

Willoughby Girls High School Annual Report



2016



8159

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2016** is provided to the community of **Willoughby Girls High School** as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

Elizabeth Diprose

Principal

School contact details

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Message from the Principal

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the 2016 Annual School Report for Willoughby Girls High School. In its 83rd year of operation, the school continues to grow into an organisation that supports the social, emotional and academic growth of girls living in Willoughby and adjacent areas. I am proud of our standing as a local school which is highly regarded and well supported by the community.

2016 was another outstanding year for the Willoughby Girls High School community. The 2016 HSC students' hard work resulted in excellent achievements, placing us amongst the top ranking comprehensive public schools in NSW. Further details of these achievements are located later in this report.

The school has an extensive extra-curricular program. The P&C managed music programs continue to flourish with over 150 students participating in the seven music ensembles, 58 of whom travelled to the USA in December to perform at a variety of venues, and engage in masterclass workshops with world renowned conductors. Similarly, the P&C managed sport programs have grown from strength to strength with 27 netball teams, six basketball teams, as well as touch football and indoor and outdoor hockey teams. All groups are managed and coached by volunteer parents and students and participate in local evening and weekend competitions.

Other well supported programs include the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Junior Drama Ensemble, Junior and Senior Dance Ensembles, the Robotics Club, Chess Club as well as Debating and Public Speaking, Mock Trial and the Environment Group. These opportunities enhance students' social, emotional and intellectual growth and ensure individual students' interests are catered for.

Student leadership and student voice continue to gain strength and momentum. The SRC and Prefects raised over \$20,000 for local, national and international charities. Senior leaders organised the International Women's Day assembly and led the school's ANZAC Day commemoration. Seven Year 11 students participated in the Max Potential Leadership Coaching program where they had the opportunity to undertake a community project of their choice, for example, running art therapy classes at local aged care facilities and holding an art exhibition to raise awareness of youth homelessness. Other student leadership initiatives include the Year 11 Leadership Awareness program, initiated this year by the Year 11 Year Adviser, and the Peer Support Program involving Year 10 students in mentoring Year 7 through their transition to High School.

These are just some of the programs at Willoughby Girls High School. We pride ourselves in encouraging every student to achieve her potential and to develop skills in collaboration, self reflection, a strong work ethic, caring for self and others, and engaging in the world actively, with compassion and with consideration for the natural environment.

Much of our focus in 2016 has been very much on teacher professional development with the view to enhancing student wellbeing and maximising student learning outcomes as outlined in our 2015–2017 School Plan. The progress made on

our goals in 2016 is outlined in this report.

I feel very privileged to be principal of this excellent school and thank all who contribute to the school's outstanding achievement as a leader in girls' education.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

Elizabeth Diprose

Principal

Message from the students

2016 arrived and breezed past ever so quickly, yet the 2015–16 Willoughby Girls High School Prefects managed to accomplish more than we imagined!

In late 2015, the Prefect body hosted an enjoyable “Halloween” inter-school afternoon tea, for a record 90 prefects from other secondary schools, which enabled initiatives and ideas to be shared and connections and friendships to be created. During Christmas, a new Prefect initiative was implemented along with the help of the SRC; the Homeroom Hamper Drive was a competition between homerooms to for each homeroom to create a hamper full of presents. These hampers were donated to the Salvation Army to be distributed to families for Christmas. The staffroom was filled with colourful and overflowing baskets by Christmas, surpassing expectations and demonstrating the generosity and kind hearts of Willoughby's students and staff.

2016 began with a new Prefect initiative aimed at ‘sharing the love’ within students and staff. Organising one thousand individually wrapped heart chocolates for Valentine's Day was no easy feat but the smiles shared around the school on Valentine's Day made it worth all the effort. International Women's Day was also a great success, with the students lucky enough to hear from inspirational speakers Jo Haylen, Member for Summer Hill and past Willoughby Girls student, Nina Curtis, Australian Olympic sailing medallist, and Hugh Bartley, a student from Sydney Boys High School who provided an interesting and unique perspective on gender equality.

Charities Day was the biggest highlight of the year. The theme ‘Childhood Memories’ saw the school littered with Disney princesses, walking crayons and cartoon personalities. Guided by the Prefects, Year 12 ran various food and entertainment stalls, such as fairy floss, nachos, second hand clothing and the Rave Cave. The incredible diligence of Year 12 and generosity of the staff and students resulted in a record breaking amount of \$11,951 raised for CARE Australia's Syrian Refugee Appeal.

Members of the Prefect body also participated in a number of community events, including the local ANZAC commemoration service at the Chatswood Remembrance Garden. We also attended leadership events at Parliament House and Government House, where we met and listened to politicians who gave us an insight into leadership at a state level.

2016 has been a fun, eventful and productive year for the students and staff at Willoughby Girls High School. As a senior leader of the school, it was a privilege to oversee numerous events and experience the Willoughby Girls' values of “truth, courage and loyalty” in action by students and staff. I wish to thank the 2015–16 Prefect Body for being an amazing team to work with and exhibiting outstanding leadership and collaboration throughout the year. I also wish to thank the staff and students for their ongoing help and support throughout the year. This has truly been a year to remember!

Natasha Shirwaiker

School Captain 2015–16

School background

School vision statement

At WGHS we strive to develop the best in each girl, to draw out her talents and interests, and to support and guide her in all areas of her schooling, so that she is well placed to pursue her career options, and to live a happy and productive life.

With the interests of all students in mind, the school offers a broad curriculum, with more than 40 courses in the junior and senior years, as well as a rich array of over 80 extracurricular programs, including competitions and awards in all subject areas, exhibitions in visual arts and design and technology, music and drama ensembles and performances, debating and sporting teams, study camps and the sustainability garden.

Student voice and leadership are valued and growing within the school with an active engaged SRC and Prefect body. The school's culture promotes values essential for living in a caring, civil and just society, values such as cooperation, integrity, responsibility and respect for others. We foster in students a capacity for independent, life-long learning and provide opportunities and guidance for students to develop into good citizens and capable leaders.

Girls and their parents choose Willoughby Girls High School because of our focused learning environment, our high expectations of students' learning and behaviour, the dedicated and accomplished teaching staff and the focus on student wellbeing.

School context

Founded in 1934, Willoughby Girls High School, located on Sydney's Lower North Shore, is recognised as a leader in girls' education in one of the most competitive schooling areas in Australia. In the general community, the school has a strong reputation for setting high standards and for academic excellence, evident in the school's consistently outstanding HSC results, with the vast majority of graduates progressing to university studies. Extension streams for selected students of high academic achievement operate in Years 7 to 10. Strong values and an effective, proactive support system, along with clear discipline policies and a well-defined uniform code, create a safe and stable school setting.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework and participated in an external validation. The framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading. During the external validation process, an independent panel of peer principals considered our evidence and assessment of the school's progress, aligned with the standards articulated in the School Excellence Framework.

2016 School Excellence Framework Self-assessment Survey (SEF S-aS)

On Tuesday 11 October 2016 our school participated in external validation. This involved the school in gathering evidence to support the judgements the leadership team had made, in consultation with the school community, about the school's performance in relation to the Schools Excellence framework. In preparation for this meeting the required body of evidence was prepared, reviewed and annotated.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of **Learning** the school leadership team considered *Learning Culture and Student Performance Measures* were Excelling. The team considered we are Sustaining and Growing in *Wellbeing, Curriculum and Learning* and *Assessment and Reporting*.

Inn the School Excellence Framework domain of **Teaching** the school leadership team considered *Collaborative Practice* and *Learning and Development* were Excelling, *Effective Classroom Practice* and *Professional Standards* were Sustaining and Growing while *Data Skills and Use* was at the level of Delivering.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of **Leading** the school leadership team considered *School Planning, Implementation and Reporting* was Excelling. The team determined that *Leadership, School Resources* and *Management Practices and Processes* were Sustaining and Growing.

Based on the team's analysis of evidence, future directions have been identified for each aspect of the school's

performance to ensure the whole school community is engaged in ongoing improvement.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/school-excellence-framework>

Strategic Direction 1

Student and Staff wellbeing

Purpose

To build a self-supporting, equitable society by empowering all members of the school community to contribute positively to all aspects of their lives. All students and staff are confident, resilient, are able to form positive relationships, have a strong sense of self, a cultural awareness and maintain a healthy lifestyle, to enable them to become exemplary, empowered citizens and have respect for living in a diverse society.

