# NSW Education Standards Authority

# Annual Report
# 2024

# Reporting on the 2023 Calendar Year

# Blue Hills College



Owned and Operated by

Seventh-day Adventist Schools
(NNSW) Ltd

# 1    Context

## 1.1    A message from the principal

Blue Hills College, though smaller in size compared to our neighbours and local competition, stands out in our community. We take pride in our school, which we fondly refer to as the Blue Hills Family. We believe that everyone associated with our school, be it students, parents, staff, or community members, will feel a strong sense of belonging to this unique family.

We base our philosophy of education on the vision and directions set by our Seventh-day Adventist church pioneers since the late 1800s. As part of our vision, the school motto is: Nurturing for Today … Learning for Tomorrow….Character for Eternity". To accomplish our vision, we base our approach towards learning at the College on five main aspects. We nurture our students and help them build their social and emotional skills to survive. We also focus on building resilience. On the academic front, students need to be grounded in the basic educational requirements as required by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). Still, it is also our responsibility to make sure that we modify and differentiate the work for our students with disabilities and learning difficulties and monitor our students' individual improvement over time. We also emphasize physical development. Students develop skills to help build their fine and gross motor skills through various activities in class, on the sports fields, and in other outdoor activities. We teach students the principles and benefits of a healthy lifestyle, including good sleep, hydration, sunlight, and physical activity. Finally, we are a religious-based school, and by instilling our Christian values into the students, we aim to help them build strong characters based on sound values that will set them up for life.

Despite the unprecedented challenges of COVID and the two devastating floods in Lismore last year, Blue Hills College has not only survived but thrived. We are immensely grateful for this. Our school community is a diverse one, and it's heartening to see students, parents, and staff from different backgrounds, beliefs, and cultures coming together and respecting each other in our Christian environment.

All the glory and honour go to our Lord and Saviour, who is the guiding and sustaining factor in our school. Our prayers are that God will continue to bless our school abundantly as we share the gospel news with our community.

Kind regards,

Carel Neuhoff

(Principal)

## 1.2 Contextual information about the school (including information about priority areas for improvement and actions taken to promote respect and responsibility)

This was the second recovery year for our school. We continued to recover from the aftermath of COVID-19 and the impact it had on student learning and outcomes. Our community at large were also still recovering from the devastating effects of the two major floods in Lismore and the impact it had on families, local businesses, and the community in general. Due to the rise in mental health issues amongst students over the last three years, we appointed a Health and Wellbeing Committee to research the most appropriate Health and Wellbeing program for our school. We did all the groundwork to ensure that the Health and Wellbeing program could be introduced at the beginning of 2024. They key focus areas of the program include mindfulness, gratitude, and resilience.

We were very blessed to receive an extension on the AISNSW grant to support students who were severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with their learning. We were able to continue supporting previously identified students several times per week to improve their academic outcomes. It was heartwarming to see the enormous effort teachers put into their action research and the levels of success they achieved.

The increasing demand on technology at every year level forced us to introduce a one-on-one laptop program for secondary students. We also introduced shared laptop trolleys between Years 3-6 classes. We also introduced a two-step authentication process for access to our computer network to make our data more secure.

The primary and secondary Professional Learning Committees (PLC) continued to strengthen their practices and embedding it into their regular operation. Each PLC group set their goals and worked through the cyclic processes of identifying an area of potential improvement, analysing data, researching improvement strategies, and implementing the improvement plan. Each group reported back at the end of the year on their outcomes, which was an excellent platform for our teachers to share their action research outcomes.

Finally, we were able to reconnect with our school families and the local community as in the pre COVID-19 years. The Home and School Committee reconvened, and they organised several social events for our Blue Hills College families. We could also reintroduce our outreach to churches, have family movie nights at school, Friday night programs for our youth at school, have our annual Carols by Candlelight, and resume all our previous sport activities and outdoor camps.

