligible to receive the contributions, the recognition of the grant as revenue will be deferred until those conditions are satisfied and control of the funds is obtained.

*Bingo and Housie revenue*

Bingo and Housie revenue is recognised on sale of the game ticket.

*Donations and bequests*

Donations and bequests are recognised as revenue when received.

*Interest*

Interest revenue is recognised as interest accrues using the effective interest method. This is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial asset and allocating the interest income over the relevant period using the effective interest rate, which is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial asset to the net carrying amount of the financial asset.

*Other revenue*

Other revenue is recognised when it is received or when the right to receive payment is established.

**Income tax**

As the company is a charitable institution in terms of subsection 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, as amended, it is exempt from paying income tax.

**Current and non-current classification**

Assets and liabilities are presented in the statement of financial position based on current and non-current classification.

An asset is classified as current when: it is either expected to be realised or intended to be sold or consumed in the company's normal operating cycle; it is held primarily for the purpose of trading; it is expected to be realised within 12 months after the reporting period; or the asset is cash or cash equivalent unless restricted from being exchanged or used to settle a liability for at least 12 months after the reporting period. All other assets are classified as non-current.

A liability is classified as current when: it is either expected to be settled in the company's normal operating cycle; it is held primarily for the purpose of trading; it is due to be settled within 12 months after the reporting period; or there is no unconditional right to defer the settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting period. All other liabilities are classified as non-current.

**Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with financial institutions, other short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

**Trade and other receivables**

Trade receivables are initially recognised at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any allowance for expected credit losses. Trade receivables are generally due for settlement within 30 days.



## **Note 2. Significant accounting policies (continued)**

The company has applied the simplified approach to measuring expected credit losses, which uses a lifetime expected loss allowance. To measure the expected credit losses, trade receivables have been grouped based on days overdue.

Other receivables are recognised at amortised cost, less any allowance for expected credit losses.

### **Inventories**

Finished goods inventories are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value on a 'first in first out' basis. Cost comprises of direct materials and delivery costs. Costs of purchased inventory are determined after deducting rebates and discounts received or receivable.

Net realisable value is the estimated selling price in the ordinary course of business less the estimated costs of completion and the estimated costs necessary to make the sale.

### **Property, plant and equipment**

Land and buildings are shown at fair value, based on periodic, at least every 3 years, valuations by external independent valuers, less subsequent depreciation and impairment for buildings. The valuations are undertaken more frequently if there is a material change in the fair value relative to the carrying amount. Any accumulated depreciation at the date of revaluation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the net amount is restated to the revalued amount of the asset. Increases in the carrying amounts arising on revaluation of land and buildings are credited in other comprehensive income through to the asset revaluation reserve in equity. Any revaluation decrements are initially taken in other comprehensive income through to the asset revaluation reserve to the extent of any previous revaluation surplus of the same asset. Thereafter the decrements are taken to profit or loss.

Plant and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items.

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line or diminishing value basis to write off the net cost of each item of property, plant and equipment (excluding land) over their expected useful lives as follows:

Buildings - improvements	5 years
Office furniture & fittings	5 years
IT hardware	5 years
Motor vehicles	2.5 years
Leasehold improvements	2.5 - 5 years or the length of the premises lease (whichever is shorter)

The residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date.

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when there is no future economic benefit to the company. Gains and losses between the carrying amount and the disposal proceeds are taken to profit or loss. Any revaluation surplus reserve relating to the item disposed of is transferred directly to retained profits.

### **Right-of-use assets**

A right-of-use asset is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The right-of-use asset is measured at cost, which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability, adjusted for, as applicable, any lease payments made at or before the commencement date net of any lease incentives received, any initial direct costs incurred, and, except where included in the cost of inventories, an estimate of costs expected to be incurred for dismantling and removing the underlying asset, and restoring the site or asset.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful life of the asset, whichever is the shorter. Where the company expects to obtain ownership of the leased asset at the end of the lease term, the depreciation is over its estimated useful life. Right-of use assets are subject to impairment or adjusted for any remeasurement of lease liabilities.

The company has elected not to recognise a right-of-use asset and corresponding lease liability for short-term leases with terms of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets. Lease payments on these assets are expensed to profit or loss as incurred.

**Note 2. Significant accounting policies (continued)**

**Intangible assets**

*Software*

Significant costs associated with software are deferred and amortised on a straight-line basis over the period of their expected benefit, being their finite life of 3 to 10 years.

**Impairment of non-financial assets**

Non-financial assets are reviewed for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount.

Recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value-in-use. The value-in-use is the present value of the estimated future cash flows relating to the asset using a pre-tax discount rate specific to the asset or cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs. Assets that do not have independent cash flows are grouped together to form a cash-generating unit.

**Trade and other payables**

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the company prior to the end of the financial year and which are unpaid. Due to their short-term nature they are measured at amortised cost and are not discounted. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

**Contract liabilities**

Contract liabilities represent the company's obligation to transfer goods or services to a customer and are recognised when a customer pays consideration, or when the company recognises a receivable to reflect its unconditional right to consideration (whichever is earlier) before the company has transferred the goods or services to the customer.

**Lease liabilities**

A lease liability is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The lease liability is initially recognised at the present value of the lease payments to be made over the term of the lease, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, the company's incremental borrowing rate. Lease payments comprise of fixed payments less any lease incentives receivable, variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, amounts expected to be paid under residual value guarantees, exercise price of a purchase option when the exercise of the option is reasonably certain to occur, and any anticipated termination penalties. The variable lease payments that do not depend on an index or a rate are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

Lease liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. The carrying amounts are remeasured if there is a change in the following: future lease payments arising from a change in an index or a rate used; residual guarantee; lease term; certainty of a purchase option and termination penalties. When a lease liability is remeasured, an adjustment is made to the corresponding right-of use asset, or to profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset is fully written down.

**Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the company has a present (legal or constructive) obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable the company will be required to settle the obligation, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation. If the time value of money is material, provisions are discounted using a current pre-tax rate specific to the liability. The increase in the provision resulting from the passage of time is recognised as a finance cost.

**Employee benefits**

*Short-term employee benefits*

Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and long service leave expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.



## **Note 2. Significant accounting policies (continued)**

### *Other long-term employee benefits*

The liability for annual leave and long service leave not expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the reporting date on corporate bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

### **Fair value measurement**

When an asset or liability, financial or non-financial, is measured at fair value for recognition or disclosure purposes, the fair value is based on the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date; and assumes that the transaction will take place either: in the principal market; or in the absence of a principal market, in the most advantageous market.

Fair value is measured using the assumptions that market participants would use when pricing the asset or liability, assuming they act in their economic best interests. For non-financial assets, the fair value measurement is based on its highest and best use. Valuation techniques that are appropriate in the circumstances and for which sufficient data are available to measure fair value, are used, maximising the use of relevant observable inputs and minimising the use of unobservable inputs.

### **Goods and Services Tax ('GST') and other similar taxes**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of associated GST, unless the GST incurred is not recoverable from the tax authority. In this case it is recognised as part of the cost of the acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the tax authority is included in other receivables or other payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to the tax authority, are presented as operating cash flows.

Commitments and contingencies are disclosed net of the amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the tax authority.

## **Note 3. Critical accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts in the financial statements. Management continually evaluates its judgements and estimates in relation to assets, liabilities, contingent liabilities, revenue and expenses. Management bases its judgements, estimates and assumptions on historical experience and on other various factors, including expectations of future events that management believes to be reasonable under the circumstances. The resulting accounting judgements and estimates will seldom equal the related actual results. The judgements, estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities (refer to the respective notes) within the next financial year are discussed below.

### *Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic*

Judgement has been exercised in considering the impacts that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had, or may have, on the company based on known information. This consideration extends to the nature of the products and services offered, customers and staffing of the company. As described in specific notes, there appear to be significant uncertainties with respect to events or conditions which may impact the company unfavourably as at the reporting date or subsequently as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

**Note 3. Critical accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions (continued)**

*Revenue from contracts with customers involving the provision of services*

When recognising revenue in relation to the provision of services, an assessment is made to identify when the key performance obligations are satisfied, and how the customer consumes benefits as the key performance obligations are satisfied. Revenue is then recognised based on the timing of the work performed in order to satisfy the requirement of the performance obligation. This includes the recognition of revenue based on the number of school days (for programs run during the school term), the contract period in which services are to be provided, or the costs associated with the provision of services to end customers being incurred to satisfy the relevant performance obligation.

*Estimation of useful lives of assets*

The company determines the estimated useful lives and related depreciation and amortisation charges for its property, plant and equipment and finite life intangible assets. The useful lives could change significantly as a result of technical innovations or some other event. The depreciation and amortisation charge will increase where the useful lives are less than previously estimated lives, or technically obsolete or non-strategic assets that have been abandoned or sold will be written off or written down.

