

2023 P&C President's Annual Report

I hope as you read through this annual report, and reflect on the year, you, like me, realise that 2023 was not only an exceptionally busy year, but also from a P&C perspective, and amazingly successful one.

I attribute the success of 2023 to two main factors. The first being the amazing support that we, as a group of volunteers, have received from the school executive, Caroline English, Principal, in particular. Without her continued support and encouragement, I suspect the year would have been a very different one indeed. The second, and perhaps the main reason, is the amazing and continued support of our SIPPS P&C volunteers throughout the year. Their hard work, dedication, and commitment to do the very best for our small, but incredible, school is a real indication of how much they believe that our P&C can make a real difference at SIPPS. And perhaps because we are a smaller school, the contribution that we can make as parents goes that little bit further.

I wrote to our SIPPS community towards the end of 2023. In that letter, I mentioned that becoming involved in the P&C is a fantastic way of getting involved in your child's school, and the school community. I truly believe that this involvement from all of us goes a long way to helping us, as parents, guide our children through their education. Being involved in your kids' school, even if just in a small way, can significantly help support your child in these very important years.

So, 2023, where to start....

The year started unfortunately with some not-so-great news; we were unsuccessful with our long-awaited grant application for the NSW Building Community Partnership grant. It was disappointing as such a massive amount of work had gone into that, but we were not disheartened, we continued to apply for smaller grants to try and achieve some of the capital projects we wanted to tick off.

In January our P&C stationary packs went exceptionally well and raised some well needed funds in term 1. Not only did this initiative help raise a small amount for our fundraising kitty, but it also helped our teachers with the required stationary (and spare) that they so desperately needed at the start of the year.

During the staff development days, the P&C were able to support the school with a selection of staff portrait photographs which have been used throughout the year in various publications as well as putting together a selection of marketing materials/flyers (specifically related to the new catchment changes).

The P&C also worked with the Principal and executive team on securing additional marketing budget from the NSW Department of Education. This took a lot longer than expected, and to this day I am still not convinced that the Department understood the need for marketing a school. However, they did eventually come to the table with a small funding amount.

The 2023 Kindy Welcome morning tea was a great hit as always and something that our new parents still speak of highly.

In early February the school put on the swimming carnival which was supported by the P&C and many parents. It was a good community day to kick start the year. February also provided us with an opportunity to put on a special lunch and for class parents to be properly introduced by the Parent Information Sessions.

Towards the end of February and the start of March the P&C were able to commence filming for a new 'SIPPS Difference video'. This time we decided that it was important for student voice to feature more heavily. So, working with the school we embarked on filming and putting together a new promotional video for our new catchment.

At the March P&C meeting, the fundraising goals for the year were determined and finalised. We were also able to support the school with a one-off payment of \$200 for each teacher to spend on classroom resources that they needed. This was a great way for the P&C to directly support the classroom teachers.

In March the P&C led the International Women's Day celebrations with a morning tea and \$1,000 worth of books for the library (all about influential Australian women). The P&C also applied for 10 different grant applications during the term to help support the fundraising goals for the year. A big one was the supply and installation of solar panels.

We were successful in receiving \$2,250 from Ku-Ring-Gai council, which paid for the scoping survey to be undertaken. This was a key document that would help support our application for funding from other sources.

At the end of March, we ran the NSW State Election BBQ and Cake stall at SIPPS. An election is a massive fundraising event, and an enormous amount of work goes into making it happen. At SIPPS we were fortunate to have plenty of cakes arrive for the cake stall from our parents and families. We also had volunteers sign up to take a shift during the day. This event brought in just short of \$4k to our growing fundraising pot.

Thanks to our canteen volunteers for another special lunch at the end of Term 1, again, bringing in more fundraising money to the P&C.

Our P&C uniform shop was also kicking over the goals in Term 1, with the introduction of 2 major changes to our uniform. The introduction of elasticated ties for the boys during the winter months and the establishment of a PSSA / representative kit for netball (boys and girls).

The term concluded with the Easter Hat Parade. The P&C were able to support this event with catering as well as a raffle that brought in just short of \$1,000 to go towards our solar project.

During the first week of Term 2, the P&C giant cheque arrived from Westpac. The aim of this was to try and promote to the community how the P&C funds were being spent. The first use of this was to present a cheque for \$8,000 to the school for the support in delivering PSSA. This money went towards staff release time to enable PSSA to take place.

