

Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School
Annual Report
2015



Annual Report 2015

I am pleased to report on another wonderful year at Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School, reflective of our values and our mission to *Educate the Whole Person for the Whole of Life*. 2015 was the 95th Anniversary of the School and this afforded some unique opportunities for celebration, reflection and commemoration. The girls enjoyed birthday cake for their School and appreciated the commemorative painting and coin which were produced to help us mark this significant milestone in the School's history. We were honoured that our special anniversary coincided with the commemoration of 100 years since the Gallipoli landing and the poignant dawn service held on ANZAC Day at the School was a time that many will remember for many years to come.



The pages that follow provide information about all aspects of the School's performance during 2015 and record highlights in key areas.

Founded in 1920, Lowther Hall continues to provide an outstanding education to the girls who attend. The School has a reputation for providing a well-rounded education for girls in an intimate environment of 800 students from Kindergarten to Year 12. We are a diverse, open-entry school where students are known and well catered for from their very first day. As well as offering programs which support and challenge each student to achieve her best, we seek to assist girls to understand a wide range of academic disciplines and co-curricular pursuits. At Lowther Hall, we see our role as broader than the provision of a leading edge curriculum. We seek to be a school that educates the whole person, helping each girl to develop personal qualities and values that will equip her for a happy and successful adult life. All of our teachers, support staff and student leaders work towards realising this goal of providing a holistic educational experience for every girl.

Our 2016 School Captain, Isabel, sums up our school as follows:

Lowther Hall is not just a school. It is an encouraging community and a support network committed to assisting us, the wonderful women of the next generation, to be the absolute best we can be in everything we do! The staff support and challenge each of us to achieve our goals, academically, in cocurricular activities and through leadership opportunities - all in a genuinely caring and nurturing environment. I feel very lucky to be a Lowther girl!

This view is not unique. Our student feedback tells us that our culturally and religiously diverse student body are united by a love of their school. They take their studies seriously, enjoy their community and are open to opportunities and assistance offered to them by the School. They are supported by a committed, professional and generous staff who work tirelessly to inspire, lead, encourage, guide and develop our girls.

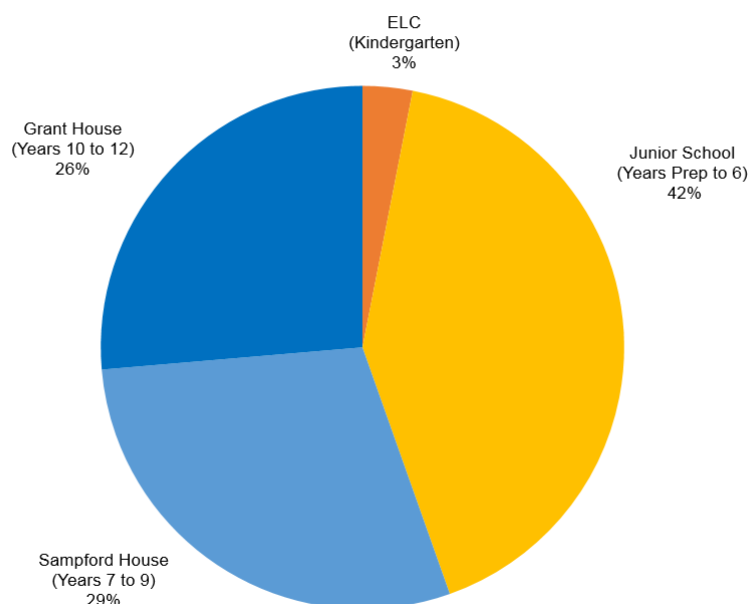
A highlight during 2015 has been continuing to work with our key support groups within the School Community – the Foundation – whose work supports the School financially, the developing Parents and Friends' Association – which has gone from strength to strength during the year, and the old Grammarians' Association, whose members continue to work closely with the School – and in 2015 initiated a new sponsorship program which sees them pay for a worthy student to join one of the Senior School Study Tour programs. It continues to be a privilege to work with the School Council, families, staff and students in leading Lowther Hall. 2015 has been an excellent year, as I hope is reflected in this Annual Report.

Ms Elisabeth Rhodes
Principal

Our Students

Student Population

In 2015, our student population of 800 girls came from 56 postcodes across Melbourne. They were born in 16 countries. The enrolment composition across the School was as follows:



In Year 9 2013 there were 81 students. In Year 12 2015 there were 73 students, representing a 90% retention rate.

Student Attendance

Student attendance remains very strong at Lowther Hall. Using the synergetic student attendance management system, student attendance is recorded every morning. Where an absence has not been notified in advance, parents are rung to follow up the reasons for a student being away. School families are discouraged from removing their daughters for holidays outside the non-instruction periods, and must seek permission from the Principal prior to any such absence. Any student for whom attendance at school is proving challenging for any reason, is offered support to ensure that any concerns are dealt with sensitively and efficiently. Attendance rates for 2015 were as follows:

2015	Attendance Rate Across the Year	2015	Attendance Rate Across the Year
Prep	94%	Year 7	97%
Year 1	93%	Year 8	96%
Year 2	95%	Year 9	97%
Year 3	96%	Year 10	97%
Year 4	94%	Year 11	98%
Year 5	95%	Year 12	99%
Year 6	95%		

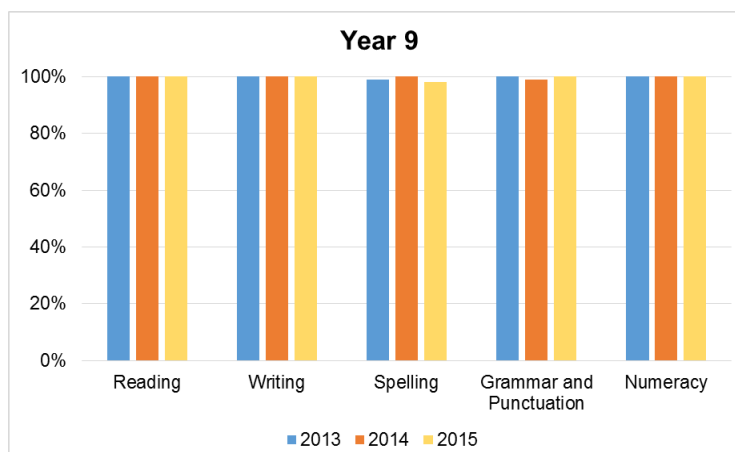
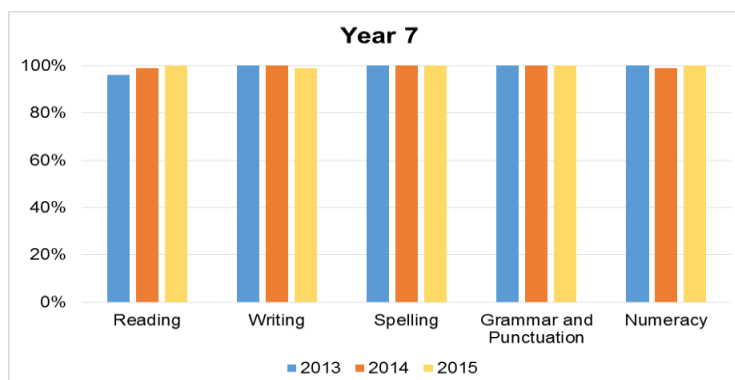
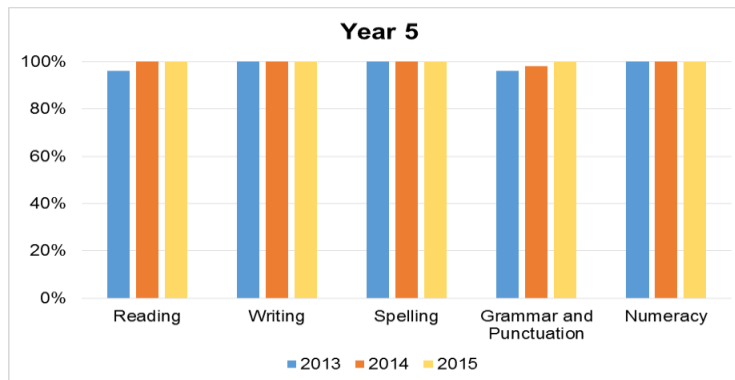
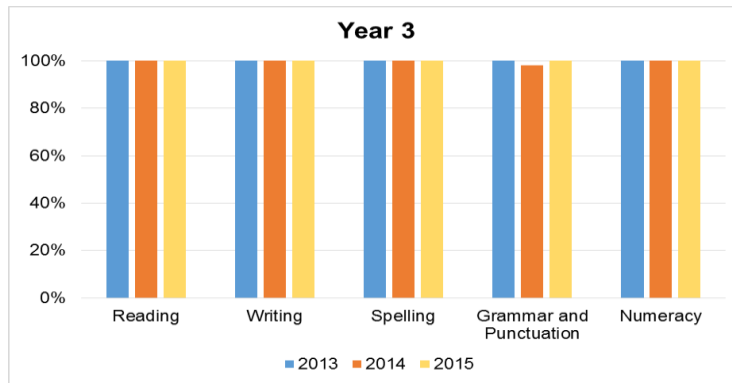
Student Performance

Lowther Hall supports all girls to achieve their best and to ensure that each student realises her academic potential. This goal is supported through an emphasis on effort and on the fostering in each girl of research based "Learning Behaviours" which encourage self-reflection, error analysis, engagement in the learning process, response to feedback and collaboration. In the Junior School the explicit teaching of self-management skills such as the regulation of emotions and the development of a growth mindset help to maximise the likelihood of students being emotionally equipped for good learning. Learning Conferences, report processes and follow up by teachers all assist parents to be involved in the learning journey of their daughter and to play an active part in supporting her to be successful.

NAPLAN Results

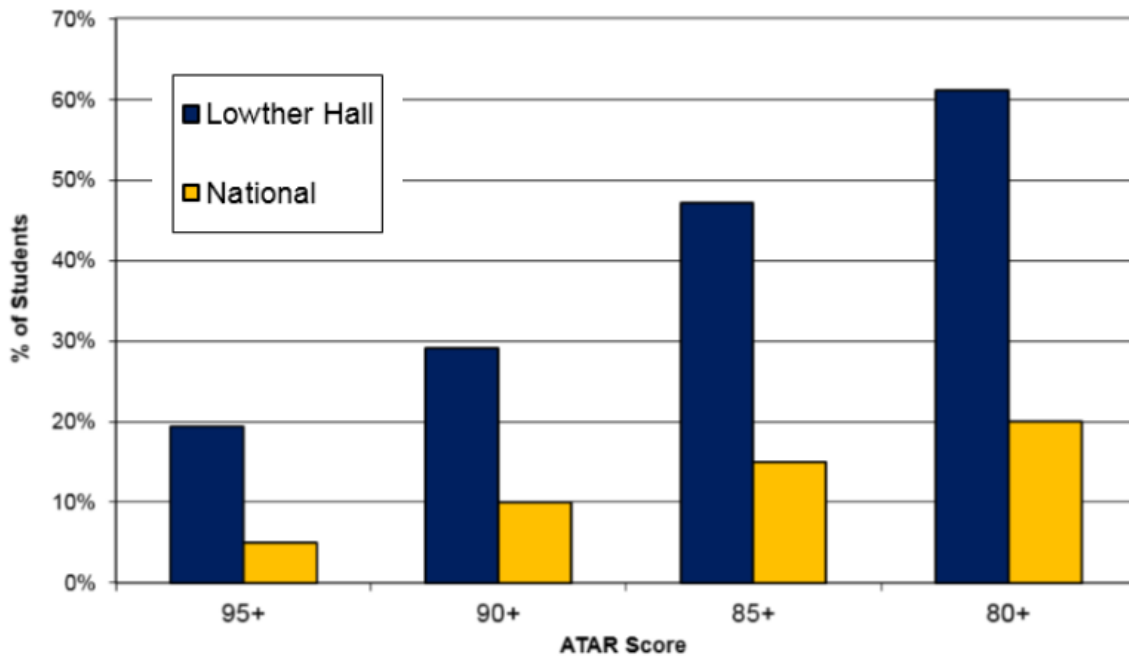
Solid literacy and numeracy skills are at the foundation of strong academic performance and are vital for navigating the post school world. Annual national testing in literacy and numeracy (NAPLAN) tests for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9, form one part of the data set we track (along with staff observations and internal testing) in order to monitor student improvement in these areas. NAPLAN results give us a benchmarked measure for the progress of individual students and cohorts.

The following graphs show the percentage of students at Lowther Hall achieving or exceeding national benchmarks according to NAPLAN testing in 2013, 2014 and 2015.



Year 12 Outcomes

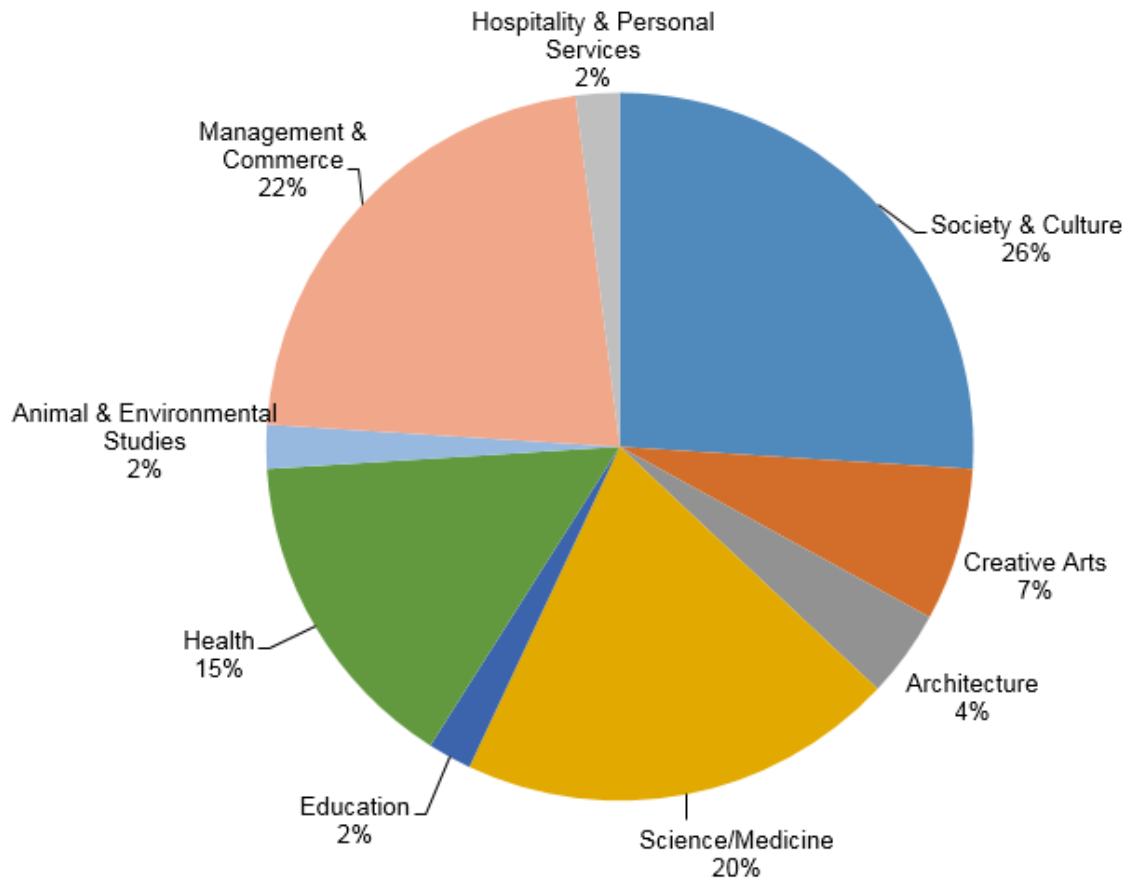
The 2015 VCE results for Lowther Hall are outstanding and a cause for much celebration with 100% of students successfully completing their VCE Certificate and 51% of graded assessments being an A or an A+. The class of 2015 embraced every aspect of School life with energy and vigour and we are proud of each student and all she has achieved during her journey. The 2015 Lowther Clarke Scholar (Dux), Leta Elias, has received an ATAR of 99.9 and classmates Isabella Crulli and Selena Chi also achieved scores of 99 or more. 19.4% of the cohort attained an ATAR of 95 or more, placing them in the top 5% of Australia. 29% scored 90 or more and 61% of the cohort gained an ATAR of 80 or more, ranking them in the top 20% of the nation. Study scores (unscaled) of 40 and above were received by 21.6% of Lowther Hall students studying a VCE subject. Four perfect scores of 50 out of 50 were awarded in Further Mathematics (2), English and Legal Studies. The median study score was 35.



Year 12 2015 Merit Scholars

Year 12 Class of 2015 - Destinations

99% of our 2015 graduates received a tertiary offer with 98% enrolling at university and 2% enrolling at TAFE to commence their studies in 2016. 1% enrolled with a private provider.



Student Programs

As well as strong teaching and learning programs across all year levels at Lowther Hall, our holistic approach also means that we invest time and effort in the provision of cocurricular sport, visual and performing arts, social justice, problem solving and service.

During 2015, particular highlights or new ventures for Senior School girls included:

- Establishment of the Years 7 & 8 Community Connectedness Program in partnership with Benetas Aged Care
- A new venue for Years 7 & 8 Camp allowing cross age activities
- Year 8 students attending Year 4 camp as mentors
- Year 12 Prefects running workshops for Year 6 Leaders
- Year 11 students attending Year 8 Writers Workshop camp as mentors
- Increased opportunities for physical activity during morning pastoral time as a result of new grassed area
- Refinement of iTunesU maths course at Year 7 and extension of it into Year 8
- Increased interventions to support Year 7 students with automatic recall related to mathematical processes
- Increased after school maths support at all year levels
- Increased opportunities for blended learning, particularly in Science
- A review of the Year 10 Science Course to better serve VCE pathways
- Increased staff allocated to in class support
- Review of Education Support to refine individual goals and outcomes for students
- Wide consultation with staff and students as the first steps in reviewing the Year 9 program
- 2015 LEAD data demonstrating significant improvement for Sampford House students around peer relationships, academic rigour, transition and teacher/student rapport
- Two Year 12 Visual Arts students invited to enter their work into a local public exhibition
- A record number of sporting teams entered in the Girls' Sport Victoria (GSV) competition
- A record number of sporting teams reaching finals winning grand finals

Highlights or new ventures for Junior School girls included:

- A review of Skills4Life program with a focus on Social and Emotional Learning using the Friendly Schools Plus program.
- Further development of student understanding of core values of the school through the establishment of awards based on the Qualities of the Lowther Hall girl.
- Extension of psychological services for Junior School girls and families.
- Offering of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs for girls after school.
- Holding of the inaugural Junior School Science Fair, opened by Old Grammarian scientist, Antonia Policheni
- A record number of Junior School girls receiving prizes in the Science Talent Quest.
- The Statewide Maths Games Day for Year 4 students being run at Lowther Hall and a Lowther Hall Team winning this event.
- Further development of cross age opportunities such as Year 8s assisting as mentors on Year 4 camp, Year 6 Leadership Training Day, Year 5 Leadership goal setting program, Year 7 Transition support program.
- New Learning Strategies programs for targeted Junior School students (EMU maths and Multilit Literacy).

Our Staff

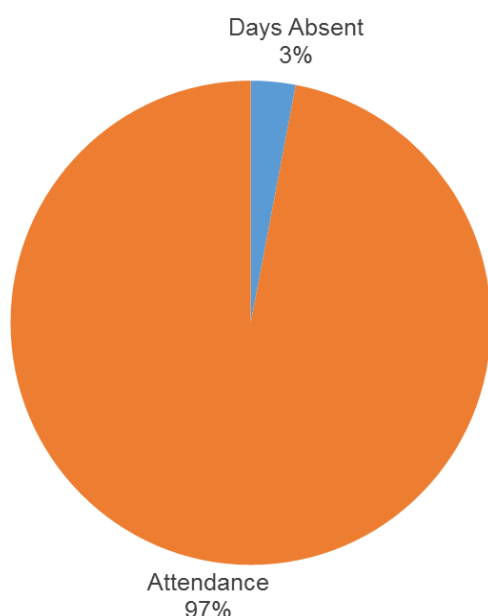
The key to a successful school is having a passionate, committed and highly accomplished staff and at Lowther Hall this is indeed the case. Teachers, administration and support staff all work with Senior Management towards the shared goal of providing a world class experience for our students and families. Staff enjoy working at the School and retention rates remain high. Staff retention details for 2015 were as follows:

Of the Junior School teaching staff five resigned, two retired and two completed their contracts. From the Senior School teaching staff cohort one retired, three resigned and two decided not to return following extended periods of parental leave; the contract period concluded for another.

In Administration, one staff member retired and six resigned. One member of the Property staff resigned and of other non-teaching support staff, there were three resignations and one short term contract concluded for another member of staff.

Teaching Staff Attendance

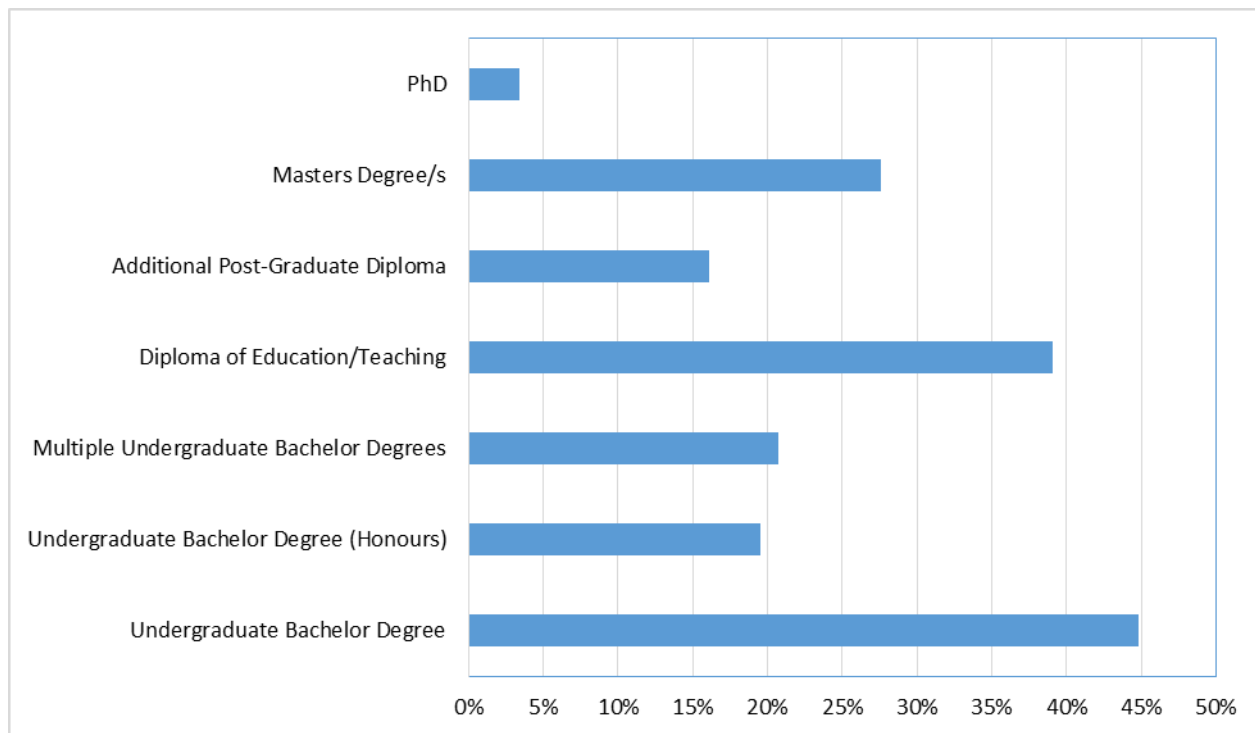
The high rate of teacher attendance is testimony to the dedication of our staff and their commitment to the girls.



Teacher Qualifications and Professional Learning

We actively seek to employ staff who are committed to their own learning. Therefore, each year, we see many Lowther Hall staff undertaking further formal study to improve their own knowledge and expertise.

Staff qualifications in 2015 were as follows:



During the year, teaching staff across all areas of the School continued to undertake professional learning in areas such as differentiation, developing a growth mindset, the instructional strategies identified in the work of Robert Marzano, curriculum documentation using the Understanding By Design method, Reggio Emilia Early Years model, digital learning, I tunes U and blended learning.

In addition, teachers undertook subject specific seminars and attended conferences specific to their teaching areas. In Senior School, the following teachers undertook marking for the VCE examinations:

Mrs Zoe Anderson	Dance (VCE VET)
Ms Yukiko Irinaka	Japanese
Dr Michaela Lattimore	Biology
Mr Andrew McDonnell	French
Mrs Selda Mehmet	Chemistry
Mrs Cathy Moloney	English & the GAT
Ms Lynne O'Brien	Physical Education
Mrs Belinda Page	Food and Technology
Mr Steven Phillips	Visual Communication Design
Dr LuLu Vitali	Japanese
Mr Charlton Woolford	Mathematical Methods

Governance

The School continues to be served by an active and engaged volunteer School Council. In 2015 membership of School Council was as follows:

Mr Peter Cannan, Chairman

Mr Peter Cannan became a member of the School Council in 2006 and was elected Chairman in 2013 having served as Treasurer prior to that. He is a Chartered Accountant with 30 years' experience and is currently working as COO at Russell Kennedy Solicitors.

Mr David Whiting, Deputy Chairman and Treasurer

Mr David Whiting joined the Council in 2008. He is a Certified Practising Accountant with experience in the Banking, Manufacturing and Agricultural industries. David has also been involved with local community groups and other school councils. He became Deputy Chairman and Treasurer in 2013.

The Rev Dr Helen Granowski, Secretary

The Rev Dr Helen Granowski is a retired Anglican priest. Ecumenism, environmental and peace issues are ongoing passions. In her previous career she was the Principal of Anglican Girls' Schools in Southport and Canberra. Helen joined the School Council in 1997 serving on various sub committees such as Policy and Planning and most recently, the Foundation sub committee and held the position of Company Secretary. Helen resigned from the School Council at the end of 2015.

The Reverend Bill Beagley

The Rev Bill Beagley is the Vicar of Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Williamstown and Anglican Chaplain to Port Phillip Prison. Before entering ordained ministry, Bill was a social worker with people suffering homelessness, addiction and intellectual disabilities. He became a School Council member in 2006 and is the School Council representative on the PFA.

Mrs Yvonne Bradley

Mrs Yvonne Bradley has worked for 18 years as a School Principal and is currently working as an educational consultant in independent schools around the country. She has assisted the School with executive staff appointments in recent years and in the development of the "Strategic Directions: 2013 and beyond" plan. Yvonne is the Chair of the Policy and Planning and Strategic Planning sub committees.

Mr Lorne Cole

Mr Lorne Cole's work on the School Council since joining in 2007 has included the chairing and establishment of the Lowther Hall Foundation. Lorne's career has been in the aviation industry. He operates a business providing aero-medical services to hospitals engaged in organ transplants and the retrieval of sick and injured Australians from overseas.

Ms Linden Golding

Lindy was a partner in an international law firm based in London for many years and now lectures in Law at the University of Melbourne and is Deputy Chair at The Opera Studio, Melbourne. She was previously a School Councillor in the UK. She joined the School Council in 2015, having been a member of the Policy and Planning Committee since 2013.

Mr Peter Malcolm

Mr Peter Malcolm is the immediate past Chairman of the Council and has served on the School Council for 20 years on various school committees. With a background in Civil Engineering, he has been actively involved in the building projects at the school.

Ms Josephine Ward

Ms Josephine Ward has served on the School Council since May 2002. She has been a member of several sub-committees of the Council and currently sits on the Finance and Development Committee. Josephine is a Credit Manager with Westpac and has worked in the banking industry for over twenty years.

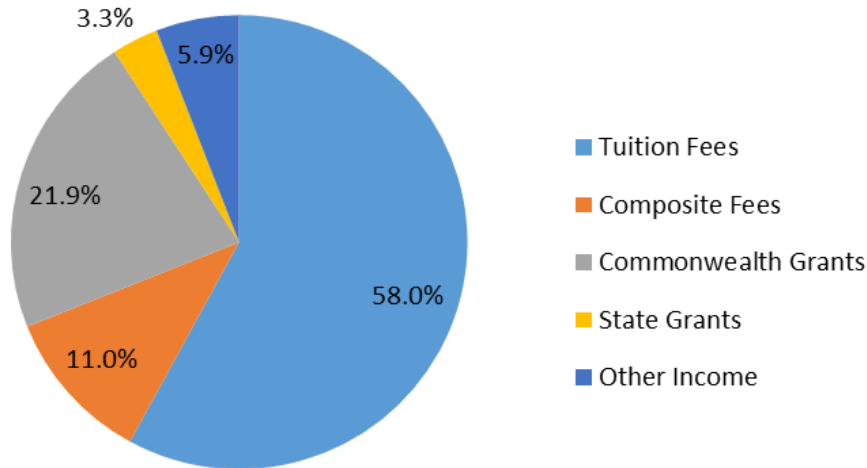
During the year, as well as monitoring the School's progress against the Strategic Plan, the following governance related initiatives were undertaken:

- A review of the School's Constitution and governance documents resulting in the development of a School Council Charter
- Registration of the School with the ACNC
- A review of Enrolment Contracts, Employment Contracts and Business Terms and Conditions
- Purchase of a Compliance software program for installation in 2016

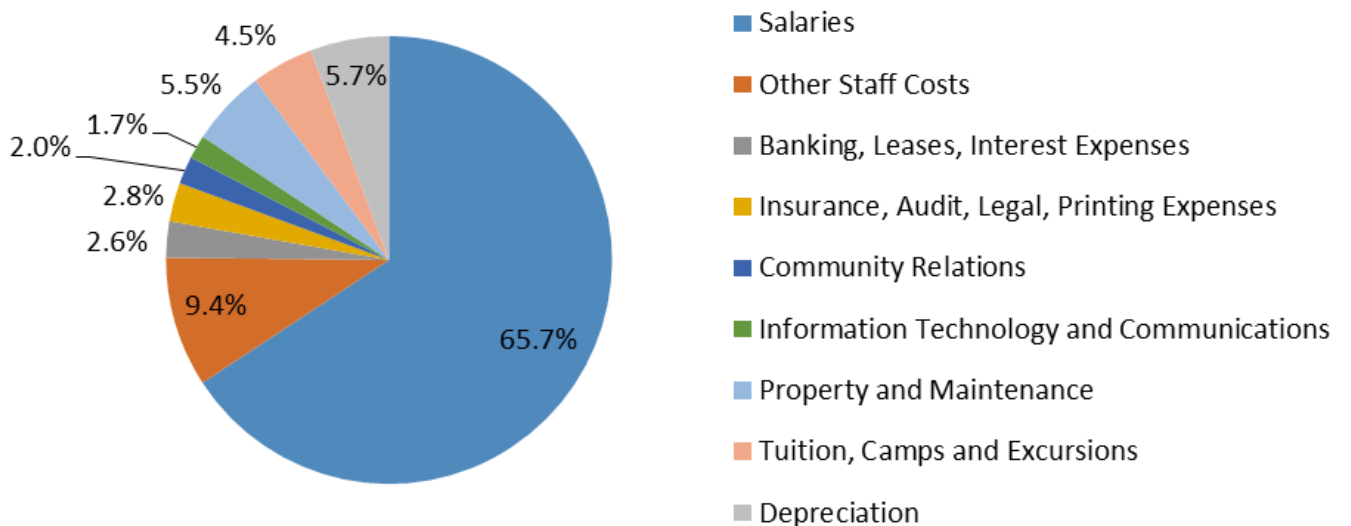
Finances

The School's finances continue to be tightly managed by the School Council, Business Manager and Business Office Team. During 2015 the forecast budget was achieved with some notable financial savings made in the areas of interest, leasing costs and Fringe Benefit Tax. Market tender process were undertaken for the supply of various capital items and works. Responsible stewardship of the School's financial resources remains a high priority for all involved. Details of income and expenditure were as follows:

Lowther Hall Income 2015



Lowther Hall Expenditure 2015



Property Matters

There were no major building projects during 2015, however architectural developments, legal and town planning and the application for the new Early Years Centre to be built on the existing site continued.

The School purchased a Warehouse in Tullamarine to alleviate ongoing storage costs being incurred through the hire of several secure storage units.

Reconstruction and refurbishment work inside the Mansion building and of the surrounds were completed during the year, notably the new "Reflection Space", paid for with funds raised through the PFA's 2014 Twilight Festival.

In addition, smaller projects and property related highlights included:

- 4.2% savings in energy consumption achieved after full review of power usage in early 2015
- Completion of indented parking in Sherbourne Street
- Improving vehicle and pedestrian access to the site via Sherbourne Street
- Renovation of Junior School Prep classrooms and addition of office spaces
- Long overdue renovation of Mansion bathroom and kitchen
- Addition of a classroom for Year 7 students in Sampford House
- New acoustic treatment to classrooms and multi-purpose spaces in the Noelene Horton Centre
- Completion of a new chemicals register in accordance with Worksafe and OHS guidelines
- Commencement of a study into air flow management in the Cultural Centre
- Heritage and Planning permits applied for and received for Mansion renovation works and future works associated with first floor walkway connection
- Town planning processes finalised for approval of concept plan for the new Early Years Centre
- Complete renovation of front lawn area
- Outsourcing of gardening and landscape works

Information Technology and Communications

Significant Information Technology and Audio Visual upgrades during 2015 included the upgrade to the Fibre Optic link into the School for Internet Access, the subsequent upgrade to wireless infrastructure inside the School and the upgrade to audio visual equipment including Interactive whiteboards and monitors.

Work also commenced on Stage 2 of the new Website project: developing a "Portal" for parents and students. This will enable access to timetables and other materials applicable to the student's enrolment as well as a Business portal allowing online transactions.

Additional milestones in the area of ICT included:

- Internal IT help website launched
- Upgrade of the email system
- Introduction of more flexible printing solutions across the School
- Engaged Cloud services; such as Google Apps for Education
- Full roll out of iPad and Bring Your Own Device program

Community Relations

Communicating with our current and prospective parents and the broader community remains very important to the School and 2015 was once again a busy year for the Community Relations Department. Specific highlights included:

- Enrolment of an additional class of Year 7 2016 students due to unprecedented demand.
- The launch of a promotional video for School website
- Appointment of Australian designer, Jonathan Ward, to design a new trans-seasonal academic student uniform
- New sport uniform items introduced (netball dresses, snow-sports jackets, dance t-shirt, volleyball shirts)
- The introduction of new school trolley bags
- Memorial wreaths constructed by students and taken to Gallipoli
- Additional second-hand uniform shop opening days introduced in response to requests from the parent body

Parent and Student Satisfaction

Every two years we seek formal feedback from our students, parents and staff by way of a suite of surveys administered by Independent Schools Victoria (ISV). During semester 2 of 2015 these surveys were undertaken and provided us with a helpful insight into the views of our community about how we were meeting the needs of our students, parents and staff.

Parent satisfaction was at or above the combined mean of other independent schools surveyed in the following areas, indicating a high level of satisfaction in these aspects of our school:

- Academic achievement
- Transition
- Facilities and resources
- Parent and community involvement
- Personal and social development

Our student satisfaction responses were significantly above the combined mean of other independent schools surveyed in every area and it was very affirming to see how pleased our students are with the quality of their teachers, the programs provided for them, their curriculum, their school environment, their leadership opportunities, the safety of their school, the ways in which bullying is dealt with and the support they receive. This student comment summed up the sentiments of many: *I like my school, I think it is great!*

Students and parents were specifically asked about the current uniform and expressed some dissatisfaction with aspects such as the multiple pieces of uniform in winter, the tie and the fabric of the winter shirt. This feedback has been taken on board by the consultative committee which is working with the designer to develop a new academic uniform.

This survey process is just one way in which we seek feedback from our community and we are always open to meeting with girls or families to hear of any concerns or discuss possible improvements which could be made.

Much information is provided to the School community on an ongoing basis throughout the year via on-line weekly School Bulletins, emails, circulars, formal academic reports, thrice yearly Lowther News magazines and the School's website.

This Annual Report is available on the School's website or in hard copy upon request.