Annual School Report 2006

Burwood Girls High School

“Not For Ourselves Alone”
Messages

Principal's message

It continues to be an absolute pleasure to lead Burwood Girls High School in achieving its targets. I thank my colleagues for their continuing effort and support in delivering quality programs and ensuring positive outcomes for our students. The school's promotion of high expectations in all aspects of school life is demonstrated in the students' achievements in the performing arts, sport, community programs as well as in the students' performance in external examinations and competitions. We were delighted that one of our Year 12 students was awarded the Young Australian of the Year by Burwood Council.

Our achievements during 2006 include outstanding value-added results in both the School Certificate (SC) and the Higher School Certificate (HSC). The results in the School Certificate were well above state average with the strongest performances in History and Computing Skills. The relative performance of the cohort in the 2006 HSC compared with their performance in the SC in 2004 was outstanding at all levels. Both literacy and numeracy performances of Year 8 students also indicated strong growth.

Our focus in 2006 has been on five areas:

• achieving excellence in education for all with special emphasis on gifted and talented programs;
• improving the quality of reporting student achievement;
• implementing the new student welfare policy and procedures;
• extending the use of technology; and
• strengthening student leadership.

I am extremely proud of the achievements of staff, students and parents in meeting the challenges and managing always to improve the learning opportunities for all.

Mia Kumar

School Council message

Burwood Girls High School encouraged staff, students, parents and community members to participate in the school's decision-making process. Our School Council ensured that all these groups had an input into the school priorities.

The School Council met four times and a subcommittee met as required in 2006. The School Council prepared an application for an ‘Investing in Schools’ grant resulting in $142,000 for additions to the music area of the school.
Council members were involved in areas such as:

- representation on interview panels for the selection of staff;
- supporting school evaluation processes;
- identifying education needs;
- determining school aims and policies;
- providing input for management plan;
- preparing surveys to assist planning;
- assessing the school’s budget/financial needs; and
- identifying facilities improvements.

Tim Cunningham, Chairperson, School Council

Parents & Citizens message

BGHS Parents & Citizens Association (P&C) is a small but active group, which met on the third Wednesday of the month during the school term. New members were welcomed, especially those joining for the first time as their daughters started Year 7.

The P&C is a community group, which included parents, school staff and community members working together to provide opportunities for the benefit of our children. It contributed funds to the school and had a vital say in what affects students at the school. It continued to provide funds for a variety of resources, including outdoor furniture and improvements to the grounds.

The P&C supported the school by taking part in discussions, by keeping informed about activities within the school and helping in the direction of the school. Head teachers and staff addressed meetings to help parents gain a better understanding of the school curriculum and policies. The P&C operated the school uniform shop and took pleasure in being consulted about uniform initiatives. A subgroup of the P&C assisted with the organisation of the Burwood Ensemble program and supported fundraising to maintain this program as one of the leading extracurricular activities in the school.

Elaine Browne, President, P&C

Student representatives' message

The Student Representative Council (SRC) is an integral part of the Burwood Girls High School community. Students from each year up to Year 11 are elected by their peers to represent the year group in decision making and event planning. Each year, the SRC is responsible for the organisation and success of International Day; International Women’s Day and various fundraisers for charities and the school.

Changes to the school have also been initiated by the SRC, as representatives bring the ideas of their peers to meetings for discussion and then to the executive of the school. The SRC also provides opportunities for students to make new friends and gain confidence as we are encouraged to lead and take an active role in the running of the school. It is vital that students have this forum to voice their opinions and to democratically decide what we need and how we can help others.

Anita Tong (President), Rosie Short and Lexy Mullins (Vice Presidents)
School context

Student information

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

Student enrolment profile

In February 2006, the enrolment was 1062 with 192 girls entering Year 11. Student enrolments at our school have increased 10% in the last four years but it has been difficult to satisfy the great demand for places at the school, in all year groups.

Student attendance profile

The student attendance rate is above that of other schools in the region and the state. Years 7-10 attendance was 94.2% compared with 90.1% statewide which continues the trend in previous years. Attendance rates for Years 11 and 12 were slightly lower at 93% but still significantly higher than the average in the region and the state.

Attendance rates are maintained at a good level and the school has implemented “Truancy Call” as a system for contacting parents when students are absent or late to school. The attendance ‘swipe’ system has also assisted in managing and monitoring student attendance.

Retention to Year 12

Between the 2004 School Certificate and 2006 HSC, a higher proportion of students continued their studies at our school. Our retention rate at 86.4% is higher than the regional rate of 75.6% and much higher than the state retention rate of 60.6%.

Post-school destinations

In 2006, 77% of Year 12 students continued to tertiary studies. Approximately 11% enrolled in courses at TAFE and 66% enrolled in a course at university. A small percentage of students chose to defer university and enjoy travel overseas.

Staff information

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

Staff establishment

The total staffing is 72.5 teaching staff and 12.8 non-teaching staff including administration staff, a general assistant, a part-time gardener and integration support staff.
Staff retention
The school's staff retention rate from 2005 to 2006 was 95%. The Head Teacher, PDHPE retired halfway through the year, one teacher was seconded, two teachers accepted transfers and one was appointed to Head Teacher, English at a nearby school.

Staff attendance
Staff have access to leave entitlements such as sick leave. In 2006 the average daily attendance rate for staff, as determined by the Department, was 95.5%.

Teacher qualifications
All teaching staff met the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

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

Staff:
- Principal: 1
- Deputy Principal(s): 2
- Head Teachers: 11
- Classroom Teachers: 52.1
- Teacher of Emotional Disabilities: 0
- Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities: 0
- Teacher of Reading Recovery: 0
- Support Teacher Learning Assistance: 0.4
- Teacher Librarian: 1
- Teacher of ESL: 4
- Counsellor: 1
Total: 72.5

Financial summary:

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<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
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</table>

Expenditure
- Teaching & learning
  - Key learning areas: 155,268.88
  - Excursions: 266,762.00
  - Extracurricular dissections: 224,225.90
- Library: 14,418.78
- Training & development: 829.44
- Tied funds: 181,089.35
- Casual relief teachers: 85,295.10
- Administration & office: 517,984.74
- School-operated canteen: 0.00
- Utilities: 98,157.76
- Maintenance: 54,389.80
- Trust accounts: 118,362.00
- Capital programs: 89,362.01
Total expenditure: 1,806,142.65

Balance carried forward: 561,649.91

A full copy of the school's 2006 financial statement was tabled at the annual general meetings of the P&C and the School Council. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2006

Achievements

Arts
The arts continued to be an area of very high student achievement as evidenced by the number of superb performances and artworks showcased throughout the year.
The Renaissance Concert at St Andrew’s Church, Summer Hill was a highlight with sensitive performances by the Camerata String Ensemble, Renaissance Dancers, the Junior Choir and the A Cappella Group which is as strong as ever despite losing a number of Year 12 performers at the end of 2005.

A number of students gained places in Arts Unit Ensembles including the Symphony Orchestra, String Sinfonietta, Wind Ensemble, State Singers as well as State Music Camps. BGHS Camerata String Ensemble forged links with Summer Hill Public School by leading string workshops at their annual weekend workshop.

In Visual Arts, student achievement continued to be acknowledged within the school through an ongoing exhibition program. Beyond the school our students gained recognition in a number of areas. Five Year 11 students gained places in the highly regarded National Art School HSC Extension program. Two of our Year 11 students won places at the Bundanon Camp for gifted and talented students. Three Year 10 students were awarded major prizes in the Burwood Council Youth Week Art Competition. An initiative with senior staff and students from the Sydney College of the Arts took the form of an ongoing wall painting project with Years 9 and 10 students. Students of Photographic and Digital Media had the opportunity to screen their work at the inaugural Video Showcase which was very well attended.

Debating
Debating this year grew in numbers with 30 students taking part in the introductory course for Year 7 and Year 8 students. The school had a successful year with students from Years 7 and 8 winning the zone competition and making it to the semi final of the competition.

The Year 10 team became the zone winners and moved onto the regional quarter finals. One student was selected to be part of the State Debating team.

Drama/Performing Arts
Variety Night, held during Education Week, showcased the talents of over 200 students in the areas of music, dance and drama with outstanding performances from the Senior Concert Band, Intermediate Band, the Camerata String Ensemble and A Cappella singers.

Thirty-five drama students also performed in the annual senior Drama Showcase as well as working behind the scenes in the areas of stage management, lighting and sound. Almost 100 Year 9 and Year 10 Drama students performed a variety of mime, mask, movement and scripted drama pieces for their Drama Showcase.

Ensemble Program
The school now boasts over three hundred participants in three community concert Bands, three school concert Bands, a stage Band, a string ensemble and Musettes choir. The annual staff concert helped with fundraising, resulting in
a magnificent afternoon’s entertainment by some great performers and teachers.

In 2006, a chamber music program was developed to include two brass quintets, two clarinet quartets, a percussion ensemble, two saxophone quartets, a string quartet and a wind ensemble.

The Stage Band held its first dance at Wests Ashfield. The Senior Concert Band performed the Rimsky-Korsakov Trombone Concerto and the String Ensemble performed Vivaldi’s Violin Concerto in A minor. Once again the Intermediate Concert Band marched in the city for Anzac Day. The Musettes appeared on national television on the “Talking Heads” program featuring Patricia Amphlett. The Senior Concert Band went on tour to Gulgong for three days and visited six country schools.

The Ensemble Program was involved in the Burwood Council Citizenship and Sandakan Memorial ceremonies, Burwood Festival and Anzac Day. We have gained financial support from Burwood Council and Wests Ashfield and were proud to be chosen as the Regimental Band of the Military Police Association.

The program continued to go from strength to strength and cater for many primary and secondary students.

Sport

Burwood Girls High School has continued to dominate in all areas of sport in 2006. There were many successes at zone, regional and state levels. Once again, we were the Northern Suburbs Zone Overall Girls Champion School, as our swimming, cross country and athletics teams were placed first in the zone competitions.

There were 285 entries for zone competitions, 65 at regional level, 24 students who competed at state level and six at national level.

In both summer and winter grade sport competitions, the students excelled. Winning teams were the Juniors (14s) netball, softball, touch football and soccer. In the 15s competition we were winners in touch football, basketball, volleyball and soccer. We also were winners in opens touch football, netball, hockey, volleyball and soccer.
The school was represented at knockout regional competitions in basketball, cricket, hockey, netball, softball, touch football, water polo and soccer. The 15s Knockout Basketball Team were placed eighth in the state. The Junior Indoor Soccer Team reached the finals and finished second in the state. Students were selected to play in a state or national team in indoor soccer, water polo, touch football, basketball and soccer.

All Year 7 students were involved in a swimming assessment program and ‘Jump Rope for Heart’ where the girls raised $3000 as part of their community service. In Year 9, 28 students undertook a surf awareness day at Bondi Beach and 29 Year 10 students took part in a two day surf camp at Bondi Beach.

Academic

English literacy in Years 7 and 8 was tested using the statewide English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA). Our results were excellent. For Year 7 in 2006, 62.9% were in the high level, 32.9% proficient, 3% elementary and 1.2% low. In Year 8, 65.7% were in the high level compared to 42.2% statewide. The graph below indicates the results for Year 7 in the ELLA tests for 2006 were better than previous years and significantly better than the like school group (LSG) and twice as good as the state average.

Literacy – ELLA Year 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement level</th>
<th>Percentage in level 2006</th>
<th>School average 2002 - 2006</th>
<th>LSG average 2006</th>
<th>State average 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
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<td>High</td>
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Numeracy – SNAP Year 7

Numeracy competence of Year 7 and Year 8 students was measured by means of the Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP).
In the area of numeracy we also excelled. The proportion of Year 7 students from our school achieving results in the high level is more than double the performance of the like school group. In Year 7, 47.6% students achieved high level compared with 24.4% statewide. These results were similar in Year 8 with 54.5% students achieving high level compared with 34.3% statewide.

Numeracy – SNAP Year 8

In English-literacy the performance of students was excellent with 39.1% achieving Band 5 or 6 compared with 25.9% statewide. Of particular note was the number of students achieving Band 4, 5 or 6. Thus, fewer students (20%) were in the lower three bands compared to the state (35%). This is an indication that whole school literacy strategies have been successful. There is still scope to improve further with the Band 6 group.

School Certificate

One hundred and seventy-four students sat for the 2006 School Certificate.

New courses introduced in our curriculum in 2006 were Child Studies, Information Software and Technology, Visual Design, and Photographic and Digital Media.

In the School Certificate, the performance of students is reported in bands ranging from performance Band 1 (lowest) to performance Band 6 (highest).

The results were above state average in all areas with the most outstanding performances in History and Computer Skills.

English
Mathematics performance was sound with 25.9% students gaining Bands 5 or 6 compared to 17.2% statewide. The school has performed significantly better (55.2%) than the like schools group (31%) in the top three performance bands. Very few students were in the lower group (Bands 1 or 2) representing 15% compared to 34.6% statewide. Achievements across all performance levels for students from our school compares extremely favourably with the schools in our LSG.

In Science the results were also sound with 33.4% gaining Bands 5 or 6 compared with 25.7% statewide. There are significantly fewer students in the lower three bands compared to state performances. There was a need to evaluate the science program to ensure that the proportion of students gaining Band 6 increases to above state average.

The History results were outstanding with 35.7% students in Bands 5 or 6 compared to 20.4% statewide. This represented the best external examination result in 2006. The quality of the performance is even more impressive when
compared to the performance of the schools in the LSG which was 17.2%.

**Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship**

The performance of our students in the Year 10 Geography external examination was an improvement on previous years. The results were sound with 34.5% achieving Bands 5 or 6 compared to 25% statewide. Approximately 74.2% of students achieved the top three bands.

**Computer Skills**

The results of the external examination in the Computer Skills Assessment (CSA) was held for the first time for Year 10 students across NSW in 2006. These results were outstanding with 71.3% students deemed highly competent compared to 53.3% statewide.

**School Certificate relative performance comparison to Year 5 (value-adding)**

A student’s School Certificate relative performance is a measure of the progress a student has made compared with students who performed at a similar level in the Year 5 Basic Skills Test (BST). A positive result means a student is performing above expectations (adding value).

As can be seen from the graph, in 2006 the school was able to add value to student performance in all areas, notably in English, History and Computer Skills. The growth was least in Geography. All subjects showed student performance above expectations, although the growth overall was not as strong as in previous years.

**Higher School Certificate**

In 2006, 171 students sat for the Higher School Certificate (HSC).
The school offered 40 different courses including two vocational education courses, Hospitality and Information Technology. Four language courses, two with extension, were offered and a further nine language courses were accessed outside of the school. Students accessed additional vocational courses through TAFE and at Sydney Secondary College. This was the first year at BGHS that students sat for the Software Design and Development course.

Student performance is reported in achievement Bands 1 to 6 (Band 6 being the highest level of achievement).

Compared to state means, the most outstanding performances were in Drama, English Standard, English as a Second Language, English Extension 1, English Extension 2, General Mathematics, Hospitality, Italian Continuers, Mathematics, Modern History, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) and Senior Science.
The graphs indicate results in the 40 different courses that contained 10 or more candidates from this school were better than schools in the LSG and well above the state average in all courses.

Analysis of the results for 2006 indicate the following:

- Students achieved their best results in English, Mathematics, Music 1, PDHPE, Visual Arts, Chinese Background Speakers, Italian Continuers and Information Technology.
- The results for all English courses were outstanding and well above state averages.
- In Standard English, 73% of students gained Bands 4 or 5.
- In Advanced English, 95% of students achieved results in the top three bands.
- In English Extension 1, 100% of students achieved the top two bands.
- In English Extension 2, 90% of students achieved the top two bands. One student was selected for the Writers’ Showcase for her poetry.
- In English as a Second Language, 96% of students achieved results in the top three bands. One student gained first place in the state in this course.
- In Drama, 100% of students received Band 4 or 5. One student was nominated for ‘On Stage’ for her individual performance.
- In Mathematics, 88% of students gained Band 4 or higher, well above the state average. In General Mathematics 70% of students gained Band 4 or higher with the overall results well above the state average. In Mathematics Extension 1, 88% scored Band 4 or higher, well above the state average. In Mathematics Extension 2 nearly all the students showed an above average value-added score while achieving Band 4 or higher.
- In Science, students sat for examinations in Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Senior Science. Over 39% of students achieved Bands 5 or 6 for all Science subjects which was above the state performance, except Physics which was equal to state performance.
- History results were of a very high standard being well above state average in each subject. In Ancient History, 48% of students gained Bands 5 or 6. In Modern History, 63% gained Bands 5 or 6 and 75% gained Band 3 (4 being the highest) in Extension History. In Studies of Religion, 50% students gained Bands 5 or 6.
- Business Studies, Economics and Society and Culture results were all above state average and more than 50% of students in these subjects achieved Band 4 or higher. In Society and Culture, the percentages in each of Bands 4, 5 and 6 were above state averages. All subjects, including Legal Studies, had students achieving at Band 6 level.
- In 2006, six language courses were taught at the school. These were Chinese Background Speakers, French Continuers, Indonesian Continuers and Extension, and Italian Continuers and Extension. Students scored five places in the top 10 of the state in various languages. Students achieved highly in Bands 5 and 6 such as 80% in Italian Continuers, 66% in Indonesian and 66% in Chinese Background Speakers.
- Visual Arts results were impressive with 69% of students achieving Bands 5 or 6 compared with 55% statewide. Three students were pre-selected for the ArtExpress exhibition.
- Results were significantly above state average in Music 1 with 100% of students in Bands 5 or 6 compared with 47% statewide. All students in Music 2 scored Band 4 or higher and all candidates in Music Extension achieved in the top two bands. One student was selected to play as part of a featured ensemble at Encore 2006.
- The three computer based HSC courses were above state average. In Information Processes and Technology, 25% of students achieved Band 5. In Information Technology,
33% of students achieved Band 5. In Software Design and Development, 15% of students achieved Band 6. One of our students was awarded the Regional Vocational School Student of the Year and also represented Sydney Regional Schools in the World Skills Competition.

- Students achieved above state average results in Community and Family Studies, Hospitality and Textiles and Design. In Textiles and Design, 56% of students achieved Band 5 or 6. In Hospitality, students achieved excellent results with 53% achieving the top two bands compared to 28% statewide.

- The results in PDHPE were outstanding with 67% of students achieving a Band 5 or 6 compared to 38% statewide.

Higher School Certificate relative performance comparison to School Certificate (value-adding)

Forty-eight students received a total of 113 Band 6 levels in 39 different courses. The following graph indicates the average level of academic growth of students from School Certificate to Higher School Certificate (value-added). By definition state average value-added is zero.

The level of value-added for students at this school continues to be outstanding by comparison with the LSG and the state levels. In particular the value-added for both lower and middle performing students from SC (2004) to HSC (2006) exceeded or remained equivalent to the already high levels as indicated by the school average 2002-2006.

The relative performance in 2006 compared to the SC performance in 2004 for the same cohort was outstanding at all levels. Three students achieved Premier’s Awards for achievement in the top 1.4% of the state.

While the academic growth was not as high for the higher performing students as it was the lower and middle groups, it was significantly higher than the LSG and state averages.

National benchmarks

The Commonwealth Government sets minimum desirable standards for reading, writing and numeracy at particular ages. These are referred to as national benchmarks.

The performance of the students in our school in the Year 7 English Language and Literacy Assessment (ELLA) and the Year 7 Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP) is compared to these benchmarks. The percentages of our students achieving at or above these benchmarks are reported below.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Percentage of Year 7 students meeting national benchmarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* National benchmarks were not available at the time of printing this report.

Significant programs and initiatives

Aboriginal education

Awareness of Australia’s unique Aboriginal tradition is emphasised. Weekly school assemblies began with students publicly acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land, the Eora people. Teaching and learning of Aboriginal perspectives was studied as a mandatory part of all subjects in the curriculum.

The faculties of History and Social Sciences were instrumental in keeping awareness of current Aboriginal issues uppermost in the consciousness of students as a consequence of the particular nature of the content of their courses. During ATSIC week celebrations Mr Lewis Parter of the Daranbal people entertained the school with traditional and contemporary songs and music at the annual NAIDOC assembly which was held in late July.
Multicultural education

The school’s non-English speaking background group was 85%, which represented 66 different language groups. Amongst staff members, the population from non-English speaking backgrounds was 37%. There were 65 students who studied languages at Saturday School of Community Languages and 18 students at Open High School.

Throughout the year different groups of teachers and students gained valuable cultural knowledge, experience and understanding when they went on successful study tours to New Caledonia and Samoa. Their enjoyment in participating in these programs was evident in the presentations and reports which they provided at the school assembly.

As in past years, our International Day celebrations coincided with Harmony Day and this provided an additional focus for the many and varied cultural activities which took place. There were 22 different food stalls on this occasion and once again the highlight of the celebrations was the talented, colourful and vibrant onstage performances from individuals and groups of students. Funds were raised for our overseas aid program “Hands Across the Ocean” and sent to orphanages in Ghana and Bali, a children’s literacy program in East Timor, and a school in India.

Our school has always been a popular choice for visits by overseas groups of educators wanting to find out about the implementation of programs and classroom practice. In 2006 teacher groups from Korea, Indonesia and the People’s Republic of China visited the school. Students and teachers from schools in Japan, Osaka College and Seien Girls School, were each hosted for a day.

We are proud of the cultural harmony that bonds our girls and establishes a school tone that is characterised by warm and positive relationships.

Respect and responsibility

The school has developed strategies to promote respect and responsibility.

Following a review of the welfare policy in 2005, the school implemented our student responsibilities and code of conduct. These were published in both the student handbook and student diary.

All Year 9 students were involved in the Community Volunteer program which fosters the girls' understanding of the needs of others and provides opportunity for demonstrating civic responsibility. Students from years 7 to 12 participated in volunteer work for charity organisations; for example, 55 students collected money for the Salvation Army’s Red Shield Appeal in May.

The SRC raised funds for distribution to other charities such as Canteen, Red Cross, Jeans for Genes Day and Legacy.
The school incorporated our anti-bullying and harassment policy into the Year 7 PDHPE program and addressed the policy with each year group at the start of the year and through targeted workshops at welfare days.

Cultural exchange programs such as the overseas trip to Samoa provided students with a broader understanding of the characteristics and needs of other cultures. In 2006 we had international exchange students from Germany and France and two teachers from Indonesia.

In 2006 we introduced quarterly professional learning workshops for the welfare team. These workshops provided an opportunity to develop a comprehensive welfare plan for each year group and identified areas of focus for ongoing support for students. The workshops also provided valuable learning time for the welfare team and covered topics such as mental health, sexuality and dealing with risk taking behaviours.

In 2006 we offered parenting skills workshops and presented five parent evenings to provide relevant and timely information and forums for parental participation in the life of the school and in the education of their daughters.

The Year 11 Big Sisters program once again provided support for students in the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 and the Year 7 Camp early in Term 1 provided an excellent opportunity for students from a large number of feeder primary schools to interact. At the Jindabyne Camp, Year 11 students had the opportunity to develop leadership skills as well as develop good working relationships with each other.

Students in the SRC provided leadership in the presentation of the school’s anti-bullying and harassment policy supported by the peer mediation program.

The revision of the school welfare policy was completed, highlighting roles and responsibilities and a whole school approach to welfare and behaviour management procedures.

Student Leadership

In 2006 the structure of the prefects changed to allow three captains with equal status to lead the group. This structure was adopted so that captains could share equally in the
responsibilities of leading the prefects. Captains and prefects actively represented the school at a number of leadership seminars such as Future Leaders Forum, International Women’s Day and the Leadership Program for School Captains. The prefects identified focus areas for their school-based activities. They actively participated in school events and took opportunities to speak to students on assembly. The prefects continued to support the “Hands Across the Ocean” initiative to help women and children in third world areas who are in need of basic and educational assistance.

Student Representative Council (SRC)

New procedures in nominating the SRC resulted in a larger and more culturally diverse team that appropriately represented the student population. Many new members participated in leadership opportunities, contributed to workshops and forums to promote student input to school decision making. Three members of the SRC reported regularly at School Council meetings keeping the wider community informed of student activity. Year 9 members regularly represented BGHS at inter-district meetings and eight Year 10 students participated in statewide leadership programs. The SRC also successfully coordinated International Women’s Day celebrations and led student groups in organising International Day.

Fundraising was again a major focus for the SRC in supporting local charities as well as initiating new overseas links where Year 9 raised money for orphanages in Ghana and Kenya. In addition, funds were sent to provide women’s health care and educational programs in India, Pakistan and Myanmar.

Vocational Education

Vocational education continues to be a strong component of the senior curriculum at BGHS. There was strong interest in Hospitality (HSC 16, Preliminary 12) and Information Technology (HSC 6, Preliminary 14). In addition girls were able to select other VET courses through TAFE or a nearby school. Excellent results were achieved in Accounting. Entertainment, Tourism and Business Services were also popular courses. TAFE offered a range of courses to suit the needs of students, with 24 students accessing 11 different courses such as Hairdressing and Children’s Services.

We are proud that one of our students became the regional state finalist in the Vocational Student of the Year Award.

Progress on 2006 targets

Target 1

Review Assessment and Reporting Policy and Procedures

Our achievements include:

- assessment strategies were reviewed in all key learning areas (KLAs);
- faculty assessment policies and procedures were reviewed and rewritten;
- assessment criteria and marking guidelines were specified for all assessment tasks;
• new reporting format in line with DET guidelines was introduced;
• computerised reports for Years 7 to 12 were implemented; and
• teacher expertise in using technology for reports was successful.

Target 2
*Implementing New Student Welfare Policy and Procedures*

Our achievements include:
• staff training in the use of RISC (Record of Individual Student Contact) for producing letters of concern and maintaining student records;
• executive and welfare team supported consistent implementation of welfare procedures;
• coordination of the learning support team by the deputy principal, for improved management;
• increase in School Counsellor referrals (118) to assist emotional, educational and social well-being;
• increased number of parent contacts and parent interviews; and
• earlier identification of students causing concern and intervention strategies implemented.

Target 3
*Implementing Gifted and Talented Program*

Our achievements include:
• early identification and involvement of Stage 4 students in gifted and talented programs;
• appointment of a gifted and talented coordinator;
• implementation of ‘rich tasks’ across all KLAs;
• a large number of students involved in activities such as debating, performing arts, solar boat challenge, visual arts, tournament of minds, sporting teams and the ensemble programs;
• excellent results in external competitions; and
• enthusiasm of students involved in gifted and talented programs and the quality of their work.

Target 4
*Increased Use of Information Technology in all Areas of the School*

Our achievements include:
• RISC utilised by staff on a regular basis;
• successful implementation of a new computerised reporting system;
• increased use of technology in administration (Truancy Call, ‘swipe’ attendance system, Timechart);
• improved technology skills for all staff; and
• installation of new IT equipment (Smartboards, sound and lighting in Hall, increase in number of computers in Library, new computers for the Media Room).
Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2006 our school carried out evaluations of Student Welfare Procedures and the Science KLA.

Student Welfare Policy and Procedures

Background

Following the review of the school’s welfare policy in 2005 it was necessary to put in place policy and procedures that support development of responsible students and effective learning.

Parent surveys were administered at parent/student/teacher evenings. Students conducted their own survey about welfare provision in the school. The welfare team and the school executive focused on improvements to practice and sought feedback from staff.

Findings and conclusions

Attendance

• Following introduction of the ‘truancy call’ system there was a significant reduction in the number of students truantaing whole days from school.

• New procedures using a ‘swipe attendance system’ resulted in more efficient work practices.

• The overall punctuality of students improved.

• 95% of parents supported the new system.

• A new attendance policy was developed to identify, monitor and follow up students with poor attendance.

• A tough new policy introduced in Term 3 to deal with truancy from class resulted in reduction in truancy rate.

Uniform

• 95% of parents with daughters in Years 8 to 10 supported the school’s uniform policy.

• Wearing full sports uniform to school on Tuesday was strongly supported by both students and parents.

• 96% of students continued to wear correct school uniform each day.

• A system of spot checks of uniform by senior executive maintained uniform standards.

Smoking

• A small number of students smoking on school premises was an issue to be addressed.

• A policy change implemented to deal with students smoking at school included counselling, detentions, parental contact and possible suspension.

• Of the students found smoking at school only 13% faced further disciplinary action following the initial incident.

Students Causing Concern (SCC)

• To improve communication about concerns teachers had with students in their classes, SCC procedures were introduced in 2006.

• Each term, teachers referred students with whom they had concerns regarding attendance, behaviour, emotional wellbeing, learning, physical wellbeing, psychological wellbeing and social skills.

• The Deputy Principals followed up these SCC referrals in liaison with relevant welfare team members and provided feedback to staff in a confidential report.

• Follow up to SCC referrals included counselling of students, provision of careers advise and goal setting, as well as meetings with parents.

Record of Individual Student Contact (RISC)

• All staff trained in the use of the RISC computer program.

• New proformas were added to the database for use by all staff to ensure consistency of communication across the school.

• The use of RISC by staff increased and the total number of entries from 2005 to 2006 increased significantly.

Awards

• Faculty award ceremonies were formalised to recognise student achievement and to provide an opportunity for year groups to display their
performance, public speaking and student leadership skills.

- 58% of students from Years 7 to 12 received either a Gold Award or Blue Award in recognition of their effort in their learning.
- 94% of Year 8 to 10 parents and 83% of Year 11 to 12 parents supported the awards system. However, 47% believed it could be improved.

Welfare Team

- Focus welfare workshops each term provided professional development activities for members of the welfare team
- A comprehensive welfare plan was developed for Years 7 to 12.

Future directions

- Monitor class attendance and refer concerns promptly.
- Monitor uniform regularly.

- Head Teacher Welfare to coordinate implementation of uniform policy and follow up non-compliance.
- Case management policy to be developed to facilitate more effective management of students causing concern.
- Better communication channels for all staff regarding students causing concern.
- RISC to include more information on students including both positive and negative contact details.
- Review merit and award schemes.
- Establish a dedicated welfare room to provide access to resources, computers and an interview space for year advisers.

Educational and management practice

Curriculum - Science

Background

While science results in the SC and HSC have been above state average for many years, a review of the teaching practice was undertaken to determine how the results may be further enhanced. Students were surveyed with a response rate of 86% in Years 7/8, 54% in Years 9/10 and 48% in Years 11/12.

Findings and conclusions

- 81% of students in Year 7 responded that their classroom was an interesting place to learn. This dropped down to 66% in Year 8 and subsequently increased to 69% in Year 9 and 78% in Year 10.
- 83% of students in Years 7-10 indicated that they try to do their best and take pride in their learning.
- 92% of students in Years 7-10 believe that their teacher expects them to do their best.
- 80% of students indicated that there is a balance between working on their own and working with other students.
81% of students in Year 7 reported that they know what they are expected to achieve in their lessons. The percentages for Years 8, 9 and 10 were 59%, 63% and 67% respectively.

81% of students in Year 7 responded that their teacher finds new ways to help them understand, compared with 63% in Year 8, 75% in Year 9 and 83% in Year 10.

The majority of students (77%) in Year 7 believed that the teacher provides stimulating and interesting lessons. This decreased to 38% in Year 8 but increased to 67% in Year 9 and 83% in Year 10.

More than 75% of students believed that they understood their weakness and how to improve.

Students responded that they need their teacher to explain more often how to do things.

Students responded that they understood work best when the teacher used a variety of strategies including explanation, examples, diagrams, demonstrations and individual assistance.

The students enjoyed the practical nature of science and group work activities.

Students said that teachers could assist them in their learning by providing more individual help and explaining scientific concepts more clearly.

Students realised that they could improve their own learning by better focus on the learning activity and asking more questions.

Students in Years 11-12 indicated that they would learn more effectively when the teacher gave more quizzes, more homework, asked everyone questions, had all students in the class focused on learning, and gave more individual help when needed.

Future directions

- Examine and evaluate the science teaching programs, especially in Year 8 to allow the teaching to be more stimulating and interesting for students.
- Teachers to be more explicit in informing students of the lesson’s intended outcomes.
- Expand the range of teaching strategies to assist students to learn.
- Provide improved and more individual assistance for students.
- Utilise a variety of explanations to increase student understanding.
- More revision type activities to be incorporated into the teaching of Years 11-12.

Other evaluations

Gifted and Talented

Background

The evaluation of the process of student identification was completed. An external test, the statewide literacy and numeracy tests, and teacher professional judgement across KLAs, were used to identify gifted and talented students in stages 4 and 5.

Findings and conclusions

- Students were identified in all KLAs and 23 Year 7 students and 20 Year 8 students accepted invitations to join the Gifted and Talented program.
- Students were enthusiastic about the variety of strategies used in the implementation of the Gifted and Talented program.
- Regular contact with the students enhanced the success of the program.
- Teachers were involved in supporting gifted and talented initiatives across the school.
- Parents strongly supported this program and all attended the final delivery of projects by students.
- An enhanced reporting system was developed to report on thinking skills and problem solving.
The focus on gifted and talented initiatives both within KLAs and across the curriculum further enhanced the culture of learning and high achievement and continued to develop confidence in independent learning.

Future directions

- Identification of gifted and talented students in Year 7 to be established early in the year.
- Focus on problem solving skills to be supported by extensive use of technology.
- Increased opportunities for students to be involved in research activities.
- Consistent implementation of ‘rich tasks’ in all curriculum areas.
- Innovative teaching strategies to promote independent thinkers and learners in all KLAs.

Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2006 the school sought opinions about the school from parents, students and teachers.

Parents

In 2006 different surveys were conducted for Year 7, Year 8-10 and 11-12 parents.

- 99% of Year 7 parents felt that their daughters had made a successful transition from primary to high school and felt that the school was meeting their expectations. They reported that communication was good and a high number of students were participating in extracurricular activities.
- 96% of Years 8, 9 and 10 parents responded that their daughters were happy to come to BGHS. Parents were supportive of school policy such as 95% support for attendance monitoring systems and for the school uniform policy.
- 94% of parents felt the school recognised student achievement well, however 47% of parents felt that the awards scheme could be improved.
- In the Year 11-12 parent survey it was found that 94% of parents and students have good understanding of the school’s assessment policy.
- 69% of parents surveyed attended an information evening to prepare their daughters for the HSC. The majority of parents surveyed believed that their daughter’s learning had been extended by her experiences at BGHS.

Students

Students in Years 7 and 9 were surveyed in 2004 to explore rates of bullying. A significant number of girls reported that they experienced bullying. This resulted in the formation of a policy and procedures document to manage cases of bullying in the school. In 2006, the prefect body decided to focus again on bullying to follow up on issues generated by the earlier survey. Years 7-12 were surveyed to determine if students knew who to approach at school if they had problems with bullying, stress or family problems. An understanding of what constitutes bullying was investigated. A broad summary of the findings was:

- most students relied on friends or family to discuss problems, stress or bullying;
- in the senior school, increasing numbers of students were willing to discuss problems with class teachers;
- the majority of students did not know what roles the school counsellor, deputy principals and head teacher welfare play in assisting with these matters, nor did they know how to access them;
- 34% students in Years 7-9 did not know their assistant year adviser;
- senior students were aware of their assistant year advisers and their roles;
- even though the Peer Mediation Program was promoted throughout the school, 30% students in Years 8-10 did not know about peer mediation; and
- 90% Year 7 students did not know about peer mediation at all.

Future Directions

- There needs to be clarity among students regarding the less aggressive yet just as humiliating and damaging forms of bullying and social conflict that are prevalent on school grounds.
- Further exploration of these issues should be raised in PD/H/PE classes.
- Discussion about procedures to manage bullying to be raised in DEAR sessions and on welfare days.
- Peer mediation to be promoted for improved understanding for all students.
Roles and responsibilities of the welfare team to be promoted more strongly throughout the junior school.

Student satisfaction is strong. Students are always willing to lead, co-ordinate and participate in school events such as International Day, Variety Night, overseas visits and carnivals. The attendance rate at the swimming and athletics carnivals in semester 1 was equal to a normal school day, approximately 95%.

Teachers

- 86% of teachers are happy to stay at BGHS.
- 30% of teachers are interested in seeking promotion.
- Areas teachers would like to see improved included:
  - greater access to technology resources in classrooms;
  - improved facilities for students such as buildings and grounds; and
  - consistent implementation of classroom management and discipline procedures.

Professional learning

The school’s major priorities for professional development in 2006 were the use of technology in teaching as well as in administration, assessment and reporting, catering for the gifted and talented, and student welfare policy review.

Professional learning for teachers was provided in activities such as:

- active participation in three school development days:
  - In Term 1 school policies and procedures, welfare policy, learning support for students, and anaphylaxis training were the focus.
  - In Term 2 technology workshops on the use of computer programs such as RISC, Timechart, computerised reporting software, and the teaching resources Interwrite and Smartboards were targeted.
  - In Term 3 assessment and reporting student achievement was the focus.

Teachers

- 65% of teachers participated in additional professional development activities both within and outside school such as workshops, conferences, network meetings, information days and faculty training workshops.

- Most faculty groups conducted full day workshops to address areas such as assessment, website design, provision for gifted and talented students and use of enhanced data.

The total expenditure for professional learning was $43,778 representing an average of $547 per teacher.

School development 2006 – 2008

Targets for 2007

Target 1

Quality Teaching and Learning (QTL)

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- increased use of data to improve student outcomes;
- reviewing current teaching practice to incorporate more innovative strategies;
- revising literacy strategies in all classrooms;
- extending the use of 'rich tasks' for all KLAs;
- revising teaching programs to incorporate assessment strategies and QTL elements;
- evaluating recognition of student achievement and awards for learning; and
- promoting the Institute of Teachers’ framework for all teachers.

Target 2

Providing Skills for Social Responsibility and Resilience

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- revitalising peer mediation program;
- focussing on values, civics and citizenship;
- providing greater opportunities for student involvement and leadership;
- appointment of an International Students Coordinator and a Prefects Coordinator;
- greater roles and responsibilities for prefects and student representative council; and
- coordinated welfare days.
Target 3

*Increased Use of Technology*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- faculty websites implemented for all KLAs;
- increase in the number of technology learning spaces;
- greater computer access for everyone;
- staff training for new technology resources; and
- improved quality of teaching using technology.

Target 4

*Provision of a Quality Learning Environment*

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- finalise the ‘Investing in Schools’ project to expand the Band Room;
- support the development of well resourced classrooms;
- improve and maintain a safe and healthy environment for all;
- involve SRC in anti-litter campaign; and
- increase the number of guest speakers.

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

David Allen, HT, Science
Judy Bokor, Parent, School Council
Robert Brett, HT, Mathematics
Elaine Browne, P&C President
Stephen Chan, Parent, School Council
Ellana Costa, SRC member
Tim Cunningham, Chairperson, School Council
Alex Einfeld, SRC member
Cheryl Gleave, Deputy Principal
Colin Jones, Community Member, School Council
Mia Kumar, Principal
Frank Levy, Community Member, School Council
Karyn O’Brien, Deputy Principal
Rosie Short, SRC member
Patrice Simpson, HT, Social Sciences
Anita Tong, SRC member
Tom Ying, HT, History

School contact information

Burwood Girls High School
Queen Street, Croydon NSW 2132
Ph: 02 9747 3355
Fax: 02 9744 2797
Email: burwoodg-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au
www.burwoodg-h.schools.nsw.edu.au
School code: 8152