The P&C applied for another grant to help support the delivery of the 2023 goals. This time with the Purrberry Trust for 50% funding towards the solar project. Working with Solar My School and the NSW Department of Education, we were successful with our grant application.

Work on the long-awaited LED sign on Acron Road also started and the P&C were very pleased to support the school with \$15,000 towards this capital purchase. The P&C also supported the school with a range of content for our community to be used on this new sign – including images, videos, and text content.

The P&C also heavily supported the school during Term 2 with promotional and marketing materials to help boost enrolments. This included a letter box drop to the entire catchment with new flyers and the publication of the new SIPPS Difference video.

Video = <https://youtu.be/P5O9CSv27SU?si=pLCSSYPQIGjsHd49>

In May it was wonderful to welcome so many amazing women to SIPPS for the annual P&C Mother's Day Breakfast. The SIPPS hospitality shone brightly as we gathered in joyful celebration of the women who love, support, and guide our students. Our P&C volunteers did a wonderful job in creating a very special morning for our SIPPS Mums.

Of course, as the weather started to get cooler, our canteen started to get busier. It was a tremendous year for our canteen. Claire and her army of volunteers each week cooked meals for over 150 students and by my estimate must have cooked well over 20,000 chicken nuggets during 2023. The students (and parents) really appreciate this wonderful service and a massive thank you must go out to all involved. The canteen is also a great income earner for the P&C and enables us to do more for the school and the students each year.

Another wonderful thing that the P&C supports SIPPS with each year is the Band Program. The SIPPSS Junior and Senior bands had record numbers this year. Tuesday mornings are wonderful at SIPPSS as their music travels from the hall to fill the playgrounds and corridors as they rehearse. It was wonderful to listen to the bands performing for the whole school at various events during the year. Thank you to all parents involved and massive thanks to our Band Parent who ensures that all is running smoothly on a weekly basis.

It was great that so many SIPPSS students made it through to the Ku-ring-gai Zone Cross Country competition at the St Ives Showground. It was brilliant to see all students challenging themselves to achieve their personal best and wonderful to see so many parents attend and support the school and their kids. Again, the P&C were able to support this event with the supply of 2 new Gazebo tents which provided shade and shelter but also a meeting point for the SIPPSS families.

Towards the end of Term 2, the P&C put on another special lunch (this time hot dogs and ice blocks). A great fund-raiser but also a brilliant community event that brings volunteers together and a good marketing opportunity for the P&C to our parents and families. The special lunch also raised \$500 for the P&C fundraising kitty.

Throughout the term, the P&C have also supported the school with their enrolment tours by providing a parent to take questions, talk with potential new families and just be there as a support person if needed. The additional pair of hands and parent voice certainly was useful and clear that a few families really found value in chatting with a current parent during and after the tour.

At the end of the term, the P&C put on a working bee at the school. It had been a while since the P&C had run a working bee and it was certainly beyond due. The main aim was to get the veggie gardens ready for planting and for the teachers to use in the following term with the kids. With a record number of volunteers turning up, we were able to not only fix up the veggie gardens, but also clear the old chicken coop and clear tons of bamboo that was just taking over the rear part of the school grounds. Massive thanks to all involved. With the addition of a BBQ and snacks, the event turned into a great community get together also.

At the start of Term 3, the SIPPSS community got behind the newly formed school dance group. Again, the P&C were able to support this extra-curricular activity by videoing and photographing the group for a competition entry. Another example of the great partnership that is enjoyed between P&C and school at SIPPSS.

The SIPPSS Athletics Carnival was yet another brilliant community event. Despite being a school run event, the number of parents and families that get together and support the school for the day is just incredible. It was so great to see so many parents put their hand up to hold a stopwatch, support the kids with technique, take photographs and much more. The P&C is keen to continue to support sport at SIPPSS and the supply of equipment may be added to the goals for 2024.

The P&C were successful in obtaining 3 x fantastic wooden benches from a local business for use at the school. The P&C put a call out to local business in St Ives and we were very lucky to have 3 benches donated at the school. These have been in constant use ever since they went in and provide some much-needed seating for parents, staff, and students.

In July it was exciting to see a wide variety of new native plants arrive at SIPPS following the P&C working bee. These new plants were the first step in establishing a native garden just outside A Block and when you walk in from Gate 1. The plants will attract wildlife and brighten up the whole entry area. It was yet another fantastic initiative led by the school but supported by the P&C.