It is a privilege to be part of such a supporting and accepting community of people. A true blessing.
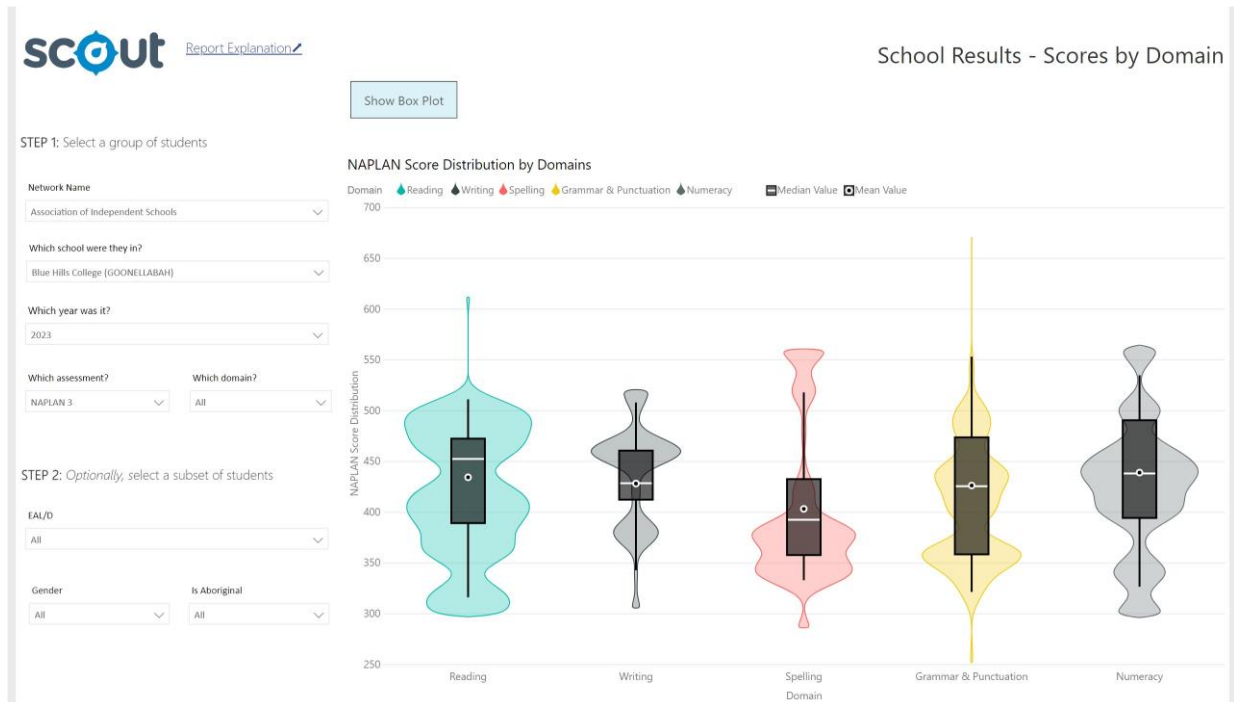
## 2.1 Student outcomes and results in NAPLAN testing

**Year 3**

The Scores by Domain report below compares NAPLAN results for the five domains (Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy) in the form of box-and whisker plots and compares the NAPLAN results for the selected assessment and domain between selected schools.



The Violin Plot displays the distribution of the NAPLAN scores by the number of students who achieved that score.

**Year 5**

The Scores by Domain report below compares NAPLAN results for the five domains (Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy) in the form of box-and whisker plots and compares the NAPLAN results for the selected assessment and domain between selected schools.



