Quakers Hill High School
Annual School Report 2013
School context

Quakers Hill High School is a public coeducational Year 7-10 high school situated in the north-west of Sydney, the largest 7-10 campus in NSW. It is one of four schools forming the Nirimba Collegiate Group with over 76 teaching staff and 15 support staff. The student population comprises 37% from a language background other than English and over 50 Indigenous students.

Quakers Hill High School is designed to meet the educational and welfare needs of students in a Stage 4/5 environment, encouraging all students to be lifelong learners and to become active citizens of the world. The school aims to provide a diverse and comprehensive curriculum responsive to the needs and aspirations of students with a focus on teaching and learning and teacher quality.

Principal’s message

The staff at Quakers Hill High School is committed to student success at every level. A wide range of learning opportunities and experiences which are designed to allow students to explore their interests and to develop talents is offered. The school is known in its community for its excellent academic, sporting and cultural achievements.

The school focuses on quality teaching by extending and enhancing the talents, achievements and aspirations of all of its students. Programs are implemented for gifted and talented education as well as programs for students who excel in the sporting and cultural arenas.

Students in the Support Unit experience equivalent high quality learning opportunities and experiences and are integrated into the mainstream through sporting and other extra-curricular activities.

The school and its community work together, providing strong congruence of purpose and alignment between the school and home. The school encourages students to value excellence, respect, responsibility, democracy and lifelong learning. Curriculum and teaching and learning programs at the school reflect student choice and student needs. There is a strong focus on personal and creative growth, challenging learning experiences, independence in thinking, risk taking, autonomy, resilience and initiative.

All measures of student achievement indicate that 2013 was another outstanding year for the school. It is the aim of the school to ensure that all students achieve their academic potential, while at the same time, being stimulated, challenged and encouraged to embrace possibilities which will allow them to grow and develop as young people.

2013 was a significant milestone for our school as it marked 20 years of delivering high quality education to the community around Quakers Hill. Our school motto ‘A caring educational community shaping a positive future’ is the focus point for all that the school endeavours to do. Whilst the school has a particularly impressive resume that reaches out to all students and their varying needs and interests, the memorabilia hung around the school hall is perhaps the best indicator of the wonderful legacy to the creative arts that the school has made over the past 20 years….. our annual school musical. Thus much of the celebratory activities marking our 20 year anniversary centred around the performing arts.

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.

Lauretta Claus

P&C message

Quakers Hill High School P&C meetings are held monthly to discuss educational issues, provide valuable feedback and plan for improvements to benefit all students.

This year members of the P&C have been involved in:
• merit selection panels;
• representation on committees for the uniform shop and school finance;
• selection panel for the new canteen lease;
• establishment of the Nirimbba Collegiate Parents and Citizens Group;
• assisting with the Year 10 cake stalls to help raise money for their formal; and
• supporting the school play with the sewing of costumes.

P&C members regularly assisted Mrs. Robertson in the uniform shop and with uniform sales on the Year 7 Information night.

With the funds raised through the uniform shop, the P&C were able to provide a school diary for every student in 2013 as well as:

• $5000 for the purchase of lighting equipment in the performance space. This lighting was essential in the 20th year celebration plays “The Elephant Man” and “Rinse the Blood off My Toga”. These performances were wonderful and congratulations should be given to all involved.
• $15 000 to supply and install an electronic sign for the front of the school to assist the school in communicating with the wider community.
• $20 000 to supply and install outdoor seating in the senior area and top area near G block. The students now have more areas to sit outside.

We have had a busy 2013 and look forward to another successful year in 2014.

Joanne Warner, P&C President

Student representatives’ message

As the 2013 school leaders, we have been proud to lead the SRC. It has been a great year; we have thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

SRC Leadership camp was one of the highlights of the year. It was a moment where the SRC learnt to trust each other and work as a group. It marked the point where many friendships were created and dispelled the awkwardness of 28 strangers working together to improve the school.

This year the SRC has achieved quite a number of goals. We kicked off the year with our annual Valentine’s Day event which was a major success. We also managed to get the DJ program up and running again. Jeans for Genes day was another popular fundraiser that raised a lot of money for a good cause. We re-introduced SRC ‘Hire a Helper Day’ which has not been run for many years; it was a huge success. This year marked the 20th Year of QHHS and to celebrate this, the school held a celebration week. The SRC had a major part to play in this week, running our first ever Spirit Day. This included events such as ‘The Fun Run’ which many students thoroughly enjoyed, a students versus teachers soccer match, many different types of games and technological fun as well as a photo booth that was very popular. We also ran lots of cupcake stalls to raise more money for the SRC development. After the devastation caused by the local bushfires, the SRC decided that we should aid other students and their families in need. We, as a school, raised over $1500. We were very happy to be able to give back something to our fellow school community in Winmalee. To finish the year on a high note, the SRC ran the QHHS Spelling Bee which we hope grows in the future to become a collegiate event.

Megan Warner, Daniel Marsh, Christopher McRae and Anita Omoruyi

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile
Management of non-attendance

2013 saw the continued implementation of our Student Attendance Plan which monitors and seeks to improve all student attendance. Close scrutiny by staff during Roll Call of students’ attendance patterns and a call home program, saw a dramatic spike in the numbers of attendance awards presented to students with exemplary or improved attendance patterns. The plan also continued to focus on managing students at risk due to poor attendance patterns and the school worked closely with the HSLO to track, review and initiate alternative programs for students with at-risk attendance. Our attendance plan is managed by the Head Teacher Administration working closely with our Welfare and Learning Support Teams.

Workforce information

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

Workforce composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Principal(s)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Teachers</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and Support Teacher(s)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of ESL</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support Staff</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>90.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 2013 Australian Education Regulation, requires schools to report on the Aboriginal composition of their workforce. In 2013 we had one Indigenous teaching member of staff and one part-time Indigenous teachers aide.

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>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Institute of Teachers Accreditation</td>
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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>30/11/2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>1080237.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>556799.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>414495.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>445053.82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>37322.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>86798.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>2620706.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**            |            |
| Teaching & learning        |            |
| Key learning areas         | 127434.73  |
| Excursions                 | 146629.84  |
| Extracurricular dissections| 86554.62   |
| Library                    | 13756.90   |
| Training & development     | 0.00       |
| Tied funds                 | 238948.86  |
| Casual relief teachers     | 84235.33   |
| Administration & office    | 208433.05  |
| School-operated canteen    | 0.00       |
| Utilities                  | 110408.17  |
| Maintenance                | 49578.35   |
| Trust accounts             | 75641.17   |
| Capital programs           | 177677.35  |
| **Total expenditure**      | 1319298.37 |
| **Balance carried forward**| 1301408.30 |

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

School performance 2013

Our students achieved results which have been typical of our performance over the past five years. There was promising achievement again for our ATSI students and some improvement in our overall performance in numeracy.

Academic achievements

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10.

The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

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

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

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

Click on the link [http://www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) and enter the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

NAPLAN Year 7 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

Overall the school recognises that there are still proportionately the same numbers of students not meeting national benchmarks in literacy and numeracy and the Learning Support Team and Learning Centre will continue to meet the needs of these students. In 2013, however, there were some outstanding successes with the improved learning outcomes for our Aboriginal students.

There was some growth in the top bands and a significant increase in the numbers of students achieving Band 9. The overall number of students achieving Band 9 well exceeded the Nirimba SEG average. The Year 7 Boys Writing and Grammar and Punctuation results continue to languish behind the girls’ results. In fact the Year 7 girls’ results outperformed the girls in the Nirimba SEG, particularly in the middle Bands 6 and 7. The results indicate that the school needs to continue to work closely with our feeder primary schools as part of our transition program. Addressing the
needs of improving our boys’ writing results will continue to be a focus of the school’s management plan and staff professional learning.

NAPLAN Year 7 – Numeracy

Quakers Hill High School students again performed strongly in Bands 7 and 6 in the Numeracy section of NAPLAN and there was a reduction in the numbers of students achieving in the lowest band. In the middle three bands QHHS exceeded the SEG average in Bands 6, 7 and 8. Year 7 boys outperformed the Year 7 girls in the top bands. It was pleasing to see a shift in the performance of girls from band 6 into band 7.

NAPLAN Year 9 - Literacy (including Reading, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation)

The school again outperformed the Nirrimba SEG across the top three bands of Year 9 Reading, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation and there was a significant rise in the numbers of students achieving in the middle bands compared with 2012 results. The Year 9 girls’ results in Grammar and Punctuation exceeded the state average in the top two bands and they performed well in Writing with an improvement of 18 scale scores above the 2012 results. The extensive preparation work the staff did prior to the NAPLAN tests will continue in 2014 and there will be a much greater focus on sharing staff strategies to improve student spelling and reading which is a strong focus of the Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnerships program.

Other achievements

Sport

Quakers Hill High School had another successful sporting year, excelling in both team and individual events on the fields, tracks and pools around the Blacktown and Sydney West regions. The Quakers Hill High community, including students, parents and teachers should be extremely proud of the amazing performances and sportsmanship that our students showed throughout the year.
The annual swimming carnival was the first event of the year. Many records were broken and a large amount of talent was on display. This year was the last year that Mount Druitt Pool would host Quakers Hill High School’s carnival; for future carnivals we are moving to Blacktown Pool. Quakers Hill High School had 46 students progress to the Blacktown Zone swimming carnival and 42 students who then went onto represent the Blacktown Zone at the Sydney West swimming meet held at Homebush Olympic Aquatic Centre.

Congratulations to the following students who received the trophy for age champion at our school’s swimming carnival.

Females: Katelyn Stephenson (12yrs), Tynesha Caruana (13yrs), Jamie Todd (14yrs), Caitlin Brown (15yrs) and Dannielle Maker (16yrs).

Males: Michael Cook (12yrs), Hayden Moran (13yrs), Matthew Walker (14yrs), Luke Micallef (15yrs) and Caleb Hansford (16yrs).

Katelyn Stephenson won the overall female champion award at the Blacktown Zone swimming carnival and Caleb Hansford had a very successful swimming year winning many awards throughout the year and representing CHS at the national championships.

Quakers Hill High School entered into boys; cricket, football, Buckley Shield, touch, basketball and girls; football, netball, softball, touch, volleyball and basketball. All coaches and students should be proud of their efforts and behaviour at these events.

The boys U15s basketball team did extremely well competing in the Sydney West Final 8 Gala Day. A fantastic team effort by the boys in the semifinal against Girraween finished them in the top four of Western Sydney and 5 points away from being in the last 22 in the state.

The team that really stood out in 2013 was the U14 boys rugby league team, coached by Mr Macintyre. Penrith junior rugby league is the largest junior base in the southern hemisphere and Parramatta the second largest, so to make the regional final of the Sydney West leg of the Buckley Shield is a tremendous effort. The team set a Gala Day record when they beat Glenwood HS by 40 points in a 15 minute game and when they beat Model Farms HS 54 to 10. Ariana Skinner is to be congratulated on her selection into the Penrith Panthers U16s girls rugby league team.

May provided us with perfect weather for our athletics carnival held at Blacktown Olympic Park. Several records were broken in both field and track events, highlighting the talent we have at Quakers Hill High. We had 139 students advance onto Zone Athletics and many progress onto the Sydney West carnival. Quakers Hill High School won the overall zone carnival champion title.

Congratulations to the following students who received the trophy for age champion at our school’s athletics carnival.

Female: Taya McLean (12yrs), Afraa Jumma (13yrs), Toni McLean (14yrs), Sara Vukasinovic (15yrs), Rachelle Perceval (16yrs).

Male: Iqbal Khurassani (12yrs), Domenic DiGhionno (13yrs), Pita Faulalo (14yrs), Waheed Shinwari (15yrs) and Joshua Marshall (16yrs).

At the Sydney West Athletics carnival a deserving Year 9 athlete Brock Styles won the Athlete with a Disability U16s 100m Australian record. Brock then went onto CHS Athletics and was awarded the AWD male outstanding athlete award.
Our long distance runners did an amazing job at the Quakers Hill High School competitors only Cross Country track. Congratulations to the following students who received the trophy for age champion at our school’s Cross Country competition.

Female: Katelyn Stephenson (12yrs), Sarah Branson (13yrs), Toni McLean (14yrs), Alicia Stattmann (15yrs), Rachelle Perceval (16yrs).

Male: Iqbal Khurassani (12yrs), Clayton Faulalo (13yrs), Daniel McDougall (14yrs), Waheed Shinwari (15yrs), Luke Gordon (16yrs).

Aside from the major competitions we also continued to strengthen as a school winning the overall points at the Collegiate Cup competition. Quakers Hill High School successfully participated in another Blacktown Zone Gala Day held at various locations across the Blacktown Zone on Monday 9th and 16th September 2013. 149 Year 8 students and 189 Year 7 students enjoyed various sports including netball, soccer and touch football. 22 Year 9 and 10 students volunteered to referee the games throughout the day. Every team was very competitive on the day and was rewarded by their final results.

School sport continues to evolve with many awards being handed out to worthy winning teams and individuals who excelled throughout each semester.

Overall the 2013 sporting arena at QHHS has been particularly rewarding with many great achievements. The school spirit, effort and commitment that the students put in to represent the school has been by far our biggest accomplishment. We look forward to an even greater year of successes and triumphs over the 2014 sporting year.

**Significant programs and initiatives**

**Aboriginal education**

The school management team recognises the importance of continuing to ensure that measures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to improve and enhance their literacy and numeracy skills, as well as providing a range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills and self esteem, are of paramount importance.

In 2013 the school focused on the compilation of meaningful and quality Personalised Learning Plans for every Aboriginal student. These PLPs were created in consultation with the students and parent representatives. The consultation process also included the two staff members responsible for Stage 4 transition and Stage 5 transition. With the Stage 5 students there was a particular focus on career planning and pathways as well as senior subject selection at Wyndham College.

Again the school employed an Aboriginal tutor through the government agency, Norta Norta. The tutor was responsible for individual assistance to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of our Aboriginal students who were falling below benchmark on NAPLAN tests. In 2013 there were some outstanding successes with improved learning outcomes for our Indigenous students. For example, Year 7 ATSI boys were 17 scale scores above the state average growth in Writing, while Year 9 ATSI girls were 12 scale scores above the state average.

In conjunction with the Aboriginal Education Committee, the QHHS Aboriginal students coordinated the development of an Aboriginal outdoor learning centre. This outdoor learning centre will not only provide a venue for students to seek out a place for reflection and study outside the traditional classroom but will also be a means to improve all students’ awareness of Aboriginal cultural ties with the land.

**Multicultural education**

The school remains committed to acknowledging and celebrating the many different cultures that make up the QHHS community. The annual Harmony Day assembly and celebration was again an opportunity to recognise the rich cultural identity of the school.

As part of the school’s 20th anniversary celebrations, staff from the CAPA faculty identified talented art students to participate in the creation of a mural for the front of the school hall. This mural titled “Inclusion” was to be a celebration of the many different cultural groups that make up the school community.

This year students also participated in the RAW program which was a regionally hosted event for students who were new arrivals to this country. This initiative gave these students the opportunities to share their cultural heritage as well as understand the resources available in the
community to assist them and their families with the transition to the Australian lifestyle.

National Partnerships and significant Commonwealth initiatives

Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnerships is an initiative focussing on improving the performance of students who are falling behind in literacy and/or numeracy. This includes targeted groups such as students from disadvantaged backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and is underpinned by a whole-school approach to improving student outcomes in literacy and numeracy. It recognises the critical role of quality teaching.

Literacy was selected as the priority focus area, with Year 8 the nominated target group. A Literacy National Partnerships Team was established in Term 2; the team comprised: Mrs. Gail Attwood (Learning and Support), Ms Emily Gray, (English), Ms Maria Romerosa (English) and Mr. Ben Dezman (Learning and Support).

The team has worked in a variety of ways throughout the year to build classroom teacher capacity to improve outcomes in literacy, including presentation of teacher professional learning on Staff Development Day in Term 3. Each faculty subsequently received targeted support for a seven week period, with Team members observing lessons, team teaching, providing strategies and resources and assisting with the writing of literacy-enhanced units of subject-specific work. Ongoing teacher professional learning has occurred at regular intervals at staff meetings, with a weekly grammar and punctuation focus introduced at the start of Term 3, and cross-curricular literacy strategies being provided to staff on a fortnightly basis. Teachers have been monitoring the correct use of punctuation and grammar in students’ written and spoken communication, with 64% of staff having indicated that improvements in student literacy are becoming increasingly observable.

The existing Year 8 Literacy program has been revised with skill-specific units of work being taught from the start of Semester 2. The Year 7 Literacy program has been similarly revised, with the teaching of these units to commence at the start of 2014. From a survey conducted early in Term 4, 80% of staff agreed that their understanding of literacy had increased and that they were more confidently and capably incorporating literacy into their everyday teaching practice. The same percentage of staff indicated that their own understanding and use of correct punctuation had improved, and that embedding literacy into their pedagogy was perceived as sustainable and becoming increasingly integral to their teaching practice. In their responses to a survey required for mandatory Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnerships reporting purposes, 63% of students indicated that the activities that their teachers use in Literacy help them to learn. As a result of a parent survey conducted at parent teacher evening, 72% of parents indicated that they would like readily available information to enable them to assist their children to improve their literacy skills. The Team is developing a Help your Child page for the school website, in conjunction with the Learning and Support Teachers, to meet this need. It is envisaged that this will be accessible mid Semester 1 2014.

Since the start of the whole school ILNNP initiative at Quakers High School there has been an approximate 8% increase in the numbers of Year 8 students who are reading at, or above, expected National Year 8 benchmarks. As such, the Literacy National Partnerships endeavours will continue in Semester 1 2014 to consolidate and further the literacy gains made this year.

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:

- parent survey and discussion forums
- Teacher Professional Learning Plans
• executive conference and data analysis.

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School Priority 1 - Student Learning
Outcomes from 2012–2014
Improved literacy outcomes in Years 7 and 9 in overall literacy, especially for boys
Improved overall reading and writing results in Years 7 and 9
Reduced percentage of students at or below National Minimum Standard (NMS)
Improved numeracy outcomes for Years 7 and 9 Aboriginal students with students achieving outcomes in line with the broader student population
Increased staff understanding of assessment requirements and best practice
Students access technology at school to enhance their learning opportunities via lesson activities, programs and assessments

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
• full-time utilisation of the Learning Centre which has seen an increase in student assessment task completion
• staff commitment to the use of Moodle, OLE and Edmodo for submission of student work
• sharing of literacy strategies as an integral element of teacher professional learning.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
• effective utilisation of the QHHS Learning Centre and Learning Support Team to identify student learning needs
• increased professional learning opportunities for staff on the explicit teaching of strategies to enhance literacy and numeracy skills
• implement all recommendations of N Award/ Assessment review.

School Priority 2 - Student Engagement and Attainment
Outcomes from 2012–2014
School culture and practice that respects and responds to every student’s aspirations, culture, gender and learning potential
Quality teaching practices used for every student with particular attention to personalised learning
Continuum of learning from 7 – 10 which provides for every student with particular emphasis on transition points
Social and emotional wellbeing and skills for life for every student

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
• effective introduction of Reward Excursion for students who have complied with all school expectations
• introduction of weekly PBL lessons during Roll Call, dealing with managing bullying behaviours
• restructure of the school Welfare Team and the inclusion of two transition advisers; one for Stage 4 and the other Stage 5.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
• continue to enhance staff capacity to manage interactions with students in a positive manner
• maintain school awards program with a particular focus on student motivation.

School Priority 3 - Teacher Quality and Leadership
Outcomes from 2012–2014
Greater capacity of teachers to improve student outcomes
Increase in the number of teachers with national accreditation
Improved capacity of staff to plan, prepare for and implement the new National Curriculum
Quality teaching practices used for every student with particular attention to personalised learning
Enhancement of school leadership team and its capacity to build and facilitate further school improvement
Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
- executive conference agenda focused on accreditation processes
- strong involvement in the planning and coordination of the Nirimba Learning Community Professional Learning Day.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
- enhance the school-based professional learning program ‘HOT HOUR’ as an integral part of individual staff TARS
- ensure all staff complete their individual professional learning plan and use these plans as a guide in the provision of professional learning through staff meetings, faculty time and TARS/EARS processes.

School Priority 4 - School Organisation

Outcomes from 2012–2014

Improved delivery of student outcomes by all teachers

Systems and structures better meet the needs of students and the community

Increased use of the school website to coordinate the dissemination of information about the school

Staff use technology with confidence in teaching, learning, assessment, administration and professional learning

Technology used effectively to communicate with our community

Parental engagement in supporting their child’s learning

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:
- establishment of school Facebook page
- establishment and refurbishment of two additional mini computer labs in TAS and CAPA
- Professional Learning Team created to develop teacher skills in use of OLE.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:
- liaise with parents and community to determine ways to facilitate better communication.

Professional learning

The focus of professional learning was to support areas targeted in the 2013 School Management Plan: quality teaching and learning, literacy and numeracy, Aboriginal education and student engagement. Training and development is a key element in our school. All professional learning is planned, focused and directed towards building the capacity of all staff to improve student learning outcomes.

During 2013, professional development was delivered through school-based activities including school development days, staff meetings, conferences, Higher Order Thinking HOT hour sessions and faculty activities. Five School Development Days were held throughout the year with workshops and presentations focusing on teacher quality, ICT strategies in the classroom, school policy development and Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) – focussing specifically on dealing with bullying and classroom management. The Nirimba Learning Community, comprising nine high schools, hosted curriculum workshops at various sites. Workshops included planning and programming for the National Curriculum, assessment and other KLA specific sessions. This was a highly successful day where many network groups were initiated and continued to develop throughout the year. All staff were trained in Child Protection and Critical Incident Management and the QHHS Executive conference addressed assessment practices across the school and preparation for the introduction of the National Curriculum.

In addition, staff (including SASS) accessed a total of 101 courses provided by the DEC and external sources. The distribution of professional learning funds is as follows: Career Development 35%, Welfare 23%, Quality Teaching 18%, Syllabus
Implementation 9%, ICT 8% and Literacy/ Numeracy 7%.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction
In 2013, the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.
Their responses are presented below.

Program evaluations
Gifted and Talented Processes and Programs Evaluation
Background
At Quakers Hill High School enrichment and accelerated classes are designed to meet the academic learning needs of gifted and talented students. In Year 7 two targeted enrichment classes run every year to engage identified gifted and talented students in extended learning activities across all KLAs. Entry to these classes is through parent application, primary school feedback and pre-testing carried out by Quakers Hill High School as part of the Year 6 Transition program. In 2013 the accelerated learning program for Stage 5 expanded to include a class in mathematics, adding to the existing accelerated classes in history and geography that have been running successfully for over a decade, with past students studying in universities in Australia and overseas.

Extracurricular programs have continued to be a strong focus across the school in providing additional extension and enrichment for gifted and talented students. Four teams were entered in the Tournament of the Minds competition, with three of the four teams gaining Highly Commended awards at regional level. The Prosperitas program had another highly successful year with 23 extended student projects submitted across a variety of KLAs. Entry in external competitions occurred across all faculties, along with regular student participation in school-based activities such as sporting teams, debating and the chess competition.

Student achievement continued to be promoted across the school and within the wider school community through an explicit focus on the regular showcasing of student work at school assemblies, in the school newsletter ‘Contact’ and on the school website.

Gifted and talented students across Years 7-10 are identified through a combination of staff and parent surveys and feedback. Students are identified for a range of skills and abilities within the categories of ‘intellectual’, ‘creative’, ‘physical’ and ‘leadership’ skills.

The Gifted and Talented team has worked throughout 2013 to raise the profile of gifted and talented students across the school and to increase staff understanding of teaching and learning strategies, specifically targeting the needs of gifted and talented students across a diverse range of skill areas and learning styles.

The purpose of this evaluation has been to assess the effectiveness of the programs currently in place for gifted and talented students and to identify areas for further improvement nominated by both staff and students, with a particular focus on teaching and learning within all KLAs. This evaluation included surveys for all staff and currently identified gifted and talented students.

Findings and conclusions
- Professional development of staff resulted in 93% of staff having a focus on gifted and talented students in their course programs.
- 16% of staff attended external professional development courses specifically targeting the needs of gifted and talented students.
- 41% of staff contributed to faculty professional learning on strategies to cater for gifted and talented students.
- 25% of staff attended within school professional learning on the identification and needs of gifted and talented students.
- 50% of staff felt their understanding of gifted and talented student identification and their ability to cater for gifted and talented students had improved over the year.
- 75% of staff believes that their faculty is focused on identification and strategies to teach gifted and talented students. Staff listed an increase in the provision of extension and enrichment tasks being embedded into their everyday teaching practice.
• 74% of staff felt that the Gifted and Talented team had raised the profile of these students within the school.

• Awareness of gifted and talented students has increased markedly within the school due to the student identification processes initiated in 2012 that are completed annually by all staff.

• The majority of staff indicated the need for further professional development in teaching and learning strategies for the classroom.

• Several staff requested more time to specifically program and plan for gifted and talented students in their faculty area.

• Students reported positive learning experiences across all KLAs, with particular identification of the learning being interesting, varied, challenging and fun.

• Students described negative experiences in a few classes across the KLAs, with difficult student behaviour, poor quality learning experiences and lack of interest in the work cited as reasons for their lack of engagement in the lessons.

• The majority of students indicated that they were happy with their educational progress, identifying positive experiences with supportive staff and the variety of subjects and extracurricular activities offered at the school as reasons for this.

• The few students who reported negative feelings about their educational progress identified this as being due to a poor quality learning environment in one or a few of their classes.

Future directions

• Set up and provide a systematic program of school-based staff professional learning sessions on further developing teaching and learning strategies to cater for the needs of gifted and talented students in all KLAs.

• Ensure that specific teaching and learning strategies for gifted and talented students are incorporated formally into all faculty programs.

• Set up a regular presentation program in staff meetings of student achievement and successful gifted and talented classroom strategies in all faculties to further promote staff involvement and engagement in planning for gifted and talented students in the classroom through creative and critical thinking.

• Implement a process to write individual learning plans for all identified gifted and talented students.

• Continue the staff identification procedures of gifted and talented students across Years 7-10 and ensure that the results are immediately available to all staff.

• Continue the focus on regularly promoting and showcasing student achievement through school assemblies, the fortnightly newsletter ‘Contact’ and the school website.

• Further develop, streamline, publicise and promote the school’s involvement in external competitions across all KLAs.

• Survey all students early in the year about the types of extracurricular activities they would like to be involved in at Quakers Hill High School.

• Develop links with gifted and talented students in feeder primary schools through the introduction of the Primary School Prosperitas program, beginning with Barnier Public School in 2014.

• Continue to develop the leadership skills of identified gifted and talented students through initiatives undertaken by the SRC and through the student mentoring program attached to the Primary School Prosperitas program.

Year 10 Transition Survey

In 2013 the school sought the opinions of Year 10 students about their overall experience of the school with a particular focus on school strengths, areas for improvement and barriers to success. Of the 225 respondents, 185 strongly agreed that they would encourage others to attend QHHS based on a number of reasons including range of opportunities, teaching
excellence and variety of electives available. 19 students indicated they would not recommend the school due to other students and/or facilities. 91% of students felt supported by the school community with 70% highlighting a trusted teacher as someone they would turn to for assistance. Lack of motivation was indicated as the major barrier (34%) to academic success with assessment and difficulties with work also being highlighted (23%).

N Award Warning System and Processes Evaluation

Background

In 2013 assessment processes and systems have been evaluated and this resulted in the production of a Year 10 Assessment booklet and work towards an N Award Warning Flowchart to capture implemented changes. In 2013 a Board of Studies spokesperson addressed the executive, leading to further change wherein a greater emphasis was placed on assessment completion, with school resources being dedicated to this purpose. As a consequence of these shifts there have been some concerns about how consistently the N Award Warning system is applied and how effectively it prepares QHHS students for Stage 6 assessment requirements.

In 2013 one emerging area for the school was to achieve a greater level of cohesion in the warning system with the Head Teacher PDHPE undertaking to provide staff development in the areas of Assessment, N Award Warning processes, redemption of warnings, tracking warnings and other related concerns.

The primary aim of this evaluation has been to assess the success of these measures and to identify any areas for improvement. The evaluation saw all Year 10 students, all classroom teachers and all head teachers surveyed. 20% of Year 9 students and parents of Year 10 students were also surveyed. Three focus groups of students were also interviewed.

The terms of reference were to evaluate:

— The understanding of students, teachers and parents of the N Award Warning System; and
— the effectiveness of the established processes to support staff and guide students towards improved academic and work expectations.

Findings and conclusions

- All Year 10 students understood the purpose of ‘N Award Warnings’ and the majority were able to accurately identify the different behaviours and actions that would incur ‘N Award Warnings’. Year 9 results demonstrated higher levels of uncertainty over what would lead to a warning.
- All students knew that ‘N Award Warnings’ could be redeemed and they were able to describe aspects of the redemption process.
- The majority of students indicated that they were unconcerned about receiving N Award Warnings, however 78% agreed that they would always try to redeem them or had redeemed them in the past.
- 86% of all respondents agreed that the system was regularly or adequately explained.
- Less than half of all respondents indicated that they had read or used the QHHS Assessment Booklet.
- Results from head teachers and classroom teachers showed some disagreement over the behaviours and actions that could lead to an ‘N Award Warning’ although all staff agreed that warnings could be redeemed and all understood how this occurred. Overall, HTs demonstrated a much stronger understanding of behaviours and actions that could result in an N Award Warning.
- Some staff felt the ‘N Award Warning’ system was unclear to students and requested further clarification through
the development of flowcharts and more visible processes.

- Staff and head teachers felt the system was ‘regularly’ explained to students.

- All head teachers and over 70% of staff said they discuss all warnings with students and explain how each task might be redeemed. Staff contacted parents ‘mostly’ or ‘sometimes’. This was at variance with statements in focus groups where all students agreed that they sometimes received warnings without being told by the teacher that this was a possibility. Several indicated that one KLA emailed out assessments without ever directly addressing them in the classroom.

- All classroom teachers/head teachers agree that they track all letters through systems such as keeping copies, specific files, diarising due dates, monitoring via FCW and so on.

- Several staff believed that there are no consequences for students and that students do not take ‘N Award Warnings’ seriously.

- Responses from parents indicated that most did not have a clear understanding of what could result in an N Award Warning though all except one agreed that copying another person’s task would lead to a warning. All parents understood that a warning could be redeemed and all knew how.

- Several parents claimed the system was unclear with several also being unsure of the system. The majority of parents believed it was easy to follow.

- Several parents indicated that parents should be informed from the beginning via a phone call or individual meeting.

- Parents unanimously agreed that they would discuss warnings with their child and that they would be concerned about receiving warnings. 100% of parents whose children had received N Award Warnings agreed that they had been contacted: 75% by letter and 25% via phone.

**Future directions**

- Ensure that Year 10 students and parents are regularly reminded of the serious nature of warnings and how they work.

- Reiterate the concept of diligence and sustained effort and what this looks like in and out of class and reinforce the various actions and behaviours that can lead to an ‘N Award Warning’.

- More explicit instruction for Year 9 who are still unsure about the system and how it works.

- Complete, publish and explicitly teach all staff the QHHS Assessment Flowchart.

- Develop a faculty/classroom teacher N Award Warning tracking system to support process and cohesion.

- Develop a SMART lesson for Year 10 based around the QHHS Stage 5 Assessment Booklet.

- Clearance of all accrued N Awards to occur once a term.

- Implement a more systematic student review process highlighting students identified as at-risk by the end of Term 1.

- Investigate the current junior assessment policy and how it supports current Stage 5 policy.

- Ensure all students sign for N Award Warning letters to indicate that they have received them.

**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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Beatrice Maricic, Deputy Principal
Rebecca Mahon, Deputy Principal
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Karen Critchley, Head Teacher
Nicole Reardon, Teacher
Bronwyn Tweeddale, Teacher
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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: