

Ashcroft High School Annual School Report 2013



School context

The number of students in 2013 totaled 535. Indigenous students represent approximately 12% of this enrolment and more than 50% of the students enrolled are from Non-English speaking backgrounds.

Principal's message

At Ashcroft we regard our work in exploring student learning as the most important aspect of our professional lives. In recent years, we have continued to develop our work as teachers and students in unison, each exploring the nature of learning as one. This has resulted in some revealing insights – students have been quick to comprehend some of the important teaching and learning concepts and then lead some aspects of the nature of learning to all Year 7 and 8 students.

Our teachers can be regarded as some of the best professionals in NSW, opening their classrooms to other colleagues over the years to share their practice and also to incorporate student feedback. This process when combined with the data collected over the years has resulted in the most insightful analysis. Teachers have been continually supportive of adjustments following feedback. Results from classroom practice have grown to the extent that by the end of 2013, significant areas of practice have continued a four year upward trend. In addition, the results in the HSC have seen a threefold increase over the last four years in upper band results.

This work has complemented the growing depth of the Student Leadership Council. Students have extended their learning in various forums, mentoring students in an ACT school about leadership; hosting a business breakfast as leadership ambassadors; excelling at bridge construction at university against all schools; leading learning in Aboriginal history as best practice in South Western Sydney; designing anti-bullying and safe strategies; leading physical activity programs; articulating to each other the link about knowledge between one subject and another within the high school setting.

Today at AHS, we are connecting learning across all aspects of the school culture in a powerful transformation. The achievements of our students as mentioned provide a great source of

pride about the way in which the many parts can come together to make a whole.

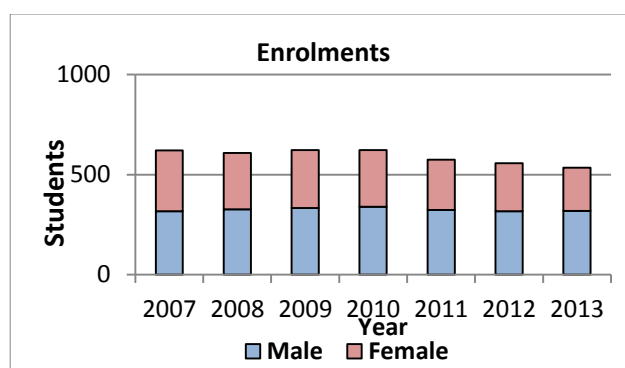
I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

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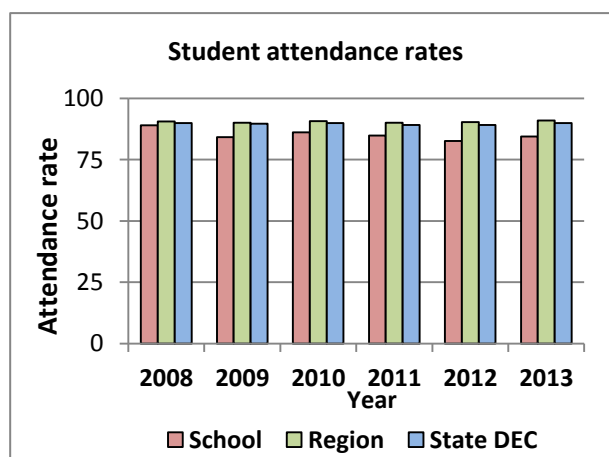
Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Student enrolment profile



Student attendance profile



Management of non-attendance

Student non-attendance is managed in the first instance by the pastoral care teacher. If poor school attendance continues it is investigated by the executive member in charge of attendance. If

the situation is not resolved, the matter is referred to the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO).

In 2013 the HSLO regularly met with the executive member (attendance) and a consistent and structured approach of working between year advisers and families saw the attendance rates rise in relation to the previous year.

For students over the age of 17 years for whom school enrolment is not a legal requirement, non-attendance is monitored by the class teachers in each subject. If poor attendance to class continues, the student is warned in writing to the parent or carer that they may be excluded from the course. If the situation is not resolved, the student is referred to the Deputy Principal who may then proceed with steps to exclude the student from school for unsatisfactory participation in learning.

Post-school destinations

In 2013, students who were under the age of 17 and wishing to leave school at the completion of Year 10, were required to prove employment of engagement in further studies at another institution. All students who left after Year 10 were successful in securing a place at TAFE to continue their studies.

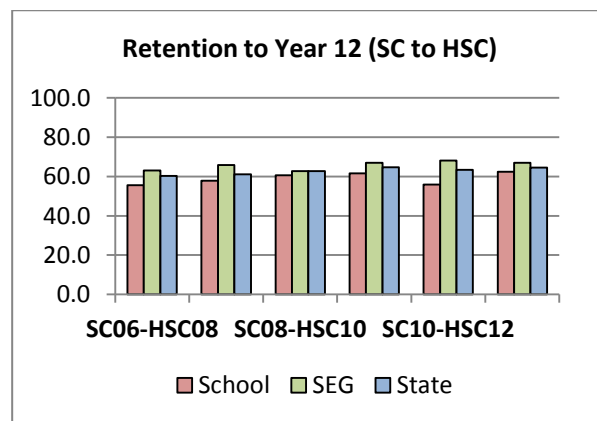
47 students sat for the HSC in 2013 and 16 gained places at university. Four students successfully gained apprenticeships and one joined the Defense Forces. A significant portion of the remainder secured work and nine are studying at either TAFE or private providers.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

64% of Year 12 students undertook one or more VET courses, and one student undertook a school-based apprenticeship.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

47 students undertook the HSC in 2013 and 44 were successful in achieving the credential.



Workforce information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

Workforce composition

Position	Number
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	2
Head Teachers	8
Classroom Teachers	35
Support Teacher Learning Assistance	1.5
Teacher Librarian	1
Teacher of ESL	0.8
Counsellor	1
School Administrative & Support Staff	12
Aboriginal Education Officer	1
Teacher Aide	3

Additional staff are funded via the Priority Action Schools (PAS) and National Partnerships (NP) programs, and include above establishment classroom teachers employed on a temporary basis and additional school counsellor time of two days per week. In 2013, a nurse was again employed two days per week as part of a "Healthy Learners" program at the school and three additional support staff were employed to manage the school canteen.