The Violin Plot displays the distribution of the NAPLAN scores by the number of students who achieved that score.
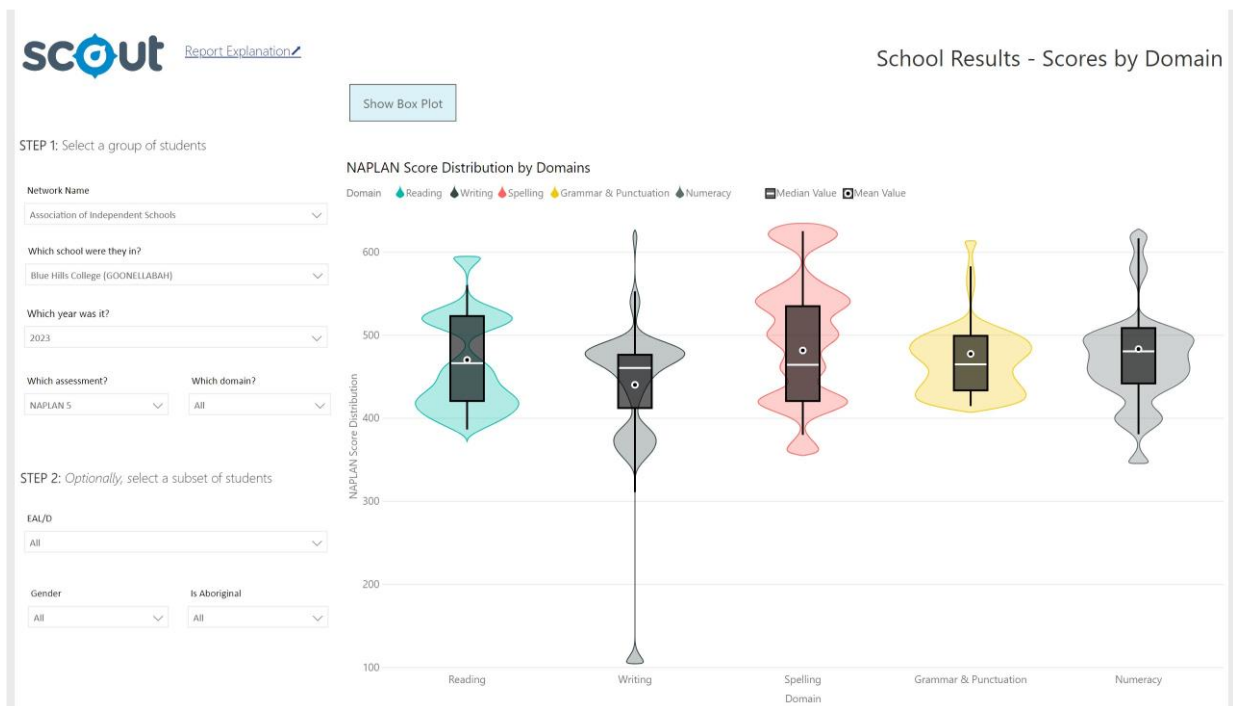
**Year 7**

The Scores by Domain report below compares NAPLAN results for the five domains (Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy) in the form of box-and whisker plots and compares the NAPLAN results for the selected assessment and domain between selected schools.



The Violin Plot displays the distribution of the NAPLAN scores by the number of students who achieved that score.

**Year 9**

The Scores by Domain report below compares NAPLAN results for the five domains (Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy) in the form of box-and whisker plots and compares the NAPLAN results for the selected assessment and domain between selected schools.