Overall summary of progress

Significant progress has been made in this aspect of our school improvement. A cohesive student wellbeing program has been finalised following the evaluation of the many wellbeing activities students engage in from Years 7 to 12. Teachers participated in further learning about growth mind sets and the Habits of Mind learning by teachers commenced in Term 4. The P&C Association worked closely with the school in developing a well-attended parent information evening focusing on healthy eating, sleeping and study habits. The majority of Year 8 and Year 10 parents attended the subject selection information evenings. Wellbeing data from the Tell Them From Me surveys shows an increase in students' sense of belonging at school, and an improvement in the quality of relationships between teachers and students, and among students. Increased teacher engagement in cross faculty learning and social events provided opportunities for staff to learn from each other and anecdotal evidence shows this is highly valued by staff.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Improved resilience skills in staff and students reflected in Tell Them From Me (TTFM) surveys, focus groups, other wellbeing data, and absenteeism	Students' sense of belonging at school increased by 2%. Student attendance is well above state average and increased in 2016 by between 0.5 and 1% with an overall average of 0.6%.	Costs associated with focus groups \$3,293
Increased staff participation in whole school staff activities	All staff report their enthusiasm for opportunities to work with colleagues from across all faculties. This opportunity was provided on each School Development Day as well as in some Thursday afternoon Professional Learning sessions. There was a significant increase in the number of staff attending the end of year staff function (increase from 30 in 2015 to 58 in 2016)	Costs associated with professional Learning sessions; staff function was funded by staff.
Parent attendance at information evenings including Year 8 and Year 10 Subject Selection, Year 11 & 12 'Surviving the HSC' presentations	Most Year 8 and Year 10 parents attended the subject selection evenings. 150 parents and Year 11 and 12 students attended the 'Surviving the HSC' parent information evening in Term 1; similar numbers attended the parent and student evening in Term 3. The evening focused on healthy lifestyle to support learning, including information about sleep, exercise and healthy study habits.	NIL cost. Deputy principals, head teachers and P&C representatives organised these events.
Finalisation and implementation of the Teaching and Learning Wheel evidenced by incorporation in programs, lesson observations and language used.		

Next Steps

Ensure a consistent whole school wellbeing framework supports the cognitive, social, emotional, physical and spiritual wellbeing of all students and staff. Continue to develop the student wellbeing programs outlined in the scope and sequence. Enable staff and students to develop a deep understanding of positive learning behaviours through

professional learning focused on growth mindset and Habits of Mind.

Strategic Direction 2

High quality teaching and learning to maximise student outcomes

Purpose

To provide students with a challenging, relevant and engaging curriculum that is inclusive of all learners, designed and delivered by a quality teaching staff who are equipped to enhance the educational experiences of their students and themselves in a learning environment with strong, mutually respectful relationships. The ongoing improvement of teaching and learning is underpinned by planned, relevant and challenging professional development where teachers share responsibility for student learning in a transparent, thinking and collaborative learning culture.

Overall summary of progress

Throughout 2016 the school continued to work towards excellence in teaching and learning. Extensive teacher professional learning focused on Project Based Learning; differentiating teaching and learning for EALD, Learning and Support students and Gifted and Talented students; formative assessment, critical and creative thinking and Visible Thinking routines. Significant progress was made in linking individual professional learning to the three strategic directions in our School Plan. A Professional Learning scope and sequence built around teachers' Professional Learning Plans was developed and resulted in a more efficient use of staff expertise and time, and school finances. Progress has been made in developing the teaching and learning wheel which incorporates important aspects of pedagogy and wellbeing to maximise student outcomes.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Student engagement – measured via Tell Them From Me (TTFM) surveys, focus groups and value added data	Extensive research through student focus groups examined the reasons behind student disengagement, particularly in Stage 5. The results of this analysis are reflected in adjustments to the School Plan for 2017.	Tell Them From Me surveys Student focus groups \$3,293
Teacher engagement in professional learning and collaborative sharing of learning – teacher professional learning realised in annual evaluations	All teachers engaged in professional learning within the school focused on: differentiation, formative assessment, ICT, creative and critical thinking, Visible Thinking; 12 teachers completed the Harvard School of Education online course, Teaching for Understanding.	\$57,566 funds received (excluding beginning teachers); \$25,853 additional funds from the school's budget
Finalisation and implementation of the Teaching and Learning Wheel evidenced by incorporation in programs, lesson observations and language used	The draft wheel was developed through consultation with all staff following the initial drafting of the document by the executive team. The Wheel is still in the drafting process.	
Maintenance of or increase in HSC student growth data; improvement in NAPLAN student	Student growth in the HSC was again excellent with the majority of students achieving above statistically expected growth. NAPLAN growth from Year 7 – Year 9: Reading: 65.7 achieved greater than expected growth Numeracy: 57.2 % students achieved greater than expected growth Trend graphs for NAPLAN show Year 9 improvement from 2015 in numeracy (+10.9), writing (+4.5), reading (+1.6)	

Next Steps

Learning: The collaboratively developed 'WGHS Teaching/ Learning/ Wellbeing Wheel' is used to support: conceptual programming, aligned to Quality Teaching; wellbeing through the development of 'growth mindsets' and 'habits of mind'; ACARA capabilities and the inclusion of Visible Thinking routines across all faculties. Ensure consistency of assessment and reporting processes and practices, including the increased and improved use of formative assessment.

Teaching: More effective and consistent use of data and evaluative thinking to inform teaching and learning decisions. Greater consistency in programming, including 'Visible Learning' strategies to ensure teaching for understanding across all stages and all faculties. Increased use of Problem Based Learning strategies and future-focused pedagogies by all teachers.

Strategic Direction 3

Leadership for a self-sustaining, self-improving school

Purpose

To provide, develop and implement opportunities for staff and students that enable them to be strong, strategic and effective leaders contributing to a school community that will support the highest levels of lifelong learning, and empower girls to be confident, innovative and inspiring leaders in the world beyond school.

Overall summary of progress

The Executive Leadership Development program included executive staff evaluating their current skills against the National Standards for Principals as a point of reflection and to inform their individual Professional Development Plans. Three additional head teacher positions funded by the school continued, and all executive were involved in the external validation process through executive meetings. The executive focused on drafting the Teaching and Learning wheel and contributed to the school planning and evaluation process. Leadership roles across the school occurred through faculty representatives on various whole school teams, including the Differentiation team, Professional Learning Team and Assessment and Reporting evaluation team. Leadership opportunities within faculties occurred through some devolution of responsibility for curriculum, planning and assessment.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Executive leadership program evaluation	The focus of the executive leadership program began with executive staff mapping their skills and experience against the National Principal Standards. These skills were then used to lead the development and evaluation of the school's Teaching and Learning Wheel. Executive also developed strategies and proposals to respond to issues raised in the Assessment and Reporting evaluation.	Included in Professional Learning expenses
Distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities across the staff – measured	Leadership roles were distributed among teachers according to their interests and expertise. There was a greater uptake of shared responsibility within faculties with more classroom teachers leading curriculum development, assessment innovations and administrative functions.	Nil cost
Increase in student initiated events; student leadership development programs	Senior students participated in the Max Potential program and the Year 11 Leadership Development Program. Student initiated events in the school increased with fundraising for International Women's Day, the Syrian refugee Appeal and other local charities. The Environment Club initiated a waste awareness campaign.	Nil cost

Next Steps

'Student voice' is recognised and valued by all staff for its importance in influencing strategies to support student engagement and learning. Develop and implement further student leadership training and opportunities in the school.

Evaluate communication and administration processes and strategies to improve access to services and information, enhancing teacher, student and parent/community engagement.

Strengthen the use of Sentral by all staff to ensure it is used consistently to support teaching, learning and administrative functions.

Continue to diversify leadership opportunities for all staff, especially in the area of middle-management.

Key Initiatives	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
English language proficiency	EALD Human resources allocated equitably across Years 7–12 so teachers and students were adequately supported to ensure growth in language proficiency. 2.4 EALD teachers worked with classroom teachers across the curriculum to develop resources and programs, and team teach in classes with students requiring EALD support. Additional flexible funding was expended on additional staffing to ensure the maximum number of students were supported as often as possible.	2.4 EALD teachers \$21,312 flexible funding used for additional EALD staffing
Low level adjustment for disability	Learning and Support teacher analysed testing of Year 7 and 8 students as well as NAPLAN test results data to inform teaching and learning programs across the school. While professional learning around differentiating within the classroom was undertaken by all teachers. Staff still need to develop confidence in making modifications and adjustments to teaching and assessment programs for students requiring these. Awareness of the difference between modification and adjustment has improved.	0.6 Learning and Support Teacher \$41,142 flexible funding expended on 0.3 additional learning and Support staffing • Low level adjustment for disability (\$0.00)
Socio–economic background	Several students were supported financially for uniform, excursions and subject expenses. Additional funds were used to conduct qualitative research on our Tell Them From Me data and our Assessment and Reporting student surveys. Focus groups involving 360 students from years 7–12 provided further information on engagement, learning, assessment and relationships. This data has been used to inform the 2017 school plan updates and teacher programs.	\$8,227 expended
Support for beginning teachers	Funds were used for release time for beginning teachers and their mentors and supervisors, professional learning days with beginning teachers from the Lower North Shore Community of Schools network, led by an experienced deputy principal.	Head teacher Teaching and Learning \$42,667 expended

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Boys	0	0	0	0
Girls	921	968	957	974

Student attendance profile

School				
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
7	95.6	97.5	96.5	97
8	94	96.3	95.9	95.9
9	93.9	95.3	94.8	95.7
10	93.6	94.1	93.5	94.2
11	93.7	95.6	92.4	93.4
12	93.9	94.6	93.7	94.2
All Years	94.1	95.6	94.5	95.1
State DoE				
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016
7	93.2	93.3	92.7	92.8
8	90.9	91.1	90.6	90.5
9	89.4	89.7	89.3	89.1
10	87.7	88.1	87.7	87.6
11	88.3	88.8	88.2	88.2
12	90.1	90.3	89.9	90.1
All Years	89.9	90.2	89.7	89.7

Management of non-attendance

Student absenteeism reduced significantly during 2016. The attendance team, comprising the Head Teacher Wellbeing and Assistant Year Advisers closely monitor student attendance and speak to relevant students in a timely manner. All parents are emailed if their daughter is absent and notes are sent to parents each Term if their daughter's absences have not been accounted for.

Post-school destinations

Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment	Year 10%	Year 11%	Year 12%
Seeking Employment	0	0	
Employment	0	0	0
TAFE entry	0	0	2
University Entry	0	0	87.8
Other	0	0	1.4
Unknown	0	0	8.8

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

Total of 12 students completing VET courses as part of their HSC

5 VET Students completing Hospitality– School Delivered

7 VET Students at various TAFE Campuses in Northern Sydney Institute

Entertainment, Human Services, Community Services – Child Studies, Hair and Beauty, Tourism and Events(Events), IT Web and Software Design, Media Radio Broadcasting

8.1% of total cohort undertaking a VET Course as part of their HSC

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification

Total – 147 Students

147 Received HSC Qualifications

100% of students attained their HSC

Non ATAR pathway – 1 student

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	2
Head Teacher(s)	10
Classroom Teacher(s)	47.6
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.6
Teacher Librarian	1
Teacher of ESL	2.4
School Counsellor	1
School Administration & Support Staff	11.77
Other Positions	1

*Full Time Equivalent

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	100
Postgraduate degree	10

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Teaching and learning, wellbeing and leadership including differentiation, curriculum development and programing, mental health, growth mindset, technology, executive leadership and teacher accreditation were the focus of professional learning activities participated in by teachers at Willoughby Girls in 2016. Sixty three teachers attended over three hundred and thirty professional learning activities, many of which were conducted outside of normal school hours. In particular, the professional learning on school development days focussed on growth mindset and habits of mind, evaluative thinking and the use of data, project based learning, differentiation, formative assessment, critical and creative thinking, visible thinking and the professional development framework for teachers.

Eight new scheme teachers worked towards Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards (BoSTES) accreditation and nineteen new scheme teachers worked towards maintaining their BoSTES accreditation at proficient level. There were three

teachers who undertook voluntary accreditation at Highly Accomplished or Lead levels.

The total expenditure on professional learning in 2016 was \$83419 with an average of approximately \$1324 per teacher.

Two beginning teachers achieved accreditation at proficient level; three teachers have begun working towards HAT accreditation. Beginning teachers (first year of service) are supported through release time for planning, marking, evaluation and report writing in addition to significant release time for professional learning and support from their chosen mentor. A professional learning day for beginning teachers (both permanent and temporary) was held every Term, enabling teachers to develop skills and gather evidence for their accreditation submissions. permanent beginning teachers also attended four professional learning days with peers from other Lower North Shore Community of Schools. These days are led by a recently retired deputy principal and include a range of activities including sharing of experiences and ideas, to support form more experienced teachers and advice on classroom management, innovative pedagogy and planning. Second year permanent teachers also participated in two LNSCoS professional learning days.

Financial information (for schools using OASIS for the whole year)

Financial information

This summary financial information covers funds for operating costs to 30 November 2016 and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Income	\$
Balance brought forward	537 503.60
Global funds	811 593.45
Tied funds	269 016.98
School & community sources	893 773.20
Interest	16 069.21
Trust receipts	295 701.04
Canteen	0.00
Total income	2 823 657.48
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	121 330.59
Excursions	267 643.63
Extracurricular dissections	364 473.68
Library	16 335.67
Training & development	15 069.56
Tied funds	241 636.11
Short term relief	140 137.95
Administration & office	351 745.40
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	105 073.57
Maintenance	81 141.33
Trust accounts	355 099.31
Capital programs	177 707.91
Total expenditure	2 237 394.71
Balance carried forward	586 262.77

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

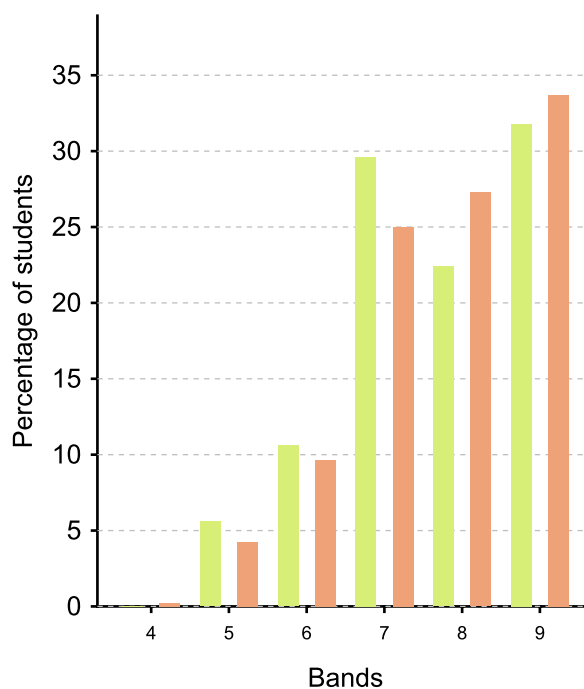
School performance

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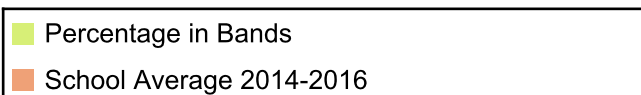
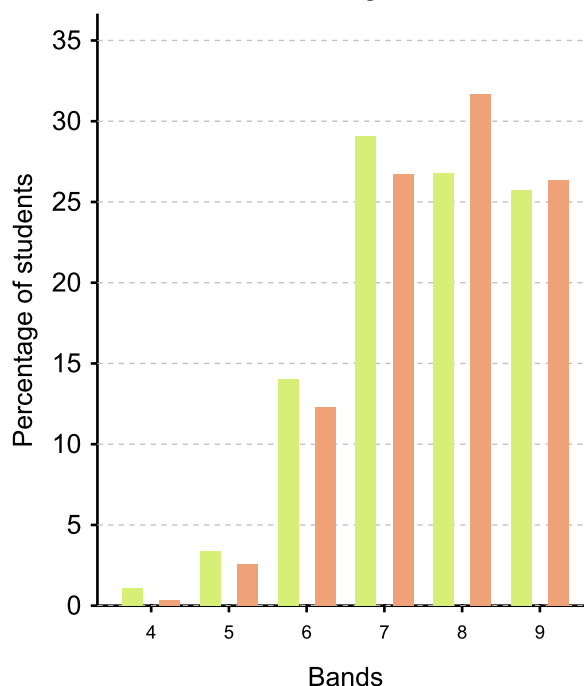
NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

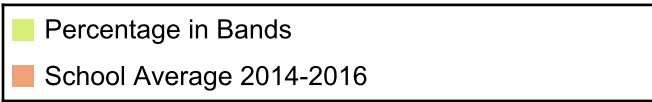
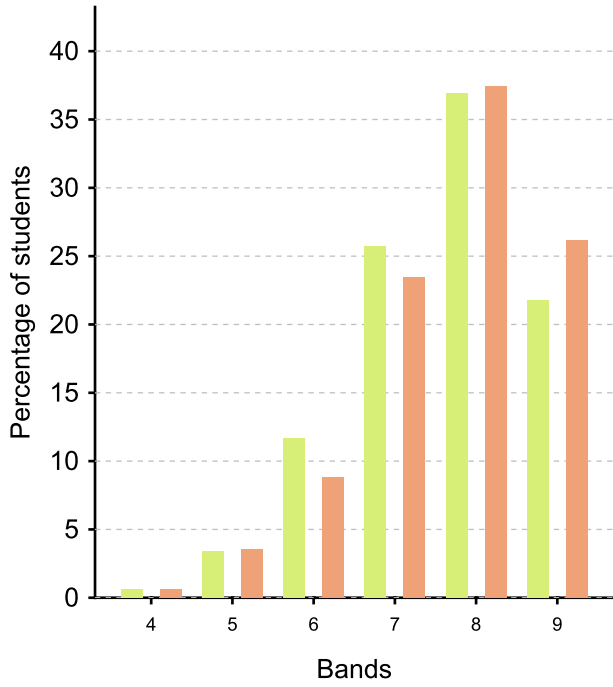
Percentage in bands:
Year 7 Grammar & Punctuation



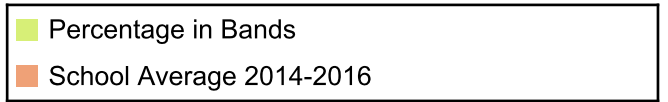
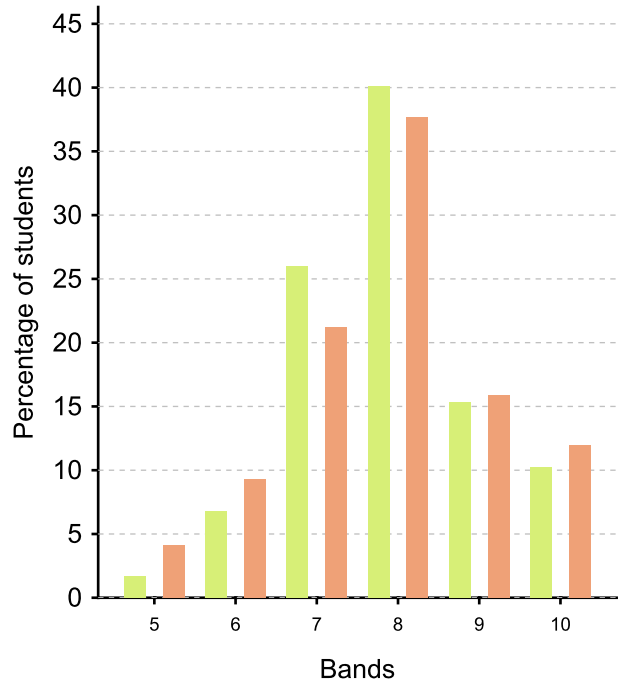
Percentage in bands:
Year 7 Reading



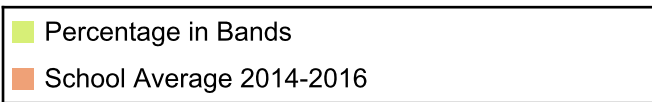
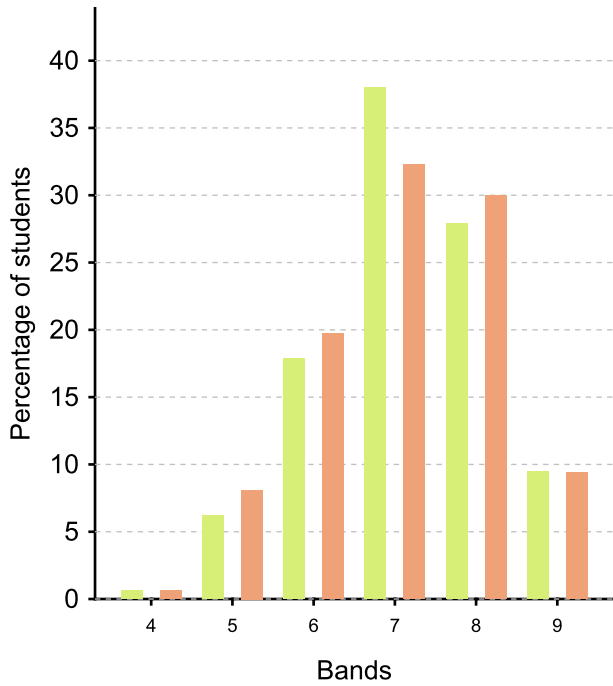
Percentage in bands:
Year 7 Spelling



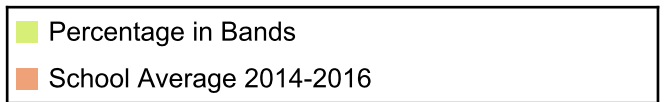
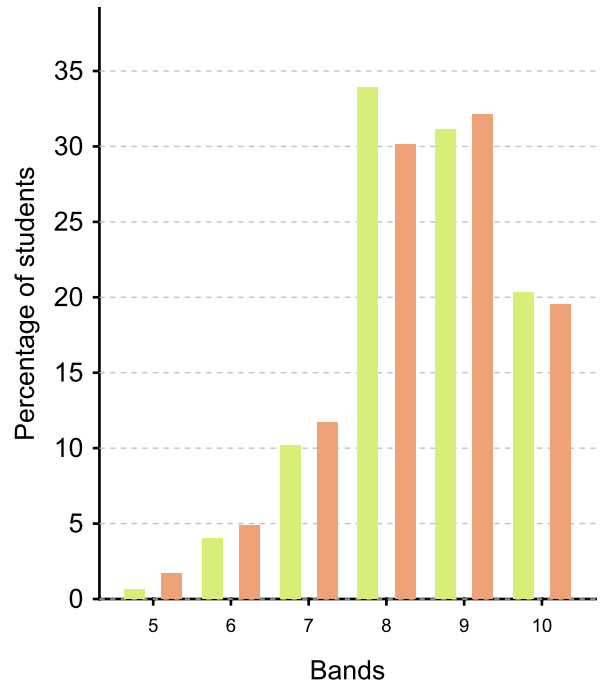
Percentage in bands:
Year 9 Writing



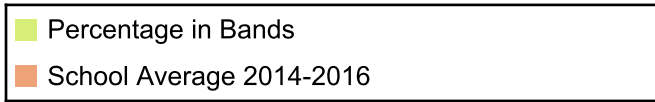
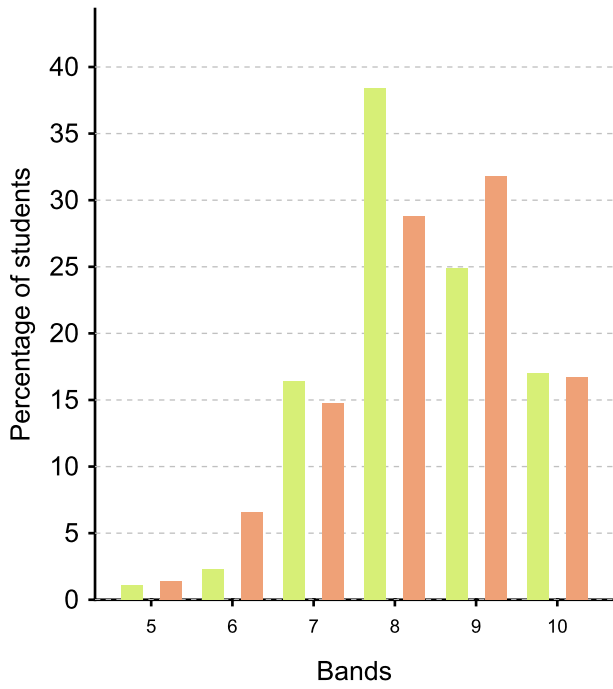
Percentage in bands:
Year 7 Writing



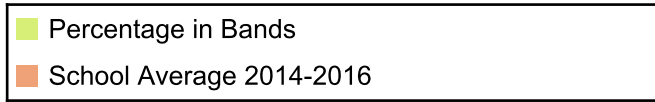
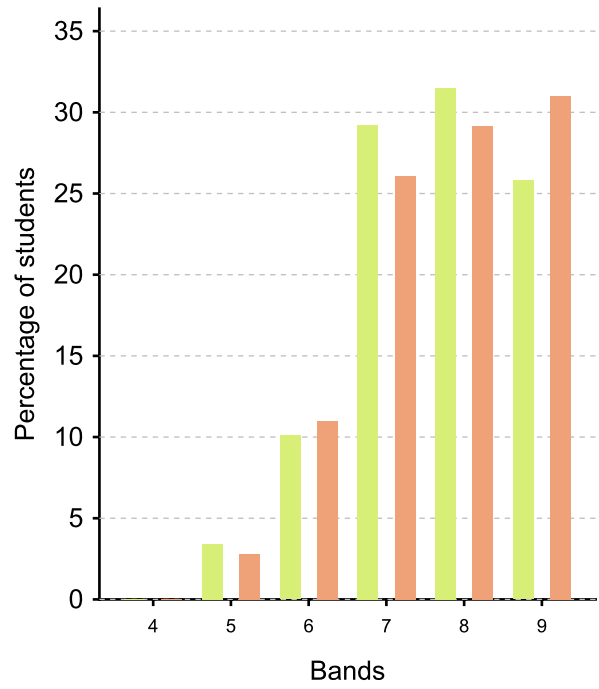
Percentage in bands:
Year 9 Spelling



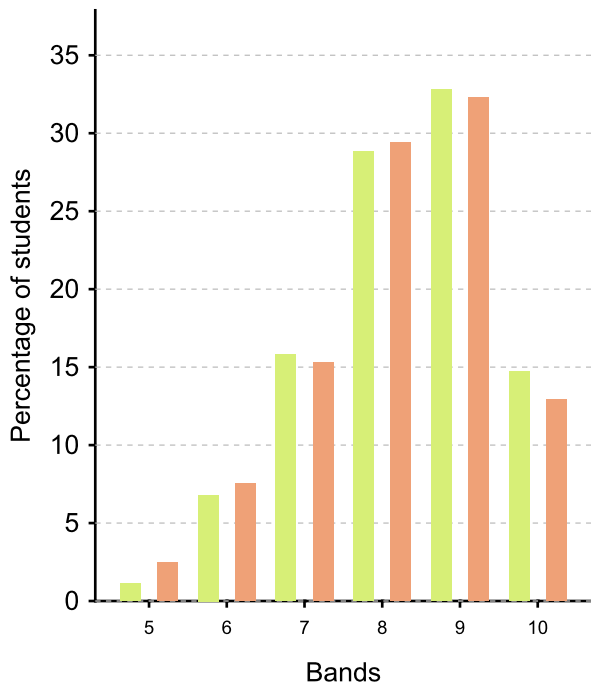
Percentage in bands:
Year 9 Reading



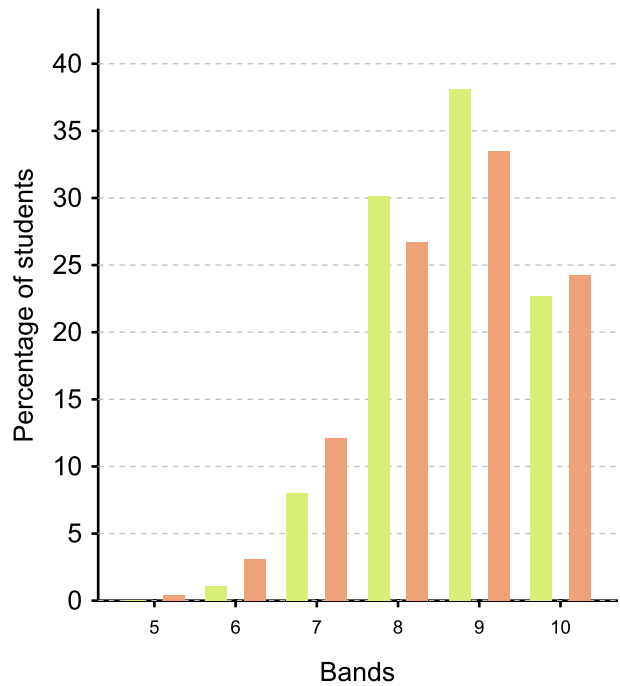
Percentage in bands:
Year 7 Numeracy



Percentage in bands:
Year 9 Grammar & Punctuation



Percentage in bands:
Year 9 Numeracy



Year 7 students achieving in the top two bands for reading (52.5%), writing (37.4%), numeracy (57.3%).

Students in Year 9 achieving in the top two bands for reading (41.8%), writing (25.5%), numeracy (60.8%).

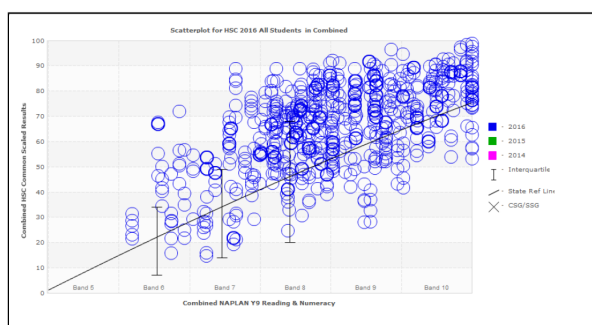
NAPLAN growth from Year 7 – Year 9:

Reading: 65.7 achieved greater than expected growth

Numeracy: 57.2 % students achieved greater than expected growth

Trend graphs for NAPLAN show Year 9 improvement from 2015 in numeracy (+10.9), writing (+4.5), reading (+1.6)

Equity funding has been used to provide additional staff support for students from non-English speaking backgrounds, students with low level disabilities including learning disabilities, and gifted and talented students. These expert teachers have provided student learning assistance in the regular classroom as well as assisting teachers in developing teaching and learning strategies that target these students' needs. This will continue into 2017 while ever funding levels permit.



Summary data on progress for students in each prior test

Year	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8	Band 9	Band 10	Total
Number of cases	-	32	72	203	178	154	639
Average progress	-	16.91	13.21	16.46	10.57	6.17	12.00

Higher School Certificate (HSC)

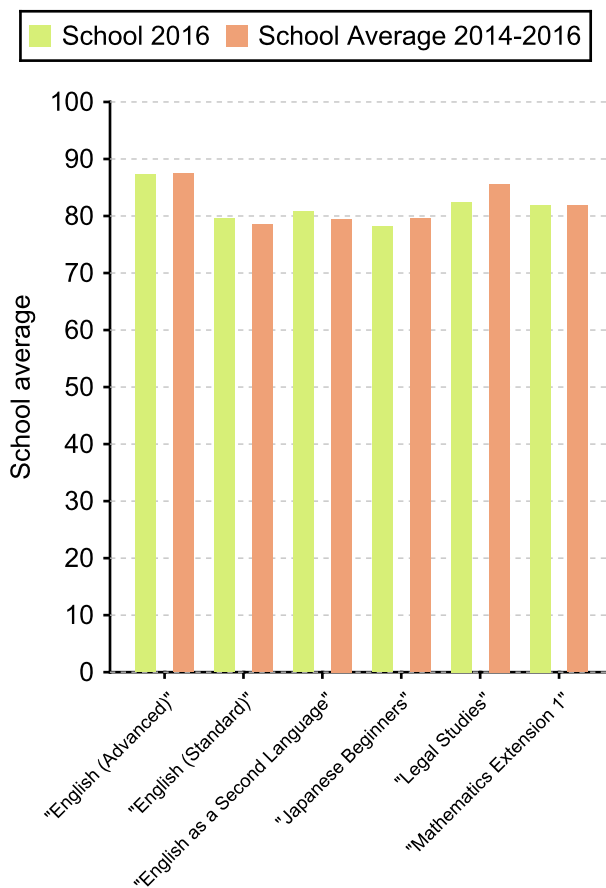
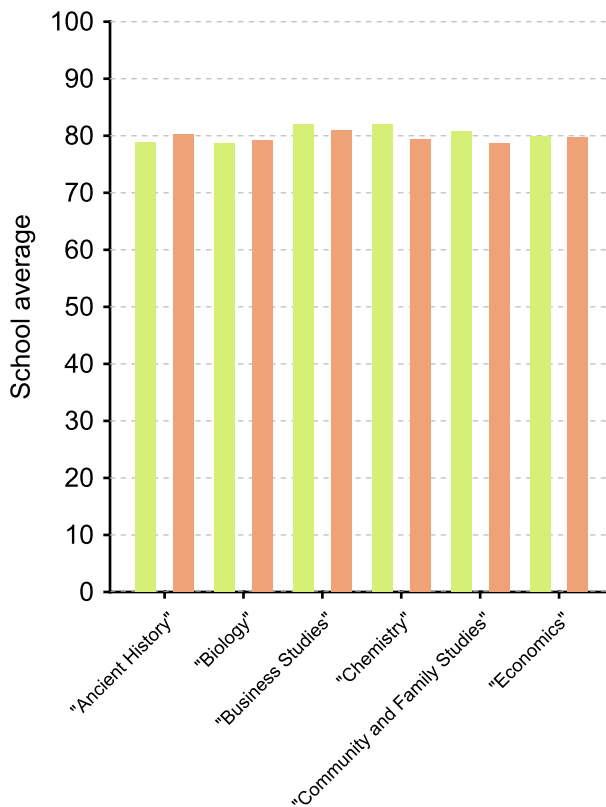
The performance of students in the HSC is reported in bands ranging from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest).

The scatterplot analysis for the 2016 HSC shows the progress made by students in all their subjects when comparing their results in Year 9 NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy to the HSC.

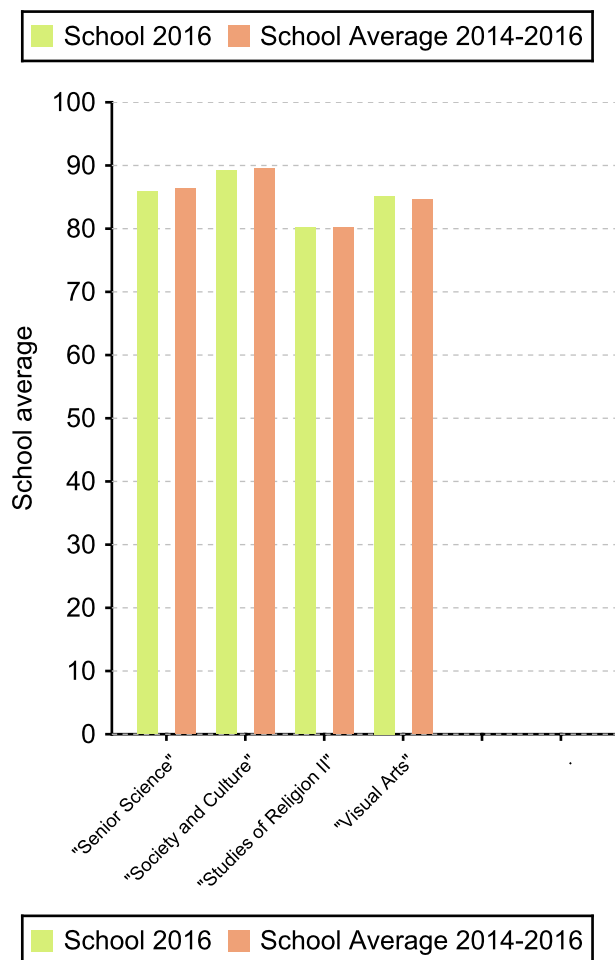
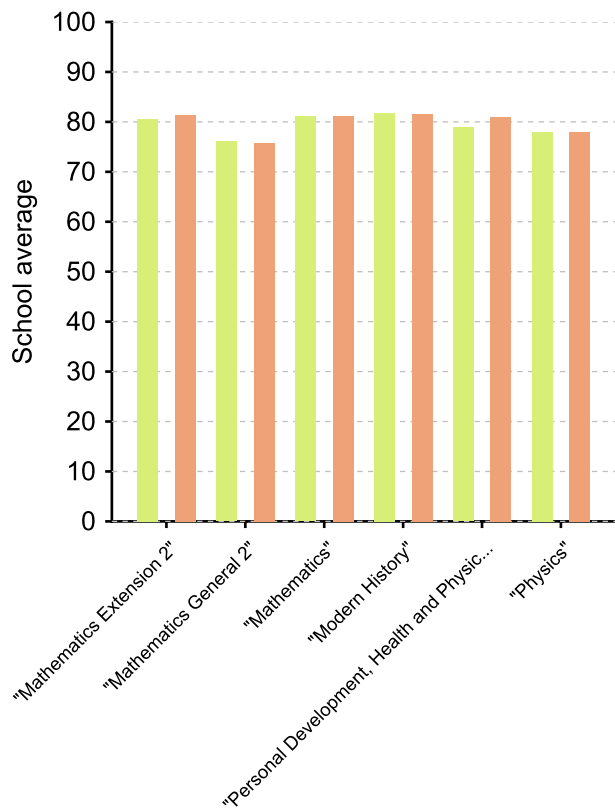
Visually, the progress made by students can be seen by observing the number of circles, which indicate a subject result for an individual student, that are placed above the State Reference Line.

The summary data table shows that students at all previous Band levels in the Year 9 NAPLAN achieved an average of 12 marks progress in their HSC.

Further, it is pleasing to note that on average, students at all separate Band achievement levels in the Year 9 NAPLAN achieved excellent progress in their HSC. This was particularly the case for students who had previously achieved at Bands 6, 7 and 8 in Year 9 NAPLAN, but, was also the case for students who had achieved at the highest Band levels in Year 9 NAPLAN.



Legend: School 2016 (green), School Average 2014-2016 (orange)



2016 Higher School Certificate Highlights

In 2016, 147 students sat for their HSC and gained 164 mentions on the Distinguished Achievers Honour Roll (Band 6) for scoring 90 or more in a course. Our school was ranked among the top five comprehensive public schools in NSW. Over 30% of students gained an ATAR of 90 or above.

Congratulations to 2016 Year 12 DUX, Helaine Liew who attained the top ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) with 99.7, closely followed by Lily Morton and Alissa Stark, both achieving at ATAR of 99.4.

Top Achieving Students

Four students were ranked among the top ten students in the state for individual subjects as follows:

Helaine Liew	Society and Culture – 1st
Jennifer Henock	PDHPE– 4th
Lily Morton	Ancient History – 7th
Alissa Stark	Ancient History – 10th

All Rounders:

Four students – achieved All Rounder Awards gaining a Band 6 (a mark greater than 90) for at least ten units of study:

Na Yeon (Katherine) Lee,
Helaine Liew,
Yiru (Suzie) Ling and
Lily Morton

Four students were nominated for the 2015 HSC showcases:

Three for *ArtExpress* (exhibition of outstanding Visual Arts works)

One for *Encore* (outstanding HSC music performances)

Courses with Band 6 results included Ancient History, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Chinese Background Speakers, Design and Technology, Economics, English Advanced, English Standard, English as a Second Language, English Extension 1, English Extension 2, Japanese Beginners, Japanese Continuers, Japanese Extension, Legal Studies, Mathematics General, Mathematics, Mathematics Extension 1, Mathematics Extension 2, Modern History, History Extension, Music 1, Music 2, Music Extension, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Senior Science, Society and Culture, Studies of Religion II, Textiles and Design, and Visual Arts.

122 graduates (83%) received first round University offers, with several of these students gaining advanced entry into their chosen courses.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Student satisfaction

In 2016 students at Willoughby Girls High School completed the Tell Them From Me survey as well as the Assessment and Reporting evaluation survey. Data from these surveys suggested that, while the majority of students are very happy with the education, opportunities and support they receive at Willoughby Girls, there are aspects of our teaching and practice, assessment methods, curriculum and relationships that need improvement. In June, three researchers from the University of NSW conducted focus groups to explore further students' feelings about the school and seek their suggestions for improvement.

There were 36 focus groups conducted, with 12 a day being held on Tuesday 21 June, Friday 24 June and Monday 27 June. Three interviewers each conducted 12 focus groups. It is estimated 360 students provided qualitative information. There were six focus groups from each academic year 7 – 10.

1. Focus area 1 – Learning in the classroom

Understanding the context: One Year 8 student remarked she thinks it is difficult being a teenager at the moment, because on top of all of their other commitments they also “have an entire online life to maintain.”

There were many positive examples of interaction between students and teachers, with History consistently being cited as an example of creative lessons and assessment tasks, as well as having staff that cared about students as people as well as simply members of the class.

Students recognised that they received a lot of good teaching across the school, and many staff received high and specific praise.

Year 7 students found that they were most engaged when they received clear explanations, and expressed a preference to not use laptops, and choose their position in class so as to engage more easily with their teacher.

There was great enthusiasm for variety in lessons, particularly involving interactive exercises, game-based learning such as Kahoot, and a variety of teaching techniques.

Students often expressed a desire for their classes to link to the world beyond the classroom. They said things such as “there’s so much going on in the world we want to understand.” History and Commerce were cited as subjects that did this. Society and Culture was mentioned as providing good lessons because “you continued talking about the lesson content after the class.”

Students across the years expressed great excitement/enjoyment about selecting subjects, or having that opportunity in the future. The sense of control derived from selecting subjects was consistently seen as a positive, and perhaps suggests a way forward in classes, where choice could be built into a

range of syllabus delivery and assessment tasks. This could perhaps increase students’ engagement and sense of ownership of their courses and school work.

The biggest frustration regarding learning in the classroom from a student perspective was a feeling that a multiplicity of learning styles wasn’t always recognised. Students did express frustration that some lessons often seemed to pass by in a blur of note taking, booklets and worksheets. All students recognised these as an important component of learning, but the juniors in particular spoke consistently plea for more engagement, creativity and interaction in the classroom. It was recognised that this did occur in the school, with History being consistently cited as an example. This is probably the biggest challenge that the focus groups produced for the school. Repetition of lesson style and approach was the area that was seen to need change.

For Years 9 and 10, there was a sense of disengagement, and that these years were seen as the lull before the senior storm. In the words of one cynical Year 9 student, “[The school] stops caring about you after Year 7, and then starts to care again in Year 11.” Students tended to see the six years in a continuum of ‘two years of excitement and effort in adjusting to high school, two years of treading water, and two years of full on effort’. There is nothing particularly unique or startling in this finding, but choice of language could be a simple way to move forward.

Clearly Year 9 students are excited by commencing elective subjects, and there is a great opportunity to build on that enthusiasm. Commerce was consistently mentioned as a subject that presented students with relevance and real world applicability. Senior students suggested that Year 10 should be portrayed as a “senior preparation year.” With the power of hindsight, they could see a relevance and value in Year 10 that wasn’t apparent to them at the time. That suggests very firm ground to build a stronger sense of purpose and engagement in Year 10, linking it with the enthusiasm of entering their first year of electives in Year 9.

2. Focus area 2 – Assessment and reporting

Assessment and reporting involved gathering perspectives on key issues such as the formal assessment program – the number, distribution and types of tasks; feedback on performance; and the formal reporting system. The general question of tests and exams naturally permeated many responses, not least because many students often struggled to differentiate between assessment and tests.

Willoughby Girls students have a good grasp on the reality of assessment in the school setting, and there was no sense of complaining for complaining’s sake. Rather, students were particularly impressive in their understanding of the nature of assessment, as well as its importance in preparation for exit exams. It was seen as a credit to the school that we have produced such perceptive and articulate students. They were able to clearly identify areas of concern, as well as providing potential constructive ways forward. In many

schools, the opportunity students were given to voice their concerns would have resulted in an endless litany of complaints, with little or no consideration given to potential solutions.

The calm and level consideration students gave to issues of assessment and reporting provide the school with some interesting ideas and comments to reflect upon which was exactly what the process was designed to do.

- The heavy concentration of assessment tasks and testing, often seen as the same thing, in mid term, creates real stress for students. This was consistent across all years, and students found difficulty in understanding why that had to be so bunched together. The creation of an assessment diary, which could be published and distributed to students, after faculties had entered their tasks, or some similar organisational approach, could play a key role in lessening stress on students.

This was probably the biggest area of discussion among students. They often couldn't differentiate between assessment tasks and tests. This may be a simple question of terminology, or it may reflect a concentration on formal testing being a major component of assessment. These concerns can be addressed easily.

The question of concentrating assessment in a narrow window mid term emerged clearly as a source of student stress. Their genuine feeling was that the majority of course assessment was limited to a two week period in the middle of a term, and their logical question was why this had to be. Their solution was the publication of some sort of assessment diary, where all faculties placed their assessment tasks. Students would know in advance where tasks were placed, and plan accordingly.

Other areas that concerned students regarding assessment included a sense that many tasks lacked clarity. This mainly manifested itself in not being sure of what was required in the task, and a strong feeling of fear that approaching teachers for clarification would result in a sense that teachers didn't think the student understood the subject. This was a fascinating glimpse into the basic insecurity that students feel, exacerbated by their awareness of the importance of assessment work. The solution here could be as simple as having a classroom discussion when a task is issued, ensuring that all students have an opportunity to raise questions about understanding and purpose.

I thought that one of the best summaries of student perspective on assessment that I have ever heard came from a Year 11 student, who told me that good assessment tasks were those that were clearly explained, and where you were doing something, not just "remembering random material we then forget after the task is completed."

Educationalists such as John Hattie have been arguing for along time now about the significance of feedback in improving student performance. As an overall finding, it is clear that students value clear, direct feedback that helps them understand what they did well, and

identifies areas where they could improve. No student was concerned about critical aspects of feedback as long as it pointed them in the direction of future improvement. One area of consistent dissatisfaction was general feedback on a task being given as a replacement for specific individual feedback.

One area where there may be a gap between staff and student perception is in the area of reports. Students basically saw them as a point of delivery of marks and grades, and regarded anything else as superfluous. Interestingly, many students would like your parent/teacher evenings to be parent/teacher/student evenings.

3. Focus area 3 –School life and outside school

This area certainly gave students the opening to complain long and loud about the school, but this did not happen. Instead the interviewers received many, many reports of the good things the school was doing, the opportunities the students had received, and the good things teachers did for them. By way of example, one Year 11 student described her feelings of pride while attending a Road Safety event at Allphones Arena. As she looked at the behaviour and attitude of the other schools attending, she saw Willoughby Girls High as a shining example of the right way to behave, and spoke about how she saw the real value of attending the school in that moment. That sentiment was echoed in a variety of ways and settings, and showed that school pride is so much more than a slogan..

Students also found the school a safe environment, and any events where safety was a potential issue were memorable because of their rarity. There were some questions about overcrowding, particularly in the library.

Above all, students valued the friendships they made at school, and obviously, the school plays a positive, vital and valuable role in the socialisation of the students. This reflects the strong, supportive environment of the school.

There were many positive examples of interaction between students and teachers.. These relationships were something students really valued, when students felt that the teacher recognised them as an individual.

There was strong recognition of the school's academic success and reputation, although this could be seen as a double edged sword. Students spoke with pride of being part of the school, but also felt significant stress in upholding the school's reputation.

Stress was a consistent factor in responses across all years, and the timing of homework and assessment tasks across weekends and holidays was a significant factor worth noting.

An interesting response from Year 11 was that the lack of a "brother school" led to them seeing themselves as a self-contained world that connected to the broader

community through school supported areas such as volunteering and extra-curricular activities that you could be involved in by choice.

Overall, I think a fair and logical conclusion is that this is a very good school, and that the students recognise that. Personally I think you are doing a wonderful job providing the most precious thing I believe a community can do: an ethical comprehensive public education to the students of your community. You are being rewarded by outstanding results and outstanding students.

In summary, students identified the following points for consideration:

A recognition of the variety of learning styles in any classroom that is reflected through a range of teaching and assessment approaches

The spreading of assessment tasks across a term through a public document available to all of them, their teachers and parents

Feedback that focuses on what was right and wrong, but most importantly, focuses on how they can improve.

Concluding comment from the research team:

More than anything, it is important to understand what a positive experience this was for us, having the opportunity to listen to students' unfiltered opinions in such a good school. Personally, I feel it is essential to recognise how rare it is in education to work with a good school trying to improve even further, which is what was at the heart of this process. I should also thank you for proving to be such powerful role models for public education. The fact that both expressed a desire to come back here and teach casually as soon as they qualified is a lasting testament to the great job you did as representatives of public education.

School response:

The 2015–2017 School Plan has been updated to incorporate changes to address many of the raised by students in these focus group interviews. Changes to student progress reports have been made to foreground the learning behaviours that are valued by the school as they lead to improved student learning outcomes. Changes to assessment

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

The Aboriginal Education Policy continues to be implemented with faculties incorporating relevant subject matter and appropriate teaching and learning strategies into their programs.

In Years 7–10 English and Drama, students read, view and write about texts created by Indigenous composers about the Aboriginal experience.

In Mathematics, students learn to recognise different

representations of maps in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders culture and explore cultural sensitivities in regards to the collection of data for the census.

In Technology and Applied Studies, the DEC Aboriginal Education Policy is implemented through the study of food availability and selection, contemporary nutrition issues, Cultural Furnishings and Groups in Context. Students attended an excursion to the Botanical Gardens to deepen their knowledge of “bush tucker” run by their indigenous education team.

In Science, students learn about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have developed and refined knowledge about the world through observation, making predictions, testing (trial and error) and responding to environmental factors within specific contexts. Students investigate examples of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' understanding of the environment and the ways that traditional knowledge and western scientific knowledge can be complementary.

The Stage 4 History curriculum focuses on developing student knowledge and understanding of the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal peoples and worldwide indigenous cultures.

The Stage 5 History curriculum focuses on developing an understanding of the struggle for rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples in the 20th century.

As part of the school's NAIDOC Week celebrations, Year 8 Visual Arts students participated in a weaving workshop run by artist Kaleen Green. She presented information about the art and history of Aboriginal basket weaving techniques and also showed contemporary practices of weaving as an art form. Students then produced a small basket.

Students study Aboriginal perspectives through Origins of the Australian Continent in junior Geography and met with the local Aboriginal Heritage Officer during their fieldwork at Flat Rock Gully. Legal Studies students explore the legal reforms arising out of native title and customary law in the Stage 6 curriculum. In Stage 6 Studies of Religion, students examined Aboriginal belief systems and looked at the changing perceptions of Aboriginal spirituality in modern Australia. As part of the Geography curriculum Year 10 students work with the Gibberagong Environmental Education Centre and local Aboriginal knowledge holders including Dave Larnder to develop resources around the study of Coastal areas in Pittwater and learn the importance of consultation with local custodians in relation to development. Dave worked with students on site at Barrenjoey Headland during the Year 10 Camp to develop and awareness of Aboriginal connection to place.

In PDHPE students address Aboriginal perspectives through the study of health care, recreation and lifestyles in Years 7–10. The senior PDHPE curriculum includes the close study of Closing the Gap initiatives and an emphasis on harmony, tolerance and an appreciation of diversity.

The Aboriginal acknowledgment of country continues to be a feature of all formal assemblies and the Aboriginal flag is flown each day, along with the Australian and NSW flags as an acknowledgement of respect to traditional owners.

Throughout 2016, Willoughby GHS has been represented at the local AECG meetings to engage with the local community. 2016 marked the second whole school celebration of NAIDOC week with faculties in Week 10 of Term 2 inviting guests from the community to meet with students and teachers planning lessons to emphasise the significant achievements of Aboriginal people.

Students who have identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders were involved in the development of their personalised learning plans. This included input from the students, their parents and the Head Teacher Wellbeing. This process assists students in helping achieve their learning goals.

In 2016, two senior indigenous students Shinead Burton and Mahlia Garay attended an Aboriginal Leadership camp at Milson's Island for female indigenous students in the Northern Region of Sydney. Shinead was the first student from WGHS to be awarded the Guringai AECG Aboriginal Student Award for Academic excellence and was also the first indigenous student to give an acknowledgement of country to the whole school in an assembly. Mahlia commenced Aboriginal Studies by distance education in 2016 and is the first student to undertake this course from WGHS.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

In 2016 Willoughby Girls High School continued its proud tradition of tolerance and cultural diversity within the NSW Department of Education and Communities. The students at Willoughby come from a wide variety of backgrounds, colourfully representing the multicultural diversity of modern Australia. Throughout 2016 the students of Willoughby Girls High School interacted on a daily basis with students from many backgrounds, cultures and beliefs, all the while respecting individual differences and customs.

The annual cultural exchange with students and teachers from Sugunami-Ku, Japan was continued in 2016. Willoughby students and members of the public billeted the 19 Japanese students, who came to the school for five days where they engaged in English language and Australian Culture lessons each morning and then joined their host students in regular classes each afternoon. As has been the case in previous years, the exchange was enormously enjoyed by both the Australian and Japanese students.

The annual school Multicultural Day was a great success. A selection of foods from all around the world was offered to both staff and students. Many students and teachers dressed in the national costumes of various countries and a variety of games played by people around the world were introduced and were tried by many students and teachers on the day.

Students were entertained by a very energetic and talented French sing-a-long show during the afternoon.

Other school programs

Environmental Committee

In 2016 the Environmental Committee was established at Willoughby Girls High School. The aim of the committee was to actively engage students in leadership projects to promote awareness of environmental issues and implement sustainability initiatives in the school and local community.

Interested student leaders initially participated in a workshop involving Willoughby Council and Tim Silverwood from the NGO "Take 3." Students discussed the importance of taking action and what action would be most appropriate to WGHS. Tim shared his own experiences of working as an individual and part of a team to start up a new NGO and how to begin to make a difference.

Students from Years 7–12 were then invited to begin attending meetings and sharing their ideas online in order to develop projects that they would lead. Students were supported in their projects by teachers Dr Watson, Ms Elias, Ms Gulline and Ms Schroers and a range of local council staff and teachers from Willoughby Primary School. Projects for 2016 included the establishment of a native bee hive in our school garden, the completion of an audit of electricity use of the school site and a presentation to staff and students, the installation of a stencil around a drain in the playground to raise awareness of keeping our waterways clear, funding applications and approval for the installation of "National Park" recycling bins in the school playground, a bush care and playground clean up group and the raising of funds for the committee through a cake stall.

The Committee is passionate about continuing to work on current project and to raise awareness and develop new initiatives into the future.

Assessment and Reporting evaluation

The Assessment and Reporting Evaluation was based on data obtained from student, parent and teacher surveys as well as from follow up student focus groups. As a result, the school was able to gather information on key issues surrounding the formal assessment program including the number and distribution of tasks; the notification process; marking criteria; feedback on performance; and the formal reporting system.

The key findings from the surveys and focus groups are summarised below.

Students, parents and teachers had an excellent understanding of the nature and purpose of assessment, that being, to inform teachers, students and parents about progress and areas of learning need for improvement.

There was general agreement that 2 weeks' notice was adequate time for assessment tasks, but it was clearly indicated that 3 weeks would be preferable, with no more than two tasks due in the one week. There was also strong agreement that a reduction in the number of tasks to three would be more acceptable than the current 4–5 tasks.

Responses from students, parents and teachers reinforced the importance of well explained and easily understood marking criteria in guiding student responses to assessment tasks with the most useful form of feedback given being timely individual written comments on the student work, accompanied by verbal feedback and explanation. In particular, students value clear, direct feedback that helps them understand what they did well, and identifies areas where they could improve.

Students, parents and teachers were in strong agreement that the main purpose of the school report should be to show progress and allow progress to be monitored over time and to provide information on what students can do to improve their learning.

As a result of these findings the school has already implemented changes to the assessment policy procedures including an increase in the notification time from two to three weeks and an overall reduction in the number of tasks. Teachers are currently working on improving the quality of both the marking criteria and feedback given as a means of further improving learning outcomes. The school executive is also currently reviewing the format and nature of the school report.