The Australian Education Regulation requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce. Currently, four staff members at Ashcroft High School identify as Aboriginal.

Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	92
Postgraduate	8
NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation	25 teachers

Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Date of financial summary	30/11/2013
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	248103.55
Global funds	395202.09
Tied funds	640331.00
School & community sources	106131.58
Interest	15876.60
Trust receipts	36183.58
Canteen	175688.83
Total income	1617517.23
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	101050.17
Excursions	30199.31
Extracurricular dissections	37139.98
Library	7501.57
Tied funds	494350.49
Casual relief teachers	24795.19
Administration & office	129613.14
School-operated canteen	166030.49
Utilities	49564.54
Maintenance	52671.37
Trust accounts	45704.14
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	1138620.39
Balance carried forward	478896.84

A full copy of the school's 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2013

Students were provided with a range of opportunities to showcase their skills and abilities in 2013 both within and outside the classroom.

Academic achievements

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.

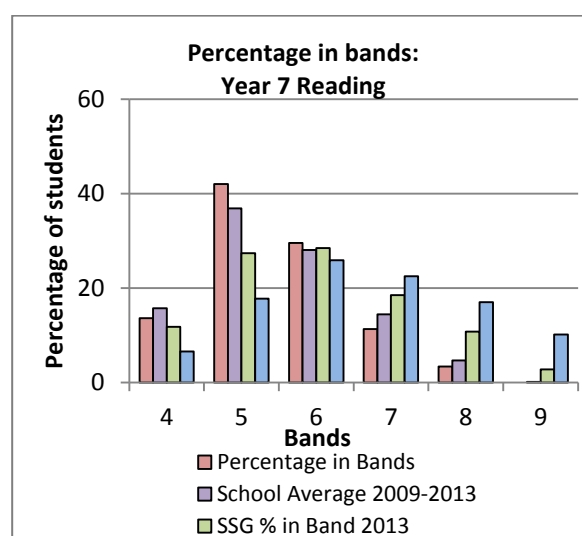
Year 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)

Year 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

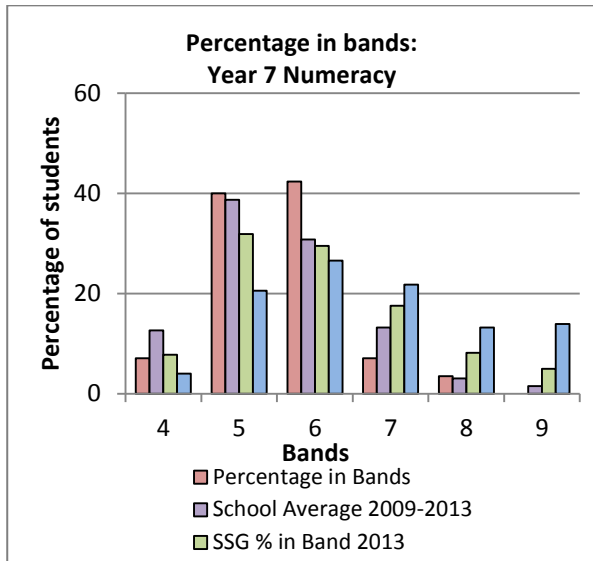
The *My School* website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing (NAPLAN).

Click on the link <http://www.myschool.edu.au> and enter the school name in the *Find a school* and select *GO* to access the school data.

