

# Merewether High School

## Annual Report



2017



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## Introduction

The Annual Report for **2017** is provided to the community of **Merewether High School** as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

Christine Rippon

Principal

### School contact details

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4969 3855

### Message from the Principal

Merewether High School is an academically selective high school with a socially diverse and geographically dispersed student population. Our school provides equal opportunity for gifted students to achieve excellence in academic, cultural, sporting, civic, leadership and social endeavours, in an inclusive environment supporting learning, teaching and friendship. Merewether High's pursuit of all round high achievement, our focus on tertiary preparation and the diversity in student programs and quality outcomes, have characterised our culture. We continued to flourish as an outstanding academically selective school in 2017 providing a stimulating and safe learning environment, offering significant opportunities for success in academic, cultural, sporting and leadership activities. The level of participation and performance of students in the many school activities available to them is impressive and I commend them for their efforts to build a cohesive, inclusive school. The efforts of all staff is also commended, in that they work very hard to meet the needs of all students in their classroom and to implement strategies that will improve our core business of teaching and learning and the delivery of a progressive gifted and talented education for all students. The active recognition of student voice through the Student Representative Council (SRC) and the Senior Leadership group of our Captains and Prefects have enhanced student wellbeing and helped achieve a positive school ethos. The support of our parent organisation, the P&C Association is also recognised and valued.

# School background

## School vision statement

Merewether High School is an inspirational model of public education. We challenge our gifted and talented students to engage with a vigorous and collaborative understanding of lifelong learning. Students are supported to achieve excellence in all aspects of school life. Our school community motivates students to become conscientious and responsible citizens within the local and broader communities. Our school is a supportive learning environment where the individual talents of each student are nurtured and students are encouraged to reach their potential while maintaining balance and a positive attitude. Merewether High School has a culture that is conducive to productivity, with superior resources, technology and staff.

## School context

Merewether High School is an academically selective high school with 88 staff, catering for 1080 students from a wide geographical area within the Hunter Central Coast Region. The school offers a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum focusing on high expectations of student academic achievement. Merewether High School is committed to developing the whole student through academic, sporting and cultural endeavours. Students are encouraged to participate in leadership, creative and performing arts programs and sporting pursuits along with a range of extra-curricular activities as well as their academic studies. The school has high expectations of all students, consistent with each student's ability and the belief that all students can achieve their personal best. Our experienced staff supports the needs of our academically gifted and talented students. A significant feature of the school is that it is a caring community, committed to excellence, diversity and fostering individual talents. The development of technology is ongoing with continued access to applications that enhance teaching and learning. The school has an active parent body that supports the school through a variety of programs. Merewether High School has established a number of important links with the community to strengthen student outcomes by supporting student academic and welfare development. Our three core values are integrity, diversity and excellence.

# Self-assessment and school achievement

## Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading. Our executive staff and staff discussed the School Excellence Framework and its implications for informing, monitoring and validating our journey. Time was dedicated in staff meetings and executive meetings to examine the school plan to ascertain those areas of the School Excellence Framework that we had addressed. Staff and students reflected on our progress made against the domains of the framework.

In the domain of Teaching, staff completed the school self-assessment in line with the School Excellence Framework judging the school against the evidence as sustaining and growing in the areas of effective classroom practice, data skills and use, collaborative practice and learning and development. In the area of Professional Standards, self-assessment was identified at delivering. School focus areas for 2017 prioritised the staff development in preparation for the implementation of the New HSC from 2018. To this end, staff researched widely, engaged with professional networks and reviewed appropriate NESA requirements to redevelop quality programs and assessment strategies aligned with the future directions and to ensure quality delivery of Year 11 courses in 2018. Staff wellbeing and professional growth continued with systematic implementation of the PDP process and all staff completing professional learning and observations aligned with professional goals. Some staff have engaged with the Australian Professional Teaching Standards through their PDP process however; this, continues to be an area for development in 2018. All staff requiring accreditation and maintenance were supported to meet requirements and pre 2004 teachers are prepared for accreditation to roll over in 2018. Improvement in student writing was a key initiative resulting in data analysis, collaborative sharing, explicit delivery of writing strategies embedded within class programs and the inclusion of specific feedback. Student external data showed outstanding improvement in student performance.

In the domain of Learning, staff completed the school self-assessment in line with the School Excellence Framework judging the school against the evidence as excelling in the areas of learning culture and curriculum and learning and sustaining and growing in the areas of wellbeing, assessment and reporting and student performance measures. In 2017

the school priorities focused on student leadership and wellbeing with promotion and support of the school leadership framework for students and increased opportunities for student voice and student led groups to contribute to the wellbeing of all students. A review of school wellbeing programs aligned with the Connect Succeed Thrive framework was undertaken to identify areas for further development in 2018. Student learning was enhanced with a focus on the explicit development of learner skills within the delivery of a quality differentiated curriculum. This was further supported in the implementation of a range of study skills, learning reflection and exam preparation initiatives for students across all year levels. Innovation in learning was targeted by supporting pedagogy in classrooms with enhanced learning environments. Some adjustment to learning spaces occurred with more thorough planning completed with a view to future developments. A major project on the front of school upgrade, was undertaken and will provide an inviting environment upon entry to the school. Further classroom upgrades will continue throughout 2018.

In the domain of Leading, staff completed the school self-assessment in line with the School Excellence Framework judging the school against the evidence as excelling in school resources and management practices and processes and sustaining and growing in leadership and school planning, implementation and reporting. Our priorities in 2017 focused on school resources and management practices and processes, reviewing data analysis, the consolidation of the Performance and Development Framework, continuing to develop policies and procedures in line with Department policies and compliance areas. Clear roles and responsibilities for all staff were communicated with Teaching and Learning programs continually developed and feedback provided to staff. The new Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting policy was communicated and further work in this area to ensure all requirements are in place will be undertaken in the 2018–2020 School Plan. Staff were supported through the employment of an ICT support technician, this will continue ensuring a highly maintained and responsive system to support teaching and learning and administration purposes. Communication has continued to be a major focus with year meetings continuing, the school bulletin available via the website and communicated through Skoolbag. Further capabilities within Skoolbag will be explored in our new school plan and the use of social media to connect with our community established. Parent Learning Groups are a major program in the school, are highly valued by all involved and will continue in the current format. The school website continues to be an area where further improvements could be made. Another area for development is the ongoing professional learning of staff in ICT ensuring they are kept up to date with developments in this area.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/sef-evidence-guide>

## Strategic Direction 1

Student success as learners and leaders

### Purpose

Develop a challenging 21st century learning environment that promotes creativity and autonomous learning, and embeds cognitive technologies into differentiated curriculum to enhance learning outcomes for all students. Develop a comprehensive whole school approach to promoting emotional intelligence and wellbeing for all students.

### Overall summary of progress

Personalisation of student learning continues to grow through appropriate differentiation of learning in classrooms. Students are consolidating their understanding of their own learning strengths and areas needed for growth. Staff at all levels continue to support reflection and evaluation of learning skills and progress through explicit feedback which is both formal and informal. Staff continue to build their understanding of, and leadership in, teaching learning skills which challenge students. They are supported by targeted Professional Learning and school wide focus on key areas of writing and 21st Century Learning. Students, staff and parents are led to understand the benefits of Growth Mindset and this is evident in teaching and learning and wellbeing programs. Application of aspects of the Mini COGE Professional learning for staff has enhanced quality learning activities to engage and challenge our students. Physical resourcing of learning spaces and staff rooms to inspire creativity continues a priority.

### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures<br>(to be achieved over 3 years)   | Funds Expended<br>(Resources)  | Progress achieved this year  |
|---|--|--|
| 100% of HSC and external competition results place Merewether High students above state average. (2014 – 88%) | \$3 800<br><br>Staff Mentoring<br>Release Learning and<br>Engagement Funds                   | Throughout 2017, student results in State, National and International academic competitions were well above average. 3 students recognised at ICAS medal presentation and 1 student invited to international Maths Olympiad. |
| Maintain greater than 70% of HSC student results at band 5 and 6 level. (2014 – 72.9%)                        | \$33 000<br><br>Staff TPL funds targeting<br>syllabus implementation<br>and Quality Teaching | Our 2016 HSC results include 307 Band 6 results and 503 Band 5 results, representing over 80% of results. 100% of students received a university offer and state ranked results in multiple subjects.                        |
| 95% of Year 9 students achieve in the proficient bands for numeracy and reading in NAPLAN. (2014 – 93%)       | \$21 500<br><br>LAST program funds and<br>identified TPL for staff                           | Targeted programs of support and consolidation of literacy and Numeracy skills saw 97% of students achieve proficiency in Numeracy, and 86% for reading in NAPLAN.   |

### Next Steps

Early identification and support for Literacy and Numeracy.

Consolidation of KLA based writing continuum with identified focus.

Embedding the teaching of creativity, critical thinking and problem solving as key thinking skills.

Ongoing focus on developing stimulating effective learning environments.

Continuation of effective feedback and reflection opportunities to inform student progress and understanding of learning directions.



## Strategic Direction 2

Staff leading innovative practice and connecting with others

### Purpose

Enhance a school culture where staff members take responsibility for their own ongoing learning, striving for innovation and improvement and who make strong connections within and beyond the school. Develop a comprehensive whole school approach to promoting emotional intelligence and wellbeing for all staff.

### Overall summary of progress

With the introduction of changes to the curriculum and assessment for the HSC from the commencement of 2018, staff development focused on ensuring readiness through planning, programming and assessment. To ensure effective implementation to meet NESA's timelines, staff engaged openly with professional networks and NESA accessible training and development to further support their progress. Staff wellbeing activities continued and staff professional learning actively addressed identified areas of staff PDP's to support their ongoing development. The school direct focus on quality writing ensured audit of student skills and programs, targeted professional learning, implementation of faculty writing plans, collaborative sharing of practice and explicit teaching with improved student outcomes as measured by internal and external data a direct result.

### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures<br>(to be achieved over 3 years)  | Funds Expended<br>(Resources)                  | Progress achieved this year   |
|--|--|---|
| 100% of staff have participated in cross KLA professional learning groups.   | \$29 000.00<br><br>Professional Learning Funds | Throughout 2017, staff were provided with numerous opportunities for cross KLA professional learning. This was built into school structures and staff meetings to ensure quality professional learning and collaborative dialogue to improve teacher practice and school operation.   |
| 100% of staff members involved in ongoing professional learning and reflection, using the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers as reference. |  | All staff across the school have engaged in a wide range of professional learning experiences inclusive of reflective practice to inform both personal and school wide strengths as well as areas of development for future focus. Whilst many staff have engaged in practice to align professional development to teaching standards, this remains an area for further development moving forward. |

### Next Steps

Development for staff in professional teaching standards

Use of MyPL to track school based staff professional learning aligned to teaching standards

Staff continue to engage in wider professional networks to further develop and enhance their collaborative practice.

Key areas of development will include quality professional development

Enhancing staff data skills and use to inform teaching and learning

Aboriginal Cultural understandings for all staff to support their Implementation of Aboriginal Education

## Strategic Direction 3

### Systems leadership and collective efficacy

#### Purpose

Establish whole school communication strategies and collaborative decision making practices, whilst enhancing a culture of collective leadership throughout the school community, developing quality organisational practices and ICT infrastructure that supports every student and teacher to excel and learn to their full potential.

#### Overall summary of progress

Communication has been consolidated through the continuation of regular year meetings to ensure students have access to the information they require to maximise their learning. This process has also helped to develop a sense of community within each year group. The website and Parent Learning Groups continue to support parents through a comprehensive engagement with school systems and practices to develop a clearer understanding of our purpose. The information sessions provided for parents on curriculum is another area that has consolidated communication. ICT has continued to be developed through the ongoing development of school infrastructure. New interactive boards, the inclusion of pod classrooms and the upgrading of the technology in the school hall have all had significant impact on school practice. School wide procedures in relation to assessment, reporting and feedback and the implementation of the school procedures document have been clearly communicated to staff and helped to consolidate our teaching and learning practices.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures<br>(to be achieved over 3 years)  | Funds Expended<br>(Resources)   | Progress achieved this year  |
|--|---|--|
| 100% of staff demonstrate an awareness of school operational systems, assessment and reporting practices, feedback expectations and organisational structures. | \$4 900<br><br>TPL Funds  | Throughout 2017, staff were provided with procedures in relation to assessment and reporting, feedback expectations and organisation structures through staff meetings, regular email contact, faculty meetings and staff handbook. Staff indicated a clear understanding of the school operational systems. |
| 50% of teachers are confident in using learning technologies to maximise 21C learning opportunities for students.  | \$118 000<br><br>Computer Coordinator Funds and General Purpose Funds | Through the employment of a technical support officer and upgrades to classrooms and staffrooms technology staff have access to up to date technologies. Staff indicated a need to continue updates as new technologies arise.   |
| 90% of staff and students communicate through online platforms.  | \$6 350<br><br>Computer Coordinator Funds                             | Moodle has become the major reference site for students to access and engage with many resources to support their learning. Staff communicate with students via email and the student portal to increase communication in relation to learning, assessment and feedback.                                     |

#### Next Steps

Review of the school's BYOD policy.

Continue building the school website.

Professional learning enhancement for staff in technology.

Consistent review of school policies and procedures to ensure these align with DoE policy.

Continue the development of Pod classrooms

| Key Initiatives                            | Resources (annual)  | Impact achieved this year  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Aboriginal background loading</b>       | Additional funds from General School funds to support this program. (\$5456.00) | The provision of tutors for senior students for the ILC in English, Maths and Science supported our Aboriginal students in their HSC studies. Cultural immersion experiences were promoted and accessed by students to gain valuable experience and learning. Strong connections with the Newcastle University enhanced support. Student PLPs featured aspirational goals which were evaluated. Increased access of ILC – student numbers and feedback from students and parents evaluated success.. |
| <b>Low level adjustment for disability</b> | Wages for SLSO (.6) and LAST = \$76 654.00<br>SLSO (.4) = \$25 160.00           | Employment of permanent SLSO and 0.4 LAST to support identified students in developing skills and strategies to succeed in classroom learning. Collaborative developed IEPs and Health Care plans supported students and featured in staff communication and planning. Evaluation of program through staff feedback, parent and student feedback.  |
| <b>Socio-economic background</b>           | Funds expended.   | Ongoing support with financial assistance for all students to engage in whole school and specific programs eg: school camps, curriculum and sporting excursions, study skills and wellbeing activities. This provided broad exposure for all students. Organisational tools, mentoring and study skills development sessions supported students to understand their own learning, set goals and grow in confidence. Evaluation of program complete and future directions identified.                 |



## Student information

### Student enrolment profile

| Students | Enrolments |      |      |      |
|----------|------------|------|------|------|
|          | 2014       | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Boys     | 608        | 612  | 593  | 593  |
| Girls    | 476        | 467  | 476  | 472  |

Merewether High School is the academically selective school for the Hunter Region with an enrolment of 1072 students. It has a strong focus on catering for the educational needs of gifted and talented students as 21st century learners. While the gender balance within each year group has varied over time, a slight predominance of male students is evident within the school.

### Student attendance profile

| School    |      |      |      |      |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|
| Year      | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| 7         | 97.9 | 96.9 | 97.2 | 97.2 |
| 8         | 96.6 | 96.3 | 95.7 | 95.7 |
| 9         | 95.2 | 95   | 96   | 95.4 |
| 10        | 95.5 | 94.6 | 94.4 | 95.1 |
| 11        | 96   | 94.7 | 94.6 | 95.3 |
| 12        | 94.1 | 95.4 | 94.2 | 95.5 |
| All Years | 95.9 | 95.5 | 95.4 | 95.7 |
| State DoE |      |      |      |      |
| Year      | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| 7         | 93.3 | 92.7 | 92.8 | 92.7 |
| 8         | 91.1 | 90.6 | 90.5 | 90.5 |
| 9         | 89.7 | 89.3 | 89.1 | 89.1 |
| 10        | 88.1 | 87.7 | 87.6 | 87.3 |
| 11        | 88.8 | 88.2 | 88.2 | 88.2 |
| 12        | 90.3 | 89.9 | 90.1 | 90.1 |
| All Years | 90.2 | 89.7 | 89.7 | 89.6 |

### Management of non-attendance

Student attendance rates are consistently above Hunter and State averages. This is a reflection of the commitment shown by students and their parents and their high level of engagement in school life.

## Post-school destinations

| Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment | Year 10% | Year 11% | Year 12% |
|--|----------|----------|----------|
| Seeking Employment   | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Employment   | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| TAFE entry   | 0.5      | 0        | 0        |
| University Entry   | 0        | 0        | 99       |
| Other  | 1        | 0        | 1        |
| Unknown  | 0        | 0        | 0        |

Merewether High School students generally transition to University after the completion of their HSC. In 2017 a student left school at the end of Year 10 to move to study at a Trade College, and another 1% of the cohort chose to change schools at the end of Year 10 due to subject availability.

### Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

#### Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

In 2017 there were 22 students who were enrolled in the Hospitality vocational course, including 12 students in the Accelerated Hospitality class. Students have continued to support local community organisations including OzHarvest through food preparation and donations. The commercial kitchen is being utilised as a community resource, with our facilities being avenue for OzHarvest Newcastle and their "Cooking for a Cause" program if required. Coffee shops and functions raised \$1442.10 for Soul Café.

#### Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification

Twenty two students (6 % of the Year 12 cohort, 9% of the Year 11 cohort and 100% of students enrolled in Hospitality) who studied the Hospitality vocational course sat for the optional HSC examination. Each of these students also gained the full qualification of a Certificate II in Hospitality.

## Workforce information

## Workforce composition

| Position                              | FTE*  |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Principal                             | 1     |
| Deputy Principal(s)                   | 2     |
| Assistant Principal(s)                | 0     |
| Head Teacher(s)                       | 11    |
| Classroom Teacher(s)                  | 53.1  |
| Teacher of Reading Recovery           | 0     |
| Learning & Support Teacher(s)         | 0.4   |
| Teacher Librarian                     | 1     |
| Teacher of ESL                        | 0     |
| School Counsellor                     | 2     |
| School Administration & Support Staff | 12.57 |
| Other Positions                       | 1     |

\*Full Time Equivalent

## Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

### Teacher qualifications

| Qualifications                  | % of staff |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Undergraduate degree or diploma | 74         |
| Postgraduate degree             | 26         |

## Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Across 2017 all staff accessed a range of professional learning both KLA specific and whole school to meet our Professional Learning targets. TPL was delivered both within the school and sourced externally and supported both the staff PDP process and key teaching and learning initiatives. Internal professional learning was a focus for all staff meetings and addressed areas including Accreditation and the Professional Teaching Standards, Quality Teaching Observations, Curriculum Differentiation, Gifted and Talented Strategies and Technology and Data use. Executive staff undertook training and development on Performance Management and Support and the use of the Schools Excellence Framework to inform planning and practice.

## Financial information (for schools using both OASIS and SAP/SALM)

### Financial information

The three financial summary tables cover 13 months (from 1 December 2016 to 31 December 2017).

The financial summary consists of school income broken down by funding source and is derived from the school Annual Financial Statement.

The financial summary information covers funds for operating costs to 31st December 2017. It does not include expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and minor maintenance. The balance carried forward has been allocated to unpaid goods on order, unpaid casual salaries, savings for basketball court refurbishment, Drama space establishment and major asset replacement.

| Receipts                       | \$               |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Balance brought forward</b> | <b>769,449</b>   |
| Global funds                   | 449,625          |
| Tied funds                     | 130,630          |
| School & community sources     | 522,262          |
| Interest                       | 9,911            |
| Trust receipts                 | 213,677          |
| Canteen                        | 0                |
| <b>Total Receipts</b>          | <b>1,326,105</b> |
| <b>Payments</b>                |                  |
| Teaching & learning            |                  |
| Key Learning Areas             | 131,160          |
| Excursions                     | 89,539           |
| Extracurricular dissections    | 90,518           |
| Library                        | 6,783            |
| Training & Development         | 0                |
| Tied Funds Payments            | 97,568           |
| Short Term Relief              | 44,712           |
| Administration & Office        | 118,259          |
| Canteen Payments               | 0                |
| Utilities                      | 62,376           |
| Maintenance                    | 16,811           |
| Trust Payments                 | 268,560          |
| Capital Programs               | 8,865            |
| <b>Total Payments</b>          | <b>935,151</b>   |
| <b>Balance carried forward</b> | <b>1,160,404</b> |

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

|                                       | 2017 <b>Actual</b> (\$) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Opening Balance</b>                | 0                       |
| <b>Revenue</b>                        | 2,441,502               |
| Appropriation                         | 1,755,156               |
| Sale of Goods and Services            | 22,848                  |
| Grants and Contributions              | 658,669                 |
| Gain and Loss                         | 0                       |
| Other Revenue                         | 0                       |
| Investment Income                     | 4,829                   |
| <b>Expenses</b>                       | -1,408,616              |
| Recurrent Expenses                    | -1,408,616              |
| Employee Related                      | -363,232                |
| Operating Expenses                    | -1,045,384              |
| Capital Expenses                      | 0                       |
| Employee Related                      | 0                       |
| Operating Expenses                    | 0                       |
| <b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b> | 1,032,886               |
| <b>Balance Carried Forward</b>        | 1,032,886               |

The Opening balance for the 2017 school financial year is displayed in the OASIS table as Balance brought forward. The financial summary table for the year ended 31 December 2017 shows the Opening balance as \$0.00 because the Opening balance for the 2017 school financial year is reported in the OASIS table (as Balance brought forward).

The amount displayed in the Appropriation category of the financial summary table is drawn from the Balance carried forward shown in the OASIS table and includes any financial transactions in SAP the school has undertaken since migration from OASIS to SAP/SALM. For this reason the amount shown for Appropriation will not equal the OASIS Balance carried forward amount.

### Financial summary equity funding

The equity funding data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

|                       | 2017 <b>Actual</b> (\$) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Base Total</b>     | 9,123,067               |
| Base Per Capita       | 164,432                 |
| Base Location         | 0                       |
| Other Base            | 8,958,635               |
| <b>Equity Total</b>   | 106,442                 |
| Equity Aboriginal     | 11,444                  |
| Equity Socio economic | 18,345                  |
| Equity Language       | 0                       |
| Equity Disability     | 76,653                  |
| <b>Targeted Total</b> | 31,100                  |
| <b>Other Total</b>    | 209,005                 |
| <b>Grand Total</b>    | 9,469,615               |

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

## School performance

### 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 9 Writing

68.9% of Year 9 students achieved results in the top 2 bands of writing with 41.7% in Band 10 and 27.2% in Band 9. Results for this group were significantly higher than across the State and other selective high schools. 87% of year 9 students demonstrated greater than, or equal to, expected growth between Year 7 and Year 9.

#### Year 9 Reading

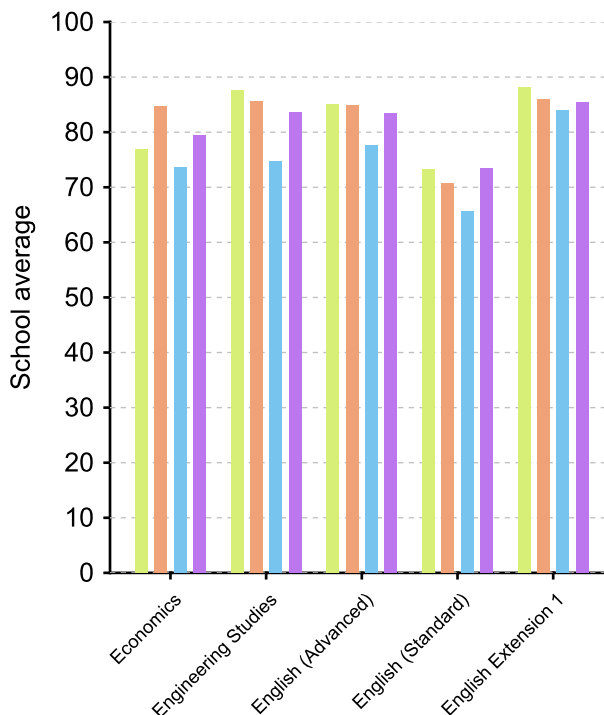
In 2017 85.6% of year 9 students placed in the top 2 bands of reading with 42.8% achieving Band 10. Student representation in the top 2 bands was significantly higher than across the State. When compared to other selective high schools, MHS had 4.2% more Year 9 students achieving Band 10 for reading. 54.3% of year 9 students demonstrated greater than, or equal to, expected growth between Year 7 and Year 9.

The Numeracy Team drives all numeracy aspects of the school plan and works closely with the Literacy Team as there is considerable overlap in its functions. Success is measured by meeting the set school target in Numeracy in 2017. Year 7 and Year 9 results showed substantial growth in students' National Numeracy assessments.

Year 9 Numeracy saw an increase of 14 more students in top band compared to last year and a 7% jump in top band compared to 2016.

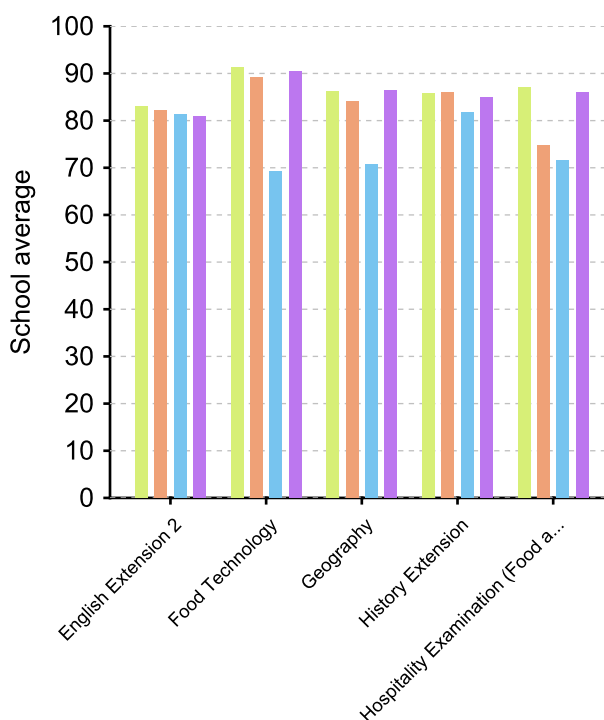
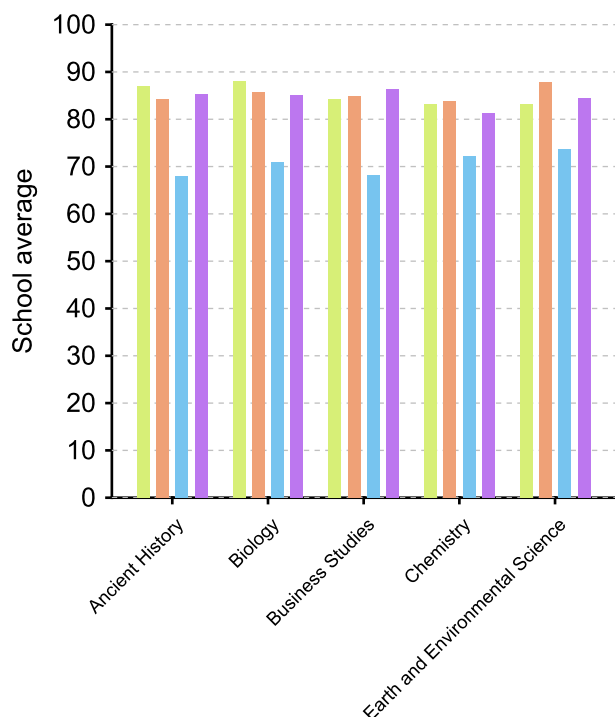
Year 7 Numeracy results showed a marked increase in top band 9, – 44 more in 2017 compared to 2015 and 20 more compared to 2017.

11 % increase in top band from 2016 and 24% from 2015. 100% demonstrated they were at proficiency level



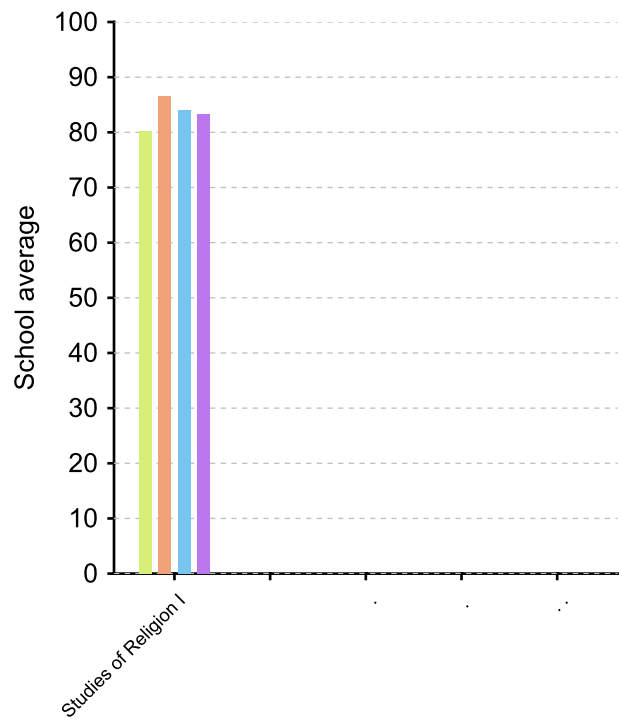
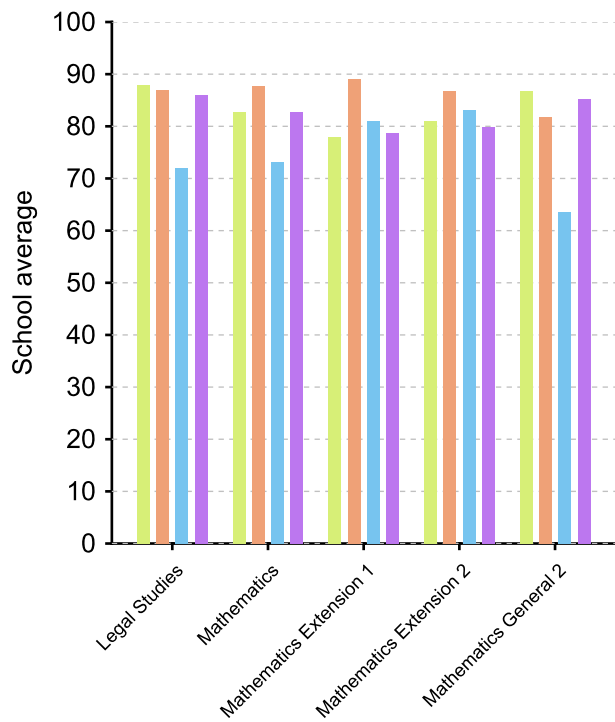
### Higher School Certificate (HSC)

The performance of students in the HSC is reported in bands ranging from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest).



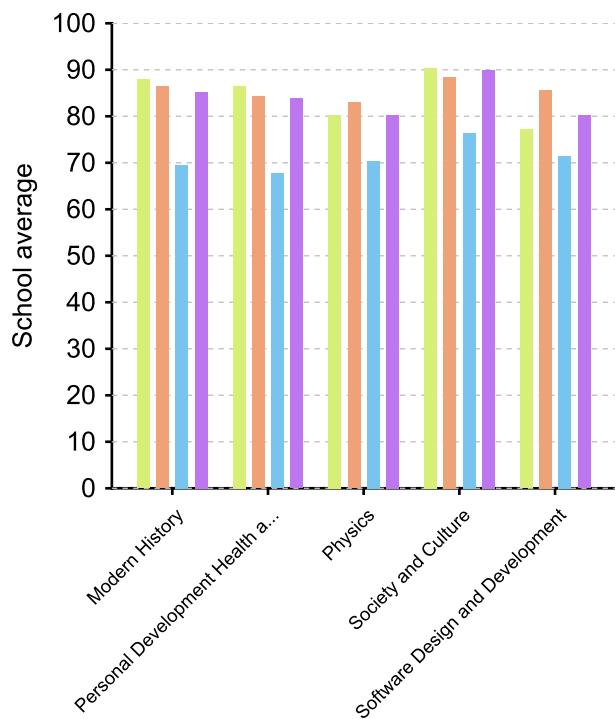
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 ■ SSSG Average 2017  
■ State Average 2017  
■ School Average 2013-2017

■ School 2017 
 ■ SSSG Average 2017  
■ State Average 2017  
■ School Average 2013-2017



■ School 2017 
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■ State Average 2017  
■ School Average 2013-2017

■ School 2017 
 ■ SSSG Average 2017  
■ State Average 2017  
■ School Average 2013-2017



■ School 2017 
 ■ SSSG Average 2017  
■ State Average 2017  
■ School Average 2013-2017

| Subject  | School 2017 | SSSG | State | School Average 2013-2017 |
|--|-------------|------|-------|--------------------------|
| Ancient History                                    | 86.9        | 84.3 | 68.1  | 85.3                     |
| Biology  | 88.1        | 85.6 | 70.9  | 85.1                     |
| Business Studies                                   | 84.3        | 85.0 | 68.2  | 86.3                     |
| Chemistry  | 83.1        | 83.7 | 72.1  | 81.3                     |
| Earth and Environmental Science                    | 83.1        | 87.7 | 73.6  | 84.5                     |
| Economics  | 76.9        | 84.7 | 73.6  | 79.5                     |
| Engineering Studies                                | 87.6        | 85.6 | 74.8  | 83.6                     |
| English (Advanced)                                 | 85.0        | 84.9 | 77.6  | 83.5                     |
| English (Standard)                                 | 73.2        | 70.8 | 65.6  | 73.4                     |
| English Extension 1                                | 88.1        | 86.0 | 84.0  | 85.4                     |
| English Extension 2                                | 83.0        | 82.1 | 81.2  | 80.9                     |
| Food Technology                                    | 91.3        | 89.1 | 69.3  | 90.5                     |
| Geography  | 86.1        | 84.2 | 70.7  | 86.3                     |
| History Extension                                  | 85.8        | 85.9 | 81.7  | 84.9                     |
| Hospitality Examination (Food and Beverage)        | 87.1        | 74.7 | 71.5  | 86.1                     |
| Legal Studies                                      | 88.0        | 86.9 | 72.1  | 86.0                     |
| Mathematics  | 82.7        | 87.7 | 73.2  | 82.8                     |
| Mathematics Extension 1                            | 77.9        | 89.1 | 81.0  | 78.7                     |
| Mathematics Extension 2                            | 81.0        | 86.8 | 83.1  | 79.9                     |
| Mathematics General 2                              | 86.7        | 81.8 | 63.6  | 85.2                     |
| Modern History                                     | 87.9        | 86.4 | 69.6  | 85.2                     |
| Personal Development Health and Physical Education | 86.5        | 84.3 | 67.7  | 83.8                     |
| Physics  | 80.3        | 83.0 | 70.4  | 80.3                     |
| Society and Culture                                | 90.4        | 88.5 | 76.4  | 90.0                     |

Twenty Five students were placed on the HSC All Rounders list receiving Band 6 results in at least ten units of study. Sixteen students achieved ATARs above 99 with Lizzy Mee awarded dux of our 2017 cohort. Our overall results saw our 2017 cohort achieve 337 Band 6s and 499 Band 5s with value added data demonstrating positive movement for the majority of students. Twenty students were placed on the top achievers list, earning a state ranking in their respective courses. Owen Small was placed 1st in the state in Geography, 2nd in German Continuers and 17th in Legal Studies (in 2016 Owen was also placed 4th in the state in Biology). Lizzie Mee was placed 5th in the state in Chemistry and 8th in Geography, while Libby Ellis achieved 3rd place in Hospitality and 7th place in Food Technology. Rizina Yadav achieved the state rank of 9th in Society and Culture and 16th in Legal Studies. Anna Carpenter placed 12th in Modern History, Elly Diamandis–Nikoletatos placed 12th in Legal Studies and Brooke Donoghoe placed 7th in Hospitality. In Food Technology, Lauren Moore achieved 2nd in the state while Rachel Vakil placed 4th and Caitlin Field 6th. In English Extension 2, Annaliese Turner was placed 10th in the state, Jessie Sucker–Walton achieved 16th in Mathematics General and Jazmyn Wood placed 18th in Biology. Thomas Whitehead was recognised as 3rd in the state in Engineering Studies and Priya Vakil placed 10th in Ancient History. So–yeun An's HSC major work in Visual Arts has been selected for Art Express. Jamie Rea was nominated for Encore for both his Music 2 and Music Extension performances and Zephan Thambar was nominated for his Music 1 performance. The accelerated program continued to see students achieve in the highest bands supporting them to achieve excellent results throughout the continuation of their HSC program.

## Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

In 2017 the school sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. This included feedback from parent surveys through; our Parent Learning Groups, student Focus Groups conducted by our School Captains, specific focus groups with the school's Student Representative Council and School Prefect Group, discussions and written surveys at the school's P&C Meeting, teacher forums and evaluations in regards to the School Excellence Framework, the current school plan and Registration of Public Schools documents, planning by staff in relation to the School Excellence Framework, the completion of the Self–Assessment aligned to the Framework, meetings and interviews. High levels of satisfaction were reported for the school's teaching and learning, community service, student welfare, cultural and sporting programs. Students indicated there is outstanding school spirit, the school is very supportive and there is a positive learning environment where success is acknowledged and celebrated. Students acknowledged the comprehensive leadership opportunities that allow them to make authentic and



school governance, administration and organisation. In particular, students made reference to strong and proactive welfare programs that supported students and the curriculum.

Staff indicated a want to develop a greater understanding of data and its use in teaching, learning and planning. They also indicated a desire to work across the school and across faculties to further increase their ability and knowledge to meet the needs of students in their classrooms. Collaborative practice and learning from each other ranked high as an area they would like to learn in the future.

Parents indicated that whilst communication is high, there is a need to continue to build and work in this area to ensure all parents are fully informed. Whilst the overall satisfaction with school programs remains consistently high, the school will continue to develop and further improve program areas in response to feedback and suggestions made through these forums.

## Policy requirements

### Aboriginal education

Support for students has continued with student learning supported by qualified and experienced tutors operating within the student study centre. Cultural awareness experiences were coordinated with students across the school engaging with local elders and community members to broaden their understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Students were provided with the opportunity to participate in a range of additional study skills and educational support programs through established community and tertiary education services. The school continued its strong relationship with the Aboriginal community and celebrated NAIDOC through a day of activities and performances led by Aboriginal student leaders and staff. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island families engaged with the school through regular scheduled parent meetings and students had the opportunity to meet regularly through the an Aboriginal Education Team. Eligible students were nominated for Nanga Mai awards and further supported to pursue identified academic and cultural programs to support their ongoing development and engagement in school, extra curricula and community life.

#### Next Steps

Aboriginal Personalised Learning Pathways embedded for all students.

Cultural Experiences continue to be available for students.

Increase student engagement in our Aboriginal Education Team.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parent and community meetings scheduled for each term.

Learning assistance provided through school tutoring programs.

### Multicultural and anti-racism education

The multicultural policies and programs in the school reflect our cultural diversity. The broad range of ethnic backgrounds within our school allows students to experience a variety of cultures. Students from all cultural backgrounds are encouraged to engage with leadership opportunities and activity groups within the school. Our appreciation of cultural diversity is highlighted through our Harmony Day celebrations where students participate in interactive activities under the theme "Strength in Harmony". Many local and international excursions, as well as student exchange programs are also available for our students. Multicultural education is explicitly taught in all our classrooms and staff ensure our school is an anti-discrimination environment, highlighted by no reports of anti-racist behaviour being reported to the Anti-Racism Contact Officer. Our Anti-Racism Contact officer (ARCO) is available for any member of the school community that may have concerns related to the issues of racism.

### Other school programs

#### Sport

Sport continues to play an essential role in the building of the culture of the school and plays an integral role in the reinforcement of positive attitudes and values within our student body. Our school has continued to experience a range of successes in sport across a number of team and individual activities. The sport program continues to be a pillar of our school structure and the program promotes actively our school values of integrity and excellence. This ongoing success can be attributed to the high participation rates of our students and the dedicated professionalism demonstrated by staff. Our weekly sports program is complemented by a variety of opportunities at Regional and State Level.

#### Highlights in 2017 included:

Our school teams won Zone Championships in swimming, athletics and cross country for the 20th consecutive year

A total of 116 students were selected to represent the Hunter Region and nine students went on to represent NSW

We had one student, Matthew Humby in Water Polo awarded a NSWCHS Sporting Blue

The following students were winners of individual gold medals at NSWCHS state carnivals:

Sarah Pickering – NSW CHS Athletics

Milly Stephenson – NSWCHS Athletics

Two students Mitch Robinson and Matthew Humby were both selected in the Australian Schools Water Polo team.

10 students were awarded Hunter Region Sports Awards or Blues

MHS students were successful at state level by winning medals in swimming, cross country, athletics and rowing

School teams in Open Table Tennis, Open Boys Rugby, 12 x50m Swimming Relay, Open Boys Soccer and Open Boys Water Polo were successful in winning Hunter Region Knockout Competitions

The Open Boys Soccer team were State winners of the Puma Cup Knockout competition.

Angel Barber was the MHS Sportswoman of the Year

Troy Brouwer was the MHS Sportsman of the Year

Matthew Humby was the Junior Sportsperson of the Year

Kye Harrison, Sam O Sullivan, Maddy Melville, Grace Harvey, Chloe Bell, Angel Barber and Tane Charman were recognized for their overall achievement in being awarded a MHS Sporting Blue in their chosen sport.

The school conducted its 11th and most successful International Sports Tour, taking 55 students in Boys Soccer and Rugby and Girls Netball.

### **Creative and Performing Arts**

The Arts continued to thrive at MHS, supported by a talented and committed staff and community professionals, who make a significant contribution to the quality and depth of the Arts programs. The Arts provide opportunities for the creative side of the intellect to stimulate higher order thinking skills, which contribute to the overall intellectual development of Gifted and Talented students.

### **Highlights for 2017:**

#### **Performing Arts—Drama and Music**

The MHS music ensembles comprise Concert Band, Jazz Band, Jam Ensemble, Clarinet Quartet, Flute Quartet, Piano Trio, String Ensemble, Vocal Ensemble and Percussion Ensemble. All instrumental ensembles participated in the Hawkesbury Eisteddfod, with outstanding results for all groups, with String Ensemble and Concert Band gaining 2nd place and Jazz 4th place in a very competitive field. The ensembles also participated in Bandfest, with the String Ensemble winning 1st prize and other groups highly commended.

There were two nominations for Encore from the 2017 HSC Music courses – one for Music 2 and Music Extension performance and the other for Music 1 performance.

The Drama Ensemble continued in 2017, with

performances at the school level and Star Struck showcasing the talent and dedication of these students.

The annual POSH concert held at Newcastle Conservatorium gave the community the opportunity to see Year 12 elective music students and MHS ensembles perform at a very high level in a professional venue.

MHS students were very involved in Star Struck, with a range of roles including featured artists, choir, backing vocalists, orchestra, drama and dance.

The Vocal Ensemble participated in the Secondary Choral Concert at Sydney Town Hall, performing the Rutter *Requiem* with a symphony orchestra, and songs with Felix Riebl from The Cat Empire.

A significant number of MHS music students are members of Regional Music Ensembles – the Hunter Wind Ensemble and Hunter Singers. This representation has increased in recent years. Both these prestigious ensembles are now based at Merewether HS, along with the community group, Newcastle Strings.

Music and Drama excursions enhanced the learning experiences of students, including Beautiful: the Carole King Musical, OnStage, Fearless, Encore and Sydney Symphony Meet the Music concerts at the Sydney Opera House.

### **Visual Arts**

One HSC visual arts student from the 2017 class was nominated for Artexpress.

Art exhibitions were held including *The Merewether Portrait Prize*, the exhibition of Year 12's Body of Work and the *Junior CAPA Night*, highlighting the outstanding quality of 2D and 3D artworks produced by MHS Visual Arts students. These exhibitions showcased the depth of talent, development of skills and higher order thinking required to produce such quality work.

Creative and Performing Arts excursions provided diverse opportunities for students and exposure to quality arts experiences, including field trips, the Year 8 Luna Park, the Archibald Prize exhibition and Artexpress.

### **English**

Student participation in a range of co-curricular initiatives continued in 2017 with considerable success. Student participation was supported through the commitment of staff to develop and extend students skills and knowledge in debating, public speaking and writing competitions.

Students were provided with opportunities to participate in a range of external writing competitions throughout the year. A number of students entered the *Dorothy Mackellar Poetry Writing* competition, *write4fun* and *What Matters* competition.

Merewether High School entered two teams in each of the three secondary competitions of the *Premier's Debating Challenge*, with outstanding successes in these state-wide competitions. In order to better accommodate the number of students interested in debating, debating squads were formed. This provided a large proportion of students the opportunity to participate in workshops and interschool debates. As the competitions became more competitive, competition teams were chosen to represent MHS. Successes in debating throughout 2017 included one of our Year 7/8 teams competing in the Regional final and our Year 11 team winning the Regional final and competing in the NSW quarter final.

Dharam Arora was successful in being chosen to represent the Hunter region as part of the Regional debating team and was invited to attend the Junior NSW State Debating Championships Camp in Sydney.

Involvement in Public Speaking competitions also continued throughout 2017. Students participated in a range of competitions. Participants were selected based on their public speaking skills, commitment to the program and an expression of interest process that included a proposal for their topic.

- 8 students competed in the Rostrum Voice of Youth Public Speaking Competition; four in the Junior Division (Sohpia Jeffries, Emma Cullen, Ashna Maki and George McNamara) and four in the Senior Division, (Aditya Enjeti, Samyuktha Sethumadhavan, Harry Su and Rosanna Gately). Four students; Samyuktha Sethumadhavan, Harry Su and Rosanna Gately and George McNamara, progressed through to the Regional Final.
- George McNamara (Year 8) won the Junior Regional and NSW finals in the Rostrum Voice of Youth Public Speaking Competition. He went on to compete at the National Final in Brisbane and placed third in Australia.
- Ethan Floyd (Year 8) participated in the NAIDOC week *NSW Speak Up* competition and placed second in NSW for both the prepared and impromptu speeches.
- Rizina Yadav and Samyuktha Sethumadhavan participated in the *Plain English* competition with Samyuktha progressing through to the NSW semi-final.
- Public speaking workshops were conducted with a particular focus on improving the quality of prepared speeches through practise and feedback. A variety of participation-based games were played and the sophistication of the students' performances was impressive and certainly improved, as a result.

## ICAS English

All students in Years 7 – 10 participated in the ICAS English Competition. In addition to this, all of Year 7 participated in the ICAS Spelling Competition and Years 7 and 8 participated in the English Writing Competition. Emma Cornally and Harry Su were both awarded ICAS medals for their achievements in ICAS

Examinations. Emma received her medal for ICAS Spelling and Harry was awarded his for his achievements in ICAS Writing. A large proportion of students received Distinctions and High Distinctions in these competitions.

## Results Breakdown

**High Distinctions:** Lachlan Baker, Matthew Banney, William Bryant, Taja Newling, Sam Spratt, Rebecca Vincent, Monet Murray, Elizabeth Patterson, Manon Rouge, Jasper Toole, Dharam Arora, Christopher Beck, Genevieve Ball, Mackenzie Gilligan, Aiden Gluvchinsky, Ella Simons, Hamish Douglas, Aditya Enjeti, Louise O'Rourke, Cooper Porter-Kay, Eben Taylor, Henry Tregilgas, Kate Edwards, Ross Fletcher. One hundred and forty one students received Distinctions with three hundred and sixteen students awarded credits.

## ICAS Spelling

### University Medal: Emma Cornally

**High Distinctions:** Emma Cornally, Chloe Kidd, Anna Nikishina. In addition, across our Year 7 cohort 16 students were awarded Distinctions and 63 students received Credits.

## ICAS Writing

### University Medal: Harry Su

**High Distinctions:** Timothy Hayes, Bella Petraello, Alice Thompson, Ryan Woolnough, Dario Bergmann, Aidan Carthew, Daniel Clarke, Tulip Cranson, Youka Freeman, Sophie Loiselle, Monet Murray, Harry Su. Ninety students were recognised with Distinction achievements and a further one hundred and forty six students receiving credit awards.

## Mathematics

The Mathematics Faculty delivered engaging programs to all year groups throughout 2017. Learning activities were aimed to provide students with engaging, challenging yet enjoyable learning opportunities aimed at a wide range of abilities. Appropriate programs for gifted and talented students were used to maximise their learning outcomes. Programs promoted innovation and creativity in the classroom, aiming to prepare students for the future learning.

Teaching and Learning activities focused on building skills in problem solving and critical analysis. Students were encouraged to build learning capacity through interactive methods and develop skills for clear communication of their mathematical ideas through collaborative processes.

Our mathematics programs were inclusive of a wide range of consideration and had a range of detailed strategies to promote mathematics education at the highest possible level. Our collaborative partnership

with University of Newcastle helped to promote learning and enrichment opportunities for our students.

## **Mathematics Competitions**

We ran two major competitions namely The Australian Mathematics Competition and The International Competition for Assessments in Schools. We had increased interest and outstanding achievements in both the competitions.

We have also offered a range of other competitions and extended invitation to competitions to our higher achieving students through an in-school program.

### **Australian Mathematics Competition.**

This year 694 students competed in the prestigious Australian Mathematics Competition. The questions in this competition are challenging and demanding and we have attained excellent results. Merewether High school students were awarded 1 Prize, 16 High Distinctions (3 in Year 7, 3 in Year 8, 4 in Year 9, 3 in Year 10 and 3 in Year 11), 123 Distinctions, 312 Credits, 223 Proficiencies and 34 Participations.

Sharvil Kesarwani (Year 10) received the Best in School award, as well as a prize certificate for excellence, a monetary prize and a lapel badge from the Australian Mathematics Trust.

### **2017 Australian Informatics Olympiad**

Angus Atkinson in Year 10 achieved a Bronze award and Dharam Arora in Year 9 received a participation award.

### **The International Competition for Assessments in Schools (ICAS)**

This year Merewether High competed in the ICAS Mathematics competition. Our students achieved results well above the state average. In Year 7, 168 students participated with 12 High Distinctions, 55 Distinctions, 69 Credits and 12 Merit awards. In Year 8, 169 students participated with 10 High Distinctions, 52 Distinctions, 72 Credits and 17 Merit awards. In Year 9, 43 students participated with 3 High Distinctions, 6 Distinctions, 24 Credits and 3 Merit awards. In Year 10, 23 students participated with 5 High Distinctions, 6 Distinctions, 6 Credits and 3 Merit awards. In Year 11, 10 students participated with 1 High Distinction, 2 Distinctions, 6 Credits and 1 Merit award, Year 12 – 1 Distinction.

### **Mathematics Challenge**

The aims of the Mathematics Challenge for Young Australians include encouraging and fostering a greater interest in and awareness of the power of mathematics. It is designed to create a desire to succeed in solving interesting mathematical problems and the discovery of the joy of solving problems in mathematics.

Mathematics Challenge helps in identifying talented young Australians, recognising their achievements

nationally and providing support that will enable them to reach their own levels of excellence. It also provides teachers with interesting and accessible problems and solutions as well as detailed and motivating teaching discussion and extension materials and comprehensive Australia-wide statistics of students' achievements in the Challenge.

Students enter this challenge to work on specific topics for a major work and our great success is demonstrated by the following students. Year 7 Benjamin Ewin, Joel Hay–Credit, Year 8 George McNamara– High Distinction, Daniel Jaeger– Credit, Samantha Deep, Thomas York –Participation, Year 9 James Punch–High Distinction Vihan Roy, Luca Borserio–Participation, Year 10 Sharvil Kesarwani, Eben Taylor– High Distinction.

### **The Australian Mathematical Olympiad Committee (AMOC)**

Congratulations and invitation to Sharvil Kesarwani. Sharvil has taken part in a range of mathematical activities and competitions throughout the year. This included Australian Mathematics Olympiad. The school extends special appreciation to Sharvil in all his mathematical involvement.

### **Pi Day**

Was celebrated on March 14 with a variety of activities targeting Mathematics applications and Pi related aspects in a fun and challenging day. It involved Pi recital, in class activities, pie eating, a Pi treasure hunt and was an extremely successful day. The Mathematics faculty are very proud of the great team effort students, teachers and office staff all contributed to a very successful day.

## **Science**

Our students continue to excel both within school and in pursuit of challenges outside of school with Justine Bull and Caitlin Young of Year 12 attend the National Youth Science Forum in January 2017. Exceptional results in the HSC saw Elizabeth Mee achieve a state ranking of 5th in the Chemistry course and Jazmyne Wood ranked 18th in Biology. Strong engagement by students in senior courses, practical investigations and excursions contribute to the vibrant learning culture within Science.

**ICAS Science Competition:** 49 students achieved a High Distinction, 236 students achieved a Distinction in and 280 students achieved a Credit. Eben Taylor of Year 10 was one of only 514 students from Australia awarded a prestigious ICAS medal and a medal winner's certificate at a ceremony in Sydney. High Distinction awards are awarded to the top 1% of participants, congratulations to all participants.

**Year 7 High Distinctions:** Dominic Seccombe, Aden Shearman, Daisy Grady, Leonardo Milan, Benjamin Davis, Matthew Banney, Jackson Yann and Cooper

Harridge.

**Year 8 High Distinctions:** Cooper Janzen, Aidan Knipe, Vashisht Jain, Zenden Grieves, Andrew Weerasinghe, Alexander Paterson, Murray Jones, Nathaniel Girdler and George McNamara.

**Year 9 High Distinctions:** James Harvey Punch, Chris Beck, Liam Prince, Dharam Arora, Mia Nash, Christopher Vallance, Callum Wainwright, Shahar Eidels and Thomas Wood.

**Year 10 High Distinctions:** Eben Taylor, Ronack Jain, Sharvil Kesarwani, Nicholas Campbell, Cooper Porter-Kay, Jonti Crisp, Angus Atkinson, Layla Bonomini, Hamish Douglas, Shannon Gillan, William Lucas, Louise O'Rourke, Louis Travers, Daniel Cosgrove, Mitchell Davis, Joseph Dullard, Fariz Ingle, Anna Moscato, Arthy Mukunthan

**Year 11 High Distinctions:** Harry Su, Kate Edwards, Luke Nepia, Jazmyne Wood

**Year 8 VALID Results** [Validation of Assessment for Learning and Individual Development]

Our school performance placed us overall 17.3% higher than the cohort comparison with consistently higher school means in all 4 key areas assessed.

## Social Science

The faculty celebrated many areas of student success in 2017. These included:

- In the Australian Geography Competition Jackson Yann, Alice Musgrave, Callum Wainwright, Eben Taylor, Kate Edwards, Louis Graves, Caitlin Young and Paul Rodgers achieved in the top 1% of Australia out of 65,000 students.
- Kate Edwards was also selected for the Big Week Out at Kangaroo Island as part of the Australian Geography Competition.
- In the University of Newcastle Business Plan Competition 3 students were placed in the top 20 of the state. Jade Conner, Lucy Witherdin and Bailey Proud
- In the University of New South Wales Business Studies Competition 3 students won prizes for exceptional scores. Leah Adams, Patrick Dowzer and Jye Hollier.
- Elly Diamandis-Nikolatos and Annabelle Cleary came 2nd in the Muswellbrook MUNA competition sponsored by the Newcastle Enterprise Rotary Club.
- In the Mock Trial Competition the team won all local rounds progressing to the third knock out round.
- In the Geography Teachers Association MHS students won a number of awards including:

**Arthur Phillip Senior Fieldwork Award**

Lizzy Mee –First in the Brock Rowe SPG Project.

Jemma Harbison– Equal Third in the Brock Rowe SGP Project.

Caitlyn Johnson– Equal highly commended in the SGP Project.

## PDHPE

Students participated in 7min fitness development activities as part of all practical Physical Education and PASS lessons. This addition to their regular program was informed by the data collected through our involvement in the University of Newcastle's BURN to LEARN research programs conducted during 2017, aimed at increasing the daily physical activity of Senior students. Students in Year 7 developed water safety knowledge and skills during the annual intensive Swim, Save, Survive aquatics program. Year 10 PASS students presented the program, enhancing their skills in leadership, instruction and organisation as well as strengthening peer mentor relationships with students in Year 7. Students engaged in opportunities to increase their daily level of physical activity through participation in lunchtime sporting competitions. Students also contributed through their participation to raising awareness of Diabetes and further supported this area through charitable donations collected as a component of these lunchtime sporting events. Students studying Physical Activity and Sports Studies in Years 9 and 10 were provided with a sporting and cultural excursion to New Zealand during the October holiday break. Based in Rotorua, students experienced a variety of challenging activities including Zorbing, Lugging, Jet Boating, Schwebbing, Free Fall Extreme and a Catamaran visit to the hot springs. One of the highlights of the trip was a rainy and muddy Mountain Biking experience that tested the skills of all participants and left them muddy yet triumphant in conquering the mountain.

## TAS

Amy Buckner was ranked 5th in the state for HSC Food Technology. (2016 HSC)

Our first accelerated Textiles and Design class achieved excellent results – 50% band 6 and 50% band 5.

60 Engineering students from Years 9–11 were involved in the "Students on Track" education program in conjunction with the inaugural Newcastle 500.

All Year 8 Mandatory Technology students participated in the UON Engineering Race day to supplement their work on CO2 dragsters and the principles of aerodynamics.

Questacon "Invention Convention" Road show visited MHS Engineering students for an incursion resulting in the selection of 3 students to attend the Regional Competition. One student – Eben Taylor was further selected to compete at the National event in Canberra.

Year 10 Accelerated Design and Technology students attended an excursion to Williamtown airport to support their case study on the Airbus A380.

Year 10 Engineering students visited the CSIRO

Research facility to observe alternative energy sources for the future, including the Tesla battery system.

Fifteen Year 9 Engineering students were involved in the University of Newcastle Science and Engineering Challenge Day, mentoring Year 6 students.

Teams comprised of students from Years 7–9 competed in Regional, State and National Robocup Competition. Our girls Dance Team came first in the State in their category.

Girls from Stage 4 and 5 were involved in a seminar conducted by UON Engineering and Built Environment Faculty to promote women in Engineering.

Year 8 elective Food Technology students hosted parents and friends at several high tea functions throughout the year with a menu they planned, prepared and served themselves. Year 10 Food Technology held “pop-up” food stalls at lunch time to support their unit on food trends.

Year 12 student Emily O’Hearn has been offered an Engineering cadetship with Boeing at Williamtown for 2018.

Year 10 students Angus Atkinson and Venkatachalam Meyyappan coded a Qubert program which was uploaded to NASA Spacestation.

## Languages

Students studied under a variety of language programs including Indonesian and German in Stage 4, French, German and Japanese in Stage 5, French, German and Japanese in Stage 6. The study of languages help develop communication skills, literacy skills and build relationships with their peers both at MHS and schools across the globe.

Highlights for 2017 include:

- Owen Small achieved 2nd place in NSW for HSC German Continuers.
- Japan Tour attended by 40 students in April visiting major cities, experiencing Japanese culture, speaking skills practice and a visit to Newcastle’s Sister City Ube.
- Café Blah–Blah ran each week for senior French students to develop speaking skills.
- Alexander Price (Year 10) won a trip to Japan in the regional Sister City Japanese Contest hosted at Merewether High School. 4 MHS students were finalists in this competition. As part of this exchange Merewether High hosted 10 students and 2 teachers from Japan for a week during August.
- French students participated in the Alliance Francais French Film Festival.
- French exchange students spent 3 weeks engaging with our French classes hosted by our students.
- Ruby Dempsey was selected as an exchange student to France.
- Taskil Dastoor spent the summer holidays as an exchange student in Japan.

- Keishin High School from Newcastle’s sister city of Ube engaged in language and cultural activities with our students on their annual visit to our school, deepening bonds between our schools and cities. Merewether High returned the visit to Keishin High during our school tour.
- Students were supported in their language and cultural studies through native speakers coming in to the classroom for Stage 6 speaking practice each week.

## Humanities

A short list to highlight some of the outstanding achievements of MHS Humanities students in 2017:

The History Teacher’s Association recognises Samuel McIntyre for his outstanding submission to the History Extension Major Work prize in 2017.

The HTA also recognised a range of our students for their essay submissions to the 2017 National History Challenge. This includes Sophia Scepanovik for achieving first in state for the Year 10 Category. Additionally, Jessica Avar (Year 11) Emma Nickel (Year 11) and Jun Young An (Year 10) were awarded Certificates of Commendation for being Regional winners with their submissions.

The Australian History Competition also saw great success with over 75% of entrants achieving a Distinction or High Distinction.

Mirielle Edwards achieved a new record for MHS in the Australian History Competition by coming first in the state for Year 8.

The MHS Chess team comprised of Dunnil Yohanes, Ruby Dempsey (Year 11), Coel Mulready and Daniel Jaeger (Year 8) were first in the region 2017, the highest the school has yet achieved and took 2nd place in the State Championship playoffs.