School context

Blakehurst High School (enrolment 1098, 79% students from a non-English speaking background), is a successful co-educational comprehensive school recognised for exemplary welfare and learning support programs. The school has an excellent reputation within Sydney Region and the local community for academic, sporting and multicultural achievements. Students enjoy a broad curriculum, including a wide vocational education and training program. Priorities include quality professional learning for all staff which supports Quality Teaching/learning and the development of student responsibility for learning. The school enjoys strong support from parents and the community.

The Blakehurst High School community values students who:

- Show respect to - other students, teachers, property, themselves, the general public and parents.
- Take responsibility to - attend school every day, work to the best of their ability, complete all work, allow others to learn and help stop bullying.

Principal's message

Our 2013 highlights include;

- Outstanding 2012 HSC results which including a top ATAR of 99.0; More than 20 students achieved ATARs 90 or above; 1 student placed 1st in the State in VET Business Services; 3 students gaining Band 6 in all 10 units; 100 students (64% of the cohort compared to 58% in 2011) named on the State Merit list in 25 subjects.
- Satisfying NAPLAN results achieved for both Year 7 and Year 9 – particularly in Numeracy. Some aspects of Literacy are still a concern but it is pleasing that the areas targeted in the 2012-14 School Plan are showing signs of improvement i.e. writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Blakehurst High School being one of the 229 schools selected to trial new school software under the LMBR program. This is the first time in over 30 years that school administration software has been changed. We have received a great deal of support as a trial school, which hopefully makes our transition smoother than it would otherwise have been.
- Continued building improvements, including the refurbishment of the demountables, and recarpeting of a number of classrooms, as well as construction of a lift and ramps for ease of accessibility for community members with disabilities.
- A fantastic Multicultural Day in Term 4, organised by the SRC, celebrating our diverse cultural makeup.
- A successful Year 7 camp to Hawkes Nest.
- Successful Language days and an International excursion to Europe.
- Well-attended Athletics and Swimming Carnivals, as well as continued success on the sporting field in Grade competition.
• Thousands of dollars raised by students to support charities such as the 40 Hour Famine and NSW bushfire victims.
• Dylan McCuaig-Walton, Year 11, selected to represent NSW at a Regional Student Parliament in the Solomon Islands.
• One of our International Students, Wendy Yang, Year 12, presented with a Premier’s Award, as the NSW International Student of the Year. This is the first time a student from a Government school has won this award.

I would like to thank the P&C for their ongoing support, both financially, as well as in representation on Merit Selection panels for staff and the Finance Committee.

The P&C, has committed over $35000 to school programs and projects this year, including –

- School Awards,
- Support for the Debating Program,
- Purchase of Multimedia Equipment,
- Science Equipment,
- Funding of the Mathletics software package for the whole school,
- Continued support of the online study skills program and the SMS absence notification system.

I would also like to thank the staff at BHS. They are a great team and always have the best interest of the students at heart. There is a very strong culture in the school of Professional Development and this is because they are so concerned about achieving the best outcomes for students and are keen to “go the extra mile” to assist students.

Improvements at the school in recent years have come about as a result of this team effort by staff. This staff group constantly amazes me with their positive attitude and their acceptance of change (of which there has been much) which will benefit the students and the school as a whole.

I believe therefore, it is this that makes Blakehurst High School, the comprehensive school of choice in the area.

I would also like to thank the parents and students of BHS for their unwavering support of the school throughout 2013.

I am very proud that I am a Principal of a public school that is fully inclusive; providing a quality education for ALL students regardless of their background, academic ability, or socio economic status.

I am also proud that we are able to help develop our students into responsible citizens. To this end, the school places a great emphasis on our Respect and Responsibility Charter.

As an educator, I see our role as not only to prepare students for the HSC, or to teach them
basic literacy and numeracy skills, but also to educate the whole person, so they leave school as law abiding, caring and responsible citizens who possess the skills to exist and thrive in our rapidly changing world.

We will continue to pursue this goal in 2014, in an endeavour to maintain Blakehurst High School as the best comprehensive school in the Sydney Region.

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.

