2009 Annual School Report
Blakehurst High School

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way
Our school at a glance

About our school

Blakehurst High School, a coeducational comprehensive school of 1120 students was awarded the title of Specialist Languages High School in the Outstanding Schools Program 2000. Our guiding principles have been developed by a collaborative process involving all in our community from an initial values development process in 1997. These values are revisited biannually to ensure relevance and coherence in a rapidly changing educational environment.

SCHOOL VALUES

We value a Learning Environment which:

1. ensures quality learning with the skills and attitudes of lifelong learning for all students;
2. empowers students to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour;
3. supports a valued, professional staff committed to continuing learning;
4. encourages active and informed parent and community involvement in all areas of their school.

Students

Total enrolment for 2009 was 1120 students. Sixty eight percent of students had a non-English speaking background (NESB) with 45 language backgrounds represented. Chinese families are the largest NESB group and represent thirty percent of our school population. Greek is our next largest group with 12% of NESB families, the majority of these families are second and third generation. Our enrolment profile is 40% Anglo-Celtic, 30% Chinese and 30% all other language backgrounds.

The school is at full capacity with an increasing demand for places. At the end of 2009 there were waiting lists in each of Years 7 – 11.

Staff

All teachers at Blakehurst High School are university graduates with at least four years training and all meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools. Once again the many successes of our school community can be attributed to the depth of talent, shared leadership and commitment of both teaching and non-teaching staff at Blakehurst High School. Our Support and Administrative staff of 12 fulltime and several part-time members contribute enormously to the ongoing, collaborative quality teaching and learning culture that is a feature of the school.

At least 50% of teachers from all Key Learning Areas are regularly called upon by the NSW Board of Studies and the NSW Department of Education curriculum planners to develop curriculum, assess examinations, set papers and lead teachers from other schools. The combined experience energy, enthusiasm, initiative and commitment to quality, is certainly a large contributor to the school’s success and as such must be acknowledged in this report.

Messages

Principal's message: 2009 A year of achievement, growth, development and change.

In 2009, as in previous years, Blakehurst High School was once again the top public comprehensive high school in the St George District in the NSW Higher School Certificate. This achievement was the symbolic of the many successes of our school community throughout the year. This report outlines the school’s activities and achievements throughout 2009 and has been collaboratively developed by the leaders of the school community. We are justifiably proud of our co-educational, comprehensive specialist languages high school which caters for the needs of students of diverse ability and backgrounds. Visitors to the school throughout the year endorse the formal report from the review team of the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET), March 2001, which commented positively on the school’s strong culture, sense of purpose and harmonious, welcoming atmosphere. This was again reinforced when the school was included as a case study in Dr John Mitchell’s investigation of innovation in NSW Public Schools, Benefits of the New School Leaving Age. Our programs are recognised as exemplary and key personnel are regularly invited to present at district, regional and state level.

As in previous years, our commitment was to continuous improvement in student learning outcomes and all school planning and actions proceeded from this commitment to excellence. Achieving quality learning underpinned all school programs and was the basis for all evaluative work by the school’s executive team. Enhancing ICT in the classroom and effective middle schooling were the driving priorities.

From the first school development day in January through to the ongoing, thoroughly planned 2009
professional development program, teachers worked together to analyse practice, share their learning and improve teaching with the ultimate aim of improving student learning outcomes. Teachers worked collaboratively on improving their ICT skills. The particular emphasis was on developing skills and programs to incorporate the use of the netbooks issued to all Year 9 students through the Digital Education Revolution (DER).

All personnel at Blakehurst High School believe in the crucial role that they play in student success and realise that it is teacher professional learning which makes the difference to student learning. We believe that it is the ongoing commitment to our own learning that distinguishes the staff at Blakehurst High School and which accounts for the improvement to impressive HSC results for the past six years. We are fortunate to have such dedicated and capable staff who are recognised as leaders in their field. Many teachers chair NSW Board of Studies Examination Committees as well as having been appointed as Supervisors for HSC marking in a number of areas.

During 2009, the environment of Blakehurst High School underwent considerable change. Work began on the long awaited gymnasium and, by the end of the year, was nearing completion. Funding through the Australian Government Building the Education Revolution (BER) enabled improvements to be made to school facilities. Notable among these was the replacement of the hall louvres which has greatly improved that valuable school resource. Upgrades to the school electrical system and wireless cabling have both been important in improving the ICT capability of the school. Upgrades to school facilities will continue in 2010.

Traditionally, the teaching and non teaching staff of the school has remained stable and this too accounts for our continuing success. Staff at Blakehurst High School generally leave only when retiring or for promotion. This was again the case in 2009. Mr Nick Tcaciuc was promoted to the position of Head Teacher English at Moorefield Girls High School. 2009 also marked the end of the careers of three outstanding servants of public education and Blakehurst High School in particular: Mrs Bev Cheal from the LOTE faculty, Mrs Joan Carter, the Senior Administrative Manager, after more than 25 years at Blakehurst High School and Mrs Judy Thompson. Mrs Thompson had been principal of Blakehurst High School since 1997 and in that time had led the school through a remarkable period of renewal, growth and improvement which saw the school become recognised as a comprehensive high school of excellence.