*Impairment of non-financial assets other than goodwill and other indefinite life intangible assets*

The company assesses impairment of non-financial assets other than goodwill and other indefinite life intangible assets at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the company and to the particular asset that may lead to impairment. If an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. This involves fair value less costs of disposal or value-in-use calculations, which incorporate a number of key estimates and assumptions.

*Employee benefits provision*

As discussed in note 2, the liability for employee benefits expected to be settled more than 12 months from the reporting date are recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated future cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at the reporting date. In determining the present value of the liability, estimates of attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation have been taken into account.

*Estimation of the fair value of land and buildings*

The company determines the fair value of land and buildings based on an estimate of its valuation provided by a certified professional real estate valuer. The reasonableness of the valuation is assessed by taking into account existing and comparable market sales data at the date of valuation.

**Note 4. Other income**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Government stimulus (COVID-19)	2,117,700	1,396,119
Interest income	9,656	22,317
Other income	8,940	139,804
	<u>2,136,296</u>	<u>1,558,240</u>

**Note 5. Government grants**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
NDIS	-	179,310
Brotherhood of St Laurence	561,099	492,168
The Smith Family	127,500	127,346
NSW Government Department of Education & Communities	1,141,459	1,005,346
Parenting Research Centre	198,304	241,349
Community Services Grants Program (EIPP)	125,397	125,238
	<u>2,153,759</u>	<u>2,170,757</u>



**Note 6. Current assets - cash and cash equivalents**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Cash at bank	1,348,905	2,250,096
Cash on deposit	2,636,284	134,768
	<u>3,985,189</u>	<u>2,384,864</u>

**Note 7. Current assets - trade and other receivables**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Trade receivables	404,369	142,809
Less: Allowance for expected credit losses	(3,032)	(3,784)
	<u>401,337</u>	<u>139,025</u>
Other receivables (Government stimulus COVID-19)	-	514,350
	<u>401,337</u>	<u>653,375</u>

**Note 8. Current assets - inventories**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Inventories	<u>134,689</u>	<u>125,541</u>

**Note 9. Current assets - other current assets**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Accrued revenue	7,047	23,456
Prepayments	174,923	118,088
Other deposits	-	4,125
	<u>181,970</u>	<u>145,669</u>

**Note 10. Non-current assets - property, plant and equipment**

	<b>2021</b> <b>\$</b>	<b>2020</b> <b>\$</b>
Land and buildings - at directors valuation	3,000,000	3,000,000
Building improvements - at cost	125,205	29,147
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(66,791)	(27,867)
	<u>3,058,414</u>	<u>3,001,280</u>
Freehold improvements - at cost	122,048	316,225
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(73,798)	(224,947)
	<u>48,250</u>	<u>91,278</u>
IT Hardware	249,940	527,816
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(129,554)	(339,403)
	<u>120,386</u>	<u>188,413</u>
Motor vehicles - at cost	-	57,352
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-	(52,434)
	<u>-</u>	<u>4,918</u>
Leasehold improvements - at cost	205,605	459,082
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(97,584)	(302,155)
	<u>108,021</u>	<u>156,927</u>
	<u><u>3,335,071</u></u>	<u><u>3,442,816</u></u>

*Reconciliations*

Reconciliations of the written down values at the beginning and end of the current financial year are set out below:

	land and buildings \$	Office furniture & fittings \$	IT hardware \$	Motor vehicles \$	Leasehold improvements \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2020	3,001,280	91,278	188,413	4,918	156,927	3,442,816
Additions	96,058	4,658	41,236	-	19,832	161,784
Write off of assets	-	(16,172)	(46,964)	(2,951)	(3,150)	(69,237)
Depreciation expense	(38,924)	(31,514)	(62,299)	(1,967)	(65,588)	(200,292)
Balance at 30 June 2021	<u><u>3,058,414</u></u>	<u><u>48,250</u></u>	<u><u>120,386</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>108,021</u></u>	<u><u>3,335,071</u></u>

*Valuations of Land and Buildings*

The basis of the valuation of land and buildings is fair value. The land and buildings were last revalued in June 2021 based on independent assessments by a member of the Australian Property Institute having recent experience in the location and category of land and buildings being valued. The directors do not believe that there has been a material movement in fair value since the revaluation date. Valuations are based on current prices for similar properties in the same location and condition.

