Ashcroft High School
Annual School Report 2014
School context statement

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 2014, significant areas of practice have continued a five year upward trend. In addition, the results in the HSC have seen a three fold increase over the last five 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

The number of students in 2014 totaled 540. Indigenous students represent approximately 12% of this enrolment and more than 50% of the students enrolled are from Non-English speaking backgrounds.

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. 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 2014 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 2014, students who were under the age of 17 and wishing to leave school were required to prove employment or engagement in further studies at another institution. In 2014, all students who had completed Year 10 returned to Year 11. A small number of students were successful in gaining fulltime training and employment throughout the year and left prior to the completion of Year 11.

66 students sat for the HSC in 2014. Year 12 students were largely successful in gaining fulltime work and/or training at the completion of their HSC. The table below indicates some of the specialised areas students were placed in.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type of Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apprenticeship</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Carpentry/bricklaying/Heavy vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traineeships</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Childcare/Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Degree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15 degree offers were made including 12 to UWS and 1 to each of UNSW, UTS and USyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Music/Online teacher’s aide/childcare/travel/counselling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private College</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Travel/Tourism/Nutritional medicine online/Website diploma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OTEN 2 Graphic design/Design
Other 2 Missionary work Papua New Guinea

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

54% of Year 12 students undertook one or more school based VET course. 100% of the information technology candidature achieved a statement of attainment working toward certificate III, 89% of the hospitality candidature achieved certificate II, 85% of retail students who completed the school based course achieved certificate II and 56% of sports coaching students achieved certificate II in Sport Coaching.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

66 students sat the HSC in 2014 and 65 were successful in gaining 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Education Officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Aide</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional staff were funded via equity funding programs, and include above establishment classroom teachers employed on a temporary basis and additional school counsellor time of two days per week. In 2014, 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional learning and teacher accreditation**

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 2014 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

Additionally, three new scheme teachers were successful in gaining their accreditation at Proficient with BoSTES.
Financial summary

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>478896.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>373637.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>1153052.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>94704.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>25505.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>66570.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>183679.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>2376047.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Expenditure               |            |
| Teaching & learning       |            |
| Key learning areas        | 99665.04   |
| Excursions                | 15255.68   |
| Extracurricular dissections| 37010.96  |
| Library                   | 8945.84    |
| Training & development    | 0.00       |
| Tied funds                | 675160.59  |
| Casual relief teachers    | 21132.22   |
| Administration & office   | 148802.35  |
| School-operated canteen   | 189680.87  |
| Utilities                 | 50779.26   |
| Maintenance               | 40919.86   |
| Trust accounts            | 69912.13   |
| Capital programs          | 0.00       |
| **Total expenditure**     | 1357264.80 |
| **Balance carried forward**| 1018782.60 |

A full copy of the school’s 2014 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 2014

Students were provided with a range of opportunities to showcase their skills and abilities in 2014 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.

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 66 candidates, 19 Band 5 results and seven Band 6 (or extension equivalent) were awarded across 16 courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>School 2014</th>
<th>School Average 2010-2014</th>
<th>SSG 2014</th>
<th>State DEC 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ancient History</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>57.9</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>69.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Studies</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and Technology</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>72.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English (Standard)</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English (Advanced)</td>
<td>71.3</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>80.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Technology</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Studies</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics General 2</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern History</td>
<td>62.2</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music 1</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDHPE</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>71.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>76.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other achievements

The Arts

- Ashcroft High School’s 50th Anniversary saw many students from Creative and Performing Arts contribute to the celebrations by performing and exhibiting a variety of talented quality items in front of parents, ex-students, teachers and community members. The importance of quality teaching and learning was highlighted through dance, music, visual arts, performing arts, band and dance ensembles. Year 12 student work was featured over the course of the event.

- Performance ensembles in 2014 included the Dance Company, Years 7-8 Dance Ensemble and Years 9-10 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 50th Anniversary evening and the Year 12 Recital Evenings.

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

- Elective Visual Arts students participated in an excursion to see ArtExpress at the Armory, Homebush. Students were also able to engage in practical activities at the UTS Art Gallery, Sydney. Senior visual arts and Dance students took part in the practical workshops at the gallery based around the Joonba Junba Julu exhibition. Junior visual arts students also attended the Pressure Vessel exhibition in the same gallery space later in the year.

- The Ashcroft High School Dance Company performed at the NSW Public Schools’ Dance Festival. They performed a routine called ‘Wonder Lost’. The company did an excellent job in entertaining the audience. Congratulations to J. Curry, T. Pavlovic, K. Woodford, A. Shaw, R. Pavez, R. Dunley and A. Xureb Whitmore, T. Thode.

- Year 12 dance and drama students, Dance Company and Dance Ensembles performed at the 2014 Dance and Drama Recital Evening. This evening had the prime focus to showcase the HSC performance pieces in front of an intimate and supportive audience leading up to the HSC practical examinations.

- Year 12 music students performed at the 2014 Music Recital Evenings. Over two nights, HSC students were able to perform their HSC pieces, under examination conditions, to parents, staff and community members. Elective music students also performed selected pieces on both nights.