Parent support for and commitment to the school’s work and the school’s commitment to well informed and involved parents once again resulted in a mutually productive year. Without the support of our parent body we would not be able to achieve the results we do with their children.

I thank all our parents for their continued support.

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.

Ms Mary Leslie

Principal (Relieving)

P&C message

The year began with great attendance and a significant number of new parents who continued to take an active role throughout the year. Several new parents took on leadership roles within the P&C.

As in the past, Head Teachers attended meetings to share information about their faculties and students’ learning.

Parents were delighted to see work on the new gymnasium commence after years of lobbying on behalf of the school and the parent community by the P&C. The upgrades of school facilities including toilets, canteen and the Hall were all strongly supported by parents. The P&C funded a number of projects during the year, including the licence for the Mathletics Program.

As always the P&C was active in helping with school events throughout the year. The efforts of the hardworking members were greatly appreciated. Such events included orientation day, information nights, parent/teacher nights, celebration of learning and graduation ceremonies.

The tenth Annual P&C Dinner was held in November. The guest speaker was Dr Phil Lambert, Sydney Region Director. Dr Lambert is a regular and welcome visitor to Blakehurst High School and he spoke warmly of the school and the Principal, Mrs Thompson, and the outstanding achievements of both. Once again, the dinner was catered by the Year 11 Hospitality class, under the guidance of their teacher, Ms Leanne Field.

Mrs Roslyn Morton’s time as a member of the Blakehurst High School ended as her youngest daughter completed her HSC in 2009. Mrs Morton has been a continuous of the member of the P&C for twenty years as her children have passed through the school. She has served in many roles over that time including as President. Her
contributions to Blakehurst High School and to public education in the Sydney Region were recognised with her being awarded the prestigious NSW Department of Education and Training Public School Parent of the Year Award 2009. This thoroughly deserved award was presented at Presentation Night.

Mrs Betty Sfakiannakis

Student Representative Council

President’s Message - 2009

The SRC strives to make thoughtful decisions on behalf of the students to meet the needs of students at school and to impact positively on the school and our community.

In 2009, the SRC achieved several key goals. We raised money for Genes for Genes Day, the Heart Foundation, Cancer Council and other local charities. We also raised money through sausage sizzles and pizza days to purchase equipment for use in the school.

One initiative of the SRC was the painting of extra handball courts in the Quadrangle and one in front of the school especially for the use of Year 7 students. The SRC also organised the painting of a giant chessboard and the purchase of chess pieces for use by students at recess and lunchtime.

The SRC attended meetings where representatives discussed our contributions and future plans. These meetings also gave our members the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills.

New members from Year 7 and the Junior Prefects enabled the SRC to grow in 2009. These new members have brought with them fresh ideas and enthusiasm.

We were able to achieve all of these things through the support of parents, students, administrative staff and teachers.

Bahia Malas – President 2009

Significant programs and initiatives

Australian Business Week

185 Year 11 students again participated in this week of intensive learning in October. This learning involves all students in teams engaged in running a simulated business for one week. We are fortunate to have the services of business mentors from Kogarah Rotary Club who assist us to conduct the program and mentor students so successfully each year. Students gain skills in decision making, problem solving, teamwork and cooperation, and leadership which we believe transfers positively to all their learning as they move into their HSC year. In 2009, Blakehurst High School was awarded third place in the National ABW awards for BEST SCHOOL PROGRAM. Blakehurst High School is renowned as one of the best schools nationally in this prestigious program. Our sustained success is due to the enthusiasm and commitment of the program’s coordinator, Ms Raquel Spratt, a Business Services teacher, and the support from Head Teacher, Peter Slater, as well as the ongoing support from all school staff, parents and Kogarah Rotary Club.

Homework and Tutorial Centre

This school funded initiative continues to be well supported. Students attend at no cost and are supervised by two teachers and a number of senior student mentors and tutors two afternoons per week. In 2008, the centre was again managed by one of the Year 11 Business Services classes.

The P&C funded the afternoon tea of fruit given to all students at each session. Average number of students attending was 45 per session.

International Students and the HSC Preparation Program

In 2009 our school community was again fortunate to be enriched by 70 International students studying across Years 8 -12. The school designed intensive HSC Preparation program was again conducted for all International Students in Year 10 and those students in Year 11 who had joined the school late in the year. In 2009, this program was commenced in Term 3 and conducted for fifteen weeks across Terms 3 and 4. Students attended specific school designed classes – English for Business, English for Science and Mathematics and English for Healthy Living. Each of these courses was designed by teachers at Blakehurst High School in consultation with specialist ESL staff. The course is designed to prepare students for Year 11 study and introduces students to the language demands of HSC subjects. There is a cultural component to the program. Regular excursions in the local area and the city introduce the students to aspects of Australian history and culture. The first group to experience this program in Year 10/11 completed the HSC very successfully in 2006.

Year 10 Community Service Program

Again in 2009, the majority of Year 10 students completed at least twenty hours of community service. In late November 2008, all Year 9 students were introduced to the concept of community service and service learning at a Community Involvement Expo at which they learned from volunteer organisations’
representatives. During the following year, students then learned and served in local primary schools, nursing homes, preschools, St George Hospital, service organisations and sporting clubs. This program is a significant part of our Respect and Responsibility program. The program was once again co-ordinated by Ms Michelle Maricic, the initiator of the program in 1998, who each year works to improve outcomes in citizenship and service learning for our students.

Languages Study Tours and Activities Program
In 2009 students of French were able to undertake a study tour to France in the October holidays. They were able to experience the culture of France and practise their speaking skills. They were accompanied by Mrs Mangraviti.

All Year 7 language students were involved in Languages Day. They participated in a variety of cultural activities such as Bocce, French Waiter's Race, Sumo Wrestling and Greek Dancing. They also experienced a variety of foods from the various countries.

Classroom activities and excursions for all years have connected students with the culture of their language of study. Students visited The Forum, Leichhardt and the Tanken Centre as well as restaurant and film excursions.

Student achievement in 2009

Literacy
Literacy across the curriculum remained a focus for 2009 and this, combined with excellent support program staff assistance in Year 7 and 8 classes, has resulted in continued improvement for Year 9 students in NAPLAN tests and for Year 10 students in the School Certificate. Targeted support for students through the Learning on Track program, has also contributed to improved outcomes.

Numeracy
Specifically targeting numeracy across the curriculum once again resulted in improved results for Year 9 in NAPLAN testing and particularly in the growth data for Year 10 at the School Certificate

School Certificate
190 students sat for the NSW School Certificate examinations. The improvement trend of numbers in the top two bands continued. The percentages of students in Bands 5 and 6 for all subjects were above State average and importantly above the school's average performance over the previous five years. Similarly, there was a decline of the numbers of students in the lowest bands. The value added data in all subjects also reflected this trend being significantly above the school average 2005-2009, the Like Schools Group average and the State average.

Higher School Certificate
166 students sat for the NSW Higher School Certificate in 42 courses. This included 7 extension courses in English (Ext 1 and 2), History, Japanese, Modern Greek, and Mathematics (Ext 1 and 2) as well as 4 Vocational Education (VET) courses in Business Services, Construction, Hospitality and Information Technology.

Students received 81 honour roll credits (marks in Band 6, 90-100) across all subject areas. These outstanding results have been sustained for each of the past seven years, the only comprehensive school in the district, to achieve this. Blakehurst High School was once again one of the top comprehensive coeducational schools in NSW based on HSC results.

Our Mathematics results placed the school as the top comprehensive school in the St George and Sutherland districts and one of the top 10 in the state for Mathematics. The averages for all Mathematics courses were significantly above both the Like Schools Group average and the State average.

The School Dux, Tiffany Li, attained an ATAR of 99.75 and this gained her entry to the prestigious Combined Law/Actuarial Studies degree at the University of Technology Sydney. Both Tiffany and Xiao Zheng were recognised on the Premier's Honour List for their results.

Stiliani Drimousis gained 2nd place in the State in both Modern Greek Continuers and Modern Greek Extension. Evy Kefalas gained 4th place in the State in the same subjects.

These results are outstanding for a comprehensive high school which is totally inclusive in its enrolment policy.

Overall, the 2009 results showed continuing improvement and were a testament to the continuing expertise and focus on quality teaching by our teachers. Of the 110 students who sought University entrance, 92 were offered places. This represents a success rate of approximately 83%.

Low, middle and high achievers gain great benefit from studying for their HSC at Blakehurst High School. This is due to the quality teaching practices and quality student support offered by teachers and programs in these final two years of schooling.
School context

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

Student attendance profile

Management of non-attendance

Co-ordinated school designed student services programs such as “Hate to be Late” and “Learning every day” as well as our emphasis on a supportive quality learning environment have once again resulted in an attendance rate which is significantly above Regional and State Attendance Rates. The attendance has been improving over the last 5 years and has been consistently above 93% since 2007.

Retention to Year 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SC03-HSC05</th>
<th>SC04-HSC06</th>
<th>SC05-HSC07</th>
<th>SC06-HSC08</th>
<th>SC07-HSC09</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>63.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEG</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>61.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post-school destinations

Of the 166 students who sat for the HSC in 2009, 92 (55%) have gone to university. Ten have gained apprenticeships, including TAFE study and 30 have gone either to a TAFE non-trade course or to private training colleges. 10 are working fulltime with on-the-job training and 6 are working part-time with on-the-job training. Eighteen students, some of whom have returned overseas, could not be contacted.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

In 2009, 26 students (16%) completed TVET courses at TAFE. The total enrolment in the Vocational Education (VET) Courses offered at school was 80 students, with 56 students (34%) studying one or more VET courses. Five students completed Industry Based studies, with two students completing School-Based Traineeships in Hospitality and Nursing.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification

In 2009, 98% of students attained and HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification. Three students (2%) were following a pathways program and will complete their HSC in 2010 or 2011.

Staff information

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

The staff team at Blakehurst High School is stable, experienced and highly qualified. The school employed a number of extra part time staff to work in specialist areas such as Support with Learning and ESL support.
Staff establishment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<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>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teachers</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Teacher Learning Assistance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff (SASS)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on indigenous composition of their workforce. At Blakehurst High School none of the staff has identified themselves as indigenous.

