

# Rowland Hassall School Annual School Report

# 2011





## Our school at a glance

### Students

Rowland Hassall School provides quality education to give students the potential to become responsible and independent citizens. There are currently 35 students enrolled in the school. The school provides individualised learning programs for students with a mild intellectual disability (IM) and an Emotional Disturbance or Behaviour Disorder (ED/BD). The Western Sydney Region Student Services Placement Panel discusses all students referred to Rowland Hassall and the parents/carers are offered a place for their child. Students visit the school before enrolment to become better acquainted with the school, its facilities and programs, so that an informed decision is made to accept or reject the placement offer. There is a culture of mutual respect created by students and staff at the school.

### Staff

There is one teacher and one school learning support officer (SLSO) for every seven students. There is a non-teaching Principal and two Assistant Principals, as well as a School Counsellor and a Transition Teacher.

### Messages

#### Principal's message

This year has been a year of change and transition for Rowland Hassall School. The school had to transition to a smaller school as a result of a fall in enrolments. As a result the principal at the commencement of the year, Mrs. Mercedes Wilkinson, moved on to another appointment. A relieving principal, Mr. Michael Cruickshank was placed at the school until I was permanently placed at the school at the start of Term 3.

Rowland Hassall has continued the high quality provision of support for the students. The programs we offer extend over the KLA's, Vocational Education and Community Access. We have expanded these programs to include Outdoor Education which has further enhanced the learning the experiences of our students. We were successful in gaining a grant from

Oceanwatch Australia, which involves environment work on the Hawkesbury River supporting the local oyster farmers. Our students monitor the foreshores in "rubber duckie" boats collecting rubbish and we report to the relevant authorities about the condition of the river.

As principal of Rowland Hassall School I am excited about the programs and provisions we will have for our students in 2012. These will include further access to VET courses, more outdoor education opportunities, and the introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh Award program. I would like to thank the staff and parents for the way they have welcomed me to the school and the support they have given to me in my role as Principal.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

**Jim Myers**

### Parent Forum

Whilst there is no formal P&C, Parent Information sessions, including school planning for 2012-2014, Meet the Teacher afternoon, IEP review meetings, Education Week events and Triple P parenting forums and a "Making Cents" information session were all very successful this year. In 2012, the school will continue to work in collaboration with parents and our local community inviting new ideas and keeping everyone well informed of curriculum programs and initiatives.

**Wendy Wharton**



## **Student representative's message**

This year we have had lots of chances to do extra things. We have worked hard to earn trips out of school. These included Work Experience, Hawkesbury River trips, Clean Up Australia day, Harmony Day, Pyjama Day, footie coaching clinics, bike riding in Parramatta Park, Interschool Sports with Niland and Coreen Schools where we won the hockey tournament, trips to Maroubra Beach and Maroubra skate park, and Sculpture by the Sea at Bondi. We thank the teachers for organising these great trips and cooking the sausages! We have painted Aboriginal murals which make the school look more colourful.

We also welcomed our new Principal, Mr. Myers.

I have had fun being School Captain for 2011. I hope the next School Captain has as much fun as I have had and we farewell our Yr 12 students and wish them luck for the future.

**Jesse Docksey**

## **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.

### **Year 10 students undertaking vocational or trade training**

In 2011, 100% of the Year 10 students successfully completed the Life Skills School Certificate.

### **Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualification**

In 2011, 100% of the Year 12 students successfully completed the Life Skills Higher School Certificate.

### **Student enrolment profile**

The student numbers at Rowland Hassall are determined by placements from the Western Sydney Regional Placement panel. This panel meets twice each term. Numbers vary throughout each year.

## **Student attendance profile**

Records of attendance are kept through daily marking of rolls, which are checked regularly, calls home for unexplained absences of more than two consecutive days and letters sent to parents who have not provided reasons for absences of their child. Regular contact is made with the Home School Liaison Officer, regular tracking of attendance is made by executive staff and students are rewarded with certificates for good attendance at the end of each semester and at Presentation day at the end of the year. Staff are provided with updates and information regarding attendance procedures. The school has its own Attendance Policy and Procedures in line with DET guidelines.

### **Management of non attendees**

The school implements a number of processes which help manage non-attendance. Students who are identified as having many absences are managed through these processes including parent/carer interviews, partial attendance programs and referral to the Home School Liaison service.

### **Structure of classes**

There are 5 classes, with up to 7 students in each class. Each class has one Teacher and one School Learning Support Officer (SLSO).

### **Post-school destinations**

Students leaving in Year 12 are supported in suitable post school options through collaborative planning with parents, teachers and the transition teacher.

