

## Response to Question on Notice: Mirrung

Mirrung is an innovative, place-based initiative in its third year of operation at Ashcroft Public School in NSW. The establishment of Mirrung has been transformative for the Ashcroft Public School community. The vision is that all children can reach their learning potential regardless of where they live, their cultural background or their socioeconomic status. To achieve this, Mirrung provides holistic support to children and their families, to meet educational, health and wellbeing needs.

Mirrung services are available to students at Ashcroft Public School and children who attend the onsite Department of Education preschool.

### Screening services

Screening services are embedded across both the preschool and school programs to ensure the indicators of developmental or educational delay are identified early.

Since 2024 Ashcroft Public School has undertaken developmental screening of the preschool cohort and of those students in kindergarten who had not previously attended Ashcroft's onsite preschool. Students who were identified as having developmental vulnerabilities were supported through an individualised program of supports ranging from in-class adjustments to small group speech therapy and occupational therapy. Where the screening raised significant concerns, students were referred to Mirrung for paediatric assessment. This is supported by ongoing screening and assessment including Year 1 phonics screening.

The first cohort of students (assessed in 2024) sat their standardised Phonics assessment in 2025 and there was a significant increase in the number of students who were assessed as meeting stage expectations.

### Supports

All children have access to a range of services which are either delivered through one to one or group interventions. These include:

- Social support programs: programs for small groups of students that were provided through partnerships with funded services and/or delivered by Ashcroft Public School, including external programs supporting transition to high school and Aboriginal cultural programs.
- Allied health services: school funded allied health services which included a psychologist, and speech therapist, utilised in 2025 by 37 students. Family counselling was also provided for a small number of families.
- NDIS coordination: In 2025, 45 students accessed NDIS funded services at school, ensuring that they could access the therapy that they needed without missing school to attend appointments.
- Paediatrician appointments: 19 students accessed appointments with the Mirrung paediatrician
- School-wide health interventions: In 2025, Mirrung supported 121 students to access a free dental check-up. The school also supported the provision of speech therapy (49 students) and occupational therapy (29 students) in small groups.

### Benefits of the Mirrung model



There are significant benefits of the Mirrung model for children, parents, families and staff including:

- Children and families are able to receive both proactive supports through screening services but also reactive and crisis assistance through the school, rather than requiring external referrals.
- The hub brings together supports from a range of services including mainstream health, allied health, community services and education. This reduces the barriers to accessing services and enables children and parents to receive supports in a setting they already attend.
- Children and families receive continuity of care with information sharing between services, reducing the need to share their story repeatedly. Multidisciplinary teams bring together all stakeholders to support children and families.
- Teachers and educational staff have access to supports to increase their own capability in supporting children with indicators of educational or developmental delay. The responsibility for supporting children to thrive is shared across the multidisciplinary team.
- Children, parents and families receive a holistic response to their needs, ranging from food pantries, parenting programs, afterschool supports, and Aboriginal cultural immersion programs. This recognises that children grow and thrive in a broader ecosystem than just the classroom.

### Results

NCOSS undertakes regular evaluations to assess the impact of Mirrung's services. In 2025:

- Ashcroft Public School had a 90.4% attendance rate in September 2025 – above the Liverpool network average of 84.8% and the NSW state average of 88%
- 65.8% of students attended school 90% or more of the time in September 2025 – a 29.3 percentage point increase from the same time of year in 2022 (36.5%)
- In 2025, the following proportion of Ashcroft students achieved stage appropriate outcomes:
  - Comprehension: 59%, which is 29.5 percentage points higher than in 2023 (29.5%)
  - Number and place value: 38%, which is 20 percentage points higher than in 2023 (18%)
  - Phonics Screening Check: 44%, which is 18 percentage points higher than in 2023 (26%)

### Uniting NSW.ACT

Uniting NSW.ACT attends Mirrung fortnightly to offer navigation and case management support. We are part of a broader network of services which work collaboratively with Mirrung and Ashcroft Primary School to ensure that children, parents and families have access to the services they need to thrive.

For additional information, please contact [REDACTED]