Brad Lester

P & C message

Blakehurst High School Parents and Citizens Association is an active part of the Blakehurst school community. It comprises of a proud and dedicated group of people who meet on a regular basis to discuss ways of enhancing the education of students in the school. It is also well supported by the general school community, shown by the high percentage of parents who make a financial contribution to the P&C.

2013 has been yet another highly successful year for the P&C. We are proud to say that for every dollar that has been donated to the P&C, we have funded the equal, if not in excess of this amount directly back into educational and enhancement programs in the current school year. This means that the funds we receive are benefitting your children immediately.

In 2013, the location of P&C information on the Blakehurst High School website was moved. This did not impact on the number of parents and others who have accessed the range of information we have available. We have been able to continue to build on this information as well as providing keynote speakers at scheduled P&C meetings. The website contains background information about the P&C, information regarding meetings, including minutes of all meetings, media releases from the NSW P&C Federation and tips to help families support their children to be successful learners at Blakehurst High School. The P&C are committed to connecting with families and support this form of communication. In addition to this, the P&C has committed to funding the school’s SMS notification system.

The P&C is primarily financed by parents who pay the P&C Enhancement Fee. This allows us to focus attention on programs and resources for the school. In 2013, the P&C funded the following resources/programs: Year 7 Diaries, Enhanced Learning Education Services (Study Skills Online), Mathletics, SMS System, Equipment for the Science department, digital Camera and associated items, Fees and training costs for student debating, contributions to school Trivia Night and Presentation night and student support for representative sport. This amounts to over $40,000 invested in the school in 2013. This is where your P&C Enhancement Fee goes. Thank you to all parents who have contributed.

The P&C hold monthly meetings. These meetings are an opportunity to listen to guest speakers and discuss information relating directly to the education and welfare of students in the school. All dates and times are available on the school’s website.

Finally, I would like to express how proud I am of being P&C President at Blakehurst High School. I have had the opportunity to work alongside a wonderful group of parents and teachers throughout the year and thank them for all the support they have given me and the school. The P&C at Blakehurst is fit and healthy and ready to better any achievement in the years to come.

Leo Andreone

P&C President

Student representative’s message

The Student Representative Council is a proud leadership body run by students who desire to bring about change to assist in improving the school.
The main focus of the SRC in 2013 was to raise awareness. By raising awareness on issues affecting the students and staff of the school, we have provided ways to fight and hopefully remove these issues from the school and our surrounding environment. Raising awareness is an effective strategy to inform people about important issues that can affect everyone.

In 2013, the SRC decided to raise awareness about three key issues; Anti-Bullying, Multiculturalism and Violence against women (White Ribbon Day). The SRC did this by making presentations at assembly to raise awareness.

Multiculturalism was our main goal this year. We held a Multicultural day in Term 4, which consisted of activities, performances and food that reflected many different cultures. The day was a huge success.

This year we achieved our goals. By working with other leadership groups on Multicultural day, we hope that a supportive relationship between the groups was formed and that the leadership groups can help each other in the future.

2013 was a very successful year for the SRC. With new executive leading the enthusiastic body of the SRC, much more success will come in 2014.

Danielle Rossen - 2013 SRC President

Student information

Total enrolment for 2013 was 1098 students. Seventy-nine percent of students had a non-English speaking background (NESB) with 51 language backgrounds represented. Our enrolment profile is 21% Anglo-Celtic, 25% Chinese and 54% all other language backgrounds. The school is near full capacity in many Year cohorts with an increasing demand for places.

Student enrolment profile

Student enrolments rose in 2013 to 1100 after dipping to less than 1100, in 2012, for the first time in three years.

In 2013 there were a total of 1098 students, 607 being male and 491 female.

Student attendance profile

Student attendance rates in all Year groups at Blakehurst High School remain pleasingly above State and regional averages.

In 2013, the average attendance rate for the whole school improved by 0.4% (i.e. 93.5% in 2012 to 93.9% in 2013).
Management of non-attendance

An emphasis on quality learning and attendance monitoring of all classes supports our excellent attendance record.

An SMS Attendance notification system was introduced in Term 4, 2011. This system was fully operational in 2013. This notification process is another way we believe student attendance and punctuality can be further improved, with parents/guardians notified the day of the student’s absence. This program has been fully funded by the P&C again for 2014.