### **Staff information**

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

There is one teacher and one school learning support officer (SLSO) for every seven students. There is a non-teaching Principal and two Assistant Principals, as well as a number of support staff including the school counsellor and transition teacher. All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

## Staff establishment

Position	Number
SSP Non Teaching Principal	1
SSP Teaching Assistant Principal	2
SSP Teacher of Emotional Disabilities	3
SSP Secondary Specialist Teacher	1
SSP Teacher RFF	0.5
SSP Priority School Funding Scheme	0.1
SSP Teacher Librarian	0.2
SSP Careers Advisor	0.2
SSP District School Counsellor	1
SSP Part-Time Teacher	0.17
School Administrative & Support Staff	6.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.5</b>

The National Education Agreement requires schools to report on Indigenous composition of their workforce. Whilst the school does not currently employ any indigenous staff members in a permanent capacity, it has collaborated with a number of indigenous consultants to work with the school.

## Staff retention

**In 2011, 84 % of permanent staff were retained.**

## Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100
Postgraduate	62.5

## Financial summary

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

Date of financial summary:	30/11/2011
<b>Income</b>	\$
Balance brought forward	239,613.75
Global funds	100,209.32
Tied funds	57,497.85
School & community sources	5,338.93
Interest	10,415.71
Trust receipts	3,252.91
Canteen	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>416,328.47</b>

## Expenditure

Teaching and learning	
Key learning areas	5,788.27
Excursions	303.99
Extra curricular dissections	2,582.30
Library	0
Training & Development	2,859.00
Tied funds	61,634.06
Casual relief teachers	28,134.26
Administration & office	24,721.82
School operated canteen	0
Utilities	18,374.97
Maintenance	37,532.15
Trust accounts	3,944.07
Capital	57,204.79
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>243,079.68</b>
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>173,248.79</b>

A full copy of the school's 2011 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

## School performance 2011

During 2011, staff at Rowland Hassall School focused on data-driven programming. Each student's reading was assessed at the beginning of each term using PM Benchmarking. Students also completed SENA (Schedule Early Numeracy Assessment) testing. Each teacher individualised their student's program to reflect their individual areas of need.

## Students Academic Achievement in 2011

### Progress in Literacy

100% of our students improved their literacy skills.

On average students grew in reading ability by 5 or more PM Benchmark levels. Students were tested on fluency, accuracy, speed and comprehension.

Students were engaged in literacy through specialised and individual units of work including interactive programs which targeted at their ability level resulting in overall growth in all areas of literacy.

## **Progress in Numeracy**

SENA testing results proved that many of our students have a firm understanding of numeral identification, number sentences and place value.

Student engagement in numeracy was also increased significantly due to the continued use of technology in numeracy including Studyladder and Mathletics websites.

Overall Rowland Hassall School has improved both in literacy and numeracy because of the student-centered approach to learning including the use of digital education. Students achieved their goals supported by structured IEP's and individual programming.

## **Significant programs and initiatives**

### **Aboriginal education**

Aboriginal Education is encouraged throughout the school curriculum. As part of an art project creating large painted murals, the students explored the Parramatta River Walk which details the Aboriginal history of the Parramatta settlement. Other Aboriginal art work was also researched and designs were then collaboratively developed by each class. The finished murals are displayed around the school for all to see in an acknowledgement of support and understanding of Aboriginal culture.



All major events and celebrations, including our regular Friday assemblies incorporate an Aboriginal version of the National Anthem as well as the Welcome to Country, acknowledging and respecting the traditional Aboriginal ownership of the land. Students are regularly reminded of the significance of this ceremony.

During 2011 we have reviewed and updated Personalised Learning Plans for Aboriginal students. The aim of the plans is to help

Aboriginal students to achieve educational outcomes that match non-Aboriginal students.

Our NAIDOC celebrations for 2011 included designing art work for Aboriginal murals and a day of Aboriginal colours where students came to school in red, black or yellow and discussed and learned about Aboriginal culture and issues.

Students have also been involved in the planning and design of a Bush Tucker garden to be established in the grounds of Rowland Hassall School during 2012. They have researched plants and seasonal bush tucker, as well as possible plans and ideas for the use of the gardens.

### **Multicultural education**

Multiculturalism was celebrated at Rowland Hassall School throughout 2011. Students began the year with a country study in Term 1. Japan, Italy, New Zealand, USA and Indonesia were studied and formed the names of the classes for the remainder of the year. Various learning experiences were enjoyed by the students including a trip around the world where students went to each classroom and were immersed in the culture of that country. Due to the natural disasters that occurred in some of these countries this year as well as those in Queensland, students continued to learn about and show a deeper understanding of the devastation that many people faced and empathy for those affected.