**Note 11. Non-current assets - right-of-use assets**

	<b>2021</b> <b>\$</b>	<b>2020</b> <b>\$</b>
Land and buildings - right-of-use	1,398,420	1,500,110
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(552,936)	(318,552)
	<u><u>845,484</u></u>	<u><u>1,181,558</u></u>



**Note 12. Non-current assets - intangibles**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Software - at cost	367,258	1,007,585
Less: Accumulated amortisation	(300,748)	(879,242)
	<u>66,510</u>	<u>128,343</u>

*Reconciliations*

Reconciliations of the written down values at the beginning and end of the current financial year are set out below:

	IT software	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2020	128,343	128,343
Additions	32,513	32,513
Written off	(3,208)	(3,208)
Amortisation expense	(91,138)	(91,138)
Balance at 30 June 2021	<u>66,510</u>	<u>66,510</u>

**Note 13. Current liabilities - trade and other payables**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Trade payables	270,425	64,053
Other payables	529,629	440,614
Goods & services tax payable	16,393	39,241
	<u>816,447</u>	<u>543,908</u>

**Note 14. Current liabilities - contract liabilities**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Income received in advance	50,146	69,536
Grants & funding in advance	642,853	680,487
	<u>692,999</u>	<u>750,023</u>

**Note 15. Current liabilities - lease liabilities**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Lease liability	<u>287,180</u>	<u>284,378</u>

**Note 16. Current liabilities - employee benefits**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Employee benefits	<u>602,576</u>	<u>489,591</u>

**Note 17. Current liabilities - provisions**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Housie prize fund	<u>159,327</u>	<u>98,679</u>

**Note 18. Non-current liabilities - lease liabilities**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Lease liability	<u>687,526</u>	<u>993,623</u>

**Note 19. Non-current liabilities - employee benefits**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Employee benefits	<u>106,041</u>	<u>91,293</u>

**Note 20. Equity - reserves**

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Asset revaluation reserve	<u>2,362,747</u>	<u>2,362,747</u>

*Asset revaluation reserve*

The reserve is used to recognise increments and decrements in the fair value of land and buildings, excluding investment properties.

**Note 21. Members' guarantee**

Learning Links is a Company limited by guarantee without share capital. In the event of the Company being wound up, each member undertakes to contribute an amount not exceeding any outstanding membership fees. As at 8 September 2021, there were 432 (30 September 2020: 528) members of the Company.

**Note 22. Key management personnel disclosures**

*Compensation*

The aggregate compensation made to key management personnel of the company is set out below:

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Aggregate compensation	<u>854,871</u>	<u>843,286</u>

No remuneration was paid or is payable to the Directors of the Company.

**Note 23. Contingent liabilities**

The company has no contingent liabilities as at 30 June 2021 (2020: Nil)

**Note 24. Related party transactions**

Members are generally also clients of Learning Links. Clients who become members pay a membership fee of \$20 which also entitles the member to a 10% discount on services provided by Learning Links.



**Note 24. Related party transactions (continued)**

*Key management personnel*

Disclosures relating to key management personnel are set out in note 22.

*Transactions with related parties*

There were no transactions with related parties during the current and previous financial year.

*Receivable from and payable to related parties*

There were no trade receivables from or trade payables to related parties at the current and previous reporting date.

*Loans to/from related parties*

There were no loans to or from related parties at the current and previous reporting date.

**Note 25. Housie operations (excluding bingo)**

Charity Housie is a gaming program with cash prizes run for charitable purposes while Club Bingo is a gaming program with non-cash prizes usually run as a social activity in registered clubs. Both are required to comply with government legislation.

The disclosure below relates only to Charity Housie, in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) requirement.

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income		
Housie ticket sales	8,009,464	7,588,989
Other sales	829,532	712,284
Total income	<u>8,838,996</u>	<u>8,301,273</u>
Expenses		
Housie prizes	(6,003,198)	(5,622,484)
Wages, superannuation and workers insurance	(1,222,830)	(1,124,399)
Profit sharing arrangements	(42,922)	-
Housie tickets	(191,932)	(185,561)
Miscellaneous	(62,642)	(87,722)
Total expenses	<u>(7,523,524)</u>	<u>(7,020,166)</u>
Gross surplus on Housie games	<u><u>1,315,472</u></u>	<u><u>1,281,107</u></u>

**Note 26. Events after the reporting period**

The Coronavirus (COVID-19), which was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation on 11 March 2020, continued to have a significant impact on the global and Australian economy. Due to the significant uncertainty and continuous developments associated with COVID-19, management is unable to quantify or estimate the full financial effects of COVID-19 on the Company at the date of this report.

No other matter or circumstance has arisen since 30 June 2021 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the Company's operations, the results of those operations, or the Company's state of affairs in future financial years.