Post-school destinations

The post school destination survey, which was conducted in March 2013, showed that of the 151 Year 12 students who could be contacted:

- 62% were undertaking degree courses at a number of universities and private institutions (which now offer degree courses).
- 12% were studying at TAFE.
- 6% were studying at a private college.
- 4.6% were working full time or part time, (mostly during a Gap Year).
- 2% had commenced an apprenticeship.
- 3% were actively seeking employment.

Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

In 2013, 20 students (12%) completed TVET (TAFE delivered Vocational Education and Training) courses.

The total enrolment in the Vocational Education (VET) courses offered at school was 48 students with 47 students (98%) studying one VET course and 1 (2%) studying two VET courses.

Two students completed School-Based Apprenticeships as well as also completing Industry Based Learning.

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent Vocational educational qualification

In 2012, 166 students completed Year 12 and attained a HSC or equivalent.
Workforce information

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 13 full-time and several part-time members contribute enormously to the ongoing, collaborative quality teaching and learning culture that is a feature of the school. The combined experience, energy, enthusiasm, initiative and dedication of staff to quality, is certainly a large contributor to the school’s success, and as such, must be acknowledged in this report. The school employed a number of extra part time staff to work in specialist areas such as Learning Support and ESL support.

Staff retention

Historically, the staff roster at Blakehurst High School has been quite stable, with many teachers being at the school for more than thirty years. This trend however, has started to change with the ageing of the teacher population. Due mainly to staff retirements, there was a ten percent changeover in personnel at Blakehurst High School between 2009 and 2010 and again between 2010 and 2011 – including both teaching and ancillary staff.

However, this percentage dropped between 2011 and 2012, and again between 2012 and 2013, with the staff remaining more stable than it had in the previous two years of staff turnover.

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>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>54.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher of Reading Recovery</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers of ESL</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>12.572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88.672</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce.

At Blakehurst High School one teacher has identified themself 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>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
<td>47</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.
Date of financial summary 30/11/2013

**Income**
- Balance brought forward 467664.54
- Global funds 561479.52
- Tied funds 338872.06
- School & community sources 647424.57
- Interest 18204.72
- Trust receipts 98581.52
- Canteen 0.00
- Total income 2132226.93

**Expenditure**
- Teaching & learning
  - Key learning areas 211153.30
  - Excursions 147354.29
  - Extracurricular dissections 151004.39
- Library 14341.01
- Training & development 0.00
- Tied funds 327607.26
- Casual relief teachers 145541.92
- Administration & office 153550.16
- School-operated canteen 0.00
- Utilities 105902.98
- Maintenance 33703.04
- Trust accounts 145558.98
- Capital programs 8750.00
- Total expenditure 1444467.33

**Balance carried forward** 687759.60

A full copy of the school’s 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the P&C. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

**School performance 2013**

**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 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)
Year 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)
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](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).

In the 2013 Higher School Certificate (HSC) examinations, of the 25 subjects where numbers were large enough to make valid comparisons, 16 were at, or above, state average.

Of particular note were subjects including Business Studies, Business Services, Community and Family Studies, Chinese Background Speakers, Earth and Environmental Studies, Food Technology, Hospitality, English Standard, English ESL, Japanese Beginners, Mathematics, Mathematics Extension 1 and 2, and Modern History, in which the 2013 results were above the state average.
The 2013 HSC value added data shows outstanding improvement in the performance of middle performing students. Figures in this category were well above other schools statistically similar to Blakehurst High (SSG).
Other achievements

Sport

Congratulations to each and every student and staff member who contributed to the outstanding results that were attained in Sport during 2013. It is deeply satisfying to see the positive relationships that develop in and through sport on Wednesday afternoons between students and staff.

Again, Blakehurst was the most highly represented school in the St George Zone Grade Sport competition, featuring in 63 summer and 56 winter sports competitions, culminating in 12 winter and 16 summer premierships.

Blakehurst High school was crowned Champion Girls’ School for the Winter Grade Sport Competition in the St George Zone for the sixth consecutive year.

Many students represented the school with distinction at the three major carnivals. Our most outstanding competitors at these carnivals include:

- Nicole Harrington – 13 Years Zone Cross Country Champion and NSWCHS Cross Country representative.
- Andrew Hung – 13 Years Zone Athletics Champion and NSWCHS Athletics representative.
- Tamara Milacic – 14 Years NSWCHS and NSW All Schools Athletics Representative.
- Sheridan Smith - 14 Years Zone and Sydney East Swimming Champion, NSWCHS and NSW All Schools Swimming representative. 3rd place 400IM at the National Schools Swimming Championships.
- Julia Glavincevski - 15 years Swimming and Cross Country Champion, NSWCHS Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics Representative, NSW All Schools Triathlon Representative. 2nd place 1500m at the NSWCHS Athletics Championships.
- Dylan McCuaig-Walton – 17 years Zone Cross Country Champion and NSWCHS Athletics and Cross Country Representative, and NSW All Schools Athletics Representative.

Many other students represented the school with distinction in a range of sports. The following students display the talent and diversity that exists within the student body of Blakehurst High School.

- Brooke Anderson - NSW Rugby Union Representative.
- Natasha Fong and Michelle Kuang – Bronze at the NSW Secondary Table Tennis Championships Open Division.
- Tiffany Wong and Michelle Har – Bronze at the NSW Secondary Table Tennis Championships Open Division.
- Jack Conen – NSW Rugby Union Representative.

In recognition for their outstanding contribution to sport, the following students received a St. George ‘Blue’ Award for their continued success and representation of St George Zone at Sydney East Competitions and NSWCHS Carnivals throughout their time at Blakehurst High School.
These Year 12 students along with their recognized sport are:
- Danil Goloubev – Swimming.
- Aubrey Young – Table Tennis.
- Nicholas Chen – Table Tennis.
- Daisy Kennedy-Holtz – Netball.
- Brooke Anderson – Soccer.
- Natalie Bakrdanikoska – Cross Country.

Blakehurst High competed in numerous CHS knock out competitions with varying success. Most teams made the second or third round of competition. The standout performances belonged to our Cheerleaders who regularly compete across the state and were crowned National Champions in the Level 3 Group Stunt. Congratulations also to our 1st Grade Girls Oz Tag team who became St George Zone Champions for the sixth consecutive year; being the highest performing school at the St George Oz Tag Competition and the Table Tennis Teams representing Blakehurst High school at the highest level and enhancing our school’s reputation within the wider community.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**

Blakehurst High School has continued to incorporate Aboriginal Education into its school Management Plan for 2012-2014.

The school, for the second year in a row, utilised the Norta Norta Tutoring Program. Three Year 12 students were provided with individual sponsorships. These Year 12 students were given the opportunity to receive tutoring in both English and Mathematics. Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs), were implemented for each Aboriginal student and have assisted in targeting the individual learning needs of each student.

Students in Years 9-12 attended Jumbunna (House of Learning) at the University of Technology in Sydney. Students in Years 10-12 have all been registered with the Aboriginal Employment Strategy in Redfern and some of these students have already been selected to attend interviews with employers for traineeships.

Rebekah Thoms in Year 10 was nominated for and won a Deadly Kids Doing Well Award.

Aboriginal poet, Lorna Munroe, was invited to the school to read her poetry to Year 9 as part of the Year 9 teaching program. We hope to maintain our connection with Lorna and perhaps have her back next year.

Lorna Munroe provided inspiration to us to paint a mural at school as part of NAIDOC Week. Taubmans, Bristol and Whitehorse Paints donated the paint. The mural played a vital role in helping to build a stronger sense of connection amongst the Aboriginal students at the school. A photograph of the mural and the students was published in the local paper (The Leader). Aboriginal elder, Aunty Fay Carroll, attended the official unveiling of the mural in Term 4. The mural has played a crucial role in terms of raising awareness about the importance of Aboriginal Education, not just for Aboriginal students and their families, but for the whole school. The mural has drawn attention to the unique nature of Aboriginal culture and the fact that it is important for all of us, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, to make sure that Aboriginal culture does not "disappear."
Rachelle (Year 12) and Rebekah Thoms (Year 10) were both awarded with scholarships. The girls received $500 each because of their outstanding voluntary service to the school.

Daisy Kennedy-Holtz (Year 12) and Rebekah Thoms received awards from Hurstville City Council for being role models, not only within the school, but within the Aboriginal community. Rebekah is currently attending work experience at the Opera House with eleven other Aboriginal students from various schools in Sydney.

**Multicultural education**

The students attended the university campus for a day and the mentors from the ARC Student Group led them through various interactive activities and discussions on the above issues. Individually, or in groups, they used their talents and skills to compose written and visual texts that represented their thoughts and feelings.

Through this participation in Mosaic Fusion, the students gained valuable skills in the areas of teamwork, communication and organisation. In addition, they met deadlines, published work for the wider community and collaborated with their university mentors. Their involvement in this project broadened their experiences beyond the school community and enriched their learning and personal development.

At the Expo and Presentation Evening at the University of NSW the students showcased their compositions and received certificates. Participating students’ compositions are published on the following website http://www.arc.unsw.edu.au/mosaic.

**Mosaic Fusion Forum 2013**

This year a group of 17 Blakehurst High School Year 9 students participated in the 2013 Mosaic Fusion Forum project. This event is an annual project organised by the Sydney Region Equity Program Team in conjunction with ARC, the University of NSW Student Group, however, this year the project was solely coordinated by ARC.

The project provides an opportunity for the culturally diverse youth in the Sydney Region to share their thoughts and feelings on issues such as multiculturalism, culture and identity, freedom and global conflicts, racism, leadership and role models with their peers and the wider community.
Premier’s Reading Challenge 2013

All students in Years 7, 8 and 9 participated in the 2013 Premier’s Reading Challenge (PRC) as part of their normal English course work and their ongoing daily homework reading routine. This year there has been an increase in participation, with 134 students successfully completing the PRC.

Even more pleasing was the high number of students, approximately 20%, who completed the Challenge for the first time. We received the following awards:

- 7 medals and platinum certificates awarded to students who have completed the Challenge consecutively for 7 years.
- 13 Gold certificates awarded to students who completed the Challenge for 4 consecutive years.

The PRC provides a structured opportunity for students to extend their reading skills and enrich their writing. Time was set aside every fortnight for students to borrow and read PRC books in the library. This time was highly valued by the majority of students and, regardless of their varying abilities, they were genuinely engaged in their reading. Students have been encouraged to select and read books that are challenging, for example reading “classic” texts in preparation for their senior studies in English. Classes have also been using a variety of technology-based activities to research, record and share their responses to texts.

Creative and Performing Arts

Culminating in successful HSC results yet again, 2013 was certainly another year of commendable achievement for the Blakehurst High School Learning Community in Creative and Performing Arts. Blakehurst High School has a thriving Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) faculty, with teachers committed to the arts in its various forms.

Performances

Music Night 2013, was an outstanding success with a full program of performances from our talented students. The concert was directed and coordinated by the Year 12 Music 1 students and the production team was able to take full advantage of our new sound and lighting system.

String Ensemble

The string ensemble continued to rehearse and learn new repertoire in 2013. The ensemble performed with distinction for Education Week activities at Westfield Hurstville and on Music Night.

Annabelle Wong (Year 8) and Chrysanthi Diasinos (Year 7) represented BHS at the Sydney Regional Music Camp and were selected to participate in the Sydney Region Orchestra. The girls performed in the ensemble at the Sydney Town Hall in November 2013.
Concert Band

2013 was a year of rebuilding for the Concert Band. Mr Alan Watters began working with the Concert Band during Term 3 and continued to take rehearsals for the remainder of the year. We hope to continue to rebuild the Concert Band in 2014 with new students to our school and would welcome all instrumentalists to join us.

Howard Ling (Year 7) was selected to participate in the Sydney Region Concert Band in 2013. The Regional Band performed at the Regional Festival of Music, the Expanding Horizons Gala Performance and at the Schools’ Spectacular.

Choir

The Blakehurst High School Choir performed at the Sydney Town Hall for the ‘Voices in Performance Concert’ in May 2013 and the Expanding Horizons Gala Performance at the Sydney Opera House in August 2013. We look forward to continued participation in these regional ensembles in 2014.

Drama

Year 12 Drama students performed in their HSC Practical and Written Exams, bringing credit to their teacher, Mrs. Sophia Shaw and to the Blakehurst Learning Community.

Music

Music 1 students successfully performed in their HSC Practical Exams in September and completed their written exams during the HSC examination period.

Visual Arts

A variety of outstanding student works were displayed at Presentation Night 2013. This display included Year 12 2013 Major Works, Photography and Visual Design works.

Hristina Mitrevska, Year 12 2013, had her major art work selected for display at the annual "Art Rules" exhibition at Hazelhurst Regional Gallery and Art Centre.

Year 9 Visual Design students took part in a national logo design competition.

Pearl Zheng’s logo design was selected as a finalist in the year 9-10 group.

Human Society and its Environment (HSIE) Competitions

Over the course of 2013, HSIE students have been given the opportunity to participate in national competitions in Business Studies, Economics, History and Geography. In each of these competitions students performed very well with a greater than average number achieving credits and distinctions.
### U Turn the Wheel

In March 2013, the U Turn the Wheel Program prepared all Year 11 students for driving on the road. The program is organised through Kogarah Rotary and involves students attending 6 different workshops presented by:

- St George Highway Patrol,
- Trent Driving School,
- Paramedics from the NSW Ambulance Service,
- Youthsafe,
- NSW Community Health, and,
- NRMA Motoring and services.

These presentations have proven highly informative for students and cover topics such as driving lessons and purchasing a car, through to the consequences of poor or reckless driving.

### NSW Premier’s Volunteering Program

2013 saw Blakehurst High School once again embrace the spirit of volunteering, through the NSW Premier’s Student Volunteering Awards Program. Approximately 70% of Year 10 students participated in the Volunteering Program, with the majority of the participants achieving 60 hours or more; obtaining Gold and Diamond Awards.

Furthermore, in November 2013, the Year 9 cohort was introduced to the Volunteering Program at a Community Involvement Presentation held within the school. Representatives from four volunteer organisations, as well as current Year 11 students, spoke of the many opportunities available for community service within our community.

The great effort of our students is commendable. They display great enthusiasm, and with their positive attitude, build good relationships with various community groups and are a credit to Blakehurst High School.

### Empowering Local Schools National Partnership

In 2013, the school received a $50000 grant from the Federal Government to participate in the Empowering Local Schools National Partnership (ELSNP).

The money has been used to employ teachers/consultants in order to achieve two goals of our 2012-14 School Plan, namely;

1. **Programs to improve Literacy and Numeracy**
   
   Employ experts/teachers/consultants to design and create resources for classroom teachers to use in order to improve students’ Literacy and Numeracy.

2. **Improve HSC Results**
   
   Employ a specialist teacher (0.4) to assist whole school implementation of the ALARM program, in order to assist improvement of the school's HSC results.

### 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:

- In-depth analysis of NAPLAN and HSC data. This is done by all teachers and Executive.
- Feedback from staff at whole school staff meetings, faculty meetings and committee meeting levels.
- Feedback from parents e.g. Finance committee and the P&C.
- Feedback from student leaders i.e. Prefects; SRC etc.

### School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

#### School priority

**Literacy & Numeracy**

**Outcomes from 2012–2014**

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- 1% increase of Year 9 students in the top two bands of the Literacy components in NAPLAN (reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation).
• 1% decrease of Year 9 students in the bottom two bands of both the Literacy and Numeracy components in NAPLAN.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
- The newly formed Literacy Team developed an action plan and strategies to improve the Literacy outcomes for all our students.
- Professional Learning has had, as one aspect, a focus on improving the Literacy of our students. This year particular emphasis was placed on training all staff in Punctuation and Grammar.
- In Year 9, the percentage of students achieving Band 10 (top band) in Spelling rose by 8.2%. Student percentages in Band 5 (lowest band) fell by 4.8%.
- In Year 9, the percentage of students achieving Band 10 (top band) in Writing increased in 2013 by 3%.
- In Year 9, the percentage of students achieving Band 10 (top band) in Grammar and Punctuation increased in 2013 by 4.6%.
- In Year 9, the percentage of students achieving Band 9 in Reading rose by 7.6%. Student percentages in Band 5 (lowest band) fell by 9.3%.
- In Year 9, the percentage of students achieving Band 10 (top band) in Numeracy increased in 2013 by 17%.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014
- Head Teachers identify professional learning needs for literacy and numeracy in their faculties.
- Integration of literacy and numeracy strategies within KLA programs.
- Maintain DEAR (Drop everything and Read) in Years 7-10.
- Literacy extension exercises developed centrally for use in one DEAR session per week.
- Maintenance of programs such as Upwords, DEAR, Peer Tutoring, PALs, to improve literacy and numeracy.
- Develop the role of the Gifted and Talented (GaT) Team.
- Develop a range of enrichment, extension and talent development programs, focusing on creating ways of improving growth amongst the more able learners.
- One assessment task in Stages 4 and 5 to contain a Persuasive Writing activity in all KLAs.

School priority 2
Outcomes from 2012–2014

Engagement & Attainment

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:
- Improved HSC results.
- Students successfully transitioned to work or alternate educational setting.
- Reduction in student lateness.
- Increase in student attendance.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
- Excellent 2013 HSC results.
- A number of students (particularly those at risk) were successfully transitioned into employment and/or TAFE.
- Full implementation of the SMS Absentee Notification system has resulted in a reduction in unexplained absences.
- Key members of the Welfare Committee have taken individual responsibility for monitoring and following up poor attendance (DP), punctuality (HT T&L) as well as truancy (DP). The outcome has been positive so far.
Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Review of welfare, discipline and learning support practices - incorporating the development, implementation and evaluation of whole school processes relating to student welfare and learning.
- Professional learning focused on Quality Teaching practices.
- Teachers and leaders to engage all students in Quality Teaching practices.
- Continuation of the SMS attendance notification system. This will depend upon the ability to integrate the existing system with the new Student Management (SALM) program in 2014.
- Development of Personal Learning Plans for all Aboriginal students.
- Embedding ICT strategies in all KLA programs.
- Intervention at key transition points.
- Continuation of ALARM (A Learning and Response Matrix) in Years 11 and 12 in order to assist improvement in HSC results. This strategy to be filtered down to Years 7-10 during 2014.

School priority 3

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Leadership & Management

2013 Targets to achieve this outcome include:

- Educational leaders who have the expertise to lead the introduction of the National Curriculum.
- A comprehensive leadership strategy to ensure sustainable improvement and succession planning.
- BHS supports all staff to create a positive learning culture.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

- A number of Head Teachers and Senior Executive attended Regional Professional Learning activities relating to the implementation of the National Curriculum throughout 2013.
- Continuation of the ‘Shadow an Executive’ program, developed in 2012, in order to increase leadership density within the school.
- Successful school-based Professional Learning around leadership was conducted throughout 2013.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

- Provision of appropriate professional learning opportunities as well as relieving experience in order to support aspiring leaders.
- Develop a program which supports New Scheme Teachers Professional Competence Accreditation and maintenance.
- Investigate ways to strengthen the role of the Prefect body and the SRC in school decision making.
- Provide resources, support and training for staff to introduce the National Curriculum.
- Provide Professional Learning opportunities to enhance the delivery of Quality Teaching strategies by all staff.
- Foster external support to improve the physical learning environment.
- Develop leadership density by ‘buddying’ new or inexperienced teachers with more experienced members of staff.
- Professional Learning plans developed for all staff that shapes the Professional Learning policy/directions.

Professional learning

Professional Learning undertaken by teachers in 2013 was in line with the three target areas in the School Strategic Plan 2012-2014: Literacy & Numeracy, Engagement & Attainment, and Leadership & Management.

Activities conducted during the 2013 Staff Development Days included the new Australian Curriculum, ALARM (A Learning & Responding Matrix), LMBR (Learning Management & Business Reform Program), Moodle, a CPR Update, an E-emergency Course, ‘Work Health & Safety’, ‘Non-Violent Intervention’, and an information session on Diabetes.
In addition to the School Development Days, the school’s mandatory, choice-driven professional learning program consisted of a series of fortnightly workshops presented by staff on a range of topics which reflected school priorities and identified staff needs. Topics included Literacy; Teacher Self-Care; the online Classroom Teacher Program for New Scheme Teachers; Guiding Behaviour in Schools; Powerpoint and Excel; an introduction to video editing and acrobat; Computers for Beginners and Advanced; I-pads; and Sports Coaching.

The total Teacher Professional Learning Budget in 2013 was $45,120. The average expenditure per teacher was $524.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about Leadership Best Practice. This was achieved by surveying each group using SchoolMap. There were 90 parent responses, 804 student responses and 70 staff responses.

The responses from all groups demonstrated a favourable view of leadership responsibility, leadership for change, inclusive leadership and leadership for learning at Blakehurst High School. Some examples of responses to various questions/statements about the school included;

1. **Leaders use the forces that shape the school’s culture to enhance the quality of the school.**

2. **Leaders model commitment to school improvement.**

Program evaluations

Background

The Blakehurst High School strategic plan, which spans 2012-2014, has had a focus on sustaining and improving our excellent HSC Results. To this end, a small group of staff travelled to the Northern Beaches Secondary College to learn more about an innovative teaching and learning model known as ALARM. ALARM stands for ‘A Learning and Response Matrix’. The group then invited Max Woods, the initiator of the ALARM model, to share his knowledge of the ALARM program at a Staff Development Day. The teaching staff at Blakehurst High School unanimously supported the adoption of the ALARM model.
The school has received a $50,000 grant through Empowering Local Schools, National Partnership and decided to use part of the grant to hire Anne O’Donnell to assist in the implementation of ALARM. Anne is a former English Head teacher with valuable experience working with ALARM. Anne’s role is to act as a support for staff in the early stages of implementation.

Findings and Conclusions

All Blakehurst High School teachers have participated in professional learning throughout 2013 to learn more about ALARM and how to use it with Year 11 students. Initially, teachers were shown the ALARM matrix and the relationship between the verbs of this matrix and HSC curriculum and assessment. This provided the basis for the development of ALARM teaching resources to target the increasingly sophisticated content and skills of Stage 6 courses.

This was followed by the application of ALARM to an understanding of the demands of short answer and extended responses in HSC assessment. Students in Year 11 were taught how to critically interpret questions and apply the ALARM scaffold to written responses to show the highest level of learning required by the question. A paragraph structure called SEAL (Statement, Explanation, Analysis and Link) was developed to teach students the structure and detail required to obtain Band 5/6 HSC responses. This was supported by a focus on academic language and HSC essay writing skills. As a result, students who apply ALARM consistently are developing the learning and writing skills required for HSC success.

Ms O’Donnell has worked with all faculties as well as individual teachers and continues to act in a supportive role in the development of ALARM resources. Subject specific applications of ALARM have been addressed through Faculty meetings, team teaching and demonstration lessons. This has led to the collaborative development of ALARM teaching strategies and scaffolds. Staff commitment has continued to grow, with many teachers reporting increased awareness of the writing demands of the HSC course and confidence in the application of ALARM for student learning and responding.

Future Directions

Blakehurst High School will be increasing the use of the ALARM framework across the school. This means ALARM will be extended beyond Year 11, and incorporated in Year 12 lessons and the junior years in 2014. The ALARM model will be written into teaching and learning programs in all faculties, except Mathematics. We will continue to seek and provide training and development to support all faculties with the implementation of the ALARM model. This support will involve monitoring the ‘take up’ of ALARM at both a whole school and individual faculty level.

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school’s practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school’s future development.

Mr. Brad Lester– Principal.
Mrs. Lynette Paton – Deputy Principal.
Mr. Dan Ovens – Deputy Principal.
Ms. Sylvia Sklavounos – Head Teacher Teaching and Learning.
Ms. Linda O’Brien – Head Teacher Science.
Mr. Peter Slater – Head Teacher HSIE.
Ms. Judy Jacobsen – Head Teacher CAPA.
Mr. Tony Yelavich – Head Teacher PDHPE.
Mr. Nathan Smith – Sports Organiser.
Ms. Angela Centorrino – Careers Adviser.
Ms. Kim Morris – School Administration Manager.
Mr. Leo Andreone – President P&C Association.
Ms. Danielle Rossen – President SRC
School contact information

Blakehurst High School
270a Woniora Road
Blakehurst. 2221
Ph: 9546 3281
Fax: 9547 1024
Email: Blakehurst-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
Web: www.blakehurst-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
School Code: 8236

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