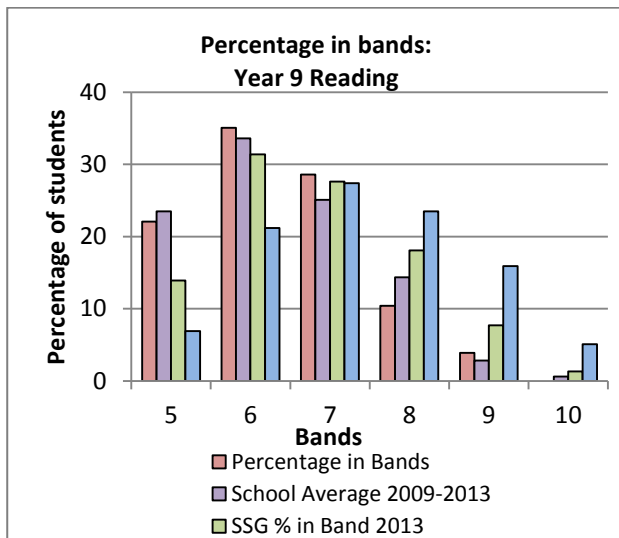
NAPLAN Year 7 - Reading



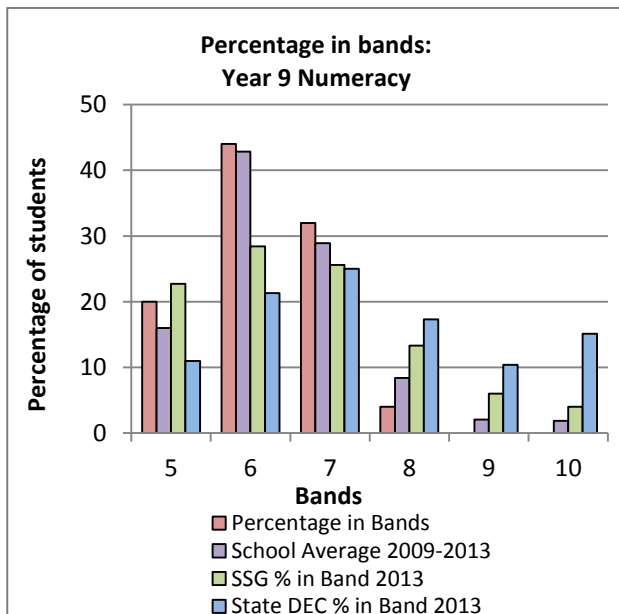
NAPLAN Year 7 – Numeracy



NAPLAN Year 9 - Reading



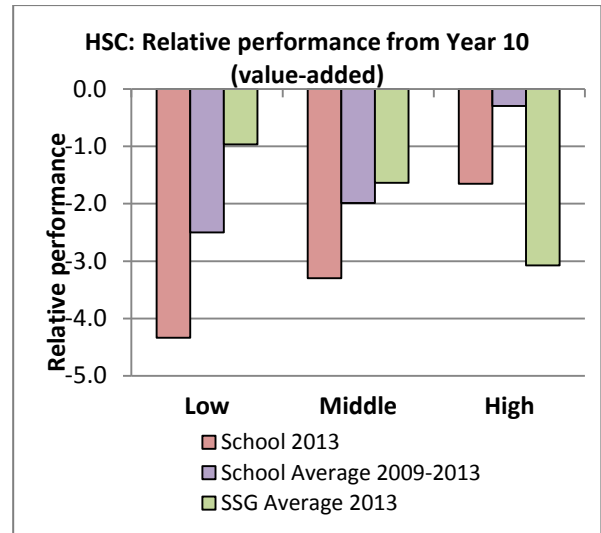
NAPLAN Year 9 - Numeracy



Higher School Certificate (HSC)

In the Higher School Certificate, the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).

For the 47 candidates, 29 Band 5 results and four Band 6 (or extension equivalent) were awarded across 18 courses.



The table below indicates the average mark achieved by students in 2013 in subjects that improved against their own scores when compared to the school average for 2009-2013.

Course	School 2013	School 2009-13	State 2013
Ancient History	59.31	57.85	71.98
IPT	73.49	68.40	74.11
Legal Studies	69.12	66.10	75.00
Mathematics	71.10	69.49	77.39
Modern History	67.58	63.63	76.10
PDHPE	62.29	60.83	70.98
Visual Arts	76.40	74.40	79.29

Other achievements

The Arts

The Creative and Performing Arts Evening Performances saw many of our students perform a variety of talented quality items in front of parents and community members. The importance of quality teaching and learning was highlighted through dance, drama, music, visual arts, performing arts, band and dance ensembles. Year 12 student work was well featured over the course of the event where they were able to display their well-rehearsed recital and individual/group projects for the HSC.

Performance ensembles in 2013 included the Dance Company and Dance Ensemble. Tutoring occurred before and after school for HSC students and gifted and talented students.

The Ashcroft High School Band performed at a variety of celebrations including presentation ceremonies, the launch of the SLC PBIS Harmony week, School Spirit week and the 2013 Creative and Performing Arts evenings.

The Primary Liaison Program for the Performing Arts continued for its ninth year. Sadleir Public School and Mt. Pritchard East Public School took part in developing their creative skills in a stimulating and supportive environment.

Visual Arts students from Year 9 to 12 participated in excursions to see *ArtExpress* and the *Archibald Prize* at the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Students were also able to engage in practical activities at the *Ken Done Studio* at the Rocks, Sydney. Selected senior Visual Arts students met the iconic Australian artist Ken Done. They were given a tour of his studio space, gallery and production area.

22 Year 7 Visual Arts students attended an excursion to UTS Art Gallery to view a series of video installations based on the theme 'Dark Matter'. Students looked at the power of film as a

creative form and took part in artist talks and related activities.

Two talented Music students attended the *Joe Satriani Masterclass* workshop to extend their guitar skills for the Music 2 HSC course.

The Ashcroft High School Dance Company performed in the South Western Sydney Regional Dance Festival. They performed a routine called '*Change is Going to Come*'. The company did an excellent job in entertaining the audience. Congratulations to J. Curry, C. Baars, C. Campbell, L. Sim, T. Pavlovic, K. Woodford, S. Tucker, R. Pavez, R. Dunley and D. Rawlings.

Dance Company 2013 was invited to perform at Revesby Workers' Club for the South West Sydney Ambassadors Ceremony as part of Education Week.

Towards the end of Term 4, students took part in a Dance and Music Recital Evening. This evening had the prime focus to showcase the talents of our dancers and music students, especially those on a Performing Arts Scholarship.

The Visual Arts class 7D entered a collaborative artwork into The Beacon Art Prize for 2013. Ten students in total were able to showcase their work based on the themes of peace, harmony and celebration. Students won the competition.

Mele Leiataua's HSC artwork was chosen to be part of the annual Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre HSC Art Exhibition. Her artwork 'Interwoven' merges weaving techniques with cultural motifs.

Sport

Swimming

- 14 students attended Zone Swimming
- 2 students attended Regional Swimming

Cross Country

- 66 students competed at Zone
- 14 Qualified for Area level
- 3 Qualified through to State level

Athletics

- 2nd in the boys competition, 3rd in the girls competition and 3rd overall at the Zone Carnival. 1st on overall handicap percentages (number of students/school).
- Jonathan Tifa was the Under 13 Boys Zone Age Champion.
- Trumayn Kuru was the 15 Boys Zone Age Champion.
- Penelope Leiataua was the Under 17+ Girls Zone Age Champion.
- 41 students in 59 individual events qualified for Area Athletics.
- Five students competed at State Athletics - Tavita Funa (High Jump), Vati Ikamui (High Jump), Jonathan Tifa (12 Boys Discus), Kalolo Tuifelasai (12 Boys Shot put) and Penelope Leiataua (Shot put and Javelin).

Zone/Area/State/Australian Sporting Teams

- 28 boys were selected in the Bernera Zone Sporting teams in touch, soccer, volleyball, rugby league, and basketball.
- 16 girls were selected in the Bernera Zone Sporting teams in touch, soccer, volleyball and netball.

