



2009

Annual School Report...

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NEW SOUTH WALES  
DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING





“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”

William Butler Yeats





## Principal's message



2009 at Castle Hill High School was a year of dynamic change and improvement. Noticeably, there were enhancements to classrooms and corridors with new carpet and paintwork at a cost of \$200,000 giving the school a lighter, fresher and more modern look. The student art gallery along the walkway, a great tribute to creativity, also looks stunning and the multi media room housing 24 inch Macintosh computers together with new seating, storage and custom made benches is now a wonderful place for students to make digital art, film and music. Students' learning environments are important and these necessary refurbishments go some way to making learning more enjoyable and more relevant.

Technology was an enormous investment area in 2009. The school was determined to modernise and so installed twelve smartboards into classrooms. Teachers and students have responded positively, using this technology to improve communication and access the web, in an instant. Additional to this was the rollout of laptop computers for Year 9 students. Again, responses have been marked, with students enthusiastically using this technology to organise their learning and to access other tools and resources to improve skills.

Academically, the school continues to go from strength to strength. The Higher School Certificate results in 2009, for example, were very strong, clear evidence that the school is determined to continue its relentless approach to learning, and value it.

As always, the school's creative and sporting programs, in particular its musical, added highlights to the calendar. Rightly, the school, its students, teachers and community members are proud of the diversity and richness of Castle Hill High School's extra curricula program.

The school believes strongly that values underpin all learning and relationships. We uphold the values of respect, cooperation, service and personal responsibility and demonstrate this regularly through student run activities that celebrate the spirit and generosity of the school.

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.

**Vicki Brewer - Principal**

## P&C message

Our P & C at Castle Hill High School strongly supports the Principal and staff in their endeavors to provide an academic environment suited to all levels of learning.

The two major fundraising activities conducted by the P & C are the Uniform shop and the Canteen. These two ventures allow the P & C to donate at least \$50,000 to the school every year, designating where we would like the money spent.

Another fundraising activity in the last year was a raffle (raising over \$5,000). As a result, extra funds have been donated to provide for the purchase of some classroom "smartboards".

The P & C also proudly provide a HSC tutoring programme. A two day forum just prior to the HSC exams, allows students some valuable one on one time with teachers.

The P & C is represented at many community events. These include Anzac Day services, The Hills Relay for Life and Orange Blossom Festival.

Meetings are held one evening per month, with executive meetings held as required for planning discussion. The meetings are a great venue for parents to bring any ideas or concerns forward for discussion with both the principal and other parents.

Most of all the P & C exists to:

- promote the interests of the school by bringing parents, citizens, students and staff into close co-operation
- assist in providing facilities and equipment for the school and in promoting student welfare
- encourage parent and community participation in issues of education and curriculum
- function successfully with the support and interest of the parent body

**Jenny Thompson - P&C President**

## Student representative's message

Castle Hill High School students have long since been recognised for their involvement in extra-curricular activities and 2009 was no exception. Be it cleaning garbage from under the portable classrooms, or cutting up mountains of fruit, bright and early on a Saturday morning at the Cancer Council's annual Relay For Life, every challenge was met with a smile - proof that a positive spirit makes all the difference!

2009 saw the continuation of many "Caso traditions" such as Spirit Week's Year 10 and 11 vs Year 12 footy match and the (always-entertaining) Guy Auction, with sausage sizzles and cake sales aplenty. Our fantastic Year 11 prefects worked tirelessly to organise this year's Spirit Week, with new inclusions such as "Find the Fugitive" and "Random Acts of Kindness". Mrs Windrim was the shocked (but unquestionably well-deserving) recipient of a huge hamper of treats. Under guidance of Sam and Ryan Jameson, the Year 10 SRC organised and held an extremely successful "Caso's Got Talent".

The Year 8 SRC had a fun and creative day selling multicultural-

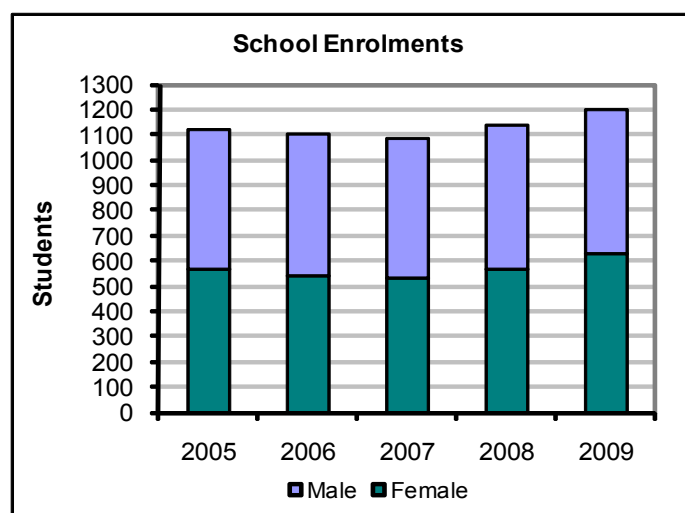
themed lolly bags, spraying hair in crazy colours, and face-painting various nation's flags, all for our annual Multicultural Day. Doubling as an educational experience in itself, the question of "So....whose flag is that?" provided many students with the perfect multicultural-icebreaker. "Green Day" (finally!) came to Castle Hill High in 2009 with full credit to the Year 7 SRC. Our four youngest members baked well over two hundred cupcakes and other green goodies, and successfully sold the entire lot to raise much-needed funds for Planet Ark. All students in the prefect body and SRC are to be congratulated on their hard work and tireless efforts in 2009.

**Debbie Boss - SRC Coordinator**

## School context

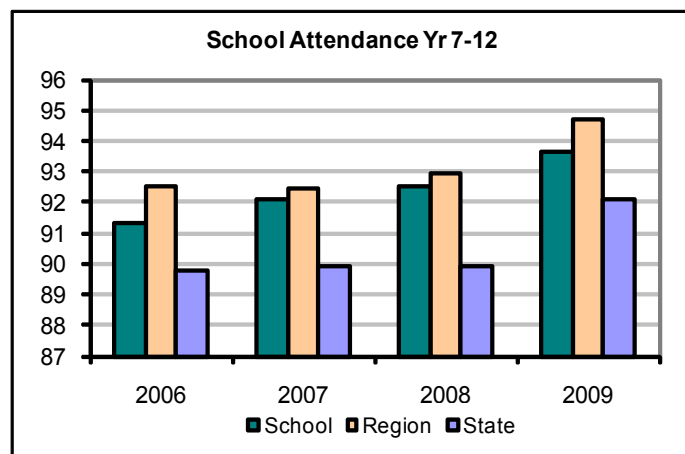
### Student enrolment profile

In 2009 the school had a total enrolment of 1200 students. The following graph reflects the total enrolment of the school by gender over a five year period.



### Student attendance profile

Attendance rates for all students was higher than the state average and lower than the regional average.



## Management of non-attendance

In October the school introduced a new system to monitor attendance. An attendance coordinator was appointed to monitor student attendance throughout the day as part of the Pilot Schools Program which allows Principals some flexibility within their staffing. The advantage of this was that one teacher was monitoring all students which ensured consistency and the action was immediate. An SMS system was also trialed in Term 4. Parents were sent a message when their child was absent or late to school. The trial was successful and fully supported by parents. The SMS system will be implemented in 2010 as part of our management of non attendance.

### Structure of classes

The strength and reputation of Castle Hill High School's Gifted and Talented program continues to grow. This is emphasised by the increased number of students who apply for acceptance into the program. In 2009 the school had 10 Gifted and Talented Classes as indicated by the following table.

Year Group	Number of Gifted and Talented Classes
7	2
8	3
9	3
10	2

Students in the Gifted and Talented classes follow the same pattern of study as mainstream classes but have a differentiated curriculum to incorporate enriched work. The Gifted and Talented classes stay together for their core subjects of English, Maths, Science, History and Geography.

### Retention to Year 12

#### Post-school destinations

Following the 2009 HSC, students pursued the following post school destinations

**University** - 46%  
**TAFE** - 24%  
**Apprenticeships** - 15%

### Year 12 students undertaking vocational or trade training

In 2009 62 (42%) students were enrolled in vocational training. 31 (21%) students were enrolled in TAFE courses.

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

In 2009 145 (99.3%) students attained HSC or equivalent vocational educational qualifications.

## Staff information

### Staff establishment

In 2009 the school had a total teaching staff of 79.2. The following table reflects the composition of the school teaching staff.

Position	Number
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	2
Head Teachers	12
Classroom Teachers	60.4
Teacher of Emotional Dis-abilities	0
Teacher of Mild Intellectual Disabilities	0
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Support Teacher Learning Assistance	0.4
Teacher Librarian	1
Teacher of ESL	1.4
Counsellor	1
(SASS)	14.1
Total	93.3

### Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100
Postgraduate	22





## 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:	30/11/2009
<b>Income</b>	<b>\$</b>
Balance brought forward	550 931.48
Global funds	560 527.03
Tied funds	405 053.16
School & community sources	869 743.08
Interest	27 705.17
Trust receipts	115 814.80
Canteen	0.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>2 529 774.72</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	360 662.75
Excursions	142 777.95
Extracurricular dissections	106 380.22
Library	0.00
Training & development	0.00
Tied funds	456 489.48
Casual relief teachers	20 084.05
Administration & office	254 167.88
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	136 082.98
Maintenance	107 637.58
Trust accounts	100 046.37
Capital programs	20 348.04
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>1 704 677.30</b>
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>825 097.42</b>

A full copy of the school's 2009 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 2009

### Achievements

#### Arts

Throughout 2009, the students and teachers of Castle Hill High School have continued to develop initiatives and opportunities to enhance students' previous successes and create opportunities for new achievements. Highlights include:

- Year 12 Drama students Hanni Trewin and Michael Weal were nominated for inclusion in Onstage, a showcase of exceptional performances and projects for the HSC Drama Examination.
- The annual School Musical *42nd Street* featured the talents of more than 150 students on stage and behind the scenes, thrilling large audiences each performance. This show is a Broadway classic and tells the story of a chorus girl, Peggy, getting her big break on stage. It was a mammoth achievement to teach the entire cast to tap dance and a highlight of the show was definitely the Tap

Dance showstoppers of *"We're in the Money"* and *"42nd Street"*. We were lucky to again have the talents of ex-student Veronica Sahabu as choreographer. The full cast dance numbers were truly spectacular.

- In August the Bright Lights of Broadway theme continued with our annual Showcase spectacular highlighting the achievements of performing arts students across Dance, Drama and Music. As always we were enthralled by the individual and collective talents of our students who were professional and entertaining in their performances.
- Term 2 saw the opening of the new Multi Media Room and CAPA students and teachers have enthusiastically embraced the opportunities this has presented to work with industry standard equipment and software. The artistic and creative discoveries being made in the room as part of our course work is thrilling and we are looking forward to further developments in talents and skills that this room will enable.
- In Term 3, the school auditorium was once again transformed into an artistic installation for the annual Art Show where visitors were treated to the talents and works of Visual Arts and Photography students from Year 7-12. This week-long exhibition also provided the opportunity to host students from the Partner Primary schools in workshops led by Year 10 students.
- The Art Department also designed and installed a permanent Art Gallery in the walkway. It is a stunning and professional display of students' work.
- Drama students were selected to present their talents on stage at the Regional Drama Festival. Ms Merryweather's Year 10 class and Ms Spinks' Year 11 class both performed class-devised playbuilt pieces that were highly acclaimed by the Audition Panel and audiences at the Festival.
- Dance students were selected to perform at the Met West Dance festival. Co-ordinated by Mrs Leeds-Roberts, these pieces showed the talents and commitment of our dance students.
- An initiative this year was the Combined Schools' Dance Festival that was held in Term 2. This brought together Castle Hill Public, Samuel Gilbert Public and Castle Hill High School to celebrate the achievements and diversity in dance education. The highlight of the Festival was the combined schools' Boys' Hip Hop ensemble performance *"G-Slide"*. Castle Hill High School students conducted Hip Hop workshops for boys from the Primary Schools and choreographed this inspirational item.
- Under the direction of Mr Adam Tomkins the Concert Band has grown in repertoire and sound, maintaining an increased performance schedule including at the Relay for Life as well as entering in two Eisteddfods - Ryde and Galston. At all of these performances they demonstrated professionalism and collective talent.
- The Vocal Ensemble, led by Ms Drewitt-Smith, participated as part of the combined choir at the Arts North Music Festival where they joined students from other schools in a program of diverse choral works.
- 2009 also saw the formation of a new music ensemble - the Brass Ensemble. Led by Mr Aynsley, this select group of brass musicians get to explore more diverse jazz style pieces and highlight their individual talents as musicians.

2009 has been another year of collective and individual successes and achievement in the Creative and Performing Arts at Castle Hill High School.

## Sport

2009 was again a successful year for Castle Hill High School students at Zone, Regional and State Carnivals. There were also knockout teams that represented the school to a high level of distinction. Here is a summary of the students' achievements:

### NSW CHS Swimming Championships

The following students represented Metropolitan West at this Carnival - Rhyse Buchanan, Katherine Gamble, Tom Gamble, Soo Hwang, Alison Jalvo, Ben Jalvo, Anna Kingsbury, Mathew Knight, Jessica Le Quesne, Taylor Loane, Damien Mulvannah, Timothy Pond, Gabrielle Ralphs, Scott Richards, Jared Seager, Matthew Schaudin, Vanessa Sefton and Nicola Tziogas.

### NSW All Schools Cross Country

- Second Place - 14 years Boys School Team (Mathew Knight, Nikko Jamora, Ben Jalvo and Thomas Woodman)
- Second Place - 12 years Girls School Team (Kelsey Dwyer, Abbie Dwyer, Andrea Sigmann and Vanessa Sefton)

### CHS Athletics

The following students achieved the high distinction of winning a medal at the C.H.S Athletics Carnival:

- Joshua Byron - First in 12 years 80m Hurdles
- Gabrielle Ralphs - First in 14 years Long Jump
- Girls 12 years 4x100m relay ( Abbie Dwyer, Kelsey Dwyer, Andrea Sigmann, Seda Kuroz ) Third place

### Hills Zone Representatives

- Boys Open Baseball - Tom Cunninghame, Adrian Choy
- Girls Open Basketball - Tara Kilminster, Amy Wallis
- Boys Open Basketball - Michael Farrell, Petar Kuzmanovic, Iwan Wibisono, Samuel Brock, Stephen Badu
- Boys Open Football - Nick Trimble, Ryan Johnstone, Blake Fowler, Todd Fowler, Andres Carol Villavedra, Ben Sansom, Ken Smith
- Girls Open Football - Ana Maria Acevedo, Samantha Rien, April Mannah, Ashley Melia
- Girls Open Hockey - Xanthe Dwyer, Bronwyn Button, Danielle Watson, Brooke Dwyer, Kirstyn Button, Abbie Dwyer, Kelsey Dwyer
- Boys Open Hockey - Keegan Brown, Joseph O'Reilly, Scott Berriman
- Girls Open Netball - Kristen Smuc
- Boys Open Rugby League - Jack Baum, Shane Chalmers, Mark McKee, Cameron Hyland
- Boys 15's Rugby League - Chris Chamberlain
- Boys Open Rugby - Mark McKee

### Met West Representatives

- Boys Open Baseball - Thomas Cunninghame
- Girls Open Basketball - Tara Kilminster
- Boys Open Basketball - Michael Farrell, Sam Brock, Petar Kuzmanovic
- Girls Open Hockey - Xanthe Dwyer, Bronwyn Button, Danielle Watson
- Boys Open Hockey - Scott Berriman





- Boys Open Rugby Union - Mark McKee
- Boys Open Rugby league - Shane Chalmers
- Boys 15's Rugby League - Chris Chamberlain
- Boys Diving - Dean Ross
- Boys Open Football - Ryan Johnstone
- Girls Open Football - Anita Acevedo
- Boys 15's AFL - Jackson Dwyer

### CHS Representatives

- Boys Open Basketball - Michael Farrell
- Boys 15's AFL Merit team - Jackson Dwyer

### State Knockout Teams

Castle Hill High School entered into State wide knockout sporting competitions during 2009. These are the following outstanding results from some of our teams:

- Boys Open Hockey - Metropolitan West Champions
- Girls Open Hockey - Metropolitan West Finalist
- Boys Open Football - Metropolitan West Champions
- Boys 15's Football - Bill Turner Cup Metro North Finalist
- Girls 15's Football - Bill Turner Shield Metro North Finalist
- Girls 15yrs Basketball - Metropolitan West Champions

Special mention must be given to the Open Boys Basketball team which finished a highly impressive third place overall from all the NSW Public Schools.

The students who have represented Castle Hill High School during 2009 at Zone, Regional and State Level Sport are to be congratulated for the positive and mature manner in which they have approached their sporting endeavours. They have shown themselves to be excellent representatives of their school. The staff are to be congratulated for their wonderful efforts during sporting carnivals and for the coaching/managing of knockout teams. Without their commitment and endeavour the carnivals and knockout teams would not have been as successful as they were in 2009. Parental involvement within sport during this year has been of great value with the transport of students to different sporting venues for knockout competitions. A big thank you to all the parents that have been such a great assistance with their support of school sport. We also need to acknowledge the ongoing benefit obtained from use of the mini bus to transport students to sporting venues. This would not be possible without the sponsorship of the Mini Bus from Castle Hill RSL, P&C Association and the Student Representative Council. Finally, thanks to everyone in the Personal Development/Health/Physical Education faculty for their whole hearted support and effort throughout the year 2009.

**Mr Lewis Williams**  
Sports Organiser

### Academic

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 the assessments.

Yr 3: from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest for Year 3)

Yr 5: from Band 3 (lowest) to Band 8 (highest for Year 5)

Yr 7: from Band 4 (lowest) to Band 9 (highest for Year 7)

Yr 9: from Band 5 (lowest) to Band 10 (highest for Year 9)

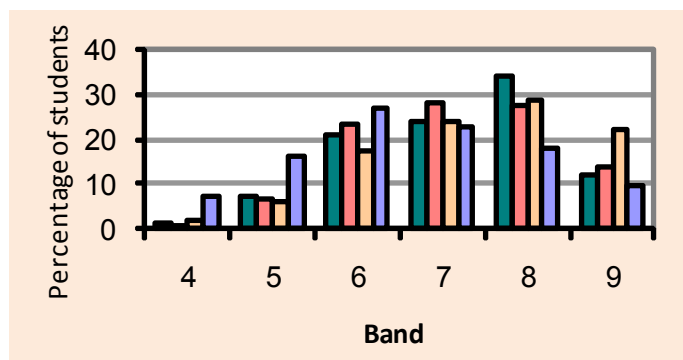
In the School Certificate the performance of students is reported in performance bands ranging from Performance Band 1 (lowest) to Performance Band 6 (highest).



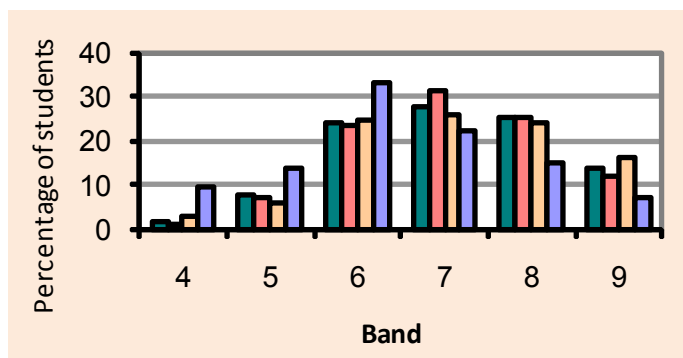


## National Assessment Program - Year 7

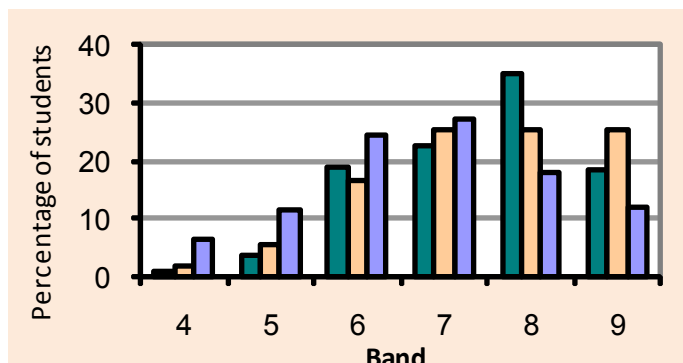
### Reading



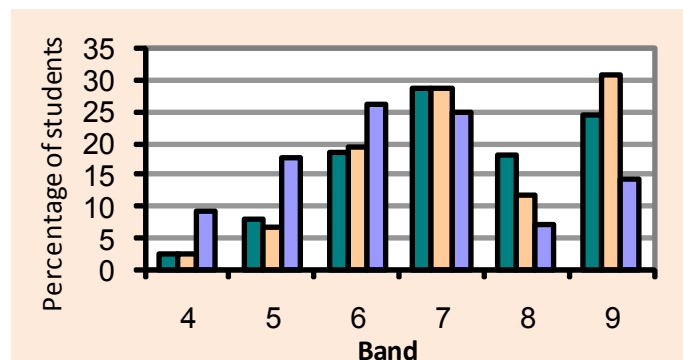
### Writing



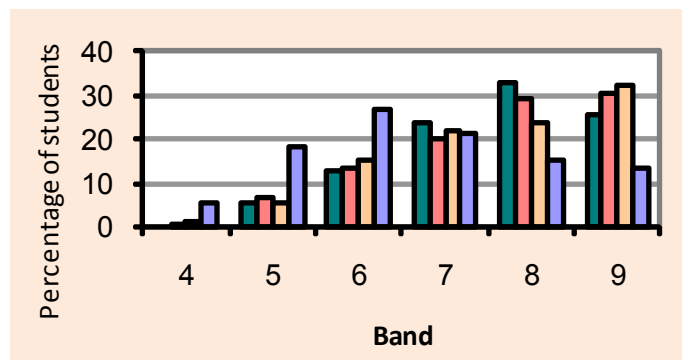
### Spelling



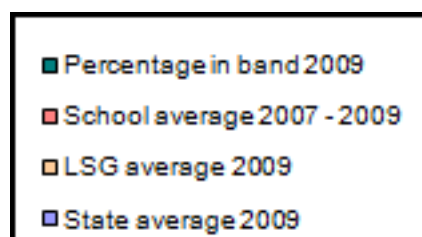
### Grammar and Punctuation



## Numeracy



### Key



### Discussion of Year 7 Naplan

2009 was the second year that students completed the National Assessment Plan for Literacy and Numeracy. The Literacy component of the NAPLAN assessment was divided into four sections including reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. Students at Castle Hill High School performed well with the average mark in most areas higher than our like school group average and the state average. 12% of our students achieved the highest band in reading, 13% in writing, 18% in spelling and 24% in grammar and punctuation. The tables show the percentage of students in the relevant bands and how this relates to the previous school average, the like school average and the state average.

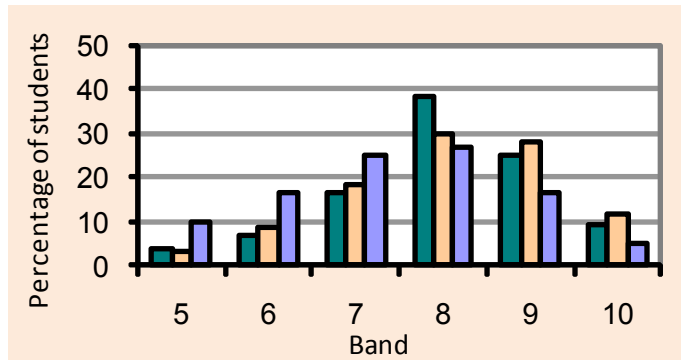
Our students performed well above state average in all areas of numeracy: Number, Patterns & Algebra, Measurement & Data, Space & Geometry. 25% of our students achieved the highest band (9), whilst 95% of them were in the top four bands. We had less than half of the state average of students in the lower bands.

Compared with our local area schools, this Year 7 group is strong in all areas of numeracy, but fall slightly below the group average.

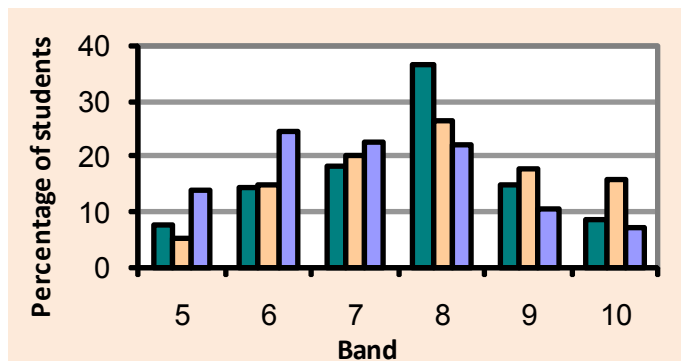
The value added data shows this group has improved well above the state average in numeracy since the Year 5 Basic Skills Test - especially the boys.

## National Assessment Program - Year 9

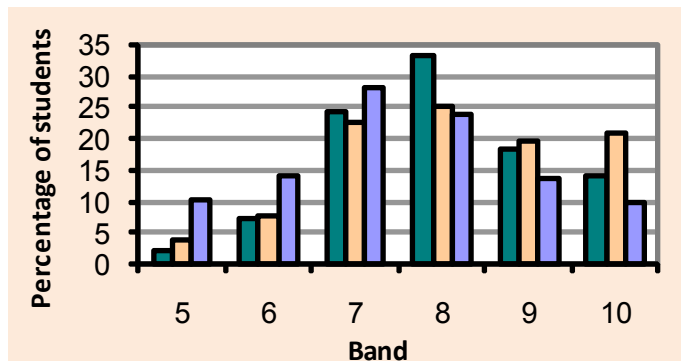
### Reading



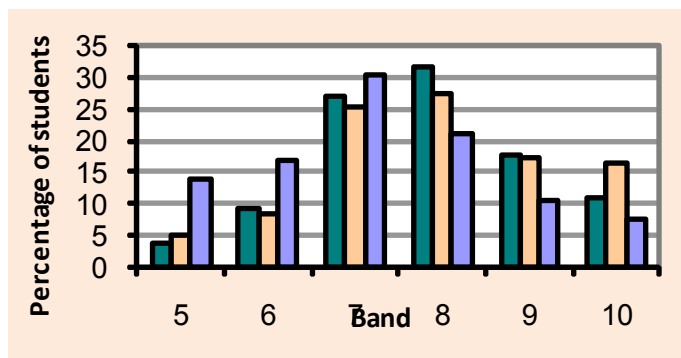
### Writing



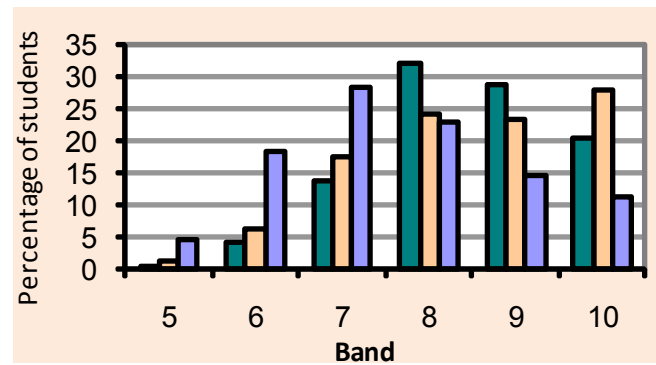
### Spelling



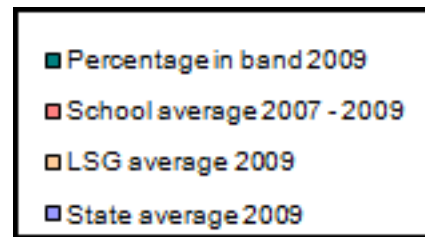
### Grammar and Punctuation



## Numeracy



### Key



### Discussion of Year 9 Naplan

The Year 9 cohort also performed well with the average mark in most areas higher than the state average. 9% of our students achieved the highest band in reading, 8% in writing, 14% in spelling and 11% in grammar and punctuation. The following graphs show the percentage of students in the relevant bands and how this relates to the like school average and state average.

In Numeracy 21% of our students were ranked in the high band (10), while 96% were in the top four bands.

Compared with our local area schools, this Year 9 group is strong in all areas of numeracy, but fall below the group average.

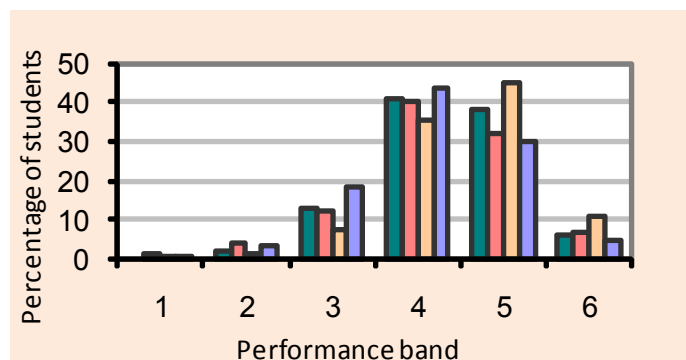
Of all the 163 students trackable (out of 218) since Year 7, 29 of them are reported with a lower overall numeracy score. This means that 82% of our students moved forward in numeracy over their first two years at High School.

The value added data shows moderate improvement since Year 7, but this is less than the state or our local area schools.

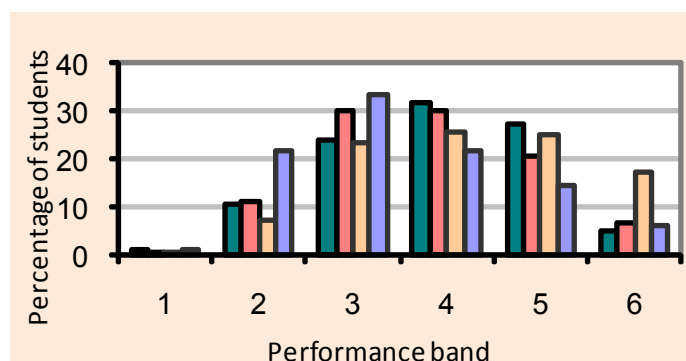


## School Certificate

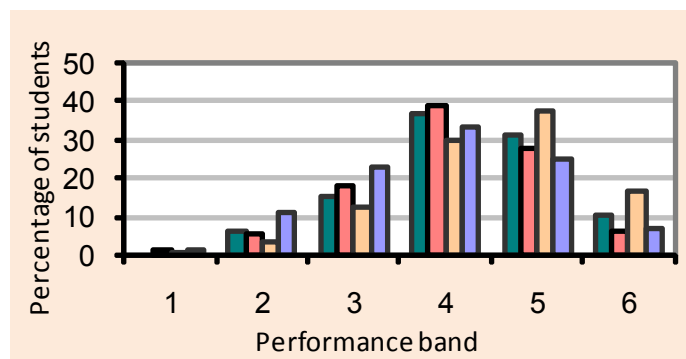
### English Literacy



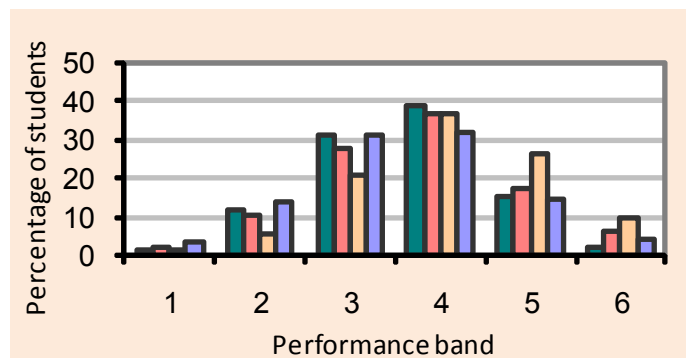
### Mathematics



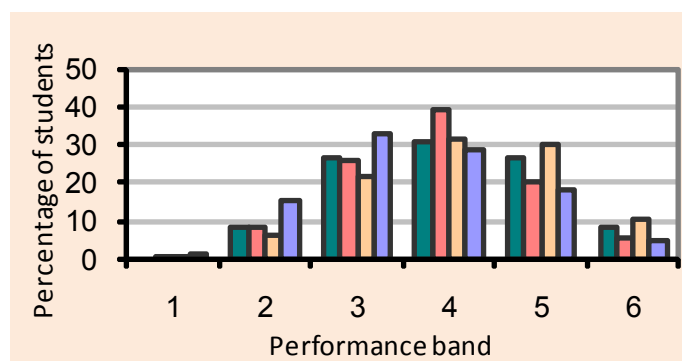
### Science



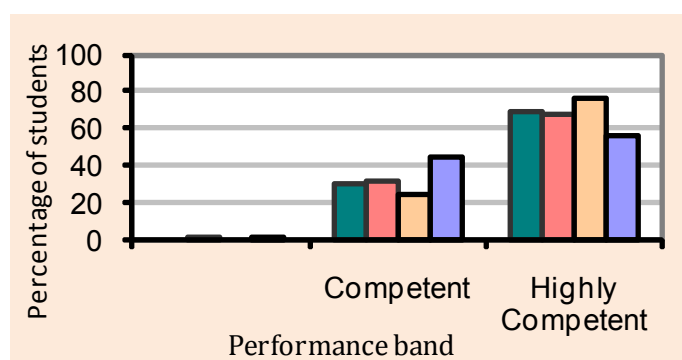
### Australian History, Civics and Citizenship



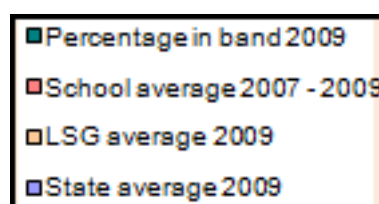
## Australian Geography Civics and Citizenship



### Computing Skills



### Key



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

In English 43.28% of students were placed in the top two bands. This compared favourably with state-wide results of 40.59% of students in bands 5 and 6. Comparative performance from Year 5 to Yr 10 remains positive for English with relative growth of 0.90 across all band ranges. English – Literacy relative performance ranked students in the higher bands, in the top 29% of the state.

Positive growth was achieved across all band ranges but of particular note was the performance of students in the lower Bands where growth of 5.85 in Band 1 and 8.08 in Band 2 was achieved.

In Science the percentage of students in the top 3 bands was 78.6%, which was well above the state average of 64.7%. In the lower bands the percentage of students continues to be below the state average. The 2009 results in the top two bands of 41.8% are stronger compared with the average school performance over the last 5 years of 33.7%.

In Australian History, Civics and Citizenship the percentage of students gaining the top band was 1.99% compared to a state

average of 5.26%. This reverses a trend of recent years of continuous improvement in Band 6 Australian History results. The percentage of students in the top three bands in History was 55% which was slightly higher than last year. In Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship the percentage of students gaining Band 6 was 8.45% compared to the state average of 5.31%. This continues a period of constant improvement in Band 6 Geography results which began in 2006. The percentage of students in the top three bands in Geography was 65% which was slightly lower than last year's results.

In Mathematics SC external test results were slightly higher than the state average, except for our higher achieving (Band 6) students. Value added data places all of our students at the high end of the state average range. This reflects the commitment of our teachers working with our students of all abilities. Our challenge is to continue the growth performance of all students. The addition of a G&T stream has brought improved results at the top, but this year has shown a slight reversal. Our incoming Year 10 group must work harder and smarter towards their School Certificate exam, whilst also concentrating on preparation for the senior school. Remedial work (detected and assisted by SNAP / NAPLAN results) has allowed us to produce pleasing improvement in our lower achieving students.

The results in Computer Skills for 2009 were impressive. 69.7% of students were in the highly competent performance band. The performance band judged as competent consisted of 30.4%. The school's average mark of 83.3 compared favourably to the state average of 80.

### Higher School Certificate

Course	School 2009	School 2005-2009	LSG 2009	State 2009
Ancient History	70.1	71.1	77.7	70.7
Biology	77.8	73.6	77.3	72.1
Business Studies	73.3	70.0	77.1	72.6
Chemistry	78.3	72.6	81.4	73.9
Community and Family Studies	70.4	74.8	76.0	71.0
Economics	73.4	72.9	80.7	75.7
English (Standard)	66.7	64.8	67.6	63.3
English (Advanced)	74.0	75.4	82.8	78.6
English as a Second Language	72.0	73.4	76.6	71.4
English Extension 1	76.0	71.0	83.4	79.4
English Extension 2	88.0	82.2	80.9	78.2
Food Technology	73.7	74.2	76.5	72.7
Industrial Technology	77.9	77.0	77.2	70.8
Information Processes and Technology	81.9	75.5	80.2	72.9
Legal Studies	70.3	75.1	80.7	72.0
General Mathematics	67.7	71.0	74.4	67.1
Mathematics	74.2	74.3	79.6	74.3
Mathematics Extension 1	80.2	77.1	85.5	80.6
Mathematics Extension 2	81.6	76.6	87.6	84.4
Modern History	75.8	74.7	79.3	74.1
Music 2	72.4	75.6	85.4	84.1
Personal Development, Health and Physical Education	74.3	74.6	74.6	70.7
Physics	66.6	71.5	79.9	74.1
Software Design and Development	80.0	77.8	78.1	71.7
Visual Arts	74.9	78.8	83.1	78.4
French Continuers	76.0	74.6		79.2
Japanese Beginners	71.3	78.0		72.8
Japanese Continuers	82.2	71.2	84.2	79.1
Construction Examination	75.6	73.4		67.8
Hospitality Examination	74.5	74.0	76.3	73.0





## Significant programs and initiatives

### Technology

The Digital Education Revolution was indeed just that at Castle Hill High School. The staff and students eagerly pursued our targeted response to the wider community's thirst for incorporating various information technologies into the curriculum.

Our first response was the School Development Day in Term 2. This day was a shared day of Professional Learning with two of our Partner Primary Schools; Castle Hill Public School and Samuel Gilbert Public School. The conference day was launched with the Keynote address by Paul Brock and followed by delegates attending two interactive workshops of their own choice. Sessions included Interactive Whiteboards and the Web two technologies of Blogs, Wikis, Podcasting and Vodcasting. Workshops were targeted at novice, intermediate and advanced level in order to meet the learning needs of our conference delegates. This day provided a huge impetus for professional learning around the various facets of technology and helped to increase the professional collegiality between Castle Hill High School staff and that of our Partner Primary Schools.

During the preparation for this Conference day the Executive of Castle Hill High School were also investigating the use of the Learning Management System 'Moodle' and Wikis as part of their professional learning. This served to raise the profile of these new technologies across the school and the associated possibilities of implementing them in teaching programs.

Consequently the Castle Hill High School Technology Team was formed in Term 2 of 2009. The team consisted of a representative from each faculty, specific ICT staff, the Deputy Principals and the Principal. The Technology Team's brief was to develop, support and further enhance the technology skills of Castle Hill High School's teaching staff.

One of the driving forces for the creation of the technology team was the Digital Education Revolution (DER) and the issuing and use of laptops by Year 9 students in late 2009. The team's first task was to devise and create the 'Laptop Protocols in the classroom' document. This document is now on display in every classroom. Students who received laptops were required to sign the 'Laptop User Charter', according to DET requirements. Students took part in compulsory lessons on the user charter, protocols and the use of Onenote software.

An important objective of the Technology Team was to facilitate the necessary training and professional development of staff in the area of ICT. A technology survey was conducted to ascertain the area of training that would be most beneficial to the staff as a whole. The results of the survey led to professional development sessions over various strands. Members of the teaching staff with specific knowledge and skills in technology as well as outside providers were approached to facilitate the professional learning. This professional development took place in the Thursday morning staff training sessions.

In Term 3 the focus was on practical applications of Interactive White Boards in the classroom. In addition to this staff investigated the practical uses of the OneNote program that is part of the suite of Software that came with the Year 9 laptops.

A guide to how Year 9 students might use this program to organise their work on their laptops across all subjects and across all classes was developed. In addition to this, a small independent learners' group, who focused on investigating the power of the subject specific software that had recently been installed in the Macintosh Multimedia Centre met to learn more. This gave staff the opportunity to explore and develop practical classroom programs and units of work using a different operating platform. Here teachers were able to develop learning activities whereby students are given the opportunity to use industry standard software.

In Term 4 staff selected workshops in either 'Classroom strategies using ICT' or 'Moodle'. Teachers were able to select the course that best suited their requirements. This culminated in a Faculty based presentation to the whole staff that reflected practical use of the skills and knowledge acquired during the training sessions. This was presented as part of the program on the School Development day at the end of Term 4.



## Aboriginal education

2009 saw the staff at Castle Hill High School continue to implement the 2008 Aboriginal Education and Training Policy. As part of the implementation process all staff received training on the policy, and consequently they are conversant with the aims and rationale of the policy.

In addition to this the Welfare Team, including Head Teacher Welfare and the Year 7 Advisor were able to develop and implement high quality and inclusive transition to high school programs for Aboriginal students. This enabled Aboriginal students from our partner primary schools individualised needs to be accommodated upon entry to Castle Hill High School.

The Castle Hill High School Welfare Team has also been instrumental in structuring Personalised Learning Programs (PLPs) for all Aboriginal students attending Castle Hill High School. Consequently all Aboriginal students have high quality, negotiated PLPs that continue to ensure good quality learning outcomes.

## Multicultural education

Bonjour, Aloha, Guten Tag , Konichiwa and G'day mate. Castle Hill High School is both ethnically and culturally diverse. Indeed multiculturalism is one of the school's greatest assets and 2009 has been another exciting year for the multicultural team.

The most exciting initiative was the multicultural day, organised by the SRC and Senior Prefect body. It was a day of celebration and respect where our school took the time to openly demonstrate that our community is strong and united. We came together in a now annual event, to celebrate our diversity and foster cultural tolerance and harmony where every race is equal and beautiful in its own way. In this way we aim as a community to reject racism and foster cultural tolerance and harmony. The day was an outstanding success and even though only one day, it is the underlying theme that was ignited and given impetus to continue to burn brightly and shine throughout the year.

The Multicultural team continues to support our World Vision sponsor child Getachew Gebretsadikan who was born in 2003 making him six this year. Our latest correspondence tells us that he dreams of being a pilot and his hobby is playing football. Maybe with the continued support Getachew's dream of being a pilot will be fulfilled.

World Vision Ethiopia are most grateful for our continued support and the assistance is so badly needed as Ethiopia faces recurrent drought where crop failure continues to affect families and communities. We also continue to fund raise and support Mina and her two children in Afghanistan at Hope House. Widows and their families are able to live safely rather than in desperate conditions on the streets due to the support from communities like Castle Hill High.

I would like to publically thank a small number of students who work so hard for charity and are my regular fund raisers who are an absolute joy to work with. They are led by Ovini Sellapperuma, Zoe Bradley, Camilla Bellstedt, Tanisha Sunaram and Dev Bhakir. These students are so giving and are a bright light of humanity always willing to help those less fortunate





than themselves. Their parents, friends and school should be as proud of their achievements as am I.

The following quote from an unknown author succinctly expresses the underlying ethos of the multicultural team, *“Brotherhood means understanding that a cry of pain means the same in all languages and so does a smile.”*

**Donna Rodgers**  
**Multi Cultural Team Coordinator**

### **Respect and responsibility**

Castle Hill High School teaches values, including those that underpin learning. Respect and responsibility are taught explicitly in classrooms and through the activities, relationships and policies of the school and its community.

Leadership from the SRC has instilled a greater awareness of these values within the student body. Our school policies, particularly Welfare, Discipline, Aboriginal, Multicultural and Attendance and the curriculum programs in all KLA's emphasise the importance of respect and responsibility. These values underpin the work of teachers, both in the classroom and in broader responsibilities.

The school's newsletter allows the Principal and staff to convey the importance of these values to parents. The school will continue to highlight and develop strategies for making core values more explicit within the context of the teaching programs.

### **Progress on 2009 targets**

2009 saw the beginning of the 2009-2011 Castle Hill High School strategic plan. As part of the annual management process, the school agreed on improvement targets that required more intense focus to achieve our priorities.

In this section of the Annual School Report, description is given on the progress made towards achieving the improvement targets for 2009 and outlines the targets set for 2010.

**Target 1: Increase levels of literacy and numeracy achievement for every student at CHHS**

Our achievements include:

- the Senior Executive used whole school planning processes to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of literacy and numeracy teaching. This resulted in the implementation of professional learning programs that increased teachers' capacity to identify and address students' literacy and numeracy learning needs.
- teachers received training in the effective use of SMART data to assess the literacy and numeracy needs of students within their classes. This allowed all teachers to actively engage in using the SMART data to not only assess learning needs of individual students but also to tailor individual programs for targeted students.

**Target 2: Quality teaching practices used for every student with particular attention to personalised learning**



Our achievements include:

- part of the professional learning program that focused on improving pedagogy to assist all students to attain excellence was an emphasis on explicit teaching for HSC success. Successful strategies were shared within faculties and then across the whole staff.
- staff at Castle Hill High School made use of a variety of data to identify and target underperforming students and to develop personalised learning plans (PLPs). This resulted in a greater variety of students being engaged in special interest projects that used higher-order activities to engage them.
- the combination of the two points above has seen improvement in engagement and value adding results of underperforming students.

**Target 3: Strengthened teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes**

Our achievements include:

- in order to assist and develop teacher capacity a structured, professional learning program guaranteeing a minimum of 1 hour of learning per fortnight was introduced on Thursday mornings.
- the teaching staff at Castle Hill High School was able to develop a stronger, more accountable, negotiated TARS process. This included the development of a negotiated CHHS Teacher Expectations Charter. This has resulted in enhancing a school culture where the whole school is engaged in critical reflection and observation that is based on the CHHS Teacher Charter.

**Target 4: Innovation in the use of interactive technologies for learning and teaching**

Our achievements include:

- Castle Hill High School has worked closely with its Parents and Citizens Association to secure the installation of 12 interactive whiteboards in 2009. The use of this interactive technology and ongoing professional learning has served to further develop teacher capacity in the use of ICT in the classroom.
- the construction and resourcing of a connected classroom that uses the Apple Macintosh platform has established a state-of-the art multimedia lab. It has allowed students to deeply involve themselves in digital music composition and digital film creation using industry standard software.
- the school focus on expanding the use of technology has seen staff integrating relevant technology into their lesson plans. In particular Web 2.0 tools and the Learning Management Tool Moodle is being used very successfully in a variety of faculties.
- innovative technology practices in other educational contexts including Soundhouse and Vectorhouse at the Powerhouse Museum.
- shared school development day with partner primary schools.
- Soundhouse and Vectorhouse consultants sharing their expertise.

## **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.

### **Educational and management practice**

#### **Background**

In 2009 Castle Hill High School conducted an evaluation of its subject selection procedures for Year 10 into 11, and timetabling processes. The school wanted to simplify and modernise procedures to ensure that:

- student subject choice was maximized
- student and parent understanding of HSC rules was accessible
- the timetabling process was efficient and accurate
- the timetabling process ensured that the number of split classes was reduced

#### **Parent, students and teacher satisfaction**

Students and teachers evaluated subject selection procedures in order to suggest better ways to ensure student choices were relevant to their needs and that the information communicated was understood.

#### **Findings and Conclusions**

- While evaluations revealed that information at parent and student HSC evenings was very well received and comprehensive, there was evidence to suggest that a more personalised approach to subject selection would ensure fewer errors and better communication of some of the finer detail of HSC rules and protocols.
- Students and teachers considered the pen and paper approach to subject selection time consuming and “old fashioned”, preferring on line subject selection, in keeping with the trend in the wider community of utilising technology to simplify tasks.
- Students indicated that they would value a one on one interview that was more specific and tailored to their individual needs as a means of checking that their subject choices were correct and relevant to them. Parents also indicated that this would be appreciated.
- Teachers indicated that a computer generated timetable package was more in keeping with the complexities of a large and modern secondary school.

#### **Future Directions**

- The school successfully trialed a new computer generated timetable package, Edval, at a cost of \$7000. This program allowed the school's timetablers to handle the complexities of producing a timetable for over 80 teachers, 20% of whom work part time. The advantages of the new package were a more efficient and more quickly produced timetable which included fewer split classes and getting rooming done in a more timely way, saving the workload of a number of administrative staff.
- The school introduced personalised interviews for each Year 10 student using a task force of twelve teachers who



had expert knowledge of HSC requirements. These 20 minute interviews allowed students to clarify their choices and confirm that their career and subject choices were aligned.

- The school converted to an on line subject selection process discarding the paper and pen approach. Students responded with enthusiasm and teachers' time was significantly saved. Additionally, human error was avoided.
- The subject selection evening was streamlined to include a more structured approach for parents and students to discuss options with Head Teachers and teachers.

## Curriculum

### Background

Each year Castle Hill High School conducts an evaluation of one of the Key Learning Areas within the school. This is a requirement of the annual school reporting process and must be communicated to all stakeholders of the school community.

The aim of these evaluations is to examine elements of the teaching and learning process within the nominated KLA that are conducted well and should continue but also identify possible areas for improvement. In 2009 the nominated Key Learning Area for Review was PD/H/PE.

The evaluation team consisted of the Deputy Principal (Team Leader), Head Teacher PD/H/PE and a classroom teacher.

### Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction

The method used for conducting the evaluation was to survey students in Years 7-11, parent members of the Castle Hill High School community and teachers from within the faculty. The surveys themselves were very detailed requiring a ranking of various elements as well as written responses which provided the respondents plenty of opportunity to express their views. The survey allowed all responses to be anonymous.

### Findings and Conclusions

The survey results indicated the following about the effectiveness of teaching and learning practices at Castle Hill High School within the PD/H/PE faculty:

- teachers deliver lessons that are relevant and appropriate. Students believe what they learn in PD/H/PE theory will help them in their adult life.
- students find theory lessons interesting and comment on the stimulating learning environment that is provided.
- teachers are explicit about why things are taught and link content to syllabus outcomes.
- the faculty is currently investigating ways to modify their delivery of Sport to make it meaningful for all students. Many students are finding it difficult to link the skills they are being taught with the context outside the classroom.
- there is an expectation by parents that all students should be expected to wear a school hat when participating in PD/H/PE and Sport.

The survey results indicated the following about the effectiveness of programs and assessment strategies used within PD/H/PE and the link to student attitude and performance:



- assessment processes are a major strength of the faculty. Students are aware of when and how assessment tasks will take place. Adequate notice to students is given and valuable feedback provided.
- assessment procedures are in line with school, DET and BOS requirements.
- programs include relevant elements of the syllabus and incorporate DET policies.
- teachers are currently evaluating programs to include a wider range of resources and activities that will allow students to be challenged and extended in the classroom in order to achieve greater engagement with the subject matter.

The survey results indicated the following about the effectiveness of classroom management strategies employed to ensure students are positively engaged in learning activities.

- teachers and students understand the School's Discipline Code and the parameters for expected behaviour in the classroom. Teachers use a variety of management strategies to ensure that all students are provided with a good and positive learning environment.
- teacher/student relationships are strong. Teachers show they care about their students and allow them to express their points of view.
- students feel they are provided with a secure learning environment when they attend PD/H/PE lessons.

The survey results indicated the following about the organisation of Carnivals and Knockout teams:

- carnivals were well planned and should remain in the same format. There was an overwhelming response indicating that carnivals should not be for competitors only.
- knockout Teams were well organised and provided students with the opportunity to demonstrate their skills. Parents and students did express concern about the fairness for all students when teams are picked for knockouts.
- more recognition is needed for students who participate or excel in sport at assemblies and /or in the newsletter.

#### Future Directions

- Continue to use the content of existing programs but enhance them to include a wider range of resources and activities that will allow students to be challenged and extended in the classroom.
- When teaching sport, provide the students with a more interesting and stimulating learning environment in order to encourage increased engagement and participation.
- Teachers are also extremely keen to continue to source further professional learning opportunities in order to further improve their practice.
- Greater commitment to the recognition of achievement. Students will be publicly recognised at assemblies and in the newsletter. The faculty has also instituted a "Sports Star of the Week" award that will be announced weekly at assemblies.
- Castle Hill High School's Sports Policy to be amended to include an expectation that all students are wearing a hat when participating in outdoor activities.

## Professional learning

In 2009 Castle Hill High School teachers embarked on an extensive professional learning program to learn new developments in teaching, in particular technology learning. Teachers worked together in collaborative teams which met on Thursday mornings from 8.30 - 9.30.

Term 1 saw teachers examining Higher School Certificate data with a view to developing best practice strategies to improve student performance in exams. Teachers collated a number of innovative ideas designed to aid student memory, analysis, creativity and understanding. Evaluations were outstanding. In Term 2, teachers analysed assessment tasks and refined marking guidelines for students so that they could "read between the lines" when completing responses. In order to improve their responses, teachers believe that students need specific clues to guide and direct them. Assessment protocols were also examined and re-worked. Again, learning was practical and tailored to the needs of teachers and students at the HSC level and evaluations were very positive.

In the following terms teachers undertook training in interactive whiteboards, the Onenote program, moodle, wikis, podcasts and vodcasts. The Thursday morning training was complemented by a combined school development day with partner primary schools, again highlighting the application of technology in the classroom.

Teacher learning is, and will continue to be, an important priority at this school. It is the only way we can sustain, nourish and grow in our profession.

## School development 2009 – 2011

The targets expressed below are linked directly to the 2009-2011 management plan.

Targets for 2010

**Target 1: Increase levels of literacy and numeracy achievement for every student at CHHS**

Strategies	Our success will be measured by:
Use whole school planning processes to identify aspects of literacy and numeracy underperformance for particular student cohorts and for individual students.	Decrease proportion of lower performing students in NAPLAN assessments.
Implement professional learning workshops that allow teachers to learn new practical literacy strategies to apply in the classroom.	Teachers use literacy and numeracy strategies to improve performance within their KLA's eg. Deconstructing dense text, modality, lexical density, cohesion.

Strategies	Our success will be measured by:
Continue use of SMART data to assess the literacy and numeracy needs of students within classes and to direct professional learning activities.	All teachers actively engaged in using SMART data to assess learning needs of individual students.  Faculty programs incorporate teaching strategies that address specific literacy and numeracy skills (NAPLAN package).

#### Target 4: Innovation in the use of interactive technologies for learning and teaching

Strategies	Our success will be measured by:
Implement more fully equipped interactive classrooms.	30 interactive whiteboards purchased, installed and utilised.
Develop teacher capacity in the use of ICT through ongoing professional learning and accessing regional personnel.	All staff are trained in the use of IWBs relevant to their teaching areas Improved access to IWBs for all staff.

#### Target 2: School culture and practice that respects and responds to every student's aspirations, culture, gender and learning potential

Strategies	Our success will be measured by:
Improve pedagogy to assist all students to attain excellence with emphasis on explicit teaching.	Students have a variety of higher-order activities to engage them.
Communicate high expectations regarding preparedness for learning – books, equipment, punctuality, homework.	All students are prepared for learning as a minimum requirement All students have explicit instruction on the standards for quality work.
Investigate curriculum delivery to minimise disruptions.	Students have fewer teachers on classes, reduction in split classes.

#### Target 5: Teaching and learning strategies strengthened through the implementation of quality evidence based programs and initiatives

Strategies	Our success will be measured by:
Implement high quality and inclusive transition to school programs for Aboriginal students through the School to Work Program.	Aboriginal students individualised needs are accommodated upon entry to high school.
Structure PLP programs for Aboriginal students.	All Aboriginal students have high quality, negotiated PLPs.
Use the DET Pilot Program to create innovative staffing opportunities to improve the learning of all students and in particular boys.	Appoint a Head Teacher Mentor to oversee the delivery of a rigorous Boys Education Program.

#### Target 3: Strengthened teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes

Strategies	Our success will be measured by:
Thursday morning professional learning time, faculty and whole school, to align student learning and teacher learning.	A structured, professional learning program in place Minimum 1 hour per fortnight of whole school time devoted to professional learning.
Develop a stronger, more accountable, negotiated TARS process Develop a negotiated CHHS Teacher Expectations Charter.	Whole school engaged in critical reflection and observation based on CHHS Teacher Charter.

## 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.

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