SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR 2012

Under the Schools Assistance Act 2008, Australian Government funding is provided to Strathcona, as to other schools and school systems. Associated compliance requirements include:

(i) Participation in national testing.
(ii) Collection of information on student background characteristics for national reports.
(iii) Provision of information published by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) on the My School website.
(iv) Reporting to parents on student progress.
(v) Publication of information relating to the School, including key student outcomes and information on satisfaction.

An Annual Report was distributed in December 2012 and is accessible on the School website. This report provides a comprehensive overview of Strathcona’s activities and achievements.

The following report in response to (v) above reiterates some key aspects of the Annual Report and includes details not available at the time of publication of the Annual Report in December 2012, in particular VCE results for the 2012 cohort of students and further details determining the level of satisfaction of parents, students and staff.

I trust that you will enjoy reading these details and join with me in celebrating the outstanding progress and achievements of Strathcona in 2012.

Our School – an overview

Strathcona, established in 1924, provides a distinctive education in a Christian environment for students throughout Melbourne’s east and north. Strathcona has grown to become one of Melbourne’s leading girls’ schools.

The School has three campuses, Senior School and Early Learning Centre in Scott Street, Canterbury, Junior School in Prospect Hill Road, Canterbury and the Year 9 Campus in Yarra Street, Hawthorn.

Every student receives individual care in a friendly, supportive environment, while being challenged through innovative programs to achieve to the highest possible level academically and in her co-curricular pursuits.

There is extensive choice in subjects with the VCE program offering all prerequisites for tertiary courses and a wide selection of studies in Mathematics, Sciences, Humanities, Business and Creative Arts. Languages studied at Strathcona are French, Italian and Mandarin Chinese.
Strathcona’s diverse co-curricular program encourages participation in a wide range of activities including drama, music and sporting activities, debating and public speaking. An extensive International Links Program enables students to participate in tours to France, Italy and China and to take part in exchanges with schools in the USA, South Africa, New Zealand, Korea, Japan and China. Additionally, Strathcona is registered to enrol 30 international students.

Strathcona’s inclusive educational philosophy and extensive curriculum and co-curricular programs are complemented by outstanding facilities. The most recent work undertaken was the refurbishment of Featherstone Hall. Prior to this, an extensive renovation of the Aquatic and Fitness Centre was undertaken, supported by a Federal Government “Building the Education Revolution” grant of $2 million. The Year 9 student facilities were refurbished in 2011 and the Year 7 & 8 levels have been refurnished. Current work involves planning for a new Learning Centre on the site of the current Spicer and Hopkins buildings which is planned to commence in November 2013.

**2012 Financial Report**

Strathcona is a not for profit organisation that is primarily funded by School Fees 85%, Recurrent Government grants 14% and 1% from other sources. (Please refer to the Income 2012 pie chart below).

Strathcona acknowledges the support of the Australian Government and Victorian Government in the form of recurrent grant funding.

Maintaining current student enrolments, combined with ongoing government grant support will ensure that we are well placed to maintain and further develop our School. The current Australian Government review of school funding could have an effect on 11% of our total income.

All of Strathcona’s income is directed towards providing the best possible educational staff, programs and facilities for our students. (Please refer to the Expenditure 2012 pie chart below).

During 2012 we spent $2.9 million on improving our facilities and equipment (Please refer to the Capital Expenditure pie chart below). 2% of these funds came from the Australian Government Capital Grants as part of the Building the Education Revolution and Digital Education Revolution schemes. These grants, combined with generous donations to our Building and Maintenance fund from our school community (8%) have enabled Strathcona to undertake these improvements with limited new borrowings (loans 5%).

The School Board endeavours to keep School fees as affordable as possible for parents each year without sacrificing the educational service provided. We strive to maintain the financial discipline of ensuring that operating expenditure does not exceed income. If, in any year, a surplus is achieved, it is reinvested in the School to maintain and enhance the facilities.
**Teacher standards and qualifications / Professional development**

The Strathcona staff are highly qualified and committed to the achievement of best practice. They are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. In 2012, 15 men and 78 women made up our teaching staff and 9 men and 38 women our teaching support staff and extra subject teachers. A full list of qualifications of staff is available on the School website. For 2012, it is noted that 57% had achieved qualifications of Post Graduate Diplomas, Masters degrees and Doctorates beyond the basic teacher training.

A requirement of registration is the completion of 100 hours of professional development over a five year period. Our staff willingly undertake professional development, recognising the benefits of ongoing learning and professional sharing. Such development includes Staff Days with whole staff activities. In addition to external speakers there is regular sharing of skills and knowledge from within our staff. This occurs in Staff Meetings and Department Meetings. In 2012, staff participated in and ran in-services in ICT centring on Blackboard, iWise and iPad use. They were updated on IT skills for the classroom; Code of Conduct; cybersafety; mindsets; Middle School SEED Program and Year 9 l-Learning. Teachers were also engaged in renewing or completing their certification in the treatment of anaphylaxis, epilepsy, diabetes, asthma, first aid and Austswim. In 2012, $76,673 was spent on professional learning, including assistance with tertiary studies, representing $824 per teaching staff member.

Schools are rich places of learning, both for students and staff. Great teachers are great learners: they learn about their students and from their students; they learn new things about their disciplines and new technologies and resources for teaching. Strathcona has membership with the key teacher development associations and maintains a library of the journals that they publish for staff reading and reference. Teachers have attended many conferences conducted by their respective subject associations and other interdisciplinary educational bodies. Two examples are the Australian Council for Educational Emerging Leaders Conference and the Hawker Brownlow Teaching & Learning Conference.

The staff at Strathcona actively contribute to the profession in many ways, for example, leading workshops in conferences or in other forums for teachers, having articles published in professional journals and assessing for the VCE examinations. In 2012, many staff were involved in subject associations and other professional bodies that provide both vital professional development sessions and connection with the broader educational community. 15 staff were involved in VCE assessing and lecturing to VCE students state-wide.

Teaching staff and all staff in positions of responsibility participated in Strathcona’s Professional Standards Scheme, benefiting from a professional partnership with a mentor and undertaking a special project to further develop a curriculum topic, resources for the subject or area of specialisation.

The commitment of our staff is further attested to in the attendance and retention rates. In 2012, the average rate of absence of teaching staff for health reasons or carer’s leave was 2.18 days. Such absences were covered by other teaching staff and relief teachers.

Two staff took Long Service Leave for one term or less and five staff were on maternity leave for part of the year. Suitably qualified replacement teachers were employed to cover these periods of leave.

In 2012, teaching staff turnover (of ongoing staff) was 0%. Four staff filled short-term replacement contracts. There were no indigenous staff employed by the School in 2012.
**Student attendance at school**

Student attendance records indicate commitment to involvement in school programs. Absences were generally due to ill health, appointments and opportunities for overseas travel.

Average days present for Prep – Year 12:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Attendance rate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>96.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>95.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>96.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>94.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>95.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>96.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>95.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parents are required to account for absences, contacting the School on the day of absence and submitting a note of explanation on the day of return to school. Unaccounted for absences are followed up by class teachers (Mellor House) and Form Tutors and Year Coordinators (Years 7 – 12). Accurate records noting reasons for absences are maintained. Student attendance is overseen by the Dean of Students, who coordinates assistance for students with medical or pastoral concerns.

Student retention rates are excellent. As an example, of the 81 students who were enrolled in Year 9 in 2009, 74 of these students completed Year 12 in 2012 within a total year group of 83 (with new enrolments received into Year 10, 2010 and Year 11, 2011). Relocation of families and specific course choices were the predominant reasons for change.

**Senior Secondary outcomes**

**VCE Data**

The 2012 cohort achieved impressive results consistent with the high standard of academic achievement seen in the School for many years.

- 9.6% achieved an ATAR over 99 (8 students)
- 38.6% achieved an ATAR over 95 (32 students)
- 51.8% achieved an ATAR over 90 (43 students)
- 78.3% achieved an ATAR over 80 (65 students)
- The median ATAR was 90.25
- The median Study Score was 37
- 32.9% of Study Scores were 40 and above

(ATAR – Australian Tertiary Admissions Ranking)
The tertiary courses and destinations of our students:

### Offers by Institution:
**Year 12: 2012 / '11 / '10**

- **Monash**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Deakin**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Swinburne**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Latrobe**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **RMIT**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **ACU**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **TAFE**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Private**: 2012, 2011, 2010

### Offers by Area of Study:
**Year 12: 2012 / '11 / '10**

- **Science/Health**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Commerce/Management**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Arts/Humanities/Media**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Creative/Performing Arts**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Legal**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Education**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Hosp/Events**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **ICT**: 2012, 2011, 2010
- **Sport/Rec**: 2012, 2011, 2010
Student outcomes in national literacy and numeracy testing

Key student outcomes

NAPLAN

NAPLAN is the National Assessment Program: Literacy and Numeracy, which assesses students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. 2012 was the fifth year that this testing has been undertaken. On average our students perform approximately two years above the average score for students in the State. On most of the tests, at least 50% of Strathcona students were in the top 25% of students in the State.

The data reinforces our focus on differentiation, as the range of achievement on the tests is quite broad. Analysis of the NAPLAN data for those students who have been at Strathcona for 2 testing periods reveals a general trend of strong growth. Our approach at Strathcona is to make use of the extra diagnostic data that the tests provide to inform our curriculum programs. Detailed analysis of the data is provided to the staff for this purpose. We also believe, as research supports, that a broad curriculum is advantageous in developing literacy and numeracy skills in all students, and that it is not just in Mathematics and English that these skills are learnt and reinforced.

At Years 3, 5 and 7 all students who sat the tests met the National Minimum Standard on all tests. At Year 5 one student achieved below the National Minimum Standard and in Year 7 one student achieved below the NMS in Spelling. At Year 9 two students fell below the NMS in Writing and one in Spelling. As an indicator of the strength of the Year 3 results, the median was at the NMS for Year 9. By Year 5 this was true of nearly all students as shown in the following table.

Percentage of students achieving at or above the National Minimum Standard for Year 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelling</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar and Punctuation</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Year 9 all students were at or above the NMS in all tests.
Parent, student and teacher satisfaction with the School

In 2012, Strathcona followed the annual procedure of conducting Exit Surveys with the parents of Year 12 students and Year 12 students. These were conducted using online surveys with Likert scales and open comments.
Year 12 Student Exit Survey (81% participation)

In this survey, Year 12 students were asked to respond to a variety of questions about life at Strathcona.

Responses were sought on satisfaction with specific subjects with the majority of responses to whether subjects studied were “Highly Satisfying” being in the Strongly Agree and Agree categories. Year 12 students could respond in short answer form and many spoke of the personal support they were given and tireless commitment and dedication of their teachers. Constructive feedback from students is helpful in informing staff on preferred approaches in the classroom, methods of explanation and use of resources. Similarly, feedback on preferred approaches to academic and careers advice will help inform our directions in catering for students at the VCE level.

The co-curricular program of the School scored highly within all areas once again. The high participation rate of Year 12 students is also to be noted, a balance with the academic program having been maintained and recognition on the part of students of the value of involvement and leadership opportunities.

On the Opinion Scale requesting feedback on Strathcona meeting the needs of the Year 12 leavers, 75% of responses were in the categories “Well” to “Very Well”. The overall Year 12 experience was rated Highly Satisfying by 73% and Satisfying by 27%.

Year 12 Parent Exit Survey (28% participation)

In this survey, parents were invited to respond to a variety of questions about life at Strathcona. It was very pleasing to note the overwhelming positive response from participants to the question, “Do you feel that you made the right decision to enrol your daughter at Strathcona?”.

The survey indicated overall a high level of satisfaction with the School in the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Very highly/Highly satisfied</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral care</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic program</td>
<td>Excellent/Very good</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for co-curricular development</td>
<td>Highly satisfied</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the question concerning what was most valued, parents indicated:

- the sense of community
- the supportive, caring, nurturing environment
- individual attention
- exceptional leadership team
- broad program/rounded education
- Christian commitment
- produces happy, articulate, positive girls

The staff and I are committed to maintaining this level of satisfaction.
The surveys, together with individual parent and student comments, and feedback from staff representatives and the School Board, help to inform ongoing planning in the School and, in particular, areas to emphasise in our procedures.

**Year 9 Feedback (46% participation)**

An extensive review was undertaken in 2010-2011 and changes in the Year 9 program were implemented in 2012 including:

1. Inclusion of Art, Performance and Music and Food Technology/Health in the core curriculum.
3. Introduction of iPads.
4. Encouragement of the completion of the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award by all students.

Feedback was sought from parents in Term 4, 2012.

1. Value of expanded core curriculum

   This was strongly supported to the level of 91% Food Technology/Health, 79% Art and 69% Music and Performance.

2. I-Learning

   The most strongly supported aspects were:

   Expanded knowledge of Melbourne (81%) and the diverse range of experiences (69%).

   Impacts on independence, research skills, stimulation of inquisitiveness and encouragement of teamwork were agreed with strongly by half of the respondents.

   Comments included the need for a clearer articulation of the purpose of the approaches taken and more clarity on the logistics. The opportunities for stimulation of inquisitiveness and understanding of the benefits of teamwork are being worked on further in 2013.

3. iPad use

   Constructive feedback has informed directions for iPad use in Years 9 and 10 in 2013. In this beginning phase of use, teachers have been intent on maximising the learning benefits. A certain level of distraction because of the novelty was expected and this decreased as the year progressed.

4. Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award – compulsory

   79% strongly agreed with the benefits of this direction.

   Comments included the need for more clarity on requirements and more assistance with sourcing community service activities.

The overall response to the girls valuing the experience at Year 9 was 86%.
Constructive feedback on communication and pastoral support influenced the introduction of an additional leadership role of Coordinator of Pastoral Care for 2013.

Detailed feedback from students on each stage of the I-Learning Program was acted upon in each term’s planning and has enabled refinements for 2013.

**Strategic Plan 2011-2015**

Surveys and anecdotal feedback reinforce the School’s emphasis on a balanced education including strong academic programs, pastoral care and co-curricular and leadership opportunities. Our commitment to supporting a wide range of abilities and talents and developing strong values in a Christian environment is also recognised as being significant in parent decisions to enrol their daughters at Strathcona and sons in the Early Learning Centre.

As we move forward, the new Strategic Plan underpins the areas of curriculum, teaching & learning, pastoral care, the co-curricular program, teacher satisfaction, resourcing of staff and having the School operating at an optimum enrolment level.

I sincerely thank and congratulate all who have contributed to the advancement of our School for the benefit of the young people in our care.

Helen Hughes  
PRINCIPAL  

June 2013