SSW Area team selections

- Jacob Williams and Tevita Funa for Boys U16's Touch. Tavita gained selection in the NSW CHS team that competed at the National Carnival.
- Penelope Leiataua, Carolina Funa, Jemah Taia, Sami Taia, Rosaline Aumale, Tiffany Baines and Shonae Rawlings in Girls Rugby Union.
- Charlton Schaffhausen and Jonathan Mose for Boys Rugby Union.
- Daniel Parker for U15's Boys Rugby League, selected into the Sydney Gold team.

- Raymond Va'a for Boys Volleyball.
- Penelope Leiataua, Carolina Funa, Nyreen Lagova, Jemah Taia, Sami Taia, Rosaline Aumale, Tiffany Baines and Shonae Rawlings into the Greater Sydney CHS team that played against and defeated ACT. Carolina Funa was named captain of this team.
- Louisa Taia, Rosaline Aumale, Jeralee Hirini, Tanaya Edwards, Sami Taia, Blessing Ah Cheung and Oriana Faaolii selected into the Wests U16's Representative team that competed at the NSW All Schools carnival.

Knockout teams

- Nine boys teams and seven girls teams competed in SSW and/or CHS knockout competitions.
- Girls Netball, Boys and Girls Touch and University (Open) and Buckley Shield (U14) Rugby League teams all won their early pool rounds and moved on to Central Venue Days in their respective Sports.

Rugby League

Boys

- Boys U14 Buckley Shield Rugby League team were winners of the SSW competition and qualified for the State Knockout Draw. Team finished in the Top 16 of the State.
- Under 15's Division 1 West Leagues Cup winners.
- Under 13's Division 1 West Leagues Cup winners.
- Under 16's won Koori Cup (1st time winners). (Second time we have won both divisions in the same year.)
- U13-s Boys nominated through to the NSW All Schools competition and made the semi-finals.
- Year 7 team won Wests 'Captains Cup Carnival' and progressed through to the NSW Captains Cup carnival and lost in the semi-final.

Girls

- Won Wests 16's All Schools Carnival.
- Won Year 11/12 Wests Captains Cup tournament.

The fourth annual Rugby League Presentation night was held to recognise excellence in Rugby League, held at Mounties Community Club with over 170 guests. An Ashcroft 'Team of the Year' was announced, along with the presentation of other recognition awards.

Awards

- Penelope Leiataua received two Zone Blues for Girls Rugby Union and Athletics awarded to the best player in the Zone in 2013 in both sports.
- Daniel Parker received a Zone Blue for Boys U15's Rugby League awarded to the best player in the Zone in 2013.
- Raymond Va'a received a Zone Blue for Boys Volleyball awarded to the best player in the Zone in 2013.
- Gerrit Munday received a Zone Blue for Boys Cross Country awarded to the best runner in the Zone in 2013.
- Penelope Leiataua, Carolina Funa, Jonathan Mose, Charlton Schaafhauasen and Jemah Taia received Zone Blues 'Principals Awards' for outstanding achievements as Bernera Zone representative in several sports over several years.
- Penelope Leiatau was awarded the Zone Blues 'Presidents Award' for the most outstanding Female Athlete in the Bernera Zone in 2013. Penelope was recognised for her achievements this year in Athletics and Rugby Union.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Reconciliation Day

As a whole school, community, Hoxton Park elders group, local feeder primary schools and a local Aboriginal preschool we gathered together to celebrate National Reconciliation Day. National Reconciliation Week celebrates the rich culture and history of the First Australians. This year marked the 17th Anniversary of national Reconciliation Week, a time to reflect on achievements so far and to renew commitments to reconciliation by exploring ways to help create a better future for Indigenous Australians.

Our ceremony clearly demonstrated that not only as a nation are we are moving forward in our efforts to see true Reconciliation, but also as a school community. This is evident in the way we continually promote the true notions of Reconciliation; justice, recognition and healing. As a school and community we are proactive in ensuring we recognise, appreciate and learn from each and every cultural group represented within our school community.

'Vocal Identification Program' (Regional Initiative)

In 2013 we had two students audition for the program and they were both successful. The VIP project allowed students from different high schools in the region to come together and form a vocal ensemble. The project identified talented Aboriginal students in performance and provided them with the opportunity to develop their talents in performance skills and with the chance to showcase their talent in the area of vocal performance.

Aboriginal Buddy Camp

For Buddy Camp this year our Aboriginal students and their non-Aboriginal buddies attended the Lutanda Conference Centre located at Toukley. This year, eleven Year 8 Aboriginal students from our local feeder schools were invited to attend our camp as part of our middle schools transition program. This year's camp was centered on the sharing of cultural knowledge, team building and sharing stories. This year's learning was centered on student involvement and direction. Ten Year 9-12 students designed and led the sessions on camp. This year we used the Quality Teaching Framework to assess the effectiveness of the teaching and learning that occurred on camp.

Aboriginal Community Christmas Luncheon

This year our school, Aboriginal community, feeder primary schools and the inter-agencies who we have worked with throughout the year gathered together to celebrate the year that was and the achievements of not only our students, but also our community and the strong partnership we have with them. At this year's luncheon we were able to celebrate the year that was with over 80 parents and community. It was a very successful event and a lovely way to finish a great year.

Norta Norta Program

The Norta Norta program aims to accelerate learning for Aboriginal students in Years 7, 8 and 9. Tutoring is available for all subjects with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Our in-class tutor has been working with students in class and assisting them with note-taking, organisation, understanding content and assisting students with preparation for assessment tasks. We believe that this program has been highly beneficial to the students involved and look forward to continuing this program in 2014 in cooperation with both school and family communities.

In 2013 we also had several students in Year 11 and 12 participate in the individual tutoring component of the Norta Norta program. Students received both individual and small group tutoring in a range of different KLAS. Involvement in this program was highly beneficial to the students who participated.

South West Sydney Region Aboriginal Student Achievement Awards Ceremony

In November this year we nominated four of our Aboriginal students for an Aboriginal Student Achievement Award. These awards acknowledge outstanding achievements of Aboriginal students in the areas of; culture, courage and commitment, literacy, numeracy, sporting achievements, attendance and leadership, citizenship and community services. All four were chosen to receive an award for their year group and category.