**Note 27. Fundraising activities**

The Company has an authority to fundraise under the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW). The Authority number is CFN 13232 which expires on 15/02/2026. Additional notes and information have been provided in the financial report to assist the authority holder with its disclosure requirements. A detailed list of fundraising permits has not been provided in this report but is available upon request.

All proceeds from fundraising activities were used in the costs of providing services to children who have difficulty learning and their families.

Charity Housie is a gaming program with cash prizes run for charitable purposes while Club Bingo is a gaming program with non-cash prizes usually run as a social activity in clubs. Both are required to comply with government legislation.



**Note 27. Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 disclosure**

**(a) Income from Fundraising**

		<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>Note</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Gross income from fundraising	27(c)	9,378,012	8,929,561
Total costs of fundraising	27(c)	(7,544,047)	(7,212,368)
<b>Net Income from Fundraising</b>	27(d)	<b>1,833,965</b>	<b>1,717,193</b>

**(b) Fundraising Events and Appeals Conducted During the Financial Year:**

Comparisons by Monetary Figures and Percentages

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>%</b>
Total costs of fundraising /	7,544,047 /		7,212,368 /	
Gross income from fundraising	9,378,012	80	8,929,561	81
Net surplus from fundraising /	1,833,965 /		1,717,193 /	
Gross income from fundraising	9,378,012	20	8,929,561	19
Total cost of services/	9,232,800 /		8,636,910 /	
Total expenditure	17,012,643	54	15,934,825	54
Total cost of services/	9,232,800 /		8,636,910 /	
Total income received	17,800,125	52	15,965,732	54

**(c) Details of Aggregate Gross Proceeds and Total Costs of Fundraising Appeals**

**Gross Proceeds from Fundraising**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Trader – Helping Hand Sweet Company and other fundraising	539,017	628,288
Charity Housie (Note 25)	8,838,995	8,301,273
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,378,012</b>	<b>8,929,561</b>

**Total Costs of Fundraising**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Charity Housie (Note 25)	7,297,915	7,020,166
Other fundraising	246,132	192,202
	<b>7,544,047</b>	<b>7,212,368</b>
<b>Net surplus from fundraising</b>	<b>1,833,965</b>	<b>1,717,193</b>

**(d) Statement showing how funds received were applied**

During the year ended 30 June 2021 the net surplus from fundraising of \$1,833,965 was spent on direct service delivery.

**Learning Links**  
**Directors' declaration**  
**30 June 2021**

In the directors' opinion:

- the attached financial statements and notes comply with the Corporations Act 2001, the Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements, the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and New South Wales legislation the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and associated regulations, the Corporations Regulations 2001 and other mandatory professional reporting requirements;
- the attached financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date; and
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

In compliance with Section 24 of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the Authority conditions, the directors also declare that:

- the statement of comprehensive income gives a true and fair view of all income and expenditure with respect to fundraising appeals;
- the statement of financial position gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs with respect to fundraising appeals;
- the provisions of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the regulations under that Act and the conditions attached to the authority to fundraise have been complied with; and
- the internal controls exercised by the company are appropriate and effective in accounting for all income received and applied by the company from any of its fundraising appeals.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of directors made pursuant to section 295(5)(a) of the Corporations Act 2001.

On behalf of the directors



\_\_\_\_\_  
Gregory Wallace  
Chairperson



\_\_\_\_\_  
Sarah Donald  
Secretary

20 October 2021



## Learning Links

### Independent auditor's report to members

## Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

### Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Learning Links (the Entity), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion the financial report of Learning Links has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- a) giving a true and fair view of the Entity's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Regime, and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

In compliance with Section 24 of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the Authority Condition, we report:

- a) the financial report of the Entity gives a true and fair view of the financial results of fundraising appeals during the year ended 30 June 2021;
- b) the accounting and associated records have been properly kept during the year in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the Regulations;
- c) money received as a result of fundraising appeals conducted during the year have been properly accounted for and applied in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 and the Regulations;
- d) at the date of this report, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Entity will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act) and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's *APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

#### ACCOUNTANTS & ADVISORS

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We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### **Other Information**

The directors are responsible for the other information. As at the date of this report, the other information comprises the information included in the Entity's directors' report for the year ended 30 June 2021 but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report**

The directors of the Entity are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 2 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the ACNC Act and the needs of the members. The directors responsibility also includes such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Directors are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

### **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.



A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of these financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at:

[http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf)

This description forms part of our independent auditor's report.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Buck".

**William Buck**  
Accountants & Advisors  
ABN 16 021 300 521

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Domenic Molluso".

**Domenic Molluso**  
Partner

Sydney, 20 October 2021