The Violin Plot displays the distribution of the NAPLAN scores by the number of students who achieved that score.
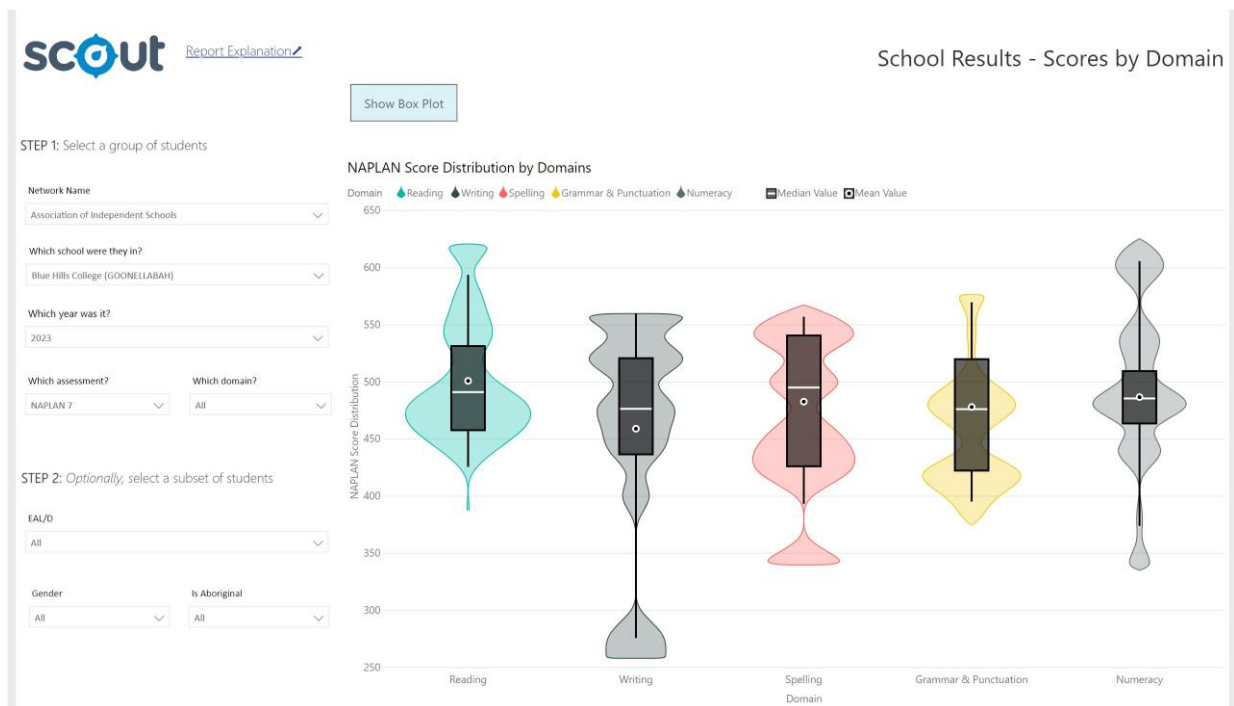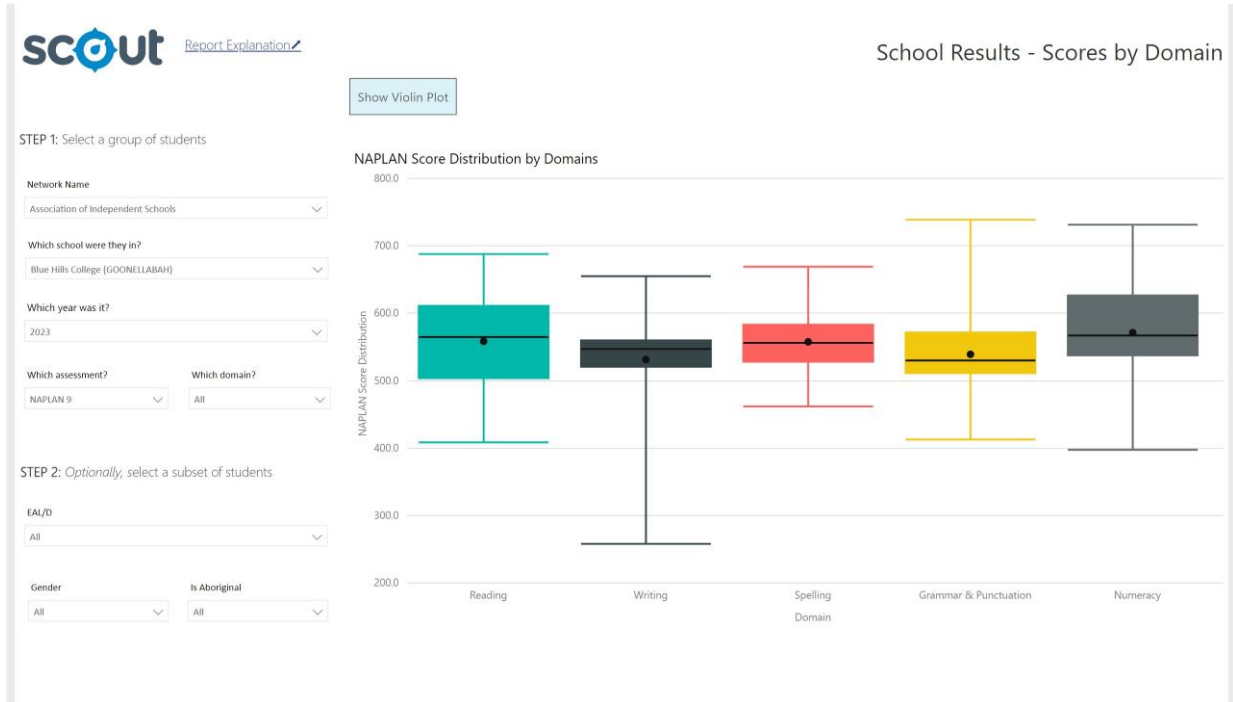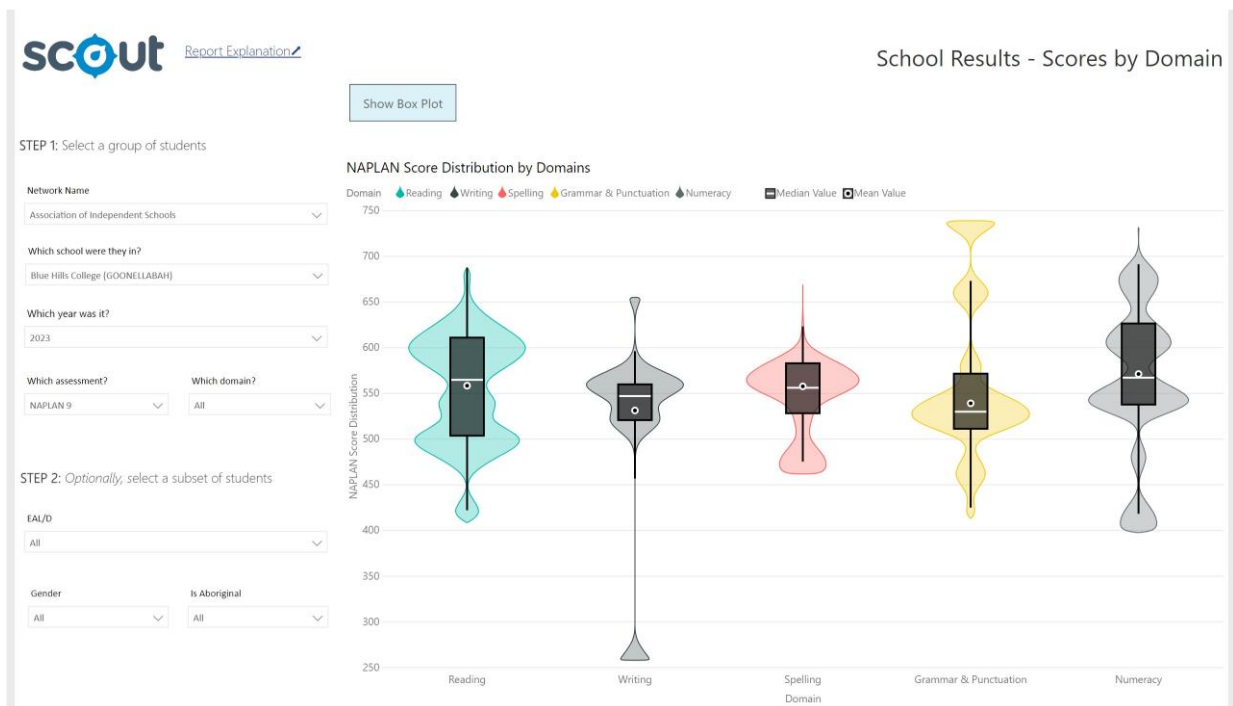
**Interpretative Comments**

The above NAPLAN results are only a broad overview of the results. The full suite of data contains much more information for analysis and interpretation, especially for individual students. Data from ALL the students who sat the benchmark testing are used to generate the graphs, and they include data from students with disabilities, learning difficulties, new overseas arrivals, students with a home language other than English, etc. Even though the graphs give us an idea of how each class scored overall, it is a much better exercise to look at individual scores and student growth over subsequent years. However, the overall scores give us an idea of the trends within each domain and which domains to target for future improvement.

## 2.2   Record of School Achievement

| Item | Students |
|---|---|
| Number of Students studying in Year 10 | **11** |
| Number of ROSAs issued by NESA in 2023 | **11** |

## 2.3   Results of the Higher School Certificate Examination 2023

**Comparison of 2023 results compared to the State**

| Subject | No of students | | Performance band achievement by number and/or % | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Band 6 | Band 5 | Band 4 | Band 3 | Band 2 | Band 1 |
| Ancient History | 4 | School | 0 | 0 | 50 | 25 | 25 | 0 |
| | | State | | | 28.3 | 20.02 | 13.27 | |
| Biology | 3 | School | 0 | 0 | 33.33 | 33.33 | 33.33 | 0 |
| | | State | | | 31.92 | 25.48 | 9.15 | |
| Community and Family Studies | 4 | School | 0 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 0 |
| | | State | | 30.08 | 36.19 | 20.18 | 6.21 | |
| English Standard | 7 | School | 0 | 0 | 28.57 | 28.57 | 42.86 | 0 |
| | | State | | | 46.51 | 30.01 | 8.70 | |

| Subject | No of students | | Performance band achievement by number and/or % | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Band 6 | Band 5 | Band 4 | Band 3 | Band 2 | Band 1 |
| Mathematics Standard | 7 | School | 0 | 0 | 14.29 | 42.86 | 14.29 | 28.57 |
| | | State | | | 26.22 | 24.46 | 14.19 | 3.5 |
| Modern History | 3 | School | 0 | 0 | 33.33 | 33.33 | 33.33 | 00 |
| | | State | | | 29.08 | 20.23 | 11.64 | |
| Personal Development, Health and Physical Education | 4 | School | 0 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 50 |
| | | State | | | 32.50 | | | 1.43 |
| Textiles and Design | 2 | School | 0 | 0 | 66.67 | 33.33 | 0 | 0 |
| | | State | | | 27.05 | 15.63 | | |

## Interpretative comments for Higher School Certificate results

We had only seven students sitting in their HSC in 2023. It is difficult to interpret trends with small classes and some subjects we do not offer yearly, complicating the process further. However, we are committed to accommodating our students' subject choices as much as possible every year. The academic ability of our students also changes every year, which significantly influences our results from year to year. This cohort of students was one of the year groups still impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the devasting floods from last year. When we reflect on the outcome and take into account that some of our students were recent overseas arrivals with limited English proficiency and also students with special needs, we are happy to see that they all achieved their HSC certificates. We would like to see a few more Band 5 and 6 results, and we are working on strategies to improve our HSC results. Despite their enormous challenges, we were happy with their final results.

## Comparison of 2023 HSC results as a trend over time

| Subject | No of students | | Band 6 | Band 5 | Band 4 | Band 3 | Band 2 | Band 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ancient History | | 2023 | | | 50 | 25 | 25 | |
| | | 2022 | | | 100 | | | |
| | | 2021 | | | | 50 | 50 | |
| Biology | | 2023 | | | 33.33 | 33.33 | 33.33 | |
| | | 2022 | | 40 | 60 | | | |
| | | 2021 | | | | | | |
| Community and Family Studies | | 2023 | | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | |
| | | 2022 | 50 | | 50 | | | |
| | | 2021 | | | | | | |
| English Standard | | 2023 | | | 28.57 | 28.57 | 42.85 | |
| | | 2022 | | | 60 | 40 | | |
| | | 2021 | | | | 100 | | |
| Mathematics Standard | | 2023 | | | 14.28 | 42.85 | 14.28 | 28.57 |
| | | 2022 | | | | | | |
| | | 2021 | | | | | | |
| Personal Development, Health and Physical Education | | 2023 | | | 50 | | | 50 |
| | | 2022 | | | 66.66 | 33.33 | | |
| | | 2021 | | | | | | |
| Textiles and Design | | 2023 | | | 66.66 | 33.33 | | |
| | | 2022 | | | | | | |
| | | 2021 | | | | | | |

**Interpretative comments for Higher School Certificate result trends over time**

As mentioned in the previous interpretative comment, we had only seven students in Year 12 last year. It is difficult to make deductions and interpret trends with small class sizes. The cohort of students, academic ability and intrinsic motivation changes from year to year. The same subjects are also not offered every year, which complicates the process even further.  We would like to see a few more Band 5 and 6 results, and we are working on strategies to improve our HSC results. We are also focussing on our junior Mathematics and English to improve our senior results in these areas. Your support in these efforts is invaluable and greatly appreciated.

## 2.4    Senior secondary outcomes

Percentage of students in Year 12 undertaking vocational or trade training:
**None**

Percentage of students in Year 12 attaining a Year 12 certificate or equivalent VET qualification: **100%**

## 2.5    Post School Destinations (secondary schools only)

(report on the destination of all students 17 and over who left school during 2023)

We had only six students who fell in this category. They all completed their HSC successfully. Four students decided on tertiary education (67%). Two of the four students have commenced in 2024, and they are studying nursing and engineering. The other two students are taking a gap year to earn money for their studies the following year. One of the two remaining students has been accepted into the Defence Force, and the last student has taken up full-time work.

## 3    Staffing

### 3.1    Teacher Accreditation Status

| Accreditation Level of Teachers | Numbers of teachers |
|---|---|
| (i)      Conditional | 5 |
| (ii)     Provisional | 2 |
| (iii)    Proficient or higher | 16 |
|  | 23 |

### 3.2    Workforce composition (comment on Indigenous staff)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Total Teaching Staff** | 23 |
| Full-time Teaching Staff | 13 |
| Part-time Teaching Staff | 10 |
| | |
| **High School Staff only** | 9 |
| Male Staff | 5 |
| Female Staff | 4 |
| **Primary School Staff only** | 12 |
| Male Staff | 1 |
| Female Staff | 11 |
| **High School & Primary staff** | 2 |
| Male Staff | 1 |
| Female Staff | 1 |
| **Ancillary Staff** | 14 |
| Male Staff | 4 |
| Female Staff | 10 |

We currently have no indigenous staff at our school.

## 4       Attendance

### 4.1    Average Year Level Attendance

| Year Level | Average Attendance (%) |
|---|---|
| Kindergarten | 93 |
| Year 1 | 91 |
| Year 2 | 90 |
| Year 3 | 90 |
| Year 4 | 92 |
| Year 5 | 91 |
| Year 6 | 86 |
| Year 7 | 88 |
| Year 8 | 88 |
| Year 9 | 83 |
| Year 10 | 82 |
| Year 11 | 87 |
| Year 12 | 94 |
| Total school attendance average | 89 |

### 4.2    Management of non-attendance

Primary teachers mark rolls electronically in the mornings and in the afternoons.  Secondary teachers mark rolls for every class during the day.  Two buses are arriving late; these students must sign in at the Student Services Office.  Students arriving late or leaving early in the afternoon are registered on the roll via the Administrative Office and provided with a late or early leave slip. The primary and secondary coordinators and the receptionist manage the electronic attendance register in the database. Students must bring a note the next day (or the day of the subsequent attendance) explaining their absence from school, or parents can send an electronic note to a dedicated email or leave a message on a designated answering service. A medical certificate is required if the absence coincides with an assessment task in Years 10-12.  We need medical certificates for extended periods of absence due to illness. The roll-marking teachers contact parents after three days of non-attendance or lateness.  We have various attendance plans/contracts and strategies in place, which

include interviews with parents, the student, and the Head of School to negotiate improved attendance rates.  Students planning to be absent for an extended period are required to apply for exemption via an official application form from the school, which is then forwarded to the system Head Office for processing and filed in their personal file.  We follow up on all patterns of chronic lateness and absences with parents/caregivers and negotiate an official improvement plan with all parties involved. If there is no improvement, we report the student to the School Liaison Officer at the AISNSW. The student may be deregistered from our school and then reported to the School Liaison Officer (DET).

## 4.3   Retention from Year 10 to Year 12 (where relevant)

Percentage retention rate: **We had a 67% retention rate.** Every year we have students who will transition either to full-time work, or TAFE, which reduces our retention rate. Due to our small cohorts of senior students, only a few students who transition out of school has a huge impact on our percentage retention rate.

## 5      School policies

The following school policies are publicly available on the NSW Adventist Schools website:

- Enrolment policy
- Child protection policy
- Anti-bullying policy (consolidated with the Student Behaviour policy)
- Discipline policy
- Complaints policy

## 6      Stakeholder satisfaction

We used Insight SRC for our annual satisfaction surveys in the last few years, a decision that was guided by your valuable feedback. However, we decided to change to a new provider for the stakeholder satisfaction surveys, again, based on your input. Unfortunately, the change forced us to postpone the surveys until the following year, which still falls within the government requirements of an expected survey at least once every two years. All areas of the previous study improved, except for community engagement. However, the lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic restricted community events and engagement. The devastating floods also significantly impacted the community and events, especially during the first nine months of last year. The outcomes of the parent survey highlighted strengths in students' connectedness with their peers, student safety, homework, student motivation, and classroom behaviour.

According to the parents, the areas that need improvement include student learning opportunities, behaviour management, access to extra-curricular activities, staff engagement and community engagement. Community engagement could have increased due to the ongoing COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions. Parents were not even allowed on campus for most of those years. The Home & School Community almost terminated, and it took a while to get it active. In response to some of these challenges, we reconnected the Home and School Committee in 2023, a decision that was influenced by your feedback.

We were delighted to see that the overall satisfaction improved, a testament to our collective efforts. However, we do have some areas, as outlined above, that we will focus on to ensure that we can improve on these identified areas. Rest assured, we are committed to addressing these issues and making the necessary changes to enhance your experience with us.

## 7    Summary financial information

The schools company will complete this section for all SDA schools.

**Income**

| Income Sources | Percentage of Total Income |
|---|---|
| Fees and private income | 16.46% |
| State recurrent grants | 17.37% |
| Commonwealth recurrent grants | 65.05% |
| Other Government grants | 1.12% |
| Government capital grants | 0.00% |
| Other capital income | 0.00% |

**Expenditure**

| Expenditure Costs | Percentage of Total Expenditure |
|---|---|
| Salaries, allowance and related expenses | 66.35% |
| Non-salary expenses | 26.99% |
| Classroom expenditure | 3.55% |
| Capital expenditure | 3.11% |

# SECTION 2

# CHECKLIST

Commonwealth legislation (Schools Assistance Act 2008) includes the following requirements not listed as part of NESA requirements for registration and accreditation.

**Please tick that your school complies with the following.** (please delete the least applicable box)

✅ Provides national reports on the outcomes of schooling

✅ Provides individual school information on performance

✅ Annually reports on school performance information and makes the report publicly available

✅ Implements the NESA Curriculum as it becomes available

✅ Has an annual certificate of financial accountability from a qualified accountant

✅ Annually reports on each program of financial assistance provided under this Act

✅ Participates in program evaluations (BGA, National Partnerships & NCCD)