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>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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>30/11/2009</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>386 385.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>564 770.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>523 753.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>616 954.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>17 567.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>63 325.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>2 172 757.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Expenditure**

- Teaching & learning
- Key learning areas 162 900.38
- Excursions 155 479.52
- Extracurricular dissections 171 250.32
- Library 13 100.49
- Training & development 26 452.82
- Tied funds 423 611.96
- Casual relief teachers 116 435.36
- Administration & office 271 094.20
- School-operated canteen 0.00
- Utilities 82 616.16
- Maintenance 59 849.74
- Trust accounts 67 266.57
- Capital programs 225 411.48
| **Total expenditure** | 1 775 469.00 |
| **Balance carried forward** | 397 288.31 |

The apparently small amount in Professional Learning is a result of the majority of Professional Learning funds being paid from tied funds. The balance carried forward allows us to start the year in a strong financial position and allows for future demands and continued improvement of school facilities.

A full copy of the school's 2009 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meeting of the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.
School performance 2009

Many significant achievements have already been mentioned earlier in this report. Culminating in outstanding HSC results yet again this year, 2009 was certainly another year of excellence for the Blakehurst High School Learning Community

Achievements

Arts
Blakehurst High School has a thriving Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) faculty and other teachers committed to the arts in its various forms.

Music and Performance Evenings
Over 100 students performed for appreciative audiences in July and December. At these performances many individual and group performers displayed the depth of talent in our school community. These evenings were organised by a student led team supported by Mrs Judy Jacobsen and her CAPA team.

Several students performed at the Sydney Region Opening of the School Year in February and again at the Schools Spectacular in November.

String Ensemble
The string ensemble is a rebuilding phase following the graduation from school of a number of key players, notably Steven Teng, who won a prestigious scholarship to continue his music studies at Sydney University in 2009. Steven also represented the school as a member of the NSW Public Schools Pops Orchestra at the Opening Ceremony of the Australian Young Olympic Festival in January, 2009. Ms Helene Rosse has continued to tutor a new group of young string performers. The ensemble performed with distinction at several functions at school including Presentation Night.

Concert Band
The Blakehurst High School Concert Band played at a number of venues and two of its members – Tara Aftanas and Harry Alexiadis were selected for the Sydney Region Band. Tara was also selected in the 2009 State Wind Band which performed at the Sydney Opera House in June 2009.

Choir
The Blakehurst High School Choir reformed in 2009 under the direction of Mr Kipi Fifita. The choir, made up of more than forty boys and girls performed with distinction on numerous occasions and developed their expertise and repertoire as the year progressed. Members of the choir were part of the Regional Choir which performed at the Expanding Horizons Gala Concert at the Sydney Opera House in August, 2009.

Sport
2009 has seen many outstanding performances by Blakehurst High School Students. Our students have attained representative status at Australian, NSW Combined High Schools, Sydney East Region and St George Zone Age levels. A number of students are also St George Zone Champions, Zone Sport Premiers and Knock-out winners.

However, the most outstanding aspect of sport in 2009 has been the large number of students who have represented their school with determination, enthusiasm and sportsmanship in Grade Sport Competitions. This has culminated with our Girls sports Teams being recognised as Summer and Winter Grade Sport Champion School.

Such successes have been due to the many staff members who give their time, effort and expertise to the students so that they are well prepared to participate competitively in our various sporting competitions.

The major sporting achievements of 2009 include:

- Andrew Edenborough achieved a NSW CHS Blue for Athletics;
- Courtenay Cooper was selected in the NSWCHS and Australian tennis teams;
- Holly Tatum was an Australian Gymnastics representative;
- Luke Noblett was an Australian All Schools Under 16 Hockey representative;
- Henrique Carillo selected in the Sydney East Regional Tennis Team;
- Shoji Isomoto, Paige Tatum and Nina Glavincevski were NSWCHS Gymnastic representatives;
- Danil Goloubev was NSW All Schools Swimming representative;
- Andrew Walsh and Corey Fogarty were selected in the Sydney East Regional cricket. Andrew was also selected in the NSW Combined High Schools Team;
- Andrew Baker was a NSWCHS Athletics representative;
- Yvonne Ilioglou was selected in the NSW Under 14 Soccer Team;
- Mika Zammit was selected in the NSW Under 14 Baseball team.
Other

Outstanding Teacher Achievement

The leadership of the Principal, Mrs Judy Thompson, was recognised by her award of the NSW P&C Principal of the Year. She was also recognised in a similar award by Rotary.

Mrs Lyn Paton, Mathematics Head Teacher, was awarded the Australian College of Education Norman Baker Award for Excellence in Education in recognition of the outstanding results achieved in the Mathematics faculty under her leadership.

Director General for a Day

Bahia Malas of Year 11 was again selected for this program. Bahia shadowed our Georges River School Education Director, Ms Dianne Barry, for a day during Education Week. Bahia learnt about the management of schools and enjoyed her experience in student leadership.

HSC Major Works

The 2009 HSC Industrial Technology Multimedia Major Projects of Jason Lee and Aaron Zimmermann were chosen for the 2010 INTECH Exhibition. Heba Beydoun’s Major Artwork was selected for the ART RULES Exhibition at the Hazlehurst Community Gallery.

Sydney Region Opening of the School Year

Tara Aftanas and Harry Alexiadis were part of the Sydney Region Band which performed at the Sydney Region Opening of the School Year. Lik Wong Yu was selected to represent Blakehurst High School and all the students of Sydney Region as one of the speakers at the ceremony.

Premier’s Reading Challenge

This project was again successful with the enthusiastic participation of students. A highlight was the award of a Premier’s Medal to Lik Wong Yu. These medals were awarded to only 29 of the approximately 180,000 students who participated in the Challenge state wide.

Academic

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 the assessments.

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

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

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

NAPLAN Literacy and Numeracy Year 7

In May 2009 all students in Year 7 were tested on the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). From the following graphs it is evident that students entering Blakehurst High School are above the state averages in the top three bands in all areas but that the percentages in band 9 are below state average, particularly in reading. This will be an area for targeting as these students move through the school. In Numeracy Year 7 students were generally above state and LSG averages.

Literacy – NAPLAN Year 7
NAPLAN Literacy and Numeracy Year 9

All students in Year 9 were tested in the National testing program in May 2009. As the graphs below attest students at Blakehurst High School were at or above state and LSG averages in the top three bands. An area for improvement is to increase the percentage of students achieving at or above minimum level in writing.
Minimum standards

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum standards for reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, spelling and numeracy for years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The performance of the students in our school in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy is compared to these minimum standards. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these standards are reported below.

Minimum Standard Information

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage of Students Achieving at or Above Minimum Standard</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>97.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage of Students Achieving at or Above Minimum Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>85.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>91.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Punctuation and grammar</td>
<td>89.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>98.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Certificate 2009

The school certificate results, including both external and internal assessments, indicate that students achieved above the state averages in all areas with particularly pleasing results in Mathematics, English, Science and Computer Skills and the internally assessed Creative Arts, TAS, Languages Other Than English and PD/H/PE.
School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)

As indicated in the following graph, the School Certificate relative performance to Year 5 (value adding) data for 2009 is significantly above both the Like School average and the Blakehurst High School average for 2005-2009.

Higher School Certificate 2009

Of the 25 subjects where numbers were large enough to make valid school/state comparisons, 18 were above state average. The value added data indicates significant improvement especially for students of low ability.

In the HSC 2009 Blakehurst High School once again achieved outstanding results both when value added and other results are considered.
Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

Average HSC Relative Performance from Year 10 (value-added)

Significant programs and initiatives

The following is a selection of the many programs which support student learning at Blakehurst High School.

Aboriginal education

Aboriginal education at Blakehurst High School has been integrated into many programs across the school. Whilst the recognition of the traditional owners at meetings and assemblies is common practice, it is in the teaching of aboriginal history and issues in classrooms that the most significant learning occurs. In Stage 5 History for example, students examine issues such as land rights, reconciliation and the stolen generation. The aboriginality of our students and indigenous peoples was also celebrated during Naidoc Week. Achievement of aboriginal students in the school was recognised through nomination for the NSW DeadlyKids Awards. Daisy Kennedy-Holtz of Year 8 was the recipient of this award.

Multicultural Education

Our diverse multicultural community is regularly celebrated, along with all that unites us as students achieved Distinctions and 57 students were awarded Credits.

Geography Competition

75 students from Years 9 and 10 entered the Geography Competition conducted by the National Geographic Channel. 23 of these students received awards: 9 High Distinctions, 2 Distinctions and 12 Credits.

Assessment of Language Competence

Once again students at Blakehurst High School participated in the Assessment of Language Competence Certificates. Although our candidatures were very small our results were extremely pleasing. In French Melvin Tang, Eugenia Wong and George Chen attained high distinctions with the other students attaining distinctions and credits in the Reading and Listening Components. Similarly in Italian Lik Wong Yu and Maria Hristovska attained high distinctions with all other Italian students attaining credits.

In Japanese Ben Ho, Crystal Chen and Eve Lam attained high distinctions while the other students attained distinctions and credits. Our results were well above state average in all languages for these exams.

National Competitions

Mathematics Competition 2009

In August 2009, 105 students from Year 7 to Year 12 sat for the Australian Mathematics Competition. High Distinctions were awarded to Jiaru Li, Tian Shu Liu and Tiffany Li. In all 21
Australians and members of the Blakehurst High School Learning Community. In 2009, overseas tours, international visitors and the celebration of the significant national days of many of the cultures represented in our community all contributed to the education of our students and staff. Year 10 English participated in the University of NSW Mosaic program, Fusion Forums, and produced writing on the theme of sharing the thoughts and feelings of Australia’s culturally diverse young people. Students were also involved in Harmony Day celebrations. At weekly assemblies school leaders draw attention to the various multicultural observances by using the Multicultural calendar. In this way, students’ backgrounds are recognised and valued and awareness of respect for difference is raised regularly.

Students from the school’s SRC represented the school at various local Youth Week activities. Joel Pragnell participated in the anti-racism forum organised by St George Youth Services. Overseas Schools Visits are another means by which our students gain multicultural perspectives. Throughout the year Blakehurst High School hosted several tours by Japanese students and teachers as well as a Thai school visit. These were an excellent opportunity for our students to practise their Japanese and to expand cultural understandings and mutual respect.