The P&C would like to congratulate SIPPS for their incredible NAPLAN 2023 results. The outstanding improvement in NAPLAN results (especially mathematics) was great news to hear and the P&C would like to acknowledge the hard work of all teachers at the school in this achievement.

Education Week in August provided another opportunity for the SIPPS parents to get involved in their child's education. Thank you to Caroline for putting on events every day of the week and for allowing parents into the classrooms to see what their kids have been up to during the week.

As the PSSA season progressed, it was obvious to the P&C that the investment to support these activities and the addition of the new netball representative kit was well worth it. Despite SIPPS being one of the smallest schools competing in the PSSA competition, we certainly punched above our weight. It was great to watch the teams progress through the different stages.

In August the school celebrated 100 days of kindy. Again, the P&C in partnership with the school executive were able to support this event in a rather unique way. An aerial photograph of the entire school on the oval in the formation of '100'. Again, the partnership between the P&C and the school came through providing a brilliant way we could both support each other.

Before long, it was the end of August and we again celebrated in true P&C style, Father's Day. Thank you to everyone who was involved in this amazing event. Again, true community coming together to put on a very memorable morning for our SIPPS Dads.

At the end of Term 3, the SIPPS spectacular provides the P&C with another opportunity to do some fundraising. The ticket sales went to the P&C fundraising kitty and this year raised over \$1,000. The P&C would like to thank the school staff for all their hard work and effort in putting on such a fantastic show. We hope that next year the P&C can again support this event and perhaps help towards the purchase of any props, costumes etc that may be required.

We finished off the term with another special lunch. This time Sushi and a donut. The event was exceptionally well received by all and bought in another \$600 worth of fundraising for our 2023 goals.

Term 4 commenced and from a P&C point of view it was all about the up-coming referendum. Normally the SIPPS P&C only prepare for 1 election each year (local, state, and federal), but 2023 provided us with another opportunity to help bring in some much-needed funds.

Our parents volunteered in force again and we were able to put on our famous cake stall and election style BBQ. It was a massive amount of work for all involved and a very long day but made all worth it by the \$4,000 raised at the event.

As normal, we had a few snags remaining from the referendum BBQ, so a special sausage sizzle lunch was in order. Thanks again to volunteers, we were able to feed the whole school the week after the vote and in the process make an additional \$500 on top of what we had already raised that weekend. Massive thanks to everyone involved for this incredible effort.

The next event was the school disco. This year our theme of 'spooktacular' aligned well with Halloween. Thank you to our wonderful P&C for putting on a fun filled evening for our students. The 'Spooktacular' disco was a night of dancing, singing, and spending time with friends. A wonderful way for our students to end another busy week of school and relax. Thank you to all the parent volunteers who made this event possible.

Following the disco, the P&C had a few weeks to recover before it was time for the book parade. Again, the P&C worked with the school to support this event by holding the book sale in the library and

providing gift packs for grandparents who visited the classrooms and the book parade. Massive thanks to the school for allowing the parents and grandparents into the classrooms once again to see how their children and grandchildren are progressing at school. These opportunities are treasured by our community.

2023 really has been a magnificent year for school and P&C alike. The word partnership comes up a lot in this annual report and it really is a true partnership. The P&C exist to support our beautiful school community and without the great working relationship, neither school nor P&C would be thriving in the way in which they are at the end of 2023.

In Summary

During 2023, the P&C undertook a massive number of events and initiatives to help support SIPPS. But, at the centre of all that was achieved was our community, and particularly our kids, which were at the centre of all our decisions.

The partnership enjoyed between the P&C executive and the school executive really is one of a kind. Not many school Principals would agree to the P&C inviting their boss, their boss's boss, their bosses, bosses' boss and the big chief boss of the NSW Department of Education to an evening event to listen to parents' questions and concerns.

We have been privileged to support and build an incredible community of SIPPS families in conjunction with our school staff. We have done this whilst managing to fundraise along the way and support the goals and objectives set out at the start of the school year.

We are privileged to work with a school executive team that listen to what we have to say, take feedback seriously and work with us to achieve the best for our children. For this, we are truly grateful.

2023 was a wonderful year for SIPPS P&C and we look forward to 2024 being just as fantastic.