- Year 11 Visual Arts student Taylor Suanno was accepted into two prestigious Visual Arts enrichment programs to extend her skills and talent. These were the Dobell Drawing Course (Year 11 Extensive Program) and the HSC Intensive Studio Practice Course at the National Art School.

- The inaugural “Generation Next” Year 12 visual arts, science and technology Major Work Exhibition took place in Term 4 at the school. This exhibition highlighted senior body of work collections for the 2014 HSC and cross faculty collaboration.
Dance students attended the annual ACPE Dance Performance @ Bankstown Performing Arts Centre in Term 4.

**Sport**

**Significant programs and initiatives – policy**

**Aboriginal education**

**Reconciliation Day**

As a whole school, community, Hoxton Park elders group, local feeder primary schools and a local Aboriginal preschool were gathered together to celebrate National Reconciliation Day. National Reconciliation Week celebrates the rich culture and history of the First Australians. This year marked the 18th 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 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.

**Aboriginal Buddy Camp**

For Buddy Camp this year our Aboriginal students and their non-Aboriginal buddies attended the Lutanda Conference Centre located at Mt Victoria. This year, eleven Year 6 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. The theme of the camp was ‘Dream, Believe, Achieve’. 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 2015 in cooperation with both school and family communities.

In 2014 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 KLA’s. Involvement in this program was highly beneficial to the students who participated.

**Good Kids Camp – Kari and Green Valley Police**

This year, several 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 2014 we had 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 won the overall competition, individual challenge and our junior team came first in their competition pool.

Aboriginal Employment Strategy SBATs

In 2014 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. Students in Year 9 attended the University of Technology Sydney’s Jumbanna open day, where they participated in a range of electives. Students in Year 9 also attended the University of New South Wales Summer School Program. We also had in-school university visits from the University of Western Sydney and the University of Sydney.

Multicultural education and anti-racism

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 counsellor 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.

Two teachers also worked with the school counsellor and a targeted group of Pacifica students in a mentoring and positive action initiative. The group met regularly over a periods of months to align personal goals with higher educational expectations and outcomes. The pilot group was highly successful in terms of increased engagement with education and improved relationships between the students and their teachers and peers.

Significant programs and initiatives – equity funding

In 2014 the school received equity funding through the Resource Allocation Model (RAM). This funding allowed us to expand our work in the area of educating the whole child and supported several whole school initiatives under the following identified priority areas:

Leadership and Development: Teachers as Leading Learners

This element focused on teacher professional learning and alignment of practice with the
Quality Teaching Framework and Focus on Reading (FoR) strategies. Our work in this area has been ongoing for ten years now and continues to be a focus for all professional learning for teachers.

**Faculty review process**

In 2014 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 any stage. The focus was on lessons where writing strategies integrated with the Quality Teaching Framework could most readily be demonstrated. For the first time, teachers were coded by the deputy principal and a head teacher from another faculty, thereby expanding the repertoire of coding experience across curriculum areas.

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.

**Professional learning journals**

All teachers were asked to continue developing their reflections of teacher practice and conversations in journals as they had done in 2013. 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.

**Curriculum and Assessment**

This priority focused on planning and implementation of the new Australian Curriculum in the second year of its implementation in years 8 and 10 for 2015.

Additional temporary teacher appointments to our school are made possible via equity funding, 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.

**Engagement and Attainment**

This priority area focused on ensuring our students and community have access to and support from a combined inter-agency approach to education. Equity funding allows us to develop and sustain:

- Additional student support services including a Student Support Services faculty head teacher who oversees the entire Learning Support process.
- Additional school counselor time of two days per week.
- Clinical Coordinator (0.6) providing health assessments, advocacy and referrals to other agencies for both our students and one of our feeder primary schools in 2014.
• Head Teacher Students provided intense and individualised support for students most at risk of not transitioning to high school successfully and thus 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.

• Via the Learning Centre during their study periods, 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.

• Students worked with teachers in smaller pastoral care groups to encourage building rapport and relationships to increase engagement in schooling.

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.

• 41 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 Yarc and Probe test. Reading age and comprehension improved for a significant number of students.

• In 2014 research was conducted into the improvement of Year 7 students who completed the reading program in terms of NAPLAN results and it was found that 60% of students showed significant improvement from their year 5 results. Qualitative data supported this result with teachers indicating an improved engagement and confidence in classroom by a majority of participating students.

Aboriginal Education

• Personal learning plans were completed for all Aboriginal students with extensive involvement of parents and community.

• An evaluation of NAPLAN results for Aboriginal students who completed the reading program in 2012 showed 21 to 52% growth in reading scores from Year 7.

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.

Student Leadership

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.

It was noted that greater opportunities for student direction and substantive communication needed to replace teacher talk, which is a worldwide trend.
Authentic student leadership
The Student Leadership Council (SLC) is divided into layers of leadership inclusive of Captains, Vice Captains, Prefects and a Senior and Junior SLC. Students had portfolio areas and in 2014 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
- 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 Years 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 2014, the second 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.

Other significant programs and initiatives

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 four students involved in 2014.

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.

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 2014 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

- School based delivery of vocational education courses (VET) included hospitality, information technology and retail and sports coaching.
- Seven vocational Education teachers delivered the courses. One staff member undertook training to deliver the construction framework course and one member of staff was funded by the school to train as a Sports Coaching teacher.
- Planning continued for the building of a state of the art Trade Training Centre where a construction course is proposed to be delivered in 2016.
- 70% of Year 11 and 54% 12 students undertook one or more school based VET course.
- 13% of Year 10 and 22% of Year 9 undertook a school based VET course.
- 100% of the information technology candidature achieved a statement of attainment working toward certificate III, 89% of the hospitality candidature achieved certificate II, 85% of retail students who completed the school based course achieved certificate II and 56% of sports coaching students achieved certificate II in Sport(Coaching).
- 22 students in Year 9 commenced the stage 5 information technology vocational education Course.
- 19 students were enrolled in TVET courses such as hairdressing, construction, automotive mechanical, automotive panel and paint and aviation-flight attendant.
- One student completed a school based traineeship (SBAT) in business services with the Department of Housing. One student continued an SBAT with KFC in retail services. One student commenced an SBAT with Mission Australia in business services.
- Vocational education continued in pastoral care periods for Year 10 students where the Work Ready Program was delivered. The work ready program is 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. Talks included Year 10 – “Preparing for Work Experience”, Year 11 “Becoming Work Ready” and Year 12 “The Next Step”.
- 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.
35 Year 10 and Year 12 students explored career options at the Careers Market. 30 Indigenous students interested in careers in health attended Healthwise. 10 Indigenous students attended an AES information session on Apprentices and traineeships 19 students attended Seek a Skill day.

- Pacific Islander students attended UWS PATHE workshops for students in Year 7/8 (29) and Year 9/10 (17). Workshops covered the development of aspirations towards higher education and training.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes
NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

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

School priority 1
All teachers are leaders of learning and engaged in high-level intellectual professional learning opportunities

Outcomes from 2012–2014
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 achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- 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-designed 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 achievement of outcomes in 2014:

- Individual learning plans were developed for all indigenous students.
- Teacher observation coding data in the dimension of Intellectual Quality (NSW Quality Teaching Framework 2003) exceeded the target of 3.8 in 2014, registering at 3.91.

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.
- Extend the work of the Primary Liaison teacher across more feeder schools, 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.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2014, 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.

Parents and community were consulted broadly as we evaluated our third year under the National Partnerships program in 2014. Again, our Indigenous parent group provided guidance and feedback on how school directions could best support students.

Future Directions

2015-2017 School Plan

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school’s website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

Future Directions

2015-2017 School Plan

Strategic Direction 1; Quality Teaching

Purpose:
To continue to develop the ten-year focus of the NSW Quality Teaching (QT) model as the basis for all practice. The practice requires continued refinement and evidence including teacher classroom data, student QT leadership and focus group feedback, teachers’ learning journals, and coaching which together connects and supports the schools whole-child whole-school ethos.

**Improvement Measures**

Increased engagement with evidence based research in the area of quality teaching, informed by data and reflected in professional learning plans.

- 90% of teachers keep a learning journal at a proficient standard documenting their reflection of classroom practice via the QT framework, and includes the school focus on setting targets and goals within the theme of ‘collaboration and improved knowledge and understanding’.

- 40% of teachers achieve highly accomplished standard regarding the knowledge and understanding of the QT model, and provides evidence for their proficiency standard according to the National Standards. This evidence is matched to the school’s focus on 10% increase in the number of students achieving Band 5/6 HSC.

**Strategic Direction 2: Students leading learning**

**Purpose:**

To continue to develop the significant role of students within the Student Leadership Council (SLC) as it links to learning through the avenue of four portfolios that includes Quality Teaching, Global Perspectives, Healthy Schools and School Welfare. Student focus includes developing and promoting initiatives, integrated co-curricular programs, creativity, research, feedback, and providing presentations to local and global audiences.

**Improvement Measures**

The following measures will provide a capacity to gauge the effectiveness of the integration of the Student Leadership Council (SLC) and the student body in their effective link to student learning:

- 40% of students will be actively involved in the Student Leadership Council (SLC), as evidenced in their roles and attendance, and though teacher learning journals.

- 100% of Year 7 students will be provided with integrated learning experiences from the SLC Quality Teaching student portfolio, and the gauge of their understanding will be determined by survey, focus groups and classroom experiences.

**Strategic Direction 3: Ashcroft High School Centrum**

**Purpose:**

AHS serves its students through the notion of a whole-child whole-school community approach and seeks to ensure that all practices, connected research, community agencies and the school’s physical environment support students within an integrated P-12 model in order to enable a comprehensive holistic and mutually inclusive process and resultant positive educational outcomes.

**Improvement Measures**

The following measures will provide a capacity to gauge the effectiveness of the integrated whole-child whole-school model:

- 80% of identified students are being cared for within the integrated healthy learner model, and there is high satisfaction levels regarding the integrated model as measured through staff, students and community, and through the addressing of identified needs.

- The AHS Centrum model is in place as a progressive developmental model over the next 24 months, including the health/education connection, and the
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.

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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:

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