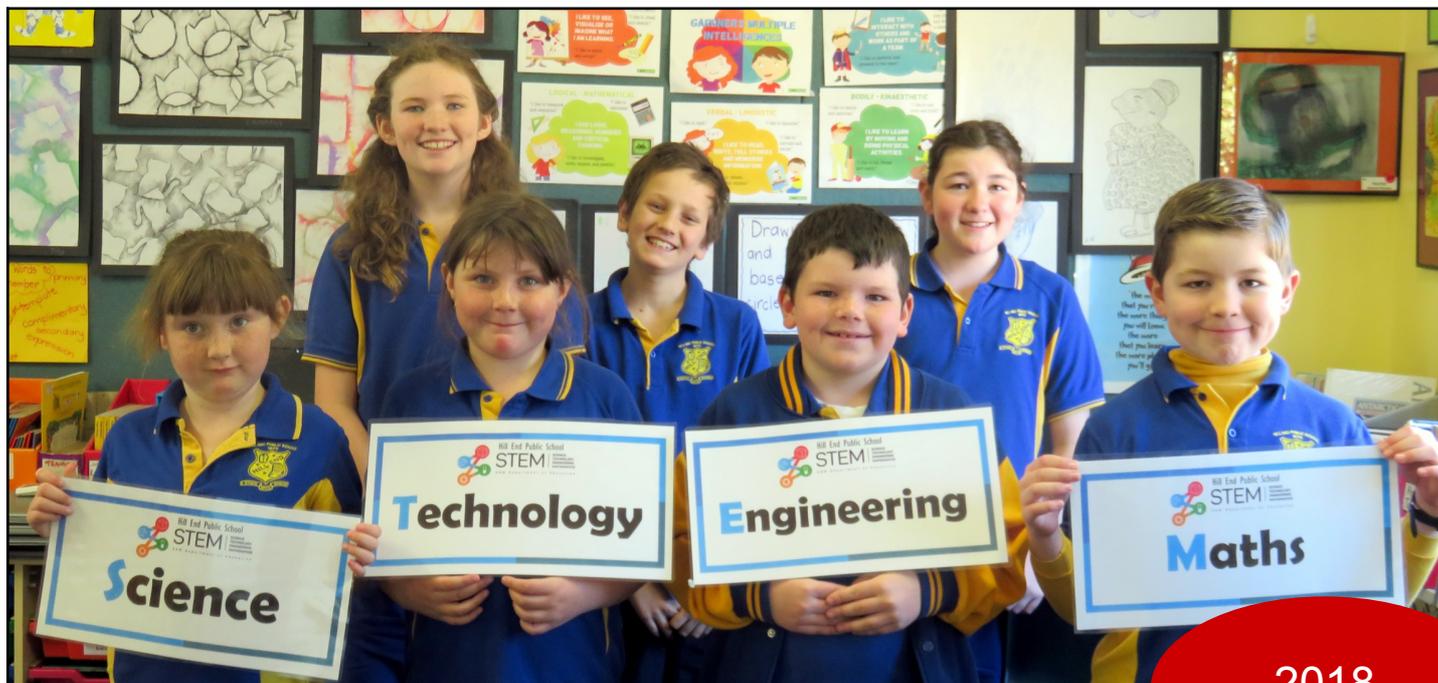


# Hill End Public School Annual Report



2018



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## Introduction

The Annual Report for **2018** is provided to the community of Hill End Public 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.

Mr C Grossett

Principal

### School contact details

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### Message from the Principal

2018 has been a year of dynamic progress for our school.

At the core of our work we have continued to focus on individualised learning for every student.

I am proud to say that our school retains a dedicated group of experienced and caring professionals who have created high levels of student engagement and support within the classroom throughout the year, and forward into the future. Academically we are driven to ensuring our students succeed with a continued focus on the key learning areas of English and Maths. Every student is supported through personalised learning plans including individual academic goals.

In 2018 our school has embraced the STEM pedagogical model of learning. By combining the best aspects of explicit teaching and learning alongside a comprehensive program of research, design, construction, individual and group based activities our students have been given extraordinary opportunities for success. Our school and our students have embraced future focussed learning with robotics, coding and 3D design and printing that now form an integrated part of our classroom program.

Throughout the year we continued to work alongside a number of similar schools bringing opportunities for our student to learn and socialise alongside students from other schools.

All of the incredible developments within our school in 2018, and the ongoing opportunities and engagement that our students have had throughout the year have of course been documented in the school newsletter – The Golden Quill. I invite you to read and enjoy the story of our school year through the newsletters.

Finally I am of course again humbled by the support our school receives from the local Hill End community. This year has been no exception, the school lies at the heart of the village in many respects, I would like to thank the entire community for their support and for the opportunity to serve as your school principal.

Christopher Grossett

Principal

## School background

### School vision statement

Excellence through innovative, collaborative practice to develop outstanding global citizens.

### School context

Hill End Public School is a small primary school located in a rural and isolated area, situated midway between the larger centres of Bathurst (85km) and Mudgee (75km). The school is staffed by a small group of experienced teachers and colleagues and has a current K–6 student enrolment of eight students including 25% who recognise Aboriginality.

The school is situated within an Historic Site managed by the Parks Service Division Office, Environment and Heritage NSW. This unique, preserved setting is visited by thousands of tourists each year. The school is a focal point in the village and community.

Key focus areas for the school include catering for individual student strengths, developing positive and constructive parent–school partnerships, and enhancing networks, both within the Department of Education and Communities, and within the wider community. Network partnerships include the Mudgee Small Schools Network, The One Schools Network and the Lithgow Network.

Extra curricular activities form a dynamic aspect of Hill End Public School learning for students and include regular music and drama lessons, eisteddfods, debating and inter–school lessons utilising Connected Classroom video conferencing.

## 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 and participated in an External Validation. 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. During the External Validation process, an independent panel of peer principals considered our evidence and assessment of the school's progress, aligned with the standards articulated in the School Excellence Framework.

Initially, Hill End Public school staff held discussions around the External Validation process and the involvement of staff in preparing and presenting the final documents to the External Validation panel. Further professional learning was held with staff from similar schools undertaking External Validation in 2018. These schools included Glen Alice and Hampton Public schools. These initial meetings were held with support from the Department of Education. Following these preliminary meetings the decision at Hill End Public School was made to gather validation evidence around six key elements.

As a part of the process in developing evidence for the validation it became clear that all of the staff at the school work above and beyond expectations together on a shared vision. Our stated vision statement for the school reads as;

***Excellence through innovative, collaborative practice to develop outstanding global citizens***

### ***School Vision Statement 2018 –2020***

This vision statement runs parallel to three aims guiding the work and efforts at our school.

***To be a school that offers the highest standards in educational programs, student welfare & community engagement. – Excellence***

***To continue to respond to innovation and change. – Innovation***

***To wrap the best aspects of our school environment within that of a wider community of similar schools. –***

## **Collaboration**

Evidence clearly shows that the school is focussed on these goals, that effort and innovation are driving change while quality teaching, student care and personalised learning remain at the heart of our core values and are reflected in the success and welfare of the students.

As a result of the External Validation process the panel assessed the Hill End Public School as excelling in three aspects of the School Excellence Framework. The three elements included:

1. Wellbeing "In schools that excel, there is a strategic and planned approach to develop whole school wellbeing processes that support the wellbeing of all students so they can connect, succeed, thrive and learn."
2. Reporting "In schools that excel, reporting that is clear, timely and accurate provides information that supports further progress and achievement for all student learning across the curriculum. "
3. School Resources "In schools that excel, resources are strategically used to achieve improved student outcomes and high quality service delivery. "

In all other aspects of the school operation the panel deemed the school to be working at a level of Sustaining and Growing with significant positive feedback given by the panel members towards the work of the staff in supporting every child at the school.

On reflection it is clear that our self-assessment and the External Validation 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

### Learning

#### Purpose

Our purpose is to provide a school wide collective responsibility for personalising student learning and success with high levels of student, staff and community engagement and achievement.

#### Overall summary of progress

Drawing on the School Excellence Framework and examining both the Learning Domain and Learning Culture the school is clearly focussed on learning and setting high expectations for students;

*"The school culture is strongly focused on learning, the building of educational aspiration and ongoing performance improvement throughout the school community." SEF – Learning Domain*

The school emphasises personalised learning with individual plans for every student and attention paid to the needs of every child.

*"The whole school community demonstrates aspirational expectations of learning progress and achievement for all students, and is committed to the pursuit of excellence." SEF – Learning Domain – Learning Culture*

Likewise with attendance a clear plan and set of processes to support student attendance and manage non-attendance exists;

*"Teachers, parents and the community work together to support consistent and systematic processes that ensure student absences do not impact on learning outcomes." SEF – Learning Domain – Learning Culture*

Within the element of curriculum it is apparent that curriculum delivery within the school is dynamic and responsive. The use of initiatives such as Small Talk Debating, STEM activities and combined school collaborations ensure that teaching and learning is rich in quality. The use of a cloud based classroom programming tool has allowed the school to adjust programs to meet individual needs and to revise and refine teaching to meet the needs of all students.

There is;

*"An integrated approach to quality teaching, curriculum planning and delivery, and assessment promotes learning excellence and responsiveness in meeting the needs of all students." SEF – Learning – Curriculum*

In developing effective teaching programs the school has in operation a clear set of assessment and reporting processes including a summative assessment schedule, clear student reporting systems, parent feedback and discussion documents. This attention to assessment allows teachers to accurately evaluate student learning and implement changes when required.

*"Consistent school-wide practices for assessment are used to monitor, plan and report on student learning across the curriculum. Formative assessment is integrated into teaching practice in every classroom, confirming that students learn what is taught." SEF – Learning Domain – Assessment and Reporting*

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)   | Funds Expended (Resources)           | Progress achieved this year  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Every student achieves a year's growth for a year's learning in literacy and numeracy through a self-centred and self-directed approach. | \$7639 Combined Equity Loadings 2018 | This year steps were taken to ensure that student academic growth is closely tracked using a range of internal measures, external assessment tools and formative assessment tasks.<br><br>The resulting depth of quantitative and quality assessment has clearly identified individual student academic growth throughout the school when measured using the Literacy and Numeracy progressions. |

## Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)   | Funds Expended (Resources)           | Progress achieved this year  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Every student achieves a year's growth for a year's learning in literacy and numeracy through a self-centred and self-directed approach. |                                      | Through the use of formative assessment students have begun to reflect on their own learning evident through self-assessment of writing tasks and improvement in key skills.   |
| Improved levels of student wellbeing and engagement  | \$7639 Combined Equity Loadings 2018 | Staff at the school pride themselves on the level of care and welfare provided to all the students enrolled. All students are taught and cared for as individuals with a detailed set of values, rules and pro-active measures to encourage wellbeing and support learning. Positive, respectful relationships are clearly evident between staff and students as documented in student surveys and evident through the positive behaviour and the enthusiastic manner of students. |

## Next Steps

In 2019 our school will work to create an integrated model of learning across all Key Learning Areas.

The model will;

1. Continue the practice of high quality, explicit teaching and learning.

These practices will align text studies with vocabulary and the development of writing tasks and models within class. Formative assessment will continue to form a key element in all writing tasks allowing students to critically evaluate their own skills, strengths and learning pathways.

2. Enhance the use of the STEM pedagogical model of learning.

This model, to be used throughout the classroom environment 2019 will enable every student to develop skills and learning strategies that can be shifted applied in all aspects of their own education.

3. Allow for individual success through a diverse range of learning activities and assessment processes.

This will include the use of all skills and processes from all Key Learning Areas within the immersive classroom environment.

4. Focus on the future by embedding such elements as 3D design, engineering, robotics and coding throughout the classroom program.

2019 will see the continued integration of technology within the classroom environment and throughout all subjects.



## Strategic Direction 2

### Teaching

#### Purpose

Our purpose is to develop quality teaching practice that is engaging and evidence based. We will continue to build the capacity of each staff member, by extending their capabilities through personalised professional learning, to ensure the school is at the forefront of best practice.

#### Overall summary of progress

Within the element of teaching, staff at the school strive to provide quality teaching across all KLA's. Our work is driven by the three aims highlighted earlier in the document of excellence, innovation and collaboration. Lesson plans and classroom timetables are designed with an emphasis on explicit English and Maths lessons with literacy and numeracy skills embedded throughout all Key Learning Areas

*"Accommodations and adjustments are made to suit needs as they arise." SEF – Teaching Domain – Effective Classroom Practice*

Feedback is provided to all students at a personal level, on an individual skill level.

*"All teachers are committed to identifying, understanding and implementing the most effective explicit teaching methods." SEF – Teaching Domain – Effective Classroom Practice."*

The use of the Scout platform, PLAN data and NAPLAN results are used school-wide in order to create effective Individual Learning Plans, identify progress and to further refine teaching programs.

*"Student assessment data is regularly used school-wide to identify student achievements and progress, in order to reflect on teaching effectiveness and inform future school directions." SEF – Teaching Domain – Data Skills and Use*

Innovation in teaching drives the planning for the near future within Hill End Public School. In 2018 a shift into Problem Based Learning and the use of the STEM pedagogical model has lifted student engagement and pathways to academic success. The school leads the region in a number of STEM programs including the Computer Science, Robotics and Engineering Programs. Syllabus outcomes have been integrated through the STEM model within the school providing the backbone to a future focussed learning environment able to engage all students from K– 6.

*"Teaching staff demonstrate and share their expertise within their school and with other schools. All teachers have expert contemporary content knowledge and deploy effective teaching strategies. The school trials innovative practices and has processes in place to evaluate, refine and scale success." SEF – Teaching Domain – Expertise and innovation*

Aligning with all aspects of the Teaching Domain are the school collaborations the school has within the region. In 2018 these include close partnerships alongside well over a dozen small schools in the Lithgow Educational network, the OneSchools Network and the Mudgee Small Schools Network.

These alliances and partnerships allow for a wide range of positive outcomes including shared professional learning, student wellbeing, consistent teacher judgement and student partnerships and study projects.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

| Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)  | Funds Expended (Resources) | Progress achieved this year   |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| –An increased proportion of teachers working at higher levels of teaching practice and skill. . |                            | Through 2018 teaching staff at the school researched, developed and implemented the STEM pedagogical model alongside established classroom programs.<br><br>The enhancements resulted in a strengthened uses of explicit teaching practice, formative assessment and the enrichment of classroom experiences for students through research, collaboration and the immersed use of technology. |

**Progress towards achieving improvement measures**

| <b>Improvement measures<br/>(to be achieved over 3 years)</b>  | <b>Funds Expended<br/>(Resources)</b> | <b>Progress achieved this year</b>   |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <p>–An increased proportion of teachers working at higher levels of teaching practice and skill. .</p> |                                       | <p>As a result of these developments the students have demonstrated high levels of engagement and development evident through their work completed and submitted for review.</p>   |
| <p>An increased proportion of teachers using evidence informed teaching strategies.</p>                |                                       | <p>Developing an in–depth understanding of the points individual learners have reached has continued to drive the teaching and learning process at the school. Students are assessed using a range of formal and informal models, this information is used to develop and deliver learning specific to each child.</p> <p>As a result of this focus every child at the school has made steady academic progress throughout the year.</p> |

## Next Steps

1. 2019 will see a continued focus on enhanced understanding of academic assessment results through assessment tools, formative assessment and student learning plans, this in turn will ensure that teaching is aimed at meeting the need of every student within the school.

The use of the STEM pedagogical model will be enhanced within 2019 through a deep immersion of the model throughout the classroom environment and program .

| Key Initiatives                            | Resources (annual) | Impact achieved this year   |
|--|--------------------|---|
| <b>Aboriginal background loading</b>       | \$4990             | In 2018 the school received additional funding to improve educational outcomes for students. The funding in 2018 was used to employ a Student Learning Support Officer to work with identified students to assist them with their literacy and numeracy.<br><br>This work included individual reading support, language and basic numeration skill development. |
| <b>Low level adjustment for disability</b> | \$468              |   |
| <b>Socio-economic background</b>           | \$2181             |   |



## Student information

### Student enrolment profile

| Students | Enrolments |      |      |      |
|----------|------------|------|------|------|
|          | 2015       | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
| Boys     | 7          | 5    | 2    | 3    |
| Girls    | 6          | 7    | 6    | 5    |

### Student attendance profile

| School    |      |      |      |      |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|
| Year      | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
| K         | 93.4 | 91.4 |      |      |
| 1         | 94.5 | 93.5 | 93   |      |
| 2         | 98.9 | 95.7 | 95.7 | 98.9 |
| 3         | 98.4 | 93.5 |      | 96.1 |
| 4         | 94.5 | 95.7 | 94.6 |      |
| 5         | 96.4 | 97.8 | 94.6 | 99.5 |
| 6         | 95.7 | 97.1 | 93.5 | 93.7 |
| All Years | 95.7 | 94.9 | 94.4 | 97.4 |
| State DoE |      |      |      |      |
| Year      | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
| K         | 94.4 | 94.4 |      |      |
| 1         | 93.8 | 93.9 | 93.8 |      |
| 2         | 94   | 94.1 | 94   | 93.5 |
| 3         | 94.1 | 94.2 |      | 93.6 |
| 4         | 94   | 93.9 | 93.9 |      |
| 5         | 94   | 93.9 | 93.8 | 93.2 |
| 6         | 93.5 | 93.4 | 93.3 | 92.5 |
| All Years | 94   | 94   | 93.8 | 93.2 |

### Management of non-attendance

Hill End Public School operates a clear and pro-active school attendance management plan.

Welfare phone calls are made to check on the welfare of any child absent from school where no notification has been given. Attendance is encouraged and supported through regular feedback, both formal and informal means including the school newsletter, letters, assemblies and informal discussions with parents and families. Home School Liaison Officer support is engaged when required.

Student attendance in 2018 showed a marked improvement over the previous year and was well

above the state average.

## Workforce information

### Workforce composition

| Position                                | FTE* |
|---|------|
| Principal(s)                            | 1    |
| Classroom Teacher(s)                    | 0.14 |
| Learning and Support Teacher(s)         | 0.1  |
| Teacher Librarian                       | 0.08 |
| School Administration and Support Staff | 0.9  |

\*Full Time Equivalent

One indigenous staff member is employed at Hill End Public School

### Teacher qualifications

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

### Teacher qualifications

| Qualifications                  | % of staff |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Undergraduate degree or diploma | 66         |
| Postgraduate degree             | 33         |

### Professional learning and teacher accreditation

In 2018, Hill End Public School staff undertook a number of Professional Learning activities, these included;

Mandatory annual anaphylaxis and CPR training

Child Protection Update Training

SAP HR payroll training

Work Health and Safety

ARCO – Anti-Racism Complaints Officer Training

Introduction to the Learning Progressions

School Excellence framework and External Validation Workshops

Principal's Network Meetings

## Financial information

### Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018.

|                                       | 2018 <b>Actual</b> (\$) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Opening Balance</b>                | 75,406                  |
| <b>Revenue</b>                        | 327,723                 |
| Appropriation                         | 315,390                 |
| Sale of Goods and Services            | 198                     |
| Grants and Contributions              | 11,037                  |
| Gain and Loss                         | 0                       |
| Other Revenue                         | 0                       |
| Investment Income                     | 1,099                   |
| <b>Expenses</b>                       | -322,888                |
| Recurrent Expenses                    | -322,888                |
| Employee Related                      | -275,504                |
| Operating Expenses                    | -47,384                 |
| Capital Expenses                      | 0                       |
| Employee Related                      | 0                       |
| Operating Expenses                    | 0                       |
| <b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b> | 4,836                   |
| <b>Balance Carried Forward</b>        | 80,242                  |

School finances are monitored and attended through regular meetings and through financial review through the Enterprise Financial Tool. Expenditure decisions are based on priorities reflected through our School Plan and the Department of Education agenda and requirements.

### Financial summary equity funding

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

|                       | 2018 <b>Actual</b> (\$) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Base Total</b>     | 275,968                 |
| Base Per Capita       | 1,547                   |
| Base Location         | 7,623                   |
| Other Base            | 266,798                 |
| <b>Equity Total</b>   | 18,051                  |
| Equity Aboriginal     | 4,990                   |
| Equity Socio economic | 2,181                   |
| Equity Language       | 0                       |
| Equity Disability     | 10,880                  |
| <b>Targeted Total</b> | 0                       |
| <b>Other Total</b>    | 13,597                  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>    | 307,616                 |

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.

From 2018 to 2020 NAPLAN is moving from a paper test to an online test. Individual schools are migrating to the online test, with some schools attempting NAPLAN on paper and others online.

Results for both online and paper formats are reported on the same NAPLAN assessment scale. Any comparison of NAPLAN results – such as comparisons to previous NAPLAN results or to results for students who did the assessment in a different format – should take into consideration the different test formats and are discouraged during these transition years.

In 2018 five students from Hill End Public School sat NAPLAN assessments. Due to the small size of the cohort and reporting protocols, results are not able to be published or commented on. Families receive individual reports on student achievement and are offered the opportunity to meet with teaching staff to discuss aspects of the assessment.

In 2018 five students from Hill End Public School sat NAPLAN assessments. Due to the small size of the cohort and reporting protocols, results are not able to be published or commented on. Families receive individual reports on student achievement and are offered the opportunity to meet with teaching staff to discuss aspects of the assessment.

<You may choose to use this text box and statement to refer readers to the My School website:

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Go to <http://www.myschool.edu.au> to access the school data.>

Delete text not required.

<Use this text box to comment on mandatory reporting requirements in accordance with the *Premier's Priorities: Improving education results* and *State Priorities: Better services – Improving Aboriginal education outcomes* for students in the top two NAPLAN bands>

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## Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year, schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Comment and feedback are sought discussion, meetings and surveys.

In 2018 a focus for feedback fell onto student responses and opinions. Questions were based on a scale with answers from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Overall responses were again very positive with some significant increases in positive reflections.

The questions and results are collated below on a scale of 0% negative to 100% positive

1. My teachers expect me to do my best. Average response 97% (up from 91% 2017)
2. I like being at my school. Average response 94% (up from 83% 2017))
3. My school gives me the opportunity to do interesting things. Average response 97% (up from 94% 2017)
4. My teachers provide me with useful feedback about my work. Average response 94%
5. Teachers at my school treat student fairly. Average response 100%
6. My school is well maintained. Average response 100%

Once again throughout the year the staff at Hill End

Public School continued to be proactive in their work and responding to departmental reforms and progress. All staff consistently embraced professional opportunities' to enhance their skills and to improve student outcomes.

## Policy requirements

### Aboriginal education

Many aspects of Aboriginal culture and heritage are taught within classroom lessons using characteristics of 8 Ways Aboriginal Pedagogies. These lessons include all OneSchools units of work that have the model embedded within the teaching and learning process.

In 2018 all students enjoyed and engaged in a combined Naidoc Day celebration with a number of small schools. The celebration of culture was held at Lue Public School and included studies into Aboriginal art, language and sciences.

### Multicultural and anti-racism education

Hill End Public School continues to operate as a place of tolerance, inclusiveness and respect for cultural diversity.

### Other school programs

#### Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Gardens

This year our school gardens have again proved to be a valuable learning environment that enhanced and enriched learning activities. Once again, the focus stayed on teaching the children the fundamentals of garden care.

During the second semester all of the students applied their knowledge of gardening to establish their own plant nursery business. The students managed all aspects of their businesses including the design of a logo, selecting appropriate seeds, propagation, sales and financial management. The project provided the opportunity for students to apply literacy, numeracy and scientific skills together under one activity.

#### Small Talk Debating

Now well established the Small Talk debating competition, pioneered and coordinated by Hill End Public School, again proved to be a great success. Using Connected Classroom Video Conferencing technology the competition brings together students from small schools across the Central West NSW. In 2018 the competition brought together over one hundred students to debate varied and engaging topics.

Wonderful growth in debating and public speaking skills and abilities were demonstrated by students taking part in the competition this year. In 2018 students from Trunk Creek Public School were awarded the title of Small Talk Champions.

## SPORT

This year at the Mudgee Small Schools Swimming carnival all of our students swam in competitive events with some wonderful results, congratulations to all of the students on their efforts..

Emily Mobbs: 2nd – 16m Breaststroke, 3rd – 16m Freestyle

Toby English: 2nd – 16m Breaststroke

Lauchlan Miller: 1st – 33m Freestyle, 2nd – 33m backstroke, 3rd – 33m Breaststroke

Emma English: 2nd – 33m Breaststroke, 2nd – 33m Backstroke

Claire English: 1st – 33m Breaststroke, 1st – 33m Backstroke, 1st – 33m Freestyle

Claire was actually running second in the Senior Girls Championship after winning her three races and came in fourth overall in her age group. A great result considering the strong competition.

## EISTEDDFODS

Bathurst Eisteddfod

After preparation and rehearsal this year our students performed superbly in three sections of the 2018 Bathurst Eisteddfod. The competition started with the choir section. The students sang "*Oomphalada*" and "*If I had words*". The adjudicator noted that the children;

*"Sang very nicely. It was great to hear clear words and the singing was very tuneful."*

Emma and Bryton sang as a duet for one verse of "if I had words" – Well done!

The next section we percussion with the students performing "*Captain Beaky Overture*". All of the students played in time and handled the tempo changes well. It was a delight to listen to.

The final section for the day was the verse speaking with our student reciting two poems. once again the adjudicator was quite impressed with the varied use of voices.

Our students faced some tough competition from other schools at the Bathurst Eisteddfod. After performing with skill our children were awarded with a third place for the choir, and second places for both the percussion and verse speaking sections.

Mudgee Small Schools Eisteddfod.

In 2018 this was again an exciting day for our students with a great crowd and students from seven schools performing items in the old town hall. Our students performed two verse speaking items, a short play and two musical items. For their efforts the children were awarded first place in verse speaking, third place in music and a highly commended award in drama.

## ART CAMP

In early November students from six small schools travelled to Hill End to take part in the annual Hill End Art Camp. The event proved to be another great success with special guest artist Jeannie Littlewood guiding the students towards creating some wonderful artworks. as a part of the camp local Hill En artists Lino Alvarez, Kim Deacon, Rosemary Valedon and Luke Scibberras invited the students into their studios to share some knowledge and insights into being professional artists.

## STEM CHALLENGE

Later in November our school buzzed with excitement as ten schools competed in the inaugural Hill End STEM Challenge.

Combining elements of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths students worked in teams to complete a series of space themed challenges. The challenges included designing and constructing models of space elevators, landing equipment and water powered rockets. Hill End students excelled working together on all of the tasks.

Guest judges including Rachael Young from the BRC, Brett Kearins from the NPWS and Tanya Riach a STEMshare Leader for the Department of Education. The judges encouraged teams throughout the day and were amazed at the skills demonstrated by the students.

Judge's Choice trophies were awarded to Wallerawang, Ulan and Hampton/Capertee PS teams. The day was capped off with two very special messages for all of the children. The first message came from Rocketlab – who had just had another successful launch.

Selena from RocketLab wrote;

*"Each and every one of you can make a real difference in this world. If you give everything you do your best shot, and with a smile on your face, you will go far! You are the next generation of STEM leaders – so work hard, don't be afraid of failure, ask for help when you need it and make sure you have fun! All the best with the competition."*

The second message for the students came directly from the Australian Space Agency;

*"On behalf of the Australian Space Agency, we were delighted to read of your STEM Challenge 'Into Space'. Space is our favourite thing too. With your excitement for space and your commitment to learn, we are certain that all of you will achieve your dreams. We can only encourage you to continue to work hard towards your goals. We wish you all every success and encourage you to keep studying and reaching for the stars."*

The day was a wonderful event for our students with a true focus on the future. The activities linked in perfectly with our own STEM program and the event will become

an incredible annual event hosted by Hill End Public School.

The inaugural 2018 STEM Challenge trophy was won in a draw by Lithgow and Zig Zag Public School teams. Our Hill End team were only two points off winning the competition, an amazing result considering our students had only been engaging in STEM activities for a few short weeks.