Throughout the term, students were able to share their heritage with their peers and teachers. This was an invaluable learning experience for everyone involved and students were positive in their attitude to learning.

### **Other programs**

#### **Priority Schools Programs**

The Priority Schools Program is an initiative of the Australian Government to improve the learning of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. In 2011, these programs included Making Cents and building financial literacy, Cooling Conflicts and Writing Culturally inclusive units of work.



## Outdoor Education



In 2011, we have developed our Outdoor Education programs allowing students to learn, co operate, share ideas and engage in the curriculum out of the confines of the regular classroom. Activities have included bike and scooter riding in the local area, as well as trips to Holroyd Gardens, Maroubra Beach, Bondi Sculptures by the Sea, bushing walking in Parramatta Reserve, a picnic at Parramatta Lake and a trip to Featherdale Wildlife Park.

## Environmental Education

In Semester 2, as part of our Outdoor and Environmental Education activities, students from Rowland Hassall also participated in a project involving environmental work on the Hawkesbury River. They travelled to Brooklyn and then used inflatable boats to clear up rubbish and check for environmental damage along the foreshores and bush land areas surrounding the Hawkesbury River. They then reported back to oyster farmers in the Hawkesbury River catchment. Four river trips were planned for Semester 2 with trips to continue in 2012.



## Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)

During 2011 Rowland Hassall School continued to promote a strong Positive Behaviour for Learning approach to education. Students and teachers embraced the goal of our students becoming Safe, Respectful Learners and this has formed part of the Rowland Hassall School ethos over the past four years. The message that all students take from this is that being safe and respectful will assist you in becoming a diligent learner. Short targeted skill streaming lessons are held daily as consistent reminders of expected behaviours and positive strategies when dealing with difficult or unfamiliar situations.



## Our Local Community

This year students from Rowland Hassall School have been involved in activities and performances organized by Parramatta Historical Society. In July, a Year 10 student participated in the inaugural public speaking afternoon at Mc Auley Girls School, presenting a short speech on the life of Rowland Hassall and his significance to our school. This speech was also presented to students in assembly the following Friday. A Certificate of Participation was awarded to both the student and to the school. In September, Indonesia Class was invited to a celebration of the History of Parramatta Schools. The celebration included various speeches, drama performances and dances from schools in the Parramatta area as well as the firing of 2 traditional muskets. The students learnt about the history of the first settlers in Parramatta, the people who started the first schools and significant people who influenced Parramatta's early history, as well as watching the firing of two traditional muskets! On both occasions students were accompanied by staff and represented Rowland Hassall respectfully.

## Interactive Connected Learning

During 2011, Rowland Hassall School had a further 4 interactive white boards installed one in each classroom. These are additional to the Connected Classroom suite installed during 2010. The educational benefits of the interactive learning approach have been clear this year. Effective integrated technology as a tool to enhance the teaching and learning program maximizes student engagement, learning outcomes and has enabled all our students to have access to the high level of technological skills expected of 21<sup>st</sup> Century school leavers. All students now have access to and are able to use this interactive technology. Year 9 students took delivery of their DER (Digital Educational Revolution) laptops promoting an increased use of technology within the classroom.



## Vocational Education Program

Rowland Hassall School provided opportunities for all students who were of work experience age to participate in work experience programs. Because of the diverse needs of our students there were many programs run to suit the ability levels of each student. The programs include VET courses, independent work experience, group work experience, in school work experience and post school options.

Independent work placements included The Guitar Factory, Bungaree Butchers and The Lolly Shop. Thank you to these places for their support in 2011 and we look forward to their continued support throughout 2012.

Group work experience saw a group of 4 students travelling with a teacher and a SLSO each Wednesday to Merrylands shopping centre, where students worked at K-Mart. Once again we thank these businesses for their ongoing

support. In-school work experience gave the students who were in their first year of work experience a chance to familiarize themselves with expectations of them within the workplace. These students will go onto group work experience in 2012.

Other students attended VET courses either at other schools or local TAFE colleges. These students gained a qualification related to a specific industry.

## Premiers Reading Challenge

Over 75% of our school participated in the Premier's Reading Challenge (PRC). Many of our students achieving a gold certificate (for four years continuous participation) and one student is on his way to a school medal if he continues to do the challenge. Books read as part of the weekly Library lesson made it easier for all students to take part in the challenge. Students eagerly borrowed PRC books throughout the year both from our own school library as well as from Parramatta Library. Some students used their weekly Community Access excursions to supplement their books and so complete their own challenge ahead of time.