Environmental Program
In 2009 the Blakehurst High School Environmental Team successfully completed many projects to raise awareness among students and to reduce the environmental footprint of the school. Led by Mrs Raquel Spratt, an enthusiastic group of students from all years undertook the following projects:

- Carried out waste, water and energy audits;
- Installed compost bins for the food laboratories, preparation rooms and canteen;
- Provided Comingle Waste Bins for aluminium cans and tins. These were placed in high traffic areas to promote recycling. The team has worked on promoting the correct use of these bins by students;
- Arranged for the installation of spring loaded bubblers to reduce water wastage;
- Instituted “Flick Off Friday” to encourage staff to turn off all computers, scanners and printers at the powerpoints over the weekend and at the end of term to reduce energy usage.
- Organised the installation of timers on the lights and fans in every classroom to reduce power usage. This work was done during the January 2010 school holidays.
- Monitored the power usage through a direct link to Energy Australia

As a result of these initiatives there was saving of approximately $4000 on electricity costs over the latter part of 2009. The goal of the team was to double this saving during Term 1 in 2010. Future projects for the team include construction of a herb garden and the planting of native shrubs around the school. The team will continue to promote and participate in Earth Hour and National Tree Day.

Respect and responsibility

Respect and Responsibility remains the cornerstone of school values and consequent student services programs. The school’s Student Services Network is integral to the success of these programs. This network operates through the Junior and Senior Welfare Teams and the Learning Support Team. In 2009, the teams consisted of the Deputy Principal Learning/Welfare, two Head Teachers (Teaching & Learning), Support Teacher Learning Assistance (STLA), Year Advisers, Senior School Support Program (SSSP) Co-ordinator, Transition Co-ordinator, Careers Adviser, ESL teachers, Mentors and the Junior Welfare Co-ordinator. The latter role was established in 2008 to address the needs of students in the years 7 to 10. Responsibilities in this role include liaising with the junior Year Advisers to develop specific pastoral care programs, managing sick students and working with the Student Leadership Team to train and supervise Peer Support Leaders, Peer Mediators and Junior Prefects. The success of this initiative in 2008 and 2009, led to the decision to create the position of Senior Welfare to perform a similar role to meet specific needs of the students in the senior years.

The Welfare and Learning Support Teams met fortnightly and used school data and referral data to target student needs.

A selection of the many targeted programs follows:

- Peer Support and Mediation
- Jump Start for girls and boys
- Boys’ and Girls’ programs run through St George PCYC.
- Social Skills program for Year 7 boys run in conjunction with St George Reconnect
• Wilderness Challenge programs for junior girls and boys

• Learning on Track program an intensive and proactive Literacy, Numeracy and Learning Skills program conducted in Term 4 for students in Year 7 identified through data from NAPLAN and by teacher referral through the Learning Support Team.

• The Chill Out program continued targeting Aboriginal and Pacific Islander students and was led by Mr Kipi Fifita. In term 4 students in this program, created a mosaic mural reflecting their heritage. The aim of the program was to address issues of anger management and social interaction and to develop positive attitudes to learning.

All teachers new to Blakehurst High School participate in Choice Theory and Reality Therapy training which is based on the work of William Glasser and which underpins our Respect and Responsibility programs. In addition, the school’s regular professional learning program included workshops on Choice Theory and Restorative Practices.

Our respect and responsibility programs assist in producing the well disciplined, secure and harmonious learning environment which is a feature Blakehurst High School. Our very low suspension rates attest to the effectiveness of our student services team and programs. Other indicators include attendance rates well above state averages and a reduction in RISC referrals for unsatisfactory behaviour, particularly for students in years 7 to 9.

Progress on 2009 targets

Targets for 2009

Targets for 2009 were drawn from 2008 data on the school’s performance and are closely aligned with the school management plan 2009 – 2012. Each faculty has a plan of action based directly on these targets and evaluates their progress on the achievement of targets.

Target 1
Continue to develop an excellent performance and development culture

Strategies to achieve this target included:

• Executive team professional development in feedback strategies and quality teaching as well as designing quality professional learning plans;

• Quality teaching teams provide opportunities for peer observation and sharing of expertise in quality teaching;

• Successful redesign and delivery of Blakehurst High School Induction Program for teachers new to the school and one for those new to teaching;

• Faculty planning to incorporate regular feedback strategies;

• Whole school professional learning program coordinated by Professional Learning Team

Our achievements include:

The professional learning for school executive included modules on giving constructive feedback to staff, individual members of the executive shared strategies and templates for providing feedback to staff.

The school’s regular professional learning program was centred on members of staff presenting and modelling strategies incorporating Literacy, Numeracy and Technology in the curriculum to colleagues in both cross-KLA and faculty teams.

A new intensive induction plan was implemented involving six one hour sessions in Term 1, with opportunities for reflection and a follow up meeting in Term 4. Participants reported a high degree of satisfaction with the program. Experienced teachers noted that it was the first program of its type they had encountered and that as such it had greatly assisted their transition into Blakehurst High School.

Target 2
Continued improvements in ICT in the classroom

Strategies to achieve this target included:

• Continuing staff professional learning program in ICT – school designed and implemented, using staff expertise;

• Continued development of Technology Committee;

• Introduction of MOODLE operating system for interactive learning;

• Provision of well maintained and quality technology to support teaching and learning;

• Provision of relief time for teachers to work collaboratively and share expertise in their classrooms

Our achievements include:

There was an increase in the time devoted to developing the confidence and expertise of staff in the use of ICT in the classroom through the
school’s professional learning program from 25% to 50% of the available time. Staff members were given opportunities for outside training which they then shared with colleagues at school. Faculties were given relief time to incorporate ICT into teaching programs and to develop the resources to support them.

Surveys of staff and students indicated an increased use of ICT in the classroom. This was particularly evident in Year 9 with the introduction of the netbooks through the Digital Education Revolution (DER).

Staff were given training in the use of the MOODLE system. Over the course of the year the number of teachers and classes using the system increased by 35%.

The technology team expanded to include representatives from each faculty and was responsible for allocation and maintenance of quality technology in line with the school’s management plan. The purchase of a new server, the installation of wireless networking and an upgrade of the school’s electrical system have improved the operation and stability of the computer network.

**Target 3**

Continuing improvement in middle school outcomes

Strategies to achieve this target included:

- Enhance role of Junior School Co-ordinator;
- Continued professional learning in middle school strategies;
- Continued growth of teacher expertise in ICT;
- Faculty reviews of middle school programs and assessments;
- Use of MOODLE to enhance learning and communication between home and school;
- Continued refinement of successful transition programs from Years 5 -7;
- Apply for funding to develop transition programs in Languages with feeder primary schools.

Our achievements include:

The Junior School Welfare Co-ordinator, Mrs Judy Smith worked closely with the junior year advisers to develop targeted pastoral care programs. Her involvement with the Leadership team led to greater opportunities for students especially in the junior years to take on leadership roles and to participate in Peer Mediation and Mentoring programs.

All faculties revised teaching programs, particularly those for Stage 5, to incorporate ICT. Increased use of ICT has enhanced student engagement in these years. This was reflected in improved School Certificate results, attendance rates in Years 7 to 9 and fewer suspensions and behaviour referrals.

The Transition program for Year 5 to 7 continued in 2009. The Year 5 Primary Links programs, the Year 6 Orientation and Partners as Learners (PALs) program for students identified as requiring additional support, the information sharing between key personnel from Blakehurst High School and the feeder primary schools and an induction and Peer Support program have ensured that incoming Year 7 students have been able to successfully make the transition to high school. In surveys at the end of Term 1 2009, 97% of Year 7 students and parents reported high levels of satisfaction with the transition process.

The Languages other than English (LOTE) faculty successfully applied for funding through the Becoming Asia Literate program. The grant of $40000 will enable the school to employ a teacher to conduct classes in Chinese and Japanese Language and Culture at three of our feeder primary schools: Blakehurst, Connells Point and Carlton South Public Schools.

**Key evaluations**

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2009 our school carried out evaluations of Attendance Policies and Procedures and VET.

**Educational and management practice**

**Learning, Attendance and Achievement**

**Evaluation of the Attendance Policies & Procedures**

**Background**

It is recognised that student attendance is a critical factor in student achievement and failure to attend an indicator of disengagement and problems of student well being. The school’s attendance policy was collaboratively developed in 2004 by all stakeholders in the Blakehurst High School community. Base line data was gathered as was the means by which progress could be measured.

**Findings and conclusions**

**Daily Attendance**
Procedures established for recording and monitoring attendance were clearly understood by all stakeholders. Year Advisers maintain contact with parents and identify patterns of absences. There is a co-ordinated approach by the Welfare and Learning Support teams to put in place programs to support students in their learning and to address issues that affect their attendance. The success of this approach is reflected in the improvement in the attendance rate over the past six years to levels well above state and regional levels.

**Partial Attendance**

Procedures for reporting and managing partial absences were reviewed and revised. Partial absences include lateness and fractional truancy. Lateness was identified as an issue for a small but significant number of students. Strategies introduced included: Targeting persistent latecomers, creating a so called “hot list” of students and closely monitoring their lateness over period of four weeks, maintaining contact with parents and arranging for students to make up lost learning time. This strategy proved successful in improving the attendance and punctuality of these students. Another strategy was to continue the frequent but random “Hate to Be Late” days. Procedures for identifying fractional truants were also reviewed and updated with an additional Head Teacher taking on the responsibility of recording and monitoring fractional truancy among senior students. Year advisers have become involved in following up suspected fractional truants on a daily basis. This co-ordinated approach has led to a reduction in fractional truancy especially among students in the junior years.

**Future directions**

To address identified areas for improvement, the following strategies have been put in place:

- Support year advisers and roll teachers with roll marking and follow up by assigning two head teachers to each year group;
- Reinforce the link between attendance and learning by ensuring that students catch up on work missed during absence;
- Make greater use of MOODLE to enable students to access work when absent;
- Continue to work closely with parents to support students in their attendance at school.

**Curriculum**

**Student Engagement: Teaching and Learning in VET courses.**

**Background**

Breadth of curriculum is regarded as important as students require enough flexibility to make choices on the basis of their interests and talents. The place of VET in the curriculum has changed and expanded over several years and is much more an option for all students. Five of the seven Industry Framework vocational courses are offered in the school. The notion of VET for the lower performing students is not prevalent and the number of classes has increased to 13. Fifteen teachers are qualified to teach the courses. Data was collected from teachers, students, parents and outside providers to measure the quality of the program and to identify areas for improvement.

**Findings and conclusions**

Students, staff and school leadership recognise the status of VET as a valuable and integral component of the curriculum of the school. The school’s commitment to quality teaching and learning was reflected in the approach to the provision of these courses.

All teachers demonstrated secure knowledge of VET requirements and students value and enjoy their learning experiences.

The introduction of MOODLE has enhanced the access of students to learning and assessment tasks for students. The school has adopted flexible approaches to assessment which has identified and accommodated student needs. It has employed effective strategies to maximise student learning and competency achievement.

**Future directions**

To address identified areas for improvement, the following strategies have been put in place:

- Develop greater levels of collaboration to ensure consistency of programming and delivery to achieve quality outcomes;
- Provide consistent information regarding VET courses and assessment schedule;
- Assign Head Teacher (T & L Senior Curriculum) to support the VET Co-ordinator to ensure consistency within the teams in the effective management of vocational delivery.

**Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction**

In 2009 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.
Their responses are presented below.

In surveys distributed throughout the year parents, students and teachers expressed generally high levels of satisfaction with the school. An area for improvement identified was feedback to students and parents.

At the end of Term 1, 97% of Year 7 parents felt that their child’s transition to high school had been successful and their teachers helpful and supportive.

Professional learning

The professional learning undertaken by teachers in 2009 was in line with priorities outlined in the School Management Plan 2009 - 2012. The three main areas were Quality Teaching, ICT in the classroom, Respectful Relationships and Leadership.

In addition to the School Development Days, the school’s professional learning program consisted of a series of fortnightly workshops presented by members of staff on range of topics which reflected school priorities and identified staff needs. All members of staff attend and participate in these workshops. A group of teacher leaders and an executive group participated in action learning projects.

An audit of ICT skills was conducted in August 2009. In Basic computer use, file management, word processing, email and internet use, the majority of the staff report an increase in confidence in their skills in this area. There was less confidence in the use of spreadsheets, technology presentation, graphics and photography, desktop publishing and digital video. 20% of the teaching staff identified themselves as highly confident in this area. The least confidence was expressed in Constructivist learning, graphic organisers, problem based learning, web publishing and the multimedia projects and this will be a focus area in professional learning in 2010.

The total Teacher Professional Learning funds available in 2009 were $43630. In addition an extra $11342 from school funds was spent on teacher professional learning. The average expenditure per teacher was $728.

School development 2009 – 2011

Our School Management Plan 2009 – 2012 developed collaboratively in consultation with our school community is aligned with our school values. The ongoing commitment is to achieving excellence in student outcomes. This is to be achieved through quality teaching, ongoing professional development of staff particularly in the area of ICT in the classroom and by building on links with our community and our feeder primary schools.

Targets for 2010

Target 1

Continue to develop an excellent performance and development culture

Strategies to achieve this target include:

• Targeted Executive Professional Learning program focussing developing leadership capacity;
• Formal program of peer observation and coding of lessons within faculty and quality teaching teams;
• Continued focus on providing quality feedback to teachers and students;
• Whole school professional learning program co-ordinated by expanded Professional Learning Team.

Our success will be measured by:

• Increased engagement of Executive with professional learning program as measured by survey in November 2010;
• Staff and student satisfaction levels with professional feedback;
• Continuing successful outcomes for students.

Target 2

Continue improvements in ICT in the classroom

Strategies to achieve this target include:

• Continuing staff professional learning program in ICT – school designed and implemented, using staff expertise;
• Continued sharing of expertise and resources to enhance the use of laptops in Years 9 and 10;
• Expansion of the use of MOODLE operating system for interactive learning;
• Provision of relief time for teachers to work collaboratively and share expertise in their classrooms.

Our success will be measured by:

• Continued increased levels of staff expertise and confidence with ICT in the classroom;
• Continued increased levels of parent satisfaction with home/school communication and access to online learning through the use of MOODLE;
• Increased levels of student engagement especially in Years 7 – 9;
• Continuing improvement in computing skills in the School Certificate

Target 3
Continue to develop excellent transition programs
Strategies to achieve this target include:
• Enhance the roles of Junior and Senior Welfare Co-ordinators;
• Expansion of joint programs with feeder primary schools.
• Program of visits and lesson observations between Blakehurst High School and feeder primary schools
• Continued development of the Primary Links and PALs programs.
• Develop the role of Transition Co-ordinator to support students in their progress from the middle school to senior school
• Development of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP), an alternative non HSC program for students in Years 11 and 12:

Our success will be measured by:
• Student survey data;
• Parent survey data;
• Continuing reduction in student welfare interventions in Year 7 as measured by school data;
• Continued improvement in value added data from School Certificate to Higher School Certificate;
• Successful transition to Year 11 as measured by Senior School Support Program (SSSP) data.

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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