

HOLMES  
INSTITUTE



# Annual Report

**Holmes Secondary College**

**Sydney**

**2018**

INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • ENGAGE

## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL**

*The Holmes Secondary College Board is pleased to present this report on the operation of the College in 2018, in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation. The College continues to offer its senior secondary program through the delivery of the Higher School Certificate. It has been challenged by a reduction of numbers for reasons which will be explored further in this report, but remained focused on delivering a quality educational programme for all its students.*

*Despite the challenge of diminishing numbers Holmes Secondary College remained a dynamic and buoyant one through 2018 and part of the school's strength is its accommodating nature through its HSC program. There is the provision of two entry points for HSC study (January & April) that sits within the NESA framework and this provides flexibility for our cohort of international students arriving from overseas and the timing of the completion of their English Language. The school is also fortunate through its connection with a High School Preparation program that is part of the Holmes Group, taking students directly into its senior secondary program once they meet the entry level requirement; this relationship continues to be a significant one.*

*The school continues to build on previous years in assembling and maintaining a high level of teaching in order to deliver these academic programs. Through 2018 the staff demonstrated a level of expertise and professionalism that was central to raising the achievements of its Year 12 HSC and in assisting students in making the adjustment to a new life and educational system foreign to their own. With such emphasis on the quality of its teaching this aspect remains the cornerstone of its success as an educational institution. The process of Performance Reviews and ongoing exposure to Professional Development ensure that this quality remains intact. This aspect was underlined by the focus given particularly on the goal of lifting Band results from the previous year and the strategies used in which to do this. The quality of staff and professionalism was a critical aspect to achieving this.*

*Consequently, it can be reported that the school responded very well in 2018 in its attempts to find improvement in relation to results recorded from the previous year. In that particular year, it was challenged by a much a smaller and fundamentally weaker cohort whose results were not consistent with those from previous years. The school has a proud history of stable results, meeting, and at times exceeding, the state standard. The implementation of a number of strategies through 2018 have proven to be effective in meeting this improvement target as expressed in the 2017 Annual Report and this report bears testament to this. The school has intensified its focus on student engagement through the challenges associated with its cohort of international students coming to terms with the rigor associated with this certificate.*

*Whilst other schools, seek advantage in their sheer size, Holmes specialises in an educational experience for students where teacher to student ratios allow for a personalised approach, where time can be spent on each individual in meeting their needs and goals. In an environment where teachers are trained specifically in education for English as a Second Language, our small school approach is one that is supportive, caring and focused, giving every student the opportunity to achieve their best. Though small in size, the school remained resourceful in its staffing, curriculum and student opportunities, making it a meaningful, and for many, a preferred option. As an organisation, it has remained robust and reliable in ensuring that all students receive the program they enroll for, further enhancing our reputation amongst a group of similar providers.*

## **ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

*In a school made up largely of international students, Holmes Secondary College's core values are directly connected to its multi-cultural population, where respect for others is a key value in ensuring that students work together accepting their responsibility in creating a harmonious learning environment.*

*Founded in 2004, Holmes Secondary College is a senior secondary school providing quality education for students at both the Year 11 & 12 level. In 2018, Holmes Secondary College continued to boast a diverse range of nationalities with all enrolled students on International Student Visas. All were from Non English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB) and central to their study was English as a Second Language. Many of the students joined our senior secondary program from an intensive English language course which for many was provided to them by the school prior to them joining Higher School Certificate course. The school had added responsibility for students who were under the age of eighteen in providing Homestay families and guardians in support of their welfare whilst studying at the school. The majority of our students, who are over 18 years of age, chose to live independently or with other students. Whatever their living circumstances, these students had many challenges to confront including a new living environment, culture, education system and family separation. All these factors can impinge directly on a student's focus and the school worked very hard to assist them in meeting these challenges. Relationships continued to be formed between the school and guardians, Homestay families, Education Agents, and this together with communication directly with parents, remained an integral aspect for the whole of our community.*

*The school seeks to prepare its students for the changing world of employment through further educational opportunities in Australia. It achieves this mission by imparting knowledge across a dynamic curriculum, underpinned by the foundations of English language. Holmes provides a highly specialised program providing both vocational and academic pathways within the organisation or with other tertiary providers.*

*In more recent times the school has also looked to diversify its curriculum giving students greater subject choices, particularly in broadening its Mathematics, Science and LOTE curriculum for delivery in HSC. This has been driven by the school's understanding and experience in tailoring a program that suits its international cohort and ESL learners best. An understanding of their prior learning in schools from their own country is imperative in the development of the school's curriculum and the subject choices make available to them.*

## **STAFF RECRUITMENT AND COMPOSITION**

*Staff employed at Holmes Secondary College represents a multi-cultural mix. Academic staff are selected on the basis of qualification and experience, however, consideration is given to prior experience in working with ESL students. Consequently, some of our staff come from ESL backgrounds themselves and countries that reflect our student body, particularly those of Asian descent. All staff are qualified as indicated by the table that follows and are categorised within Level One, in that they all hold a university teaching degree.*

*The school's administrative staff also reflects this cultural mix and Holmes Secondary College has appointed a number of these staff to provide translation for all of its students. In this way the school can openly communicate with students, and more particularly with families in assisting them through their study as well as sharing an understanding of their cultural background.*

## **TEACHING STAFF & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

*Holmes Secondary College encourages and ensures that teachers undertake ongoing professional development and learning. Through 2018 this included subject specific teacher conferences, forums, teaching courses, Pre-Service Teacher supervision, course and curriculum maintenance, In House training and activities that meet Professional Development hours as per each teacher's NESA registration requirements.*

*The following Professional Development was undertaken:*

- *First Aid Training – All Staff*
- *Beyond STEM: Spreadsheet Magic – All Staff*
- *Using Video for Social Change – All Staff*
- *Staff Curriculum Days*
- *Professional Course and Subject Development including;*
  - *HSC Chinese & Literature Syllabus Development 2018-2023*
  - *HSC Chinese & Literature Prescribed Texts*
  - *Information Session: Year 12 Physics Syllabus (new)*
  - *NSW Cross-Sectoral Japanese Teachers Conference 2018*
  - *ETA NSW Annual Conference*
- *Weekly Staff Meetings: incorporating school administrative matters, student issues (academic & welfare)*
- *Professional Development file: All staff completes an appraisal of their PD activity and comment on how it may have informed their practice*
- *Classroom Observations – Deputy Principal led*
- *Classroom Peer Observations*
- *Incorporating Blackboard in the Classroom – School Online Learning Platform*
- *Fortnightly KLA Curriculum Meetings: incorporating matters pertaining directly to the delivery of the curriculum*
- *Teacher Registers annotations and revisions*
- *Fortnightly Year 11/12 HSC Staff Meetings – curriculum, assessment and student discussion*
- *Parent/Teacher conferences – Year 12 HSC*
- *Performance Reviews with Principal – staff meet formally with Principal at least three times a year*

Name of Teacher	Category	Institute of Teachers Accreditation Number and Level (if applicable)	Formal Qualifications, where and when obtained and, if applicable, date AEI-NOOSR equivalence granted	Number of Years Primary Teaching experience	Number of Years Secondary Teaching Experience	FTE	Classes/Years/Subjects taught/areas of special responsibility (eg. Principal, Head of Department)
DESPINA EFTHYVOULOU	i	114723	Bachelor of Education (Secondary) University of Sydney 2004	Nil	Fourteen	1.0	HSC English as a Second Language  Year 11 HSC English as an Additional Language/Dialect  Program Manager (Term One)
STEPHEN BET	i	250912	Bachelor of Arts University of New England 1993  Diploma of Education University of New England 1994	Nil	Eighteen	1.0	HSC Business Studies  HSC Information Processes & Technology  Preliminary HSC Information Processes & Tech  Preliminary HSC Business Studies
ROHINI RAM	i	760615	Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) University of Western Sydney 2002;  Bachelor of Science University of South Pacific Fiji Islands 1996;  Secondary Teacher Training Certificate Fiji College of Advanced Education, Suva, Fiji Islands 1998	Nil	Seventeen	1.0	HSC Mathematics Standard  HSC Mathematics  Preliminary HSC Mathematics Advanced  Preliminary HSC Physics  Curriculum & Assessment Coordinator (Term One)
MIAO FOSTER	i	194837	Masters of Arts in International Communication Macquarie University  Graduate Diploma in Education Macquarie University  Bachelor of Education Suzhou Railway Teachers College	Nil	Twelve	0.4	HSC Chinese & Literature  Preliminary HSC Chinese & Literature
THUY DUNG LE	i	225274	Bachelor of Education (Mathematics) & Bachelor of Science – University of Sydney 2007	Nil	Ten	0.6	HSC Mathematics  HSC Mathematics Extension 1  Preliminary HSC Mathematics Advanced

JOAN AVERY	i	271251	<p>National Diploma of Accounting AIT Auckland NZ – 1994</p> <p>Diploma of Teaching Auckland College of Education 1997</p> <p>Bachelor of Business Studies Polytechnic of NZ 2002</p> <p>Post Graduate Certificate TESOL Bond University QLD 2015</p> <p>Graduate Diploma TESOL University of Western QLD 2017</p>	Nil	Ten	0.2	Preliminary HSC Business Studies
NATALIE LIDDELL	i	Existing	<p>Bachelor of Teaching: Physical Education/Health Exercise Science - University of Newcastle 2004</p>	Nil	