The Premier's Reading Challenge encourages all students to read and so develop a love of books and learning which can extend beyond their school life and into adulthood.

We look forward to the 2012 Challenge.

## Premiers Sporting Challenge

In 2011, Rowland Hassall School along with Niland and Coreen Schools has been involved in a regional initiative, the Premiers Sporting Challenge Middle Years Project and students have been involved in skill based sporting activities including basketball, tennis, hockey, soccer, cricket, t-ball and volleyball as well as an interschool sport competition.

This year the schools have competed at hockey, football, t-ball and volleyball. A cup is awarded to the winning school at the end of each term. Students have not only learnt sport skills but also sportsmanship skills.



Rowland Hassall, Niland and Coreen have all reported on the great success of the program and planning to continue in 2012 has taken place. The schools have also been asked to present the model to other local SSP's.

### **Charities**

The school would like to thank the parents and community for their support in fundraising this year. Throughout 2011, the school has raised money for CanTeen, the Pyjama Foundation, Maroon for a Day in aid of the Queensland Flood Rescue, Jeans for Genes and the Cancer Council.

### **Premiers Volunteering Awards**

In Semester 2, students in Years 9 and 10 at Rowland Hassall were involved in the Premiers Volunteering Program.

Volunteering is an activity you do of your own free will to meet genuine needs. Although you often need to learn new skills and knowledge, you receive no payment or advantage for your efforts. Volunteering means you giving your own time to help others. Many students see volunteering as "doing good stuff", putting a smile on people's faces and generally helping out.

Students have accrued hours of volunteering in school by undertaking extra responsibilities such as making and handing out sandwiches through a Breakfast Program, promoting and fundraising for Bandana Day for CanTeen, daily raising and lowering the Australian Flag and gardening activities.

We hope to continue this program in 2012.

### **Interschool Athletics Carnival**



For 2011, our Athletics Carnival was an interschool event held with Niland and Coreen Schools on 18<sup>th</sup> October at Blacktown International Sports Centre. Students were divided into age groups and competed against their peers from each school. Sprint races as well as tabloid sports including high jump, discuss, javelin and long jump competitions provided and very successful and rewarding day. All students were encouraged to participate in some way with students from Rowland Hassall achieving great results. We would like to thank Coreen School for their organization of the day.

### **Parent Information Night**

Our parent information night held at the beginning of Term 4 was well attended and a successful evening. A guest presenter from Break Thru spoke to parents about options for their children. Positive discussions on school planning and opportunities for students for the remainder of 2011, as well as for 2012-2014 were held and talks on Mathletics, Cybersafety and Facebook were well received. Parents readily and freely volunteered their ideas, asked questions and raised concerns. A light supper was provided and the clothing pool was available for parents to purchase new and second hand uniforms.

### **Progress on 2011 targets**

#### **Target 1**

**50% of students will have achieved their current stage in Literacy by the end of 2011 based on in school assessment.**

Our achievements include:



- 50% of students have achieved their current stage in Literacy based on in school assessment.
- Implementation of consistent school programming in literacy reflecting scope and sequence for writing and including individual reading programs.
- Training of staff in how to complete appropriate and relevant records in reading.
- Introducing interactive website activities to engage students, enhancing learning outcomes.
- 75% students successfully participated in the Premiers Reading Challenge

### **Target 2**

#### **50% of students will have achieved their current stage in Numeracy by the end of 2011 based on in school assessment**

Our achievements include:

- 50% of students have achieved their current stage of numeracy based on in school assessment
- Continuation of Mathletics interactive website to enhance students' engagement and increase learning outcomes.
- Participation in the Making Cents program developing financial literacy in all students.
- Implementation of consistent school programming and scope and sequence for numeracy.
- Consistent use of school wide assessment procedures

### **Target 3**

#### **An increase in on task behavior by 5% for those students who are currently off task for more that 25% of the time.**

Our achievements include:

- Average increase of task behaviour from 81% in 2010 to % in 2011.
- Introduction of interactive activities in all curriculum areas increased student engagement and in turn on task behaviours

- Individual Education Plans regularly reviewed to ensure appropriate and relevant programming
- Increase in available reward activities for those students reaching on task behaviour targets. Students demonstrating Safe, Respectful Learners. Some students achieved 97% engagement.

### **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 2011 our school carried out evaluations of School Leadership, Planning and Learning.

#### **Educational and management practice**

2011 brings an end to the three year plan. Goals and targets have been achieved and plans for the next three years are already in discussion. Rowland Hassall has seen many changes over the three years. A questionnaire was given to all stakeholders to address issues such as planning, learning and leadership within the school.

#### **Findings and conclusions**

78% of parents, staff and students said that the main purpose of the school targets was to improve student learning outcomes.

The majority of the school community agreed that the school involved parents and students in decisions about what it is aiming to do. These results reflect the IEP and informal parent and student meetings held regularly to support student learning and achievement.

The survey also indicated that whilst 65% of the school community agreed that the school makes changes to its plans to improve what it does in response to emerging needs; parents would like to be more regularly updated as to those changes.

83% of parents and 77% of students agreed that the school ensures that everyone within the school community is treated fairly. The majority

felt that contributions of individuals and groups to the school were valued and respected.

While 68% of people surveyed believe that the school is always looking for ways to improve what it does, the parent community indicated that they would like to be more involved in deciding what the school is aiming to achieve.

## **Curriculum**

### **Findings and conclusions**

90% of students used samples of work over time to show their improvement over time. Staff said they used this process to help students reflect on their learning and engage in self-assessment.

The large majority of the school community agreed that Rowland Hassall provided learning environments and opportunities that were interesting, stimulating and secure.

There was also a 75% agreement as to the communication and support between school and home. Students indicating that their parents and teachers often spoke about what they were achieving and their learning goals.

### **Future directions**

2012 will be an exciting year. Our new school plan begins with opportunities for parents and carers to get involved in the school. Parent/carer information nights will take place to keep up to date with new initiatives and programs that will be available to students, as well as the way forward in school planning. These opportunities will continue to strengthen the Rowland Hassall School Community and allow for all to be engaged in the education process.

A new timetable is to be introduced allowing students to access the expertise of all staff in a range of subjects including music, science, visual art, ICT and TAS. Students will be encouraged to participate cooperatively and collaboratively in a range of activities with their peers whilst achieving individual learning outcomes. PBL will be a strong focus for 2012 with specific skill

streaming sessions run daily and based on promoting social and emotional wellbeing.

## **Professional learning**

Throughout 2011, all staff were involved in substantial professional learning. This included school development days, weekly staff training meetings, team and stage meetings and special initiatives to support the schools management plan and targets. We also saw the establishment of a Professional Learning Community between Rowland Hassall, Coreen and Niland Schools with staff sharing ideas and skills and undertaking joint professional learning interactive whiteboards, connected classroom video and using Web 2 tools.

A total of \$2,859.00 was expended from the Teacher Professional Learning tied grant. In addition some professional learning was undertaken at no cost to the school, through the use of DET consultants and courses.

## **School planning 2012—2014**

The school planning policy provides direction for the preparation and implementation of school plans including the identification of priority areas, intended outcomes and targets that are consistent with the NSW State Plan and the Department's planning documents.

## **School priority 1**

### **Outcome for 2012–2014**

#### **Curriculum and Assessment**

#### **2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- 100% of students will improve their assessment from entry to exiting the program
- Improve teacher quality in using evidence based assessment
- Strategically support NSW curriculum incorporating Australian Curriculum
- Embedding the Australian Curriculum into T&L programs

#### **Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Teachers make professional judgment that supports the provision of accurate data on student improvement

- Teachers develop knowledge and understanding of the new National Curriculum
- Develop an Assessment and Programming Policy specific to the needs of Rowland Hassall school
- Create a Charter for newly enrolled students to be assessed upon enrolment

## **School priority 2**

### **Outcome for 2012–2014**

#### **Leadership and Development**

##### **2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- All staff to develop professional development/learning plan
- All executive to increase their ability to lead and manage the school
- Teachers to move forward on the teaching standards

##### **Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Teachers to develop and enhance ICT skills
- Staff to complete an emotional intelligence course.
- Staff to identify areas for development and be mentored by executive team

## **School priority 3**

### **Outcome for 2012–2014**

#### **Student Engagement and Attainment**

##### **2012 Targets to achieve this outcome include:**

- Implement a variety of attainment level programs for students to participate and gain qualifications.
- Implement proactive social development programs for students and community.
- Research all transition options for Post School Placements

##### **Strategies to achieve these targets include:**

- Students achieve success on the Life Skills Continuum

- All students will be engaged in at least one accredited course relevant to their skills and aspirations.
- Improve individual student engagement and decrease suspension rates through accessing alternative placements ensuring interest based learning.
- All staff to participate in the Regional program “Smooth Transitions”.

## **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.

Mr Jim Myers – Principal

Mrs Renee Culgan – Assistant Principal

Mrs Kirsty Reynolds – Assistant Principal

Mrs Katherine Muller – Class Teacher

Mrs Wendy Wharton – Parent

### **School contact information**

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School Code: 5411

Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr>