**Introduction**

The Annual Report for 2015 is provided to the community of Grahamstown 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.

Sue Kane
Principal

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(02)49876510

**Message from the Principal**

Grahamstown staff and students are a dedicated group who are strongly supported by parents and the school community in the endeavours and goals for which we strive.

The school has received equity funding throughout 2015 and has used the resource to develop pedagogy and improve the explicit direct instruction given to every student. This has allowed for greater achievement in outcomes for students through the improved delivery of lesson content.

The school is celebrating improved NAPLAN results, particularly in reading, spelling and mathematics. The results are a reflection of the improved pedagogy and consistent delivery of quality lessons. This again can be attributed to the additional professional learning afforded through the additional equity funding provided to the school.

The funding has also seen the Aboriginal students access a significant cultural program and the whole school enjoy the benefits of a cultural garden, complete with totem poles.

Education week was a great success with overwhelming support for the open day combined with Grandfriends’ Day. Visitors were entertained by student performances from the dance and drama groups as well as a superb performance from the school choir. The audience was also treated to a performance from a senior group of tap dancers whose ages ranged from 65 to 80 plus. The day included a sausage sizzle, classes showcasing lessons and sport events through the afternoon.

Three staff and two students were recognised for their achievements throughout the year at an Education Week Award ceremony conducted at Raymond Terrace High School.

Grahamstown students are given the opportunity to be involved in a considerable number of extra curricula activity provided by a staff who strive to provide a well-rounded education for our students.

The drum corps has developed to performance level and the students involved are very proud of their success. They train one lunch time per week and have developed their skills consistently throughout the year.

A school band is in its inaugural year and the students are developing their musical knowledge through tuition from a qualified tutor.
The dance troupe competed in a local eisteddfod and performed successfully at Showcase and a community performance for Education Week.
The school choir was successful in gaining a position to perform at the choral festival at the Opera House. Much hard work went into developing a quality choir that were proud to perform and showcase their talent.
Public Speaking has flourished in 2015 with several students achieving success and making it through to the zone final. Two of those students were successful and went to the regional final to compete.
Several sporting teams made it through the rounds of PSSA Sport with the soccer team being the most successful and making it through to the fourth round. Teams in softball, netball, basketball, touch football, soccer, cricket and rugby league competed in 2015.
The gifted and talented programs delivered a successful debating program, students winning an engineering challenge, students performing in Starstruck and success in an art exhibition at a local art gallery. A team entered the Tournament of the minds competition and had a successful day completing all challenges to a high standard.
The student leadership program has developed responsible leaders who demonstrate caring and initiative when dealing with their fellow students. This development takes place through the 007 program which teaches senior students the skills to organise lunch time activities, assist students to resolve minor issues and develop leadership skills that will assist each individual for the rest of their life.
The Positive Behaviour for Learning program is developing responsible, cooperative, caring students who are more engaged in learning and are able to successfully interact within the school environment and broader community. Grahamstown Public School is regularly congratulated for the quality of behaviour exhibited by its students. The program has proven to be highly successful in allowing students to achieve their best and be proud of themselves and their school.

School background

School vision statement

Grahamstown Public School – a quality inclusive school preparing students for the twenty-first century through quality teaching and learning programs and by developing a culture of citizenship, leadership and ethical behaviour.

School context

Grahamstown Public School is in a rural area, drawing a majority of students from a low socio-economic background. There are currently 352 students from an increasingly diverse cultural heritage, including 48 Aboriginal students and 42 Defence Force family students. Grahamstown Public School has a strong emphasis on student welfare which underpins the culture of support and personal development. Student welfare issues are supported through an active Learning Support Team, student leadership development, a staff dedicated to welfare issues and communication between home and school. Our school works in partnership with neighbouring Lakeside Learning Community Schools to develop a shared vision, values and aligned K-12 learning projects. Educational engagement is supported through a well-developed network of ICT equipment and quality practice imbedded to supplement and support curriculum. Grahamstown Public School proudly offers a wide range of extra curricula activities to develop interest, skill and talent through sport, visual and performing arts and environmental projects.
Self-assessment and school achievements

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

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

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the elements of the School Excellence Framework.

Grahamstown Public School has evaluated all elements of the school plan and has achieved all areas of the School Excellence Framework to varying degrees. The 2016 plan has been guided by the developmental process offered in the School Excellence Framework and has been planned around school improvement to meet the next level of achievement set.

Our self-assessment process will further assist the school to refine the strategic priorities in our School Plan leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

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**Strategic Direction 1**

**Collegiality and Common Practice**

Creating a collegial environment for the implementation of imbedded common practice and high performance of staff and students. Developing a culture of collaboration and evidence driven learning programs, stemming from educational leadership, learning engagement and quality teaching.

**Purpose**

To improve student achievement through the provision of professional learning, imbedded common practice and valid assessment of, for and about learning while creating a culture of self-improvement for students and staff.

**Overall summary of progress**

The school has worked collegially on common bookwork practices and expectations. This common set of expectations is being implemented across all stages. The implementation has been evaluated and adjusted throughout the process to determine the effect on the quality of student work and to build the expectation of high standards.

Common Program expectations have been imbedded so all staff are familiar with expectations and supervisors are readily able to communicate school expectations to all staff.

The Curriculum Leader has a Professional Learning Plan in place for the effective delivery of the improved pedagogy, particularly in literacy. This has resulted in greater explicit, direct instruction and a common set of guidelines for the delivery of quality lessons. After a solid introduction through professional learning and follow up support in classrooms student outcomes are now beginning to reflect improvement with a 5% improvement in students achieving in the top bands of NAPLAN.

All students have been assessed using Sena (1 or 2), a running record and the GPS spelling test at the beginning of Semester 1 and were reassessed at the beginning of Term 4. Kinder used Best Start at the beginning of Term 1. The collection and collation of this data has been formalised so all staff are working on a common approach so data becomes consistent and the tracking of student growth becomes relevant.

All students are now tracked using the PLAN website developed by The Department which allows for ease in the transfer of student records from one teacher to the next and for accurate reporting to parents.

Supervision practices have become more collegial where staff meet in a sharing session to review and discuss programs, assessment tasks, marking criteria and school plan expectations. A grammar scope and sequence has been developed and revised. All staff are implementing the ‘writing hand’, We Are Learning To (WALT), What I’m Looking For (WILF) and Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI) models in the classroom.

The school plan has been evaluated by staff and has been revised through P&C and the Tell Them From Me surveys.

The intent of the school plan Strategic Direction 1 has been achieved and excelled upon during 2015. A greater collegial approach has seen the development of better pedagogy, improved practices and a more consistent approach to the learning cycle at Grahamstown Public School.
Strategic Direction 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement measure</th>
<th>Progress achieved this year</th>
<th>Resources (annual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality literature embedded as a base for the teaching of writing.</td>
<td>100% of literacy sessions are supported through the careful planning and implementation of quality literature. Professional learning and Curriculum Leader support has imbedded all expected common practices proposed in the school plan. Explicit Direct Instruction is positively impacting on student performance the tracking of which needs to be refined and collated more rigorously.</td>
<td>$147 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All staff aware of expected common practices at GPS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment information will be transferred to teachers of students for the following year. Assessment will drive learning.</td>
<td>100% of assessment data in English and Maths is tracked using individual tracking cards. The cards are used at a transfer of information session in the last week of Term 4. 100% literacy and numeracy results are tracked through PLAN data. Assessment driving learning has not achieved its target and will need to be a focus for 2016.</td>
<td>$10 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next steps

- The programming expectations are delivered as a document to all staff to be held in the front of all teaching and learning programs. Teaching and learning programs will be data driven and will incorporate assessment strategies.

- The Professional Learning Plan for each successive year will be plotted onto a calendar to track when training is taking place, funding and the data to reflect the effectiveness of the program. The professional learning calendar will be a direct reflection of the school plan and will use student assessment data to drive its implementation.

- Professional Learning focus will include the development of quality feedback to increase student achievement.

- Data from plan will be transferred to a data wall to track students and determine where resources need to be allocated for greater effectiveness.

- Continued Professional Learning funds will be allocated for Consistent Teacher Judgement of assessment data and continuum plotting.

- Collegial stage meetings will be used to develop effective assessment tasks, track data from assessment and plan as a group the next phases of learning to gain insight into student achievement and improve outcomes.

- Further development of the grammar scope and sequence that is integrated into the English scope and sequence which will link to a whole school scope and sequence covering all KLAs.

- Parents and students will be fully confident in explaining WALT, WILF and DEI through continued literacy lingo sections in the school newsletter.
Strategic Direction 2

Collaborative development of systems, leadership, professional improvement

Embedding quality leadership and organisational practices to support ongoing professional development, leadership sustainability and implementation of quality teaching practices.

Purpose

To empower the school community for self-improvement and to recognise and foster potential leadership by building collegial and supportive organisational and supervision practices where expectations are common and high across the school.

Overall summary of progress

- All executive and staff trained in Performance and Development Framework (PaDF) which resulted in collegial observations for improved teaching practice. Staff indicated the positive result of the observations and the developmental process that is now an integral part of the practice. Supervision has changed from a checking system to that of a supportive, collegial, developmental process.

- Four staff members nominated as grade leaders through EOI. This has led to the development of leadership skills with a view to the future of potential executive aspirations.

- The executive team are released one day per week through equity funding to mentor staff and develop capacity to achieve goals set in the Performance and Development Plan (PDP) at the beginning of the year. 100% of staff achieved their goals and achieved success in delivering higher quality in teaching practice. The Quality Teaching Support allocation has been used for mentoring staff requesting assistance in developing their capacity to implement the school plan.

- Running record kits have been developed for all Reading Recovery levels. 100% of students are assessed a minimum of twice per year and their levels are recorded on a progress chart to be passed to teachers from one year to the next and to determine areas where additional support is needed. The staff engaged in training to develop a consistent guide on how to administer the assessment so results would become more consistent across all stages.

- Common expectations for programming and bookwork have been developed and 100% of staff have imbedded the expectations into practice.

- Professional Learning is charted onto a calendar so it impacts as little as possible on quality learning time and to ensure all staff access the developmental process imbedded into the school plan. This has resulted in 100% of staff being aware of the expectations, being capable of and comfortable with imbedding the expectations into practice.

The PBL mascot, Graham, is a popular character at Grahamstown Public School.
### Strategic Direction 2

**Progress towards achieving improvement measures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement measure (to be achieved over 3 years)</th>
<th>Progress achieved this year</th>
<th>Resources (annual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% of staff embeds WALT and WILF (learning intentions into teaching and learning practice.)</td>
<td>Staff delivery of lessons is prefaced with the We are Learning To (WALT) and What I’m Looking For (WILF) for all lessons and this becomes imbedded as part of teaching practice. Supervision is a collegial process where common expectations are imbedded and supported by all.</td>
<td>$110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All staff engaged with new PADF process and familiar with new teacher accreditation guidelines.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100% of staff are working with a mentor on targeted improvement and goal setting. 100% staff engaged in collegial planning days and focused lesson observations. Explicit teaching is demonstrated in all classrooms with a specific focus on improved achievement in school data collation.</td>
<td>Supervision is a collegial process where common expectations are imbedded and supported by all.</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Next steps

- Refine programming practice and imbed the bookwork expectation into supervision practices. Refine the practice to imbed assessment for learning and tracking of students to determine progress and areas of need.

- Development of the quality of assessment tasks and imbed how that will determine the teaching cycle within all staff members. This will become part of the literacy program where quality assessment and feedback are to be a focus for 2016.

- Collegial programming days will be used so the team can develop quality assessment tasks, followed by the development of quality learning activities.
Strategic Direction 3

Quality implementation of the new syllabus documents to ensure depth of understanding of terminology and the intent of each document.

Purpose

To develop a deep understanding of the intent of each document is vital for this to be imbedded into teaching practice and for the successful delivery of outcomes. The structuring of an integrated whole school scope and sequence will need development, implementation, review and adjustment.

Overall summary of progress

- Adobe Connect Sessions were regularly accessed with staff developing a guide and presenting the content of the session to their colleagues to deepen the knowledge base and develop an understanding of the 21st Century Learning expectations imbedded in each document. 100% of staff are implementing all of the required new syllabus documents.

- Scope and sequence were developed for maths, English, science and history as well as grammar. Each of these documents were implemented, evaluated and revised to ensure they were working documents that could support effective teaching practice. 100% of staff are imbedding the scope and sequence into programming practice and are using the documents to support an effective teaching and learning cycle.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement measure (to be achieved over 3 years)</th>
<th>Progress achieved this year</th>
<th>Resources (annual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% of staff are confident in their knowledge and ability to implement new syllabus documents and imbed the whole school scope and sequence.</td>
<td>Staff confident in using English, Maths, History and Science Syllabus Documents Staff successfully implementing content and intent of new syllabus documents. All staff aware of and confident in using whole school scope and sequence.</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next steps

- Imbedding documents into programming with greater emphasis on 21st century learning skills.

- Greater integration of units of work with a greater focus on skills development.

- Development of geography scope and sequence in preparation for implementation and integration with the history document.

- Continued evaluation of the scope and sequences to ensure they are working effectively and in conjunction with each other.
### Key initiatives (annual)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Impact achieved this year</th>
<th>Resources (annual)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aboriginal background funding</strong></td>
<td>No Aboriginal student is working below state achievement expectation in NAPLAN results. The Tell Them From Me survey reflects 85% of all students believe culture is respected at Grahamstown Public School (GPS). The cultural garden is developed and will be accessed in 2016 for cultural experiences for all GPS students. 100% of Aboriginal students have a PLP developed in conjunction with parent input. Two staff were trained and 100% of Aboriginal students are engaging in the Sista and Bro Speak programs.</td>
<td>$36 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English language proficiency funding</strong></td>
<td>The students have greater confidence to access the curriculum and to interact socially. An improvement in decoding is evident but comprehension is a focus for further improvement. Expressive and receptive language has improved as has writing skills but improvement is required in the use of connectives.</td>
<td>$1 938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socio-economic funding</strong></td>
<td>100% of staff implementing WALT, WILF and writing hand. 5% improvement of students meeting minimal benchmark standards K-6. 100% staff using explicit teaching strategies.</td>
<td>$150 000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Impact achieved this year

- No Aboriginal student is working below state achievement expectation in NAPLAN results.
- The Tell Them From Me survey reflects 85% of all students believe culture is respected at Grahamstown Public School (GPS).
- The cultural garden is developed and will be accessed in 2016 for cultural experiences for all GPS students.
- 100% of Aboriginal students have a PLP developed in conjunction with parent input.
- Two staff were trained and 100% of Aboriginal students are engaging in the Sista and Bro Speak programs.

#### Resources (annual)

- **Aboriginal background funding**: $36 000
- **English language proficiency funding**: $1 938
- **Socio-economic funding**: $150 000

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85% of Aboriginal students are working at their cluster expectation in literacy and numeracy.

An Aboriginal SLSO was employed to assist Aboriginal students experiencing difficulty to meet the expected outcome achievement level.

An Aboriginal Elder was employed to develop a deeper knowledge of culture among Aboriginal students.

The Green Team from the Worimi Land Council was engaged to enhance the cultural garden and make it a cultural learning space for all students. 100% of Aboriginal students have a PLP developed with parent/carer interaction.

Sista and Bro Speak programs introduced to Aboriginal students.
Mandatory and optional reporting requirements

Student information

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

In 2014 the expected enrolment for the commencement of 2015 was 358. The enrolment throughout 2015 has remained close to the original expected population. Our student population is drawn from the eastern side of Raymond Terrace with most students living in close proximity to the school. Within the student population, 5% of children have Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE), 13.6% identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and 9.6% are from Australian Defence Force families. The school’s student profile reflects the community profile. In 2015 the school was supported by Transition Equity Funding and this funding will continue to support Grahamstown School throughout 2016.

Student enrolment profile

Our total enrolment at the start of the year was 358 and finished the year at 348. Our enrolment has remained steady throughout the year and is anticipated to be 349 for 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>2009</th>
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<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<td>Male</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>217</td>
<td>208</td>
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Student attendance profile

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<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>95.4</td>
<td>94.6</td>
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<td>94.6</td>
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<th>2015</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
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<td>95.0</td>
<td>95.2</td>
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<td>94.4</td>
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<td>94.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>94</td>
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<td>94.1</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Workforce information

Two Aboriginal teachers are employed on a permanent basis at Grahamstown Public School. One is a proud member of the Wiradjuri people from the Wambol River area and takes an active role in Aboriginal education, including being a member of the local Youyong Aboriginal Education Consultative Group as well as the indigenous community. The other is a proud member of the Wanarrua Nation.
Teacher qualifications
All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degree or diploma</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate degree</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professional learning and teacher accreditation
During 2015 the focus for professional learning has been pedagogy and imbedding quality literature into literacy sessions.

Throughout 2015 Grahamstown Public School has been implementing a writing program where all staff are given support in the classroom from a curriculum leader for the development of strategies to improve the teaching of literacy from a writing focus using quality literature and direct explicit instruction.

This program will extend into 2016 and will have an added focus on quality feedback as current research tells of this as having a significant impact on learning.

In addition to the writing project staff have engaged in quality teaching rounds and used observations to gain a broader experience in lesson presentation and to have their teaching critiqued for improved performance.

Significant professional learning has been centred round the implementation of the new curriculum so staff are prepared through the development of a relevant scope and sequence and a raised awareness of the content of the new documents.

Seven staff members are in the process of maintaining their accreditation. This requires 100 hours of professional development over a five year period. Each of these staff members is current with their professional learning hours and is monitored against a set of national standards.

By 2018 all staff will be required to maintain accreditation and will be monitored using the Australian Teaching Standards guidelines.

Financial information

Financial summary
This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

A full copy of the school’s 2015 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>423925.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>221915.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>460224.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>75112.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>10121.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>12036.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>1203336.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**           |            |
| Teaching & learning       |            |
| Key learning areas        | 35105.65   |
| Excursions                | 41708.44   |
| Extracurricular dissections| 42466.81   |
| Library                   | 12163.78   |
| Training & development    | 966.14     |
| Tied funds                | 533498.99  |
| Casual relief teachers    | 73782.23   |
| Administration & office   | 55870.40   |
| School-operated canteen   | 0.00       |
| Utilities                 | 33207.50   |
| Maintenance               | 14320.59   |
| Trust accounts            | 14805.38   |
| Capital programs          | 42855.10   |
| **Total expenditure**     | 900751.01  |
| **Balance carried forward**| 302585.01  |
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.

The My School website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Click on the link My School and insert the school name in the Find a school and select GO to access the school data.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

Parents, students and teachers were surveyed through the Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey tool this year.

Overall the results demonstrated a positive response to the programs adopted by Grahamstown Public School during 2015.

The TTFM survey reports in a scale that rates from 1-10 with 1 being a low response or disagreement with the question and 10 being a high response or strong agreement with the question.

Staff

Leadership, collaboration, positive learning culture and inclusivity rated highly with an average ranking of 8 from staff.

Data informing practice, teaching strategies, challenging and visible goals, planned learning opportunities, quality feedback and overcoming obstacles to learning all ranked between 7.6 and 7.8 on the satisfaction scale.

Technology scored 5.8 with students tracking their goals through technology being a major weakness.

Parent involvement was rated as a 6 with the sharing of goals and parents being asked to review those goals being areas for development.

Parents

Parents feel welcome at the school and highly value teacher communication and information provided about school activities. They have a clear understanding of their child’s progress and believe they will be informed if progress is of concern. Reports on progress are written in terms that are easily understood and parents feel they will be informed if adequate progress is not being achieved.

Parents are supportive of learning at home with praise, encouragement for doing well and taking an interest in children’s assignments rating highly on the scale. (above 8)

School support of learning was rated highly by parents with teacher interest and encouragement being rated the highest.

Positive behaviour was rated highly in all aspects with 8.4 being the average ranking. This coincides with a high rating for safety at school.

Grahamstown is an inclusive school with ongoing attention required to maintain positive friendships and assistance for students learning at a slower rate.

Students

Student’s survey results reflected that of parents and teachers.

70% of students have a sense of belonging with 82% experiencing positive relationships and 96% valuing school outcomes. 89% of students believe they try hard to succeed while they feel important concepts are taught well. Effective learning time was valued by 85% of students.

Bullying was rated very low among students, however the current anti-bullying program needs to be consistently revisited with the teaching of the language of bullying and the disaster scale being an integral part of learning.

Students felt there were positive relationships between themselves and teachers and felt teachers had high expectations for their achievements.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

100% of Aboriginal students participated in a cultural program conducted over two terms by an Aboriginal Elder from the Murrook Cultural Centre. As part of this program the Aboriginal Cultural Garden was refurbished through the Worrimi Land Council with new totems and plants added to complete the project.

100% of Aboriginal students also participated in Sista and Bro Speak sessions to enhance their understanding of their culture and to improve self-esteem and pride in their history.
The cultural program will extend in 2016 to the whole student body to develop a respect and understanding of the Aboriginal Culture.

The 2015 NAPLAN results are showing an improvement in outcomes with less students achieving in the lower two bands and a significantly greater number of student gaining achievement in the top band for all aspects of the tests in both Years 3 and 5.

**Multicultural Education and Anti-racism**

Grahamstown Public School addresses multi-cultural education through:

- integrated themes and perspectives across the K–6 curriculum;
- peer support,
- promoting tolerance and understanding of cultural diversities within our own community and
- through our core school rules of act safely, be respectful, cooperate and do your best.

The improvement in understanding and tolerance of differences is reflected in the low numbers of students referred for conflict involving racial and cultural matters.

Further awareness raising of the positive differences and similarities of all groups within our community through participation in events such as Harmony Day should see continued improvement in tolerance.

Racial vilification is not tolerated at Grahamstown Public School and the consequences for such actions are the same as for all bullying.

**Other school programs**

**Positive Behaviour for Learning**

PBL or Positive Behaviour for Learning is a behaviour management system implemented at Grahamstown Public School in 2013. PBL focuses on rewarding the students’ positive behaviour to encourage our students to follow our four overarching “A, B, C, D” rules of

“Act Safely,” “Be Respectful,” “Cooperate” and “Do Your Best.”

This has been a highly successful year for PBL at Grahamstown Public School with significant reductions in the amount of students in our discussion room at lunch time. The playground has been a much more harmonious place for the

students with the implementation of the introduction of the anti-bullying cards. The reduction in incidents and bullying suggests that students are happier and are following our school PBL rules outside during recess and lunch. We have also seen great success since introducing specific rules for within the classroom.

During Term 3 we began implementing specific classroom PBL rules at our Friday assemblies and our weekly PBL lessons. This has reduced the number of negative incidents within the classroom by 50 percent.

Due to the positive behaviour in both the classroom and the playground we have now seen 3 students move up to the next level of PBL Rewards. They have each received a badge which when all four are collected will signify that these students can confidently follow all of our Grahamstown PBL “A, B, C, D” rules.

I would like to thank the entire PBL committee and the staff of Grahamstown Public School, for without their enthusiasm and consistency towards PBL this program would not have made such a positive impact on the school community.

PBL Coordinator
Mathew Casserly

**007**

007 leadership program is run each year to teach Year 6 students how to be effective leaders within the school and community by upholding our school beliefs of Respect, Responsibility and Pride. To take part in the program Year 6 students nominate themselves and need to successfully complete organised training in communication and leadership. The 007 leadership program incorporates key messages of big looks after little, respect for yourself and others and time and place for behavioural choices. The senior students have responsibility of running and coordinating lunchtime activities for younger grades and are encouraged to be positive role models for younger students.
Peer Support
Peer Support provides a fun and engaging environment for students to address issues such as bullying, relationships and self-image. Trained Year 5 students facilitate activities with small groups of younger students. Teachers supervise groups which consist of one or two Year 5 Peer leaders and 7-8 students from Kindergarten to Year 6.
The module covered in 2015 was Promoting Harmony. This module encourages students to learn what values are and identify those things they value in themselves and others. Values demonstrated in the module include caring, respect, responsibility and doing your best. Promoting Harmony provided students with the opportunities to explore values in the context of their school communities, assisting students in defining individual and community values, building relationships and improving decision making skills.
All participating students benefit from the Peer Support Program by:
- Identifying personal and community values
- Demonstrating how they care for themselves and others
- Acknowledging and respecting the rights of all
- Developing ways to be responsible
- Attempting new tasks to the best of their ability
- Identifying personal and group strengths

Implementing Promoting Harmony assists in creating a harmonious school community that espouses a set of values by which to live. Focussing on values enables students to develop the skills, understandings and knowledge necessary to face challenges in the future and contribute to a socially just society.
Peer Support has been implemented at Grahamstown Public School for a number of years and will continue in 2016. The time allocation accommodated 8 half hour sessions in Term 3.
In 2015 there were 40 Peer Support groups formed involving 45 Peer Support leaders. This included 27 girls and 18 boys.
The future direction of Peer Support in Grahamstown Public School is to continue teaching 8 sessions in Term 3 in 2016.
Peer Support Coordinator
Kristy Webb

Student representative’s message
As the 2015 School Captains of Grahamstown Public School, we have had the opportunity to be part of so many events such as representing the school, sporting events, fundraisers and so much more. We have had the opportunity to represent our school on ANZAC Day. We were honoured to lay a wreath and speak on behalf of all the brave soldiers that fought for our country.
On the 19th of March we held a fundraiser where we dressed up in warm colours and had a harmony lunch. As part of our fundraising we also held a successful cake stall and coordinated with students and staff on ‘Nuf Nuf Day’ which is a mini fete put on by the senior students for the rest of the school.
In August we had Grandfriends come in for Grandfriends’ Day. Grandfriends’ Day is where student’s Grandfriends come in and look at the work the children have done throughout the year, and we also had a picnic lunch.
Earlier this year, every Year 6 had the opportunity to participate in 007 duties around the school. This teaches them responsibility and leadership which will help as they become older.
We’re sure the captains and prefects elected for 2016 will do a great job, so good luck and best wishes to all of them. Thank you to students for choosing us to be your leaders and role models for 2015. We hope we have helped the next generation of leaders.
Grahamstown Public School Captains
Madison Jones and Tom Beautement.

School Choir
In 2015 The Grahamstown Public School Choir consisted of 36 members, with students ranging from Years 2-6.
The choir rehearsed weekly with Mrs Katie Brown and Mrs Helen Saville, learning and building their choir skills.
The students have enjoyed performing a collection of both unison and two part harmonies at various school ceremonies and assemblies. They were involved in the Irrawang High School Showcase, Market Place in Education Week. Anzac Assembly and GPS School Concert, just to name a few.
A feature of 2015 was the learning of 11 challenging traditional and contemporary pieces. This repertoire was performed successfully at the Sydney Opera House, as part of the ‘Festival of Choral Music’, on 28th October 2015. GPS choir was one of only 6 Hunter schools to be selected to perform. What a great opportunity!
Choir Coordinators
Helen Saville and Katie Brown
Dance Troupe
In 2015 the Grahamstown Public School Dance Troupe participated in a number of performance opportunities. In the July school holidays, the dancers competed in their very first eisteddfod against professional dance schools in the Heritage Challenge of the Champions Eisteddfod. They received a very special mention from the adjudicators which was announced to the whole audience during the presentation awards, as they were the only school group to enter the competition. They achieved outstanding results with minimal or no dance background apart from what they had learned in their lunch times.

Two weeks after performing at their first eisteddfod, the Dance Troupe performed an entirely different dance at the annual Showcase held at Irrawang High School. During the full day rehearsal the group received many comments from staff and students from Wirreanda Public School who saw their performance for the first time, and also the high school students themselves who were amazed at what they were able to achieve in their dancing, even though they were only in primary school. This was a great compliment to the dancers. During the evening’s performance they danced for a large crowd and once again received many compliments and praise for yet another outstanding performance. Following their Showcase recital, the Dance Troupe participated in a public display at Raymond Terrace Marketplace where they performed both of their routines “I See Fire” (eisteddfod dance) and “Safe and Sound” (Showcase dance).

They also did a lunch time dance display at our Grahamstown PS Grandfriend’s Day, performing Safe and Sound once again to their family, friends and visitors to our school.

For the remainder of the year, the Dance Troupe will be working towards one final performance for 2015 by producing a Christmas themed dance to be performed at a Friday, School Assembly towards the end of the year.

The Dance Troupe has had an outstanding year of performances and competitions and we look forward to more wonderful dance opportunities next year.

Dance Coordinator
Lisa Moore

Drama Group
2015 has been a productive and rewarding year for the Grahamstown Public School Drama Group. We have had amazing opportunities to show our talent in many different places.

Firstly, we were asked by the King Street Heritage Festival organisers to participate in a School’s Puppet Theatre. We were given five puppets, which we had to create a script for and decorate the puppets accordingly. We decided to research Raymond Terrace’s, and specifically, King Street’s history, which is where we found old excerpts from The Raymond Terrace Examiner from 1915. We created a story that was loosely based around businesses, and their owners, that were present on King Street in 1915.

The students that participated in this activity worked very hard during lunch times to prepare and gave up a day of their holidays to perform in the puppet show.

The drama group as a whole worked very hard in Term 2 to create a performance for Irrawang High School’s Showcase. The theme this year was ‘Never Stop Dreaming’, so we decided to base our script on what the students wanted to be when they grew up. Each student decided what they wanted to be when they grew up and how they were going to portray that on stage through lines, costume and acting. Each student worked collaboratively with Mrs Delmege to write their part of the script. Each student was responsible for organising their own costume and props. Each Wednesday the students came together to practice their performance.

On the night of the performance each and every student put 100% effort in and had a blast! They received compliments from the high school back stage crew members on their professionalism and creativity.

We also had the opportunity to perform our play at our school’s Grand friends’ Day as well as at Marketplace Raymond Terrace in front of shoppers. Every student in the Drama Group has improved their performing abilities and has represented Grahamstown Public School with pride.

Rebecca Delmege

Debating 2015
Our 2015 team consisted of four Year 6 students who had stayed with the team since the previous year. The team also welcomed four talented Year 5 students this year. These Year 5 students attended a training day at Ashtonfield Public School early in the year where they gained many valuable debating skills and techniques.

This year the debating team participated in the Premier’s Debating Competition and the Rotary Debating Competition. We were successful in two out of our four rounds of the Premier’s Debating Competition. Unfortunately we were knocked out in our first debate of the Rotary Debating Competition.
in a very close debate. The team will now prepare for next year’s competitions.

Debating Coordinator
Natasha McDermott

**Gifted and Talented Program**

This year, students have been provided with opportunities to participate and demonstrate their abilities in a variety of Gifted and Talented programs. The programs offered were designed to give students opportunities to be extended in an area of which they demonstrate a significant talent. Throughout the year different students were selected to participate in individual/group projects, problem solving, creative and critical thinking activities.

Grahamstown participated in a number of activities provided by the University of Newcastle Aim High Program; these included the Year 5 Careers program, Year 6 Discovery Day and Year 4 STEM program.

At the end of third term we took a team of 24 Year 5 and 6 students to Maitland High School to compete in the Science and Engineering Challenge where they had to compete against other schools in a variety of challenges and at the conclusion of the day Grahamstown came home in first position.

Seven students from Year 5 and 6 participated in Tournament of The Minds in the area of Social Science.

This year 8 students from Year 5 and 6 represented the school debating team; they participated in the Premier’s Debating Challenge and the Rotary Debate.

The Irrawang High School GATS program continued with 6 Year 6 students and 7 Year 5 students who were selected by a panel of high school teachers. They visited the high school on several occasions throughout the year working in different areas of the curriculum. In Term 2, 8 Year 4 students participated in a bridge building task with all primary schools in the Lakeside Learning Community. At the conclusion of Term 3 Grahamstown participated in an Enrichment afternoon at Irrawang High School to showcase our students work in enrichment throughout the year.

This year 2 individual students from Year 5 were selected to attend a CAPA GATS camp where they participated in organised activities over a 3 day period.

In the area of Creative and Performing Arts, Grahamstown participated in Star Struck with 17 students from Stage 3. Three artworks were selected to be exhibited at Maitland Art Gallery as a part of the 2015 FACE exhibition.

Selected Year 5 and 6 students participated in the Newcastle Permanent Maths Competition and the Maths Olympiad Competition.

This year Grahamstown entered the Newcastle Herald Competition with 10 year 6 students completing our submission which included five feature stories, one editorial, photos to accompany stories and a cartoon.

Six students from Stage 3 participated in Junior Journos, filming a segment for NBN news on the Aim High program.

GATS Coordinators
Natasha McDermott and Melissa Blake

**Garden Club**

The Garden Club has been very busy throughout 2015. Our main focus has been on improving the school vegetable garden to ensure it is accessible by all students and the produce grown is utilised. This year we supplied the canteen on a weekly basis with eggs and other produce. We held a plant and herb stall during Grandfriends’ Day and a pumpkin weight guessing competition to increase student engagement in the garden. A Moroccan mountain herb garden has been established and we welcomed the arrival of 3 new chickens to keep our remaining 2 company; they are all getting along merrily.

The garden club has supported Mr Henderson, the school’s general assistant, in maintaining and improving the school grounds. Students have been learning to care for the garden through mulching, pruning, weeding, raking and planting. Students used these skills to revitalise a quiet lunchtime sitting area near the frog pond. New trees have been planted along the boundary fence at the end of the oval and a garden at the front of the school has been cleaned out and planted with native ground covers.

The garden club has welcomed new members throughout the year with several Kindergarten students becoming keen gardeners. Next year we hope to continue to improve and develop the school’s appearance.

Garten Club Coordinator
Andrew Mort
**Peer Tutoring**

For Peer Tutoring in 2015, 18 students from both Year 6 classes; 5/6R and 6T were selected to continue the Peer Tutoring program this year. These Year 6 students had the responsibility of becoming a tutor for 17 students from 1H and 1C. The role of the Peer Tutors this year was to assist Year 1 students who may have needed a little extra help learning their sight words and act as their tutor and buddy for the year. The sight word program that was used and developed was based on the Oxford Sight word program which uses high frequency words that children use in their everyday language, reading and writing. The Peer Tutoring program ran for 15 minutes from Monday to Thursday straight after recess in D.E.A.R time so that the Year 1 and 6 students could have 15 minutes of quiet time together to learn these sight words. The Year 6 students would follow their instructions and run through the process of the program including flashing the sight word cards and seeing whether the Year 1 students could recall what the word was. Once the Year 1 student moved through the first set of 5 word cards successfully for the week, they would move on to the next set of words, unless they needed a little more practice. Throughout the whole year, the Year 6 students performed their role and responsibility of peer tutor successfully and gained a friendship with their Year 1 student. The Year 1 students gained a lot as well including learning their sight words successfully and gaining a new Year 6 buddy who not only helped them to learn their sight words, but were also their buddy and friend for the year.

Peer Tutoring Coordinator  
Chantal Sciacca

**Literacy Project**

The Literacy Project has continued to focus on improving student achievement of the English syllabus outcomes through consistent pedagogy in all classrooms. All staff have participated in numerous professional learning opportunities to study current educational research practices and reflect on best practice. Throughout 2015 staff have implemented Explicit Direct Instruction EDI techniques such as learning intentions, success criteria, checking for understanding and concept and skill development strategies to teach the objectives of syllabus documents. Our aim has been to teach students to become confident communicators who can use language effectively when responding to and composing texts for a range of purposes and audiences. Teachers have used quality spoken, written, visual and multimedia texts as a foundation for all units of work. Grammar scope and sequence and terminology documents have been developed and implemented into classrooms to ensure consistent language is used across all classrooms and a continuum of learning is maintained from K-6. Next year the project will continue with a focus on implementing relevant assessment strategies that provide teachers with a thorough understanding of the learning needs of individual students.

Literacy Project Coordinator  
Andrew Mort
Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is an early intervention program designed for children who are clearly at risk in literacy learning after a year in a good classroom program. Entry to the program is based on being a child’s second year at school and performing within the lowest literacy levels in Year 1. Reading Recovery has been implemented at Grahamstown Public School for twelve years and will continue in 2016. The time allocation accommodated four students per day for Semester 1 and Semester 2 in 2015.

In 2015 there were 11 children who participated in the program during the year, this included 3 students who were carry-overs from last year. Six of the students were girls and five were boys. Three students have successfully discontinued, two have been referred to STLA support and two have transferred interstate while on the program. Of the remaining four students, it is hoped they will discontinue by the end of the year.

Most of the children who entered the program in 2015 had reasonable letter identification but had similar confusions and used letter names for identification. Children’s letter formations were very poor. Word knowledge, both written and read in text and in isolation was a weakness along with Concepts About Print and directional behaviours. Children who entered the program in 2015 in the first intake were at text level 1. The later intakes of children entered on levels between 8 and 14.

The Reading Recovery Program continues to impact on the literacy programs at Grahamstown Public School with most staff familiar with running record analysis and using Reading Recovery levelled texts in Guided Reading. Book boxes have been developed for each grade incorporating questions to assist and increase classroom teacher consistency with their benchmarking.

Year 1 reading Intervention Program

The Year 1 Reading Intervention Program is based on Reading Recovery strategies and procedures. It targets small groups of students who are performing within the lowest literacy levels in Year 1 and who haven’t been identified for Reading Recovery. The 20 minute lessons include a combination of reading 2 or 3 texts, writing a sentence consolidating the language in one of the texts, sorting and sequencing a sentence and magnetic letter sorting to improve visual discrimination.

Each group consists of two students reading at a similar instructional level. The composition of the groups changes, as the progress and needs of the students change. Students remain on the program until they are identified for Reading Recovery or until they reach the average class level and they are able to transfer their learning to the classroom environment.
Ten students are taught each day, with sixteen students participating in 2015. The students in the first intake of 2015 were all reading instructional level 2, with later intakes reading between levels 3 and 8. Four of the students have been identified for Reading Recovery and one transferred schools. The students who have returned to class programs in Terms 3 and 4, were reading instructional level 16 or 17 with good strategies on board. Most are reading in a phrased, fluent manner and have sound comprehension. Some students will remain on the program for term 4, but have shown improvement in all areas and should achieve class average by the end of 2015. Susan Dellar.

Technology Report
2015 has been another progressive year for the school in the area of Technology, with the purchase of yet another load of new laptops with touch screen features. The school now has over 90 laptops for use throughout the Library, Computer Lab and classrooms. The 2013 upgrade to eT4L is now well and truly in place and our school has further increased our Wi-Fi access throughout the entire school. The Computer Lab refurbishment has also been completed, providing new desks, Wi-Fi access and state of the art laptops set in a 21st Century collaborative learning space. The recent initiatives at GPS including laptops and iPads with charge carts has placed us in good stead to move our students forward with access to areas of growth utilising technology and developing 21st Century learning such as collaborative problem solving and communicating through increasingly digital means. The end of 2015 saw the direction of Technology at GPS to continue the provision of high accessibility to technological opportunities for all students to ensure future growth and skill enhancement.

Technology Coordinator
Helen Saville