Good Kids Camp – Kari and Green Valley Police

This year, seven of our Indigenous students were involved in a reward camp for high attendance,

good behaviour and aptitude to studies. The camp was funded by KARI and NSW Police, and was developed as a means to encourage and reward Indigenous students for their efforts at school. The students who attended this camp were exposed to a range of cultural and learning activities that promoted school retention and engagement.

TAFE 'Hands On' - South Western Sydney Region and TAFE

Over the course of 2013 we had 8 students from Years 9-12 involved in a number of 'Hands On' courses, from Automotive to Hair & Beauty. The 'Hands On' program aims at supporting young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in school and keeping them engaged in education and providing them with employment opportunities. This program also provides students with an opportunity to participate in a variety of 'TAFE taster' programs in order to gain new skills in an alternative learning environment.

Aboriginal Numeracy Competition – Regional Initiative

Each term two teams of four are entered into the numeracy competition a junior and senior team. Each team participates in three different rounds. Students develop their problem solving skills, timetables and general mathematical skills. In term for we win the overall competition, individual challenge and our junior team came first in their competition pool.

Aboriginal Employment Strategy SBATs

In 2013 we had one student sign up with the AES to undertake School Based Traineeship. This student was supported through this process by the Aboriginal Education Service and gained fulltime employment.

University Experience Days / Workshops

Throughout the year we had a variety of different visits from Universities and also on campus experience days. Eight students in Year 9 attended the University of Technology Sydney's

Jumbanna open day, where they participated in a range of electives. Two students in Year 9 attended the University of New South Wales Summer School Program and one Year 11 student attended their Winter School Engineering program. We also had in-school university visits from the University of Western Sydney and the University of Sydney.

Multicultural education

Our Aboriginal community group continues to meet regularly and be our strongest community advocates. They are regularly consulted regarding school planning and initiatives. The inclusivity on non-Aboriginal students in many of our indigenous programs is indicative of our integrated approach to our multicultural community.

Three teachers under the auspices of the school counselor worked closely with several targeted groups of Arabic speaking students in a mentoring role. These sessions aimed to build rapport and understanding cross-culturally via shared learning and debriefing sessions. The “buddy concept” model of students sharing their cultural learning and experiences with a peer was extended to the Arabic speaking students inviting a non-Arabic speaking peer to the end of Ramadan celebrations as a method of bridging the understandings across cultural groups within the school.

National Partnerships (NP)

In 2013 the school was in its second year of a four year funding cycle under National Partnerships. This funding supported several whole school initiatives under the following identified priority areas:

Leadership and Development

- This element focused on teacher professional learning and alignment of practice with the Quality Teaching Framework and Focus on Reading (FoR) strategies.

Curriculum and Assessment

- This priority focused on planning and implementation of the new Australian Curriculum.

Engagement and Attainment

- This priority focused on working with students in smaller pastoral care groups to encourage building rapport and relationships to increase engagement in schooling.
- The Learning Support Team, along with the Head Teacher Welfare (NP) and Head Teacher Students (NP) and Clinical Coordinator (NP) provided intense and individualized support for students most at risk of not meeting their learning outcomes.
- A Learning Centre continued to run in the school library and students were provided with both group and individualised support who had either missed periods of time from school or required specialist learning interventions. A detailed account of this initiative is presented later in this report.

Literacy and Numeracy

- The school focus continued on all teachers becoming familiar and confident in the use of FoR strategies for teaching reading and comprehension.
- Teachers looked at the integration of numeracy across the curriculum whilst the Mathematics faculty worked on a research project for enquiry-based approaches to learning in the mathematics classroom.

Aboriginal and Pacific Islander Student Education

- Personal learning plans were completed for all Aboriginal students with extensive involvement of parents and community.
- A Pacific Islander ex-student was employed on a part time basis to mentor the Rugby League players to support their continuing engagement in learning.

Organisational Effectiveness

- This priority area focused on collecting evidence and subsequent evaluation of all key innovations to ensure shared understanding and goals between students, teachers, school leadership and community.

Priority Action Schools Program (PAS)

The school continued to be funded by the PAS program in 2013. PAS funding supports:

- An allocation to Head Teachers to facilitate the implementation of Quality Teaching.
- Additional temporary teacher appointments to our school, enabling us to keep class sizes smaller and offer a far broader curriculum in order to ensure competitive and comprehensive selection options for the full range of students.
- Additional student support services including a Student Support Services faculty Head Teacher.
- Additional school counselor time of two days per week.

Quality Teaching

Students and Quality Teaching

SLC members from the quality teaching portfolio team continued their work on unpacking the elements of the framework so that they would be able to teach particular elements to Year 7 students. The aim was to promote the idea that students are partners in their own learning and therefore they need to have the practice of teaching and learning demystified so that they can take responsibility and be participants in learning. With the support of the Quality Teaching Team, students focused on one element which was knowledge integration. The process was supported by the students taking the staff through the same activities they had presented to Year 8. This reinforced the importance of integrating knowledge in the classroom.

Students from the SLC were invited to present this work at the ACEL conference in Canberra in a joint presentation with the Principal, Deputy Principal and two senior Head Teachers. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and the work has subsequently been opened up to sharing with partner schools in both Sydney and the ACT.

Faculty review process

In 2013 during semester two both Deputy Principals observed and coded a lesson from all teachers as they had done for the past three

years. On this occasion the staff nominated a class from Stage 4 or 5. The focus was on lessons where FoR strategies integrated with the Quality Teaching Framework could most readily be demonstrated.

The aim was to provide feedback, share strategies and to encourage collegial discussions between teachers. The data provided through these observations along with student focus groups was synthesised into a comprehensive report which was then shared with all executive staff. The data provided valuable insights, including an overall trend with a correlation between weaker elements and the elements which align to the teaching of literacy. Teacher focus on these elements we believe is above the state mean, but our attention to these particular elements provided for a very sharp focus on literacy as it matched with the Quality Teaching Framework.

Student focus groups allowed the coding data to be triangulated and provided a wonderful insight into how students like to learn. Feedback also provided information about teacher consistency of practice.

It was noted that greater opportunities for student direction and substantive communication needed to replace teacher talk, which is a world-wide trend.

Professional learning journals

Head Teachers were asked to continue developing their reflections of teacher practice and conversations in journals as they had done in 2012. It was suggested at this point that faculties design their own reflection journals demonstrating ownership of the process. The focus of the journal is to record the dialogue between teacher and head teacher to ensure professional development and support in improving classroom practice.

Head teachers continued to have a four period allowance to support their staff in their understanding and implementation of the Quality

Teaching Framework within their programs, lessons and classrooms. The journal must provide evidence of lesson study, head teacher coding sheets, professional profiles and recorded dialogue between the head teacher and each teacher on their staff. The head teacher journal was required for the faculty review processes which took place once per semester.

The Principal reviewed the journals and sought to correlate information between the teacher and head teacher, and provided a written review.

Horizons

Horizons was developed as a not-for-profit company by David Willis who was previously CEO of HBOS (Australia) and supporter of programs at Ashcroft High School for many years. It was developed in conjunction with Ashcroft High School with the focus of lifting the aspirations of students in disadvantaged school communities.

Students are selected on the basis of significant disadvantage and are matched with national and international companies. They undertake paid work during school holidays, and receive a \$500 clothing allowance in order to feel comfortable and fit into their new work environment. This was the third year of the program with two students involved in 2013.

Horizons are keen to evaluate pre and post program involvement in order to ensure the experience has the most advantageous impact on student career aspirations.

Respect and responsibility

Ongoing Student Welfare initiatives in 2013 fostered increased student engagement. These are outlined below.

Small Home Groups/Pastoral Care classes were established in years 7-12, with the purpose of mentoring students and developing learning plans. Mentoring teams maintain regular contact with home and monitor attendance as well as the ongoing promotion and support of our PBIS behaviour expectations: Respect, Safe and Learn.

Ten Year 8 girls and ten Year 9 boys participated in the PACE (Positive Attitude Changes Everything) program run at the school by staff from SWYPE. This six week program worked on developing non-violent problem solving strategies through physical exercise and fostering a positive mental outlook.

The HEART (Honesty, Equality, Accountability, Respect and Trust) Project was initiated and is a long term peer education initiative designed to support young women and educate them about developing and maintaining safe, equal and respectful relationships. In 2013 the Year 11 student leaders worked closely with welfare staff leading discussions with all Year 10 female students about developing healthy relationships, appropriate dress for school and women's health issues. The sessions included a workshop with a counsellor from Liverpool Women's Health Centre.

The Put the Boot into Bullying Project was designed to combat the ever increasing problem of bullying, in particular cyber bullying within the school context, the program empowers students to be active bystanders. In 2013 the whole school was involved in a School Spirit Week leading up to The National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence. Student Leaders of the project also participated in the Smart Schools are Safe Schools competition, three students were invited to discuss the school's entry with Peter Garrett at Facebook Headquarters in Sydney.

Student Leaders and the PBIS team worked collaboratively throughout the year to promote Ashcroft High School's positive behaviour expectations of RSL (Respectful Safe Learners). This was reinforced with a revision and promotion of the merit level system within the school which acknowledges and rewards students who meet the behaviour expectations and are actively involved in school citizenship throughout the school.

Year 10 students completed the two day Peer Support training course and actively participated in and led Year 7 orientation and transition.

Students from a Pacific Island background participated in a PATHE visit which focused on the development of educational and career goals that include tertiary education at a university level.

Students were given opportunities to access support programs such as Stewart House and Young Carers Program.

New Student Welfare initiatives were developed in 2013 to build student leadership, student engagement and a positive quality learning environment.

Ten boys and ten girls from Year 10, in gender specific groups, participated in the Skills4Life program run by Salvos YouthLinks. Students were involved in an outdoor education and personal development course designed to re-engage them with learning as well as developing skills in team work, leadership and individual motivation. Students participated in activities including: high wires, canoeing, abseiling, flying fox and orienteering.

The Mainsbridge Music Mentoring Program was a community access program developed between Ashcroft High School and Mainsbridge School which gave students with disabilities students with and without disabilities an opportunity to develop tolerance and to understand the benefits of inclusive education. The ten student leaders gained a new perspective on student leadership and an opportunity to critically evaluate their own social skills when relating to others. By uniting both school's PBIS/PBL values we aim to see a new level of mutual understanding and respect emerge.

The Put the Boot into Bullying team ran the inaugural Boot Film Festival. Students produced short films that promoted the school's anti-bullying, active bystander campaign. Two articles

were published in the Liverpool Leader about the school's active campaign to stop bullying.

All students in Years 7-10 participated in the Digital Thumbprints workshops which gave students essential information about cyber-safety and the responsibilities and impact of being an online citizen.

Ten Year 9 girls were involved in a domestic violence prevention and personal development program run by Junctionworks. The program focused on developing positive self-image, positive relationships and being assertive.

Twenty Student Leaders participated in a Toastmasters course. The course explicitly taught skills for public speaking which have been actively put into practice throughout the school.

Beacon Program

The Beacon Foundation have an established track record of helping inspire and motivate students to either stay in school and increase their educational engagement and attainment or choose a positive pathway that enables successful transition to employment, further education or training.

The programs that ran over 2013 had key focus areas for student self-development and include building: self-awareness, motivation, personal responsibility, positive psychology, goal setting, and emotional intelligence. Students conducted themselves consistently with diligence and should be proud of their involvement with this program.

The events and activities that students immersed themselves in included: The Beacon Student Ambassador (BSA) training day, Business Breakfast, Speed Careering, the Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) Visit, Komatsu Site Tour, the Polish Program, Lunch with the Girls, Dress for Success, Intercontinental Visit, Mock Interviews, BBQ with the Boys and the Be Art Competition.

The activity outcomes from running these events resulted in 100% of students stating that they believed that the Beacon activities had helped

them with some also stating that the activities were life changing, 94% of students said Beacon activities increased their chances of getting a job and 100% of students stated that the Beacon activities had helped them feel more confident about entering further education or training.

These opportunities for our students would not be possible were it not for the support of the Beacon Foundation, Lloyds International, local business associates, ex students and staff at Ashcroft High School who have made the program a success.

Vocational education program

- School based delivery of vocational education courses (VET) included hospitality, information technology and retail and sports coaching.
- Five vocational Education teachers delivered the courses. One staff member undertook training to deliver the construction framework course
- The kitchen was upgraded to meet standards required to better deliver the hospitality course
- Planning began for the building of a state of the art Trade Training Centre where a construction course will be delivered
- 65% of Year 11 and 64% 12 students undertook one or more VET course.
- 10% of Year 10 and 11% of Year 9 undertook a VET course
- 100% of the information technology candidature achieved a statement of attainment working toward certificate III, 100% of the hospitality candidature achieved certificate II, 88% of retail students who completed the school based course achieved certificate II and 67% of sports coaching students achieved certificate II in Sport(Coaching).
- 12 students in Year 9 commenced the Stage 5 information technology vocational education course.
- 17 students were enrolled in TVET courses such as fitness, beauty, media, construction, and automotive mechanical.
- One student completed a school based traineeship in business services with the

Commonwealth Bank with whom she was offered a full time placement. One student completed a program with Supporting and Linking Tradeswomen (SALT) and was offered a construction apprenticeship with John Holland.

- Vocational education continued in pastoral care periods for Year 10 students where the Work Ready Program was delivered. This program prepared Year 10 for work experience. Twelve students completed work experience at the end of Term 3. The work ready program was also the foundation program for preparing students for work placement which is compulsory for all students undertaking a vocational education course. This was supplemented by workshops given by a guest speaker provided by Southwest Connect.
- Vocational education lessons were delivered to Year 9 students in pastoral care periods in Term 4. This took the form of scenario activities from The Real Game program.
- A careers program was delivered by the careers teacher to all Year 10 students. The program focused on developing a resume and job interview skills through role plays. It also explored career websites and prepared students for the task of selecting subjects for their senior years. It linked with Beacon activities including the interview day which gathered local business representatives to provide authentic interview experience for students.
- Students had the opportunity to access vocational information in a number of ways. 39 Year 10 and 24 Year 12 students explored career options at the Careers Market. 10 Indigenous students interested in careers in health attended Healthwise. 17 students attended Try a Trade day.

Student Leadership

Authentic student leadership is a school identified priority area. The Student Leadership Council (SLC) is divided into layers of leadership inclusive of Captains, Vice Captains, Prefects and

a Senior and Junior SLC. Students have portfolio areas and in 2013 were involved in the following areas:

Global Perspectives

- Christmas hampers
- B-in-it (Bin-it campaign) SLC and Environmental group
- Shoe box remote community Christmas gift
- School Year 8/SLC Camp
- Induction ceremony
- Outside SRC groups and leadership camps
- Interschool activities
- Presentations and group sessions on the Year 7 orientation day.
- Liaison with charity and business organisations

Healthy Schools

- In-school sports competition - teachers v students
- Lunch time organised sports competitions
- Early morning sports with complimentary breakfast vouchers

PBIS/Welfare

- Continued involvement RSL initiatives and promotion across the school via assemblies, student focus groups, etc, regarding what the school expectations *respect, safe* and *learn* looks like around the school.
- Put the Boot into Bullying Campaign – an anti-bullying initiative from state SRC designed to raise awareness and combat cyber bullying was led and delivered by year 10, 11 and 12 students and SLC members along with support from our local police.

Quality Teaching Portfolio

- Students were introduced to the concept of higher-order thinking through the Quality Teaching framework where SLC leaders assisted in the development of and then the delivery of materials to junior students.

In 2013, the inaugural Student Leadership Day was held involving our SLC, the local feeder primary school student leaders and our partner school from the ACT Namingi. Our student

leaders were involved in the design and delivery of a series of workshops exploring the idea of authentic leadership for young people.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan.

In 2013 we again conducted an extensive review of teaching and learning across the school using the Quality Teaching Framework as the filter via which we reflect on classroom practice.

Aspects of the evaluation included:

- classroom observations
- coding data
- student focus group feedback
- triangulation of internal and external data (NAPLAN and HSC)
- comparative faculty coding data over the past four years
- teacher reflection journals
- head teacher reflection journals and interviews

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1

All teachers are leaders of learning and engaged in high-level intellectual professional learning opportunities

Outcomes from 2012–2014

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

To increase staff engagement with pedagogical action research from 50% in 2012 to 60% in 2013 and 70% in 2014.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- All staff undertook and process of professional evaluation and individual pedagogical research via engagement with faculty review and coding using the Quality Teaching Framework.
- All staff maintained a teacher reflection journal which was appraised by head teachers and senior executive and focused on individualised areas of practice and reflection.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- Strengthen teacher professional learning plans in line with school and faculty priority areas – faculties re-design the teacher reflection journals to strengthen ownership and individual priorities.
- Succession planning through coaching in order to encourage higher level duties.
- Continue high-level professional learning undertaken by the senior executive, for executive and 2 I/C, and whole staff – research-based readings.
- Assist teacher learning regarding in-school measurement and alignment to targets.

School priority 2

Implementation of the Australian Curriculum, aligned to high-standard quality teaching and a personalised approach to learning for all students.

Outcomes from 2012–2014

To increase the number of students with personal learning plans tracking academic outcomes from Year 7 in 2012, to Year 9 and all Indigenous students in 2013 and all students in 2014.

To boost high level delivery of curriculum as evidenced by teacher observation coding data in the dimension of Intellectual Quality (NSW Quality Teaching Framework 2003) from a school average of 3.63 across the dimension in 2012 to 3.70 in 2013 and 3.8 in 2014.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- Individual learning plans were piloted with students in Year 8 via the Pastoral Care team.
- Five teachers trialed an approach to individualizing student feedback with assessment and reporting via comparative data graphing and individual target setting with students in their classes.
- Teacher observation coding data in the dimension of Intellectual Quality (NSW Quality Teaching Framework 2003) exceeded the target of 3.70 in 2013, registering at 3.79.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Monitor and assess the implementation of the Australian Curriculum across English, maths, science and history with ongoing evaluation and adjustment of current programing and assessment.
- Strengthen the place of VET Stage 5 in Computing Studies in 2014 and evaluate its effectiveness in relation to successful outcomes for the candidates and their level of engagement.
- Develop an electronic Personal Learning Plan template encompassing both curricular and co-curricular areas; students will set their own literacy and numeracy targets and will be mentored by a teacher in small home groups.
- To increase the number of students accessing the learning centre post work placement and/or long term absence from school to assist in the transition back to the classroom and completion of school assessments.
- To increase the number of students attending the homework centre and its

profile as a hub for learning outside designated school hours.

- Continue to develop teacher confidence in the Quality Teaching model through alignment of practice, journal records, student feedback and relationship with assessment.
- To ensure that all stage 4 students have the opportunity to engage further with the QT framework to ensure they are equipped as partners in their own learning.
- Create a Primary Liaison teacher who will observe, journal and coach our teachers through the process of how literacy and numeracy is taught in Stage 3.
- Learning Centre to focus on assessment, transition to class and study skills.

Professional learning

The average expenditure per teacher on professional learning was \$540. All teachers participated in the least three professional learning opportunities at the school level. All teachers had opportunities to attend professional learning external to the school in their specific area of interest.

The school prioritised the following areas for professional learning:

- implementing the Quality Teaching Framework
- syllabus implementation
- leadership and career development
- welfare and equity
- literacy and numeracy
- new scheme teachers

School based professional learning in 2013 included:

- quality teaching workshops
- Australian Curriculum implementation workshops at both whole school and faculty levels
- curriculum differentiation
- literacy in the classroom

- lesson study
- laptops for learning
- network meetings for executive staff

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

The faculty review process undertaken in Semester 2 saw teachers and students reflecting on teaching and learning very deeply. Teachers were observed and coded by the deputy principals and reflected on these lessons with critical conversations about learning in their classrooms. Students focus groups were conducted for each faculty and students provided thoughtful and insightful feedback for all classes. An extensive report was written and tabled at an extended executive meeting open to all staff in Term 4, 2013.

Parents and community were consulted broadly as we evaluated our second year under the National Partnerships program in 2013. Again, our Indigenous parent group provided guidance and feedback on how school directions could best support students.

Program evaluations

A key aspect of the school plan is the engagement of students and improved outcomes in literacy. The Learning Centre established in 2012 under National Partnerships funding was

again evaluated in 2013 to assess its ongoing development.

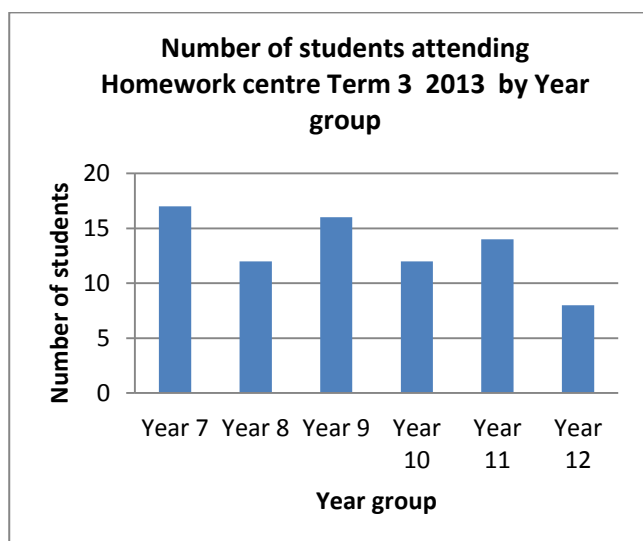
Learning Centre

Background

In 2013 the learning centre team, consisting of Ms Jacinta Purcell, a teacher's aide Ms Kylie Dillon, the librarian, Ms Hanna Safadi and Social Sciences head teacher Ms Drapalski consolidated the implementation of the after school homework centre, operating for one and half hours 4 days a week. The learning centre staff also supervised and assisted Year 12 students in their free periods to complete assessment tasks improve study skills and undertake personal learning plans that incorporated career planning. In addition a program designed for stage 4 students to improve reading fluency and comprehension continued to be implemented with a high level of success.

Findings and conclusions

In 2013 168 students or 33% of the school population accessed the homework centre compared to % in 2012.



Student evaluations were conducted in Term 2. Students were asked how the homework centre helped them. Sample responses included

- *I am more focused and it is easier to stay at school and continue working*

- *My assignments have been submitted on time and I have been reading my English texts entirely. I have access to computers and printing and it's great to have someone when I'm stuck*
- *My work was done on time and my marks were improved*

All Year 12 students completed a personal learning plan that allowed them to keep track of their progress throughout the year. A study space was created for them that provided specific revision material, study skills resources and information regarding TAFE and university entrance. Students also received assistance in creating a resume.

29 Stage 4 students completed a *Multilit* program and *Probe* activities designed to improve reading fluency and comprehension. Students were pre and post tested with both the Neale test and Probe test. Reading age improved for all students.

Future directions

Learning support referrals suggest that an expansion of literacy support programs, including work in the area of speech and occupational therapeutic approaches would enhance the reading and comprehension support work undertaken in the Learning Centre.

Additionally, using the Learning Centre and pastoral care teams to develop and strengthen individual learning plans for all students is an area for deeper investigation in 2014.

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's

practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

Mr Ted Noon, Principal

Ms Kylie Landrigan, Deputy Principal

Mrs Teena Haslehurst, Deputy Principal

Ms Teresa Drapalski, HT Social Sciences

Ms Janene McPherson, Aboriginal Education Officer

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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at:

[http:// www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr](http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr)