

Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School  
**Annual Report**  
**2014**



# Annual Report 2014

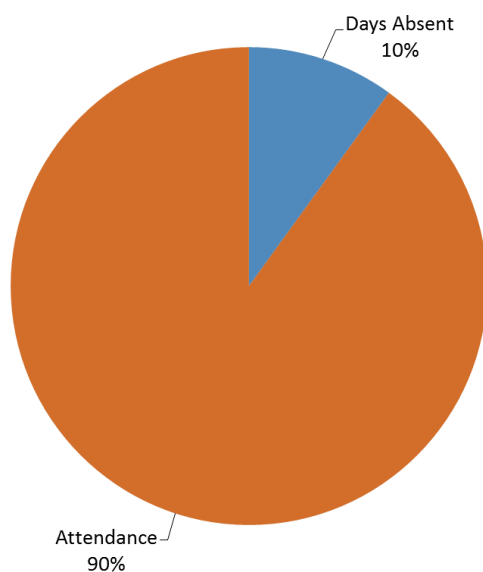
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As part of the funding agreement between schools and the Commonwealth Government, all schools are required to report to parents and the broader community on a range of aspects of school life. Should you have any queries about this data please feel free to contact me by email at [rhodese@lowtherhall.vic.edu.au](mailto:rhodese@lowtherhall.vic.edu.au).

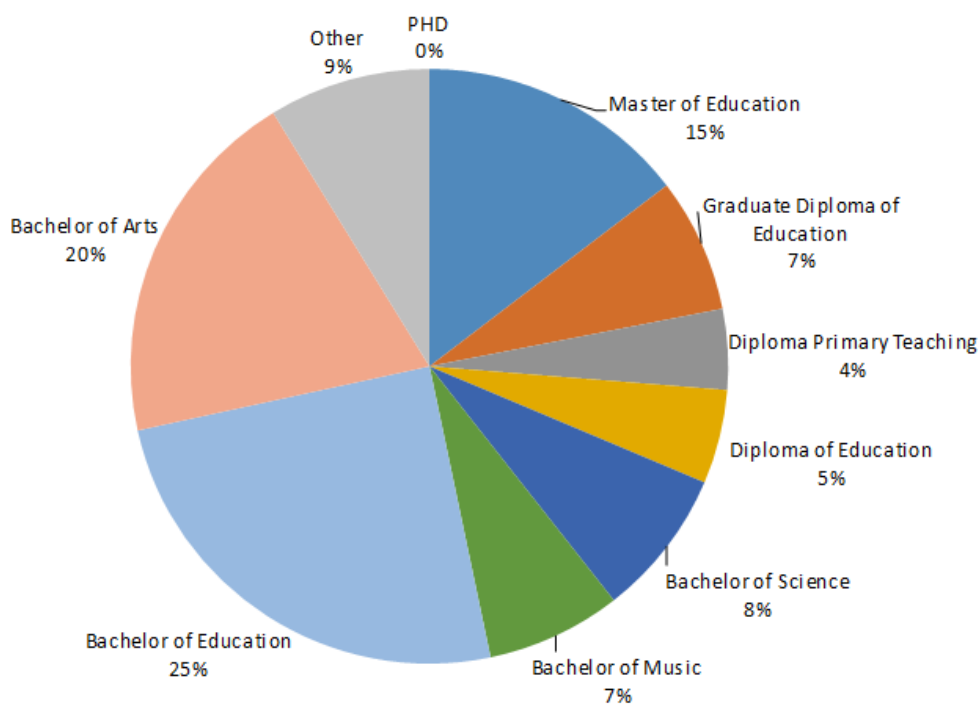
I hope you find this summary of information from 2014 interesting and informative.

**Ms Elisabeth Rhodes**  
Principal

## Teaching Staff Attendance



## Teacher Qualifications



## Staff Retention

Two of our junior academic staff and one of the administration staff retired at the end of 2014. Of the administration staff, one accepted a position elsewhere. Of the teaching staff, three resigned. Three academic staff completed their contracts with the School at the end of 2014.

## Teacher Participation in Professional Learning

During 2014 the School continued to promote Professional Learning throughout our staff community. Staff across the School attend conferences, workshops and engaging with a variety of external consultants to promote research and best practice.

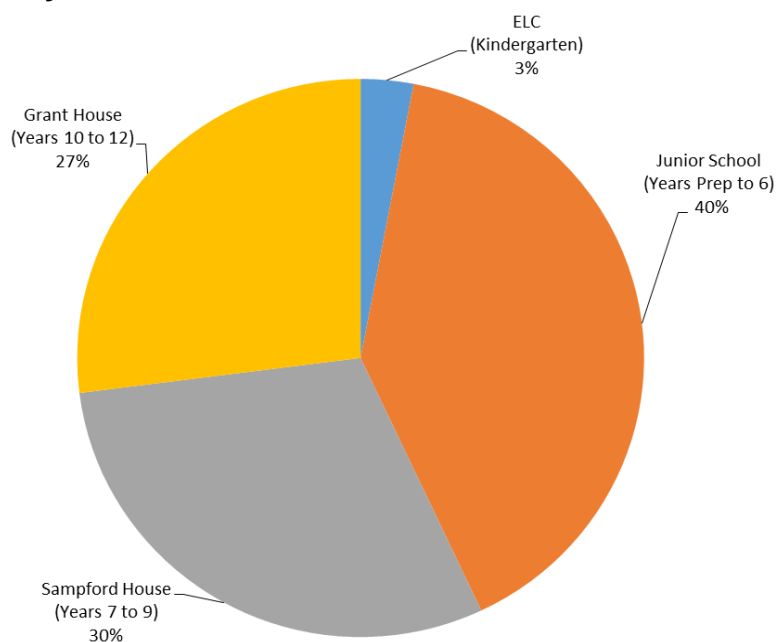
As well as continuing to focus on the key areas identified in the Strategic Plan for Teaching and Learning, professional learning for teaching staff took place within and outside the School. The work of Robert Marzano, Carol-Ann Tomlinson and Jay McTighe continued to be central in the development of pedagogy and curriculum writing. Teachers continued to work face to face and in a blended learning environment with our Digital Learning Consultant to develop best practice in the integration of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and technologies into the classroom. Staff continued to attend specialised conferences related to their subject areas and members of the Senior School staff participated in VCE assessing and examination marking.

There was an opportunity for teaching staff to participate in an “Aspiring Leaders” course run internally which involved a shadowing component as well as professional readings, workshops and reflection.

## Student Attendance

2014	Attendance Rate Across the Year	2014	Attendance Rate Across the Year
Kindergarten	100%	Year 6	96%
Prep	95%	Year 7	96%
Year 1	95%	Year 8	96%
Year 2	95%	Year 9	97%
Year 3	95%	Year 10	96%
Year 4	95%	Year 11	96%
Year 5	94%	Year 12	97%

## Summary of Enrolments 2014



## Student Retention

In Year 9 2011 there were 75 girls. In Year 12 2014 there were 71 students, representing a 95% retention rate.

## NAPLAN Testing

The National Benchmarks are levels of achievement agreed upon by the States to be the minimum acceptable standards at each particular Year Level. These Benchmarks are measured across Australia through the National tests (NAPLAN). The graphs show the percentage of students at or above the benchmark for 2013 and 2014 for each year level tested.

### How does the School use the NAPLAN data?

These students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 completed the NAPLAN tests in May 2014 and the results arrived in the School in September 2014. The School received individual and cohort data.

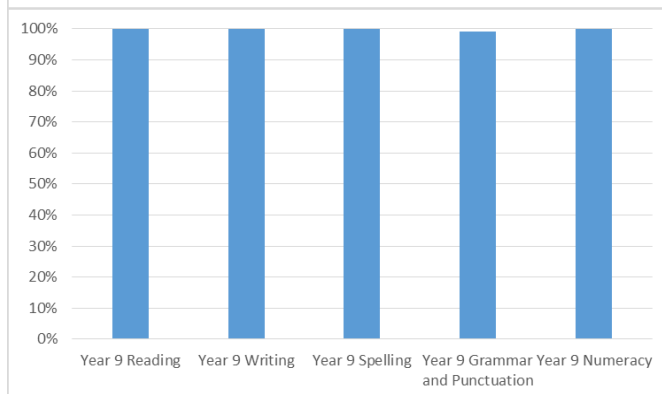
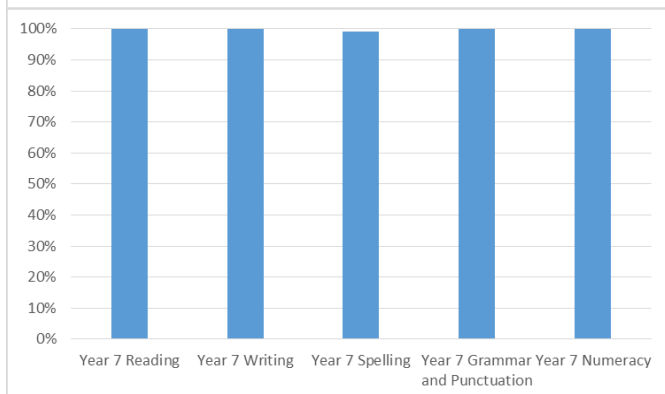
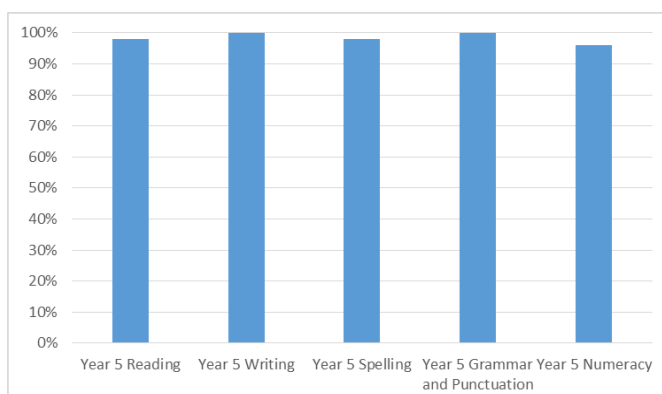
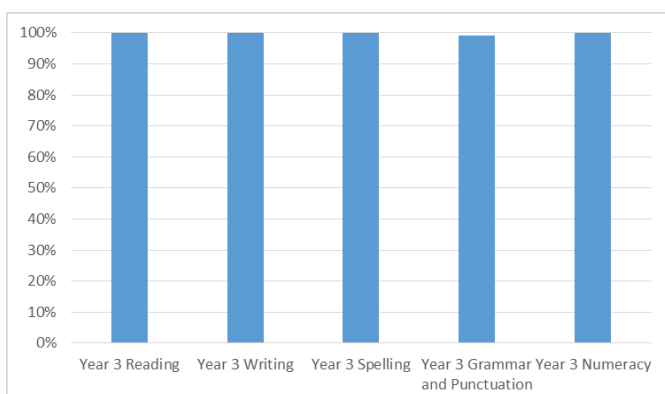
#### For individual students:

- Parents received the printed results for their daughter
- Meetings were held with parents to discuss their daughter's result if required
- The School matched the data with existing school based assessment results
- The data informed the placement of students in groups for additional assistance or extension
- Individual learning plans were put in place if required
- The data was entered into the School's student assessment database and used comparatively with previous student assessment data
- The data will be compared with subsequent assessment data to track and monitor future progress

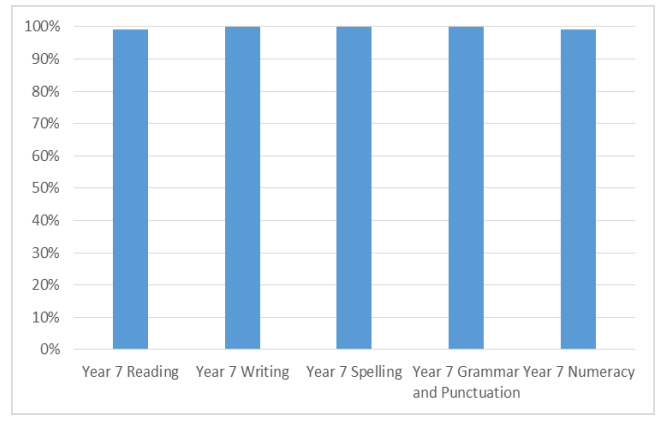
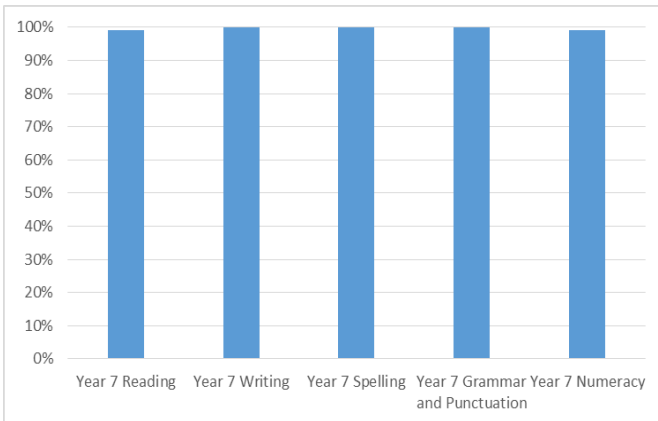
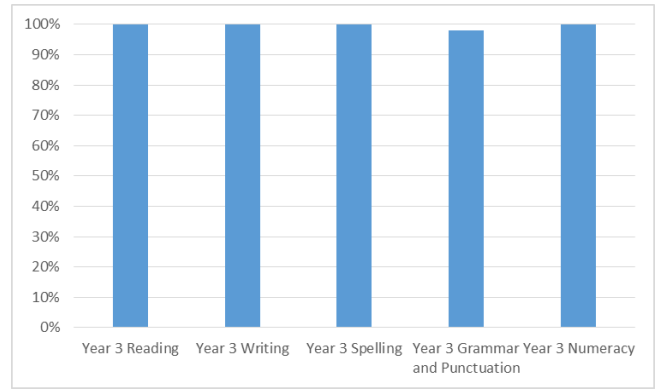
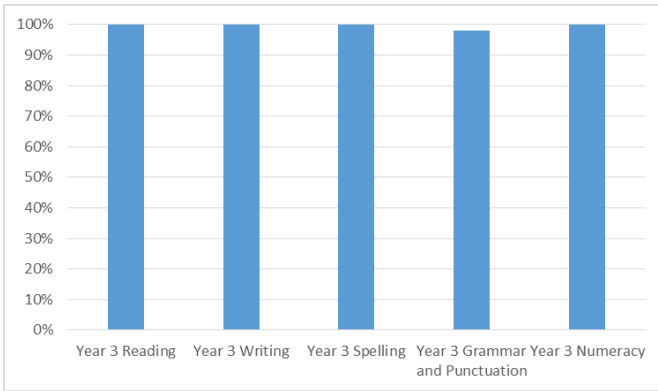
#### For cohorts of students:

- Staff met to review data and identify curriculum priorities and goals
- Staff attended relevant professional learning sessions and purchased resources to meet the priorities and goals set
- The School considered the student data when constructing class lists for subsequent years
- The data will be compared with subsequent assessment data to track and monitor future progress

## Percentage of Students Achieving or Exceeding Benchmarks - 2013

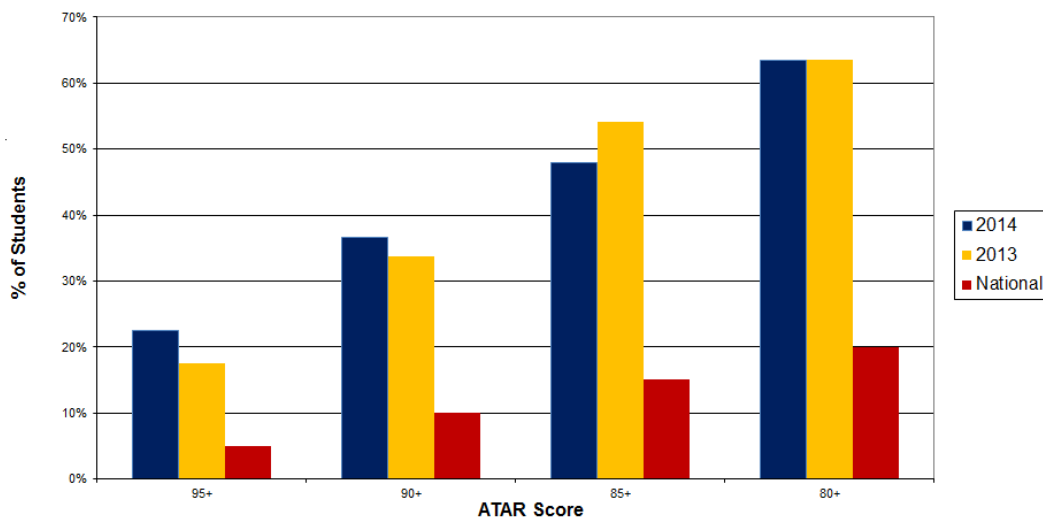


## Percentage of Students Achieving or Exceeding Benchmarks - 2014



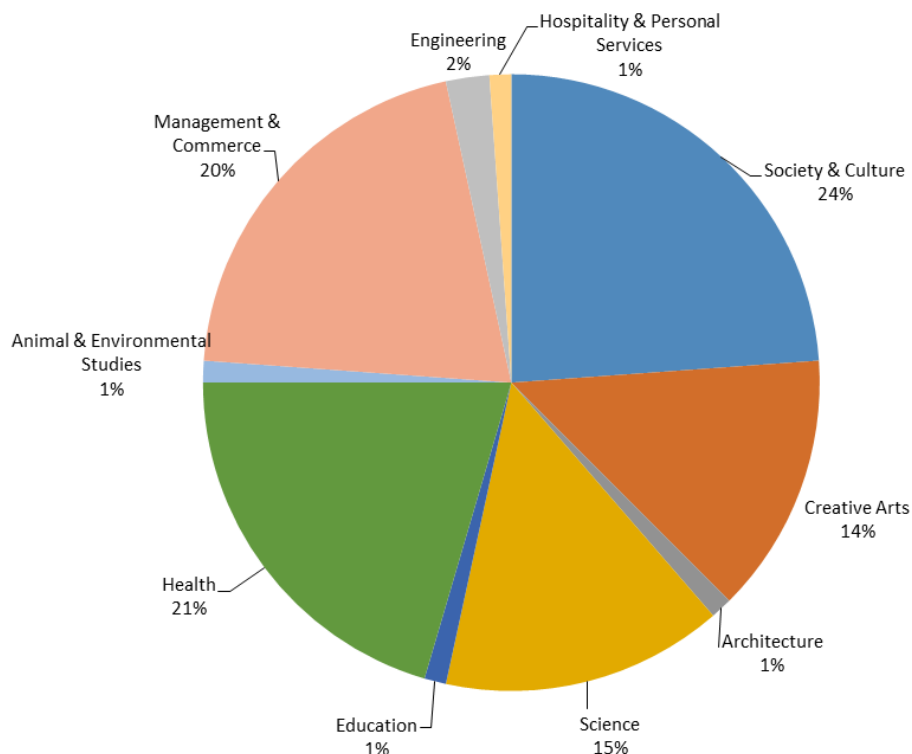
## Year 12 Outcomes

The results reflect the hard work of staff and students and show a commitment to the pursuit of excellence by all. 22.5% of the cohort achieved an ATAR score of 95 or more, placing them in the top 5% of Australia. 36.6% scored an ATAR of 90 or above, placing them in the top 10% of the nation. 44% of graded assessments were an A or an A+. 27% of girls have been awarded the VCE (Baccalaureate) – an additional form of recognition for students who successfully meet the demands of studying a higher level mathematics and a language in their VCE program.



## Year 12 Class of 2014 - Destinations

98% of our 2014 graduates received a tertiary offer with 98% enrolling at university and 2% enrolling at TAFE to commence their studies this year.

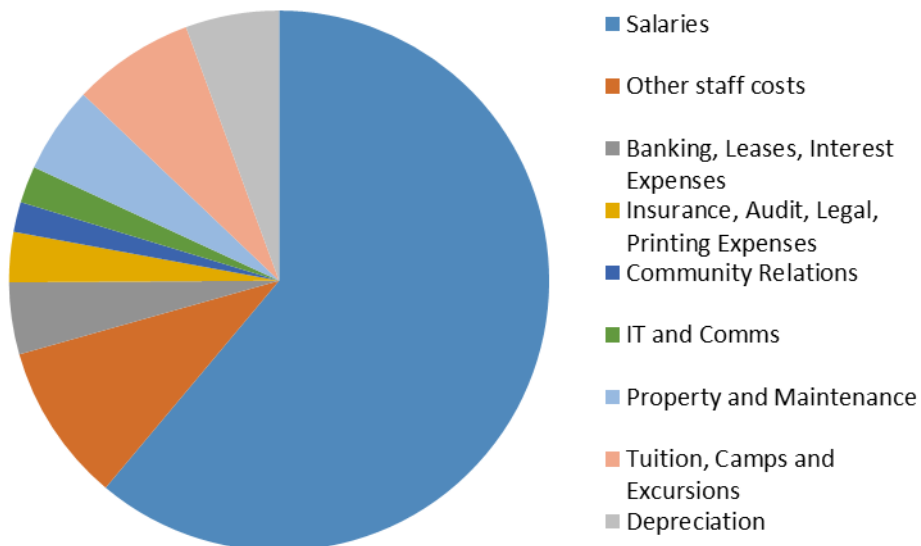


## Finance and Major Projects

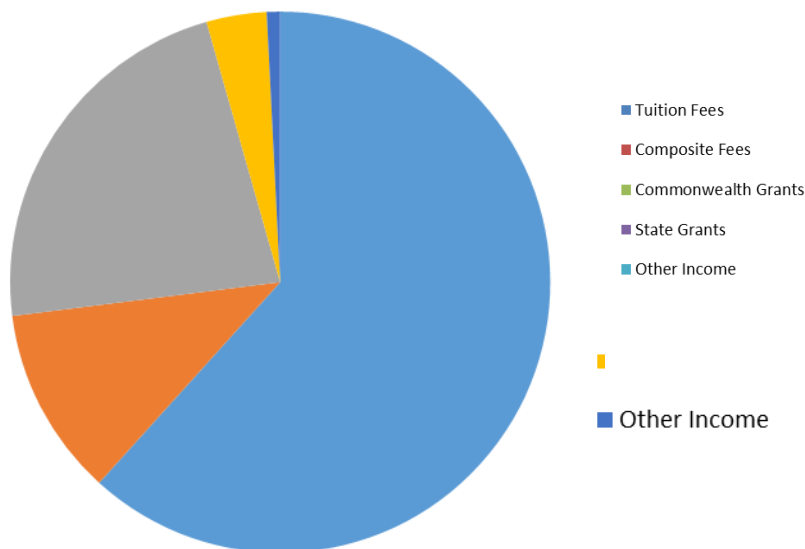
There were no major building projects in 2014, however concept plans relating to the construction of a new Early Learning Centre on the existing site have been completed. The School has completed capital works in refurbishing and relocating Senior School Administration to the ground floor of Grant House.

The other major capital expenditure for 2014 was the redevelopment of the School Website. All financial indicators are largely consistent with previous years. Reduction of debt, due to the delay in commencing the ELC Building Project, has resulted in lower interest costs.

### Lowther Hall Expenditure 2014



## Lowther Hall Income 2014



## Parent and Student Satisfaction

Hearing the student voice across the School has remained a priority throughout 2014. Specific structures to facilitate opportunities for girls to convey their suggestions and feedback include:

- Weekly meetings with senior staff and the School & Deputy School Captain in both Senior School and Junior School
- Weekly meetings of the Student Representative Council in Junior School and Senior School
- Meetings with all Year 12 students in groups of 10 – 12 with the Principal, in March and October
- The Senior School student newspaper *The Mansion Messenger*
- Senior School Home Group sessions where students share their views
- Junior School class “Circle Times” where students can give feedback

Similarly, provision has continued to be made to give parents an opportunity to be heard. Specifically this has included:

- “Coffee, Cake and Conversation” meetings with the Principal – open to all parents to come and discuss any questions they may have
- Breakfasts with the Principal for all Preparatory and Year 7 parents – an opportunity to provide feedback at these 2 important transition points
- Specific surveys – for example, regarding the reporting processes across the School and following the Annual Music Concert after its relocation to the Melbourne Recital Centre
- Learning Conferences for parents and students with teaching staff

## Other areas of note where value has been added

### Strengthening the Community

Throughout 2014 the Parents and Friends’ Association (PFA) continued to grow and strengthen. Coffee Mornings and the Year Level Representative structure provide forums for parents to come together and share experiences. This has continued to strengthen the sense of community at Lowther Hall, providing a supportive environment for all. Nowhere was this more palpable than at the School’s 2014 Twilight Festival, a major PFA initiative which will now be a biennial event.

Parent Forums continued throughout 2014, with one highlight being the forum delivered by former Victorian Police Commissioner, Christine Nixon about the importance of men and fathers in raising girls. There have also been opportunities for parents to come to evenings run by school staff regarding specific curriculum areas, stages of development or ways that parents can assist their daughters.

The launch of the School’s updated website has provided more information to the community within and outside the School about our programs, people and approaches. There has been a great deal of positive feedback about the improved website.

### Social and Emotional Learning

2014 saw specific initiatives implemented in response to data from the ACER Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEW) surveys undertaken in 2013. Specifically, classes in Personal and Social Development and the Pastoral Program across Junior and Senior Schools addressed anxiety reduction and a greater emphasis on self-regulation. Opportunities for cross-age involvement and mentoring were increased in order to build confidence in leadership and through contact with older students. The SEW surveys were undertaken again in October 2014 and showed a reduction in anxiety across a number of cohorts.

The learning program across the School continues to focus not only on equipping girls with the knowledge, skills and understanding they require in specific subject areas, but also on developing the capabilities which will be needed in the emerging world of work which they will inhabit – innovation, collaboration, creativity and independence. The fostering of the 12 Qualities of the Lowther Hall Girl continues to be a mechanism for equipping the girls for the adult life.

## **Junior School**

In Junior School during 2014 the focus of ongoing learning has been evident amongst all members of our community. Junior School staff have spent considerable time researching best practice models in pedagogical frameworks, particularly focussed around the area of mathematics. Junior School staff continued to meet weekly in Professional Learning Teams, led by key members of our Junior School Leadership Team to explore, research and develop improved learning experiences for our students. The teaching of mathematics has been extended to provide programs which are catering for each and every student at their individual point of need. Girls have been grouped in flexible groupings across each cohort, ensuring each student is operating in her zone of proximal development, that being the zone whereby she is receiving the right level of challenge married with the right level of support. The results of this reflection upon professional practice have ensured that Junior School students are demonstrating improved engagement levels in their mathematics classes as well as achieving improved academic results.

This focus on Mathematics has transferred through to the learning of our parent community in response to research which indicates it is particularly the role modelling of the mother which has a direct impact on the confidence with which students approach their mathematics learning, it is crucial that parents are supporting this learning at home. Therefore, our parent education program in 2014 involved numerous sessions over the year where parents learnt about current educational practices and participated in a variety of activities that they could share at home when supporting their daughters' learning.

Another highlight in Junior School during 2014 was the focus on the improvement in our Year 6 Leadership program, with the support of our mentors from the Senior School. This year, our Year 6 girls participated in an off campus Leadership Day where they heard from current and past Lowther Hall Senior School Leaders, as well as members of the Junior School Leadership Team and School Executive. The Year 6 girls examined their own strengths and worked to develop a leadership plan for success within their role. Cross age learning across the school assists our Year 6 students in their transition to Year 7, as well as providing important opportunities for development of our school community values.

During 2014 we launched the update of our Student of the Week program; a new program focussed around the Qualities of the Lowther Hall Girl. This program encouraged even our youngest students to reflect upon their own qualities and to set individual goals for improvement. Through the development of this program our students have improved their understanding of the Qualities of the Lowther Hall Girl, with teachers regularly conducting lessons to explore these important statements for the education of each girl in preparation for the whole of life.

Through the implementation of these and many other programs in our Junior School, we continue to offer our students a vibrant learning environment where each student is individually valued as a member of our school community and supported to achieve her personal best.

## **Senior School**

Throughout 2014, Senior School continued to be a vibrant learning community with staff and students alike committed to being the very best version of themselves as leaders, learners and teachers.

This year saw a much improved Transition Program for the students coming into Year 7. We recognised that the girls coming in from Junior School brought with them a range of experiences and understandings that were different from the girls joining Lowther Hall from external primary schools and we tailored the transition experience accordingly. In all instances senior student leaders were involved in the process and played a key role in working with our new Year 7s. Year 7 students also benefitted from the Peer Assisted Learning program that was piloted in Term 4. This program saw Year 9 students who had been through an application and training process, working with Year 7s to assist them as they prepared for their first examinations.



Cross age programs were indeed a feature of SS this year. Apart from the many opportunities for the Leaders to work with the Year 7s, 2014 also saw nearly half of the Year 11 cohort volunteering to attend either Year 10 camp or Year 8 Writers Workshop. We also introduced this year, mentoring across Junior and Senior School with the Prefects attending the Grade 6 Leadership Training Day.

2014 also saw the inaugural meeting of the Golden Braid Club. Conscious of the fact that it is not always straightforward for women to establish supportive professional networks, this initiative brought together our Prefect bodies from the past 7 years. Bringing together these remarkable young women created a vibrant atmosphere where connections were made or strengthened and there was a sharing of their journeys and an appreciation of their commonalities. We anticipate that this will now be an annual event.

The camps program continued to be a highlight of the year for all year levels made especially significant by our philosophy that all camps should cater for the needs of the particular cohort. Whilst this certainly increases the work load for each Year Level Coordinator it means that our girls experience meaningful tailor made camps that serve their needs. Our Year 7 girls headed off the Anglesea where they undertook activities that they had identified they had never tried before. It was certainly quite challenging for many but the watching the joys of mastery develop, whether it be learning to ride a bike for the first time or skateboarding up and down a ramp, was something to behold. Year 8 girls were challenged by a personal growth program in Kinglake where the highlight was indeed the Leap of Faith; a telegraph pole which the girls bravely climbed to the top of and leapt off to the support and encouragement of their cohort. Vietnam or Central Australia were the destinations of our Year 9s as part of the Humanities Our Place program. At such a significant stage in their adolescent development, it fair to say that these two destinations challenged our girls and undoubtedly gave them a sense of not only how fortunate they are but more importantly the role they will need to play in shaping the adult world they will come to live in.

Independence and leadership were the themes of Year 10 camp which took place in Belmont and along the foreshore of Geelong. 25 Year 11 students volunteered to come along on the camp to facilitate the activities designed to assist the Year 10s to be more confident and connected; important elements for personal success. Year 11 Camp which took place in the CBD was all about preparation for Leadership as the girls prepared to enter Year 12 as the leaders of the School. Year 12 Retreat was a wonderful break at the end of Term 3 that allowed our 2014 Valedictorians to enjoy the opportunity to look back and look forward. They reflected with a sense of gratitude on all that Lowther had offered them and but also demonstrated that they were optimistic and had a sense of hope for their futures.

Without a doubt, 2014 was a successful year most particularly in our capacity to make the world a better place because a Lowther Hall girl is in it. This was best summed up by a Year 12 student when asked by the Principal, Ms Rhodes, whether she felt she had had a successful year. Her reply was, "Look, with so many people working so hard here to make you are better person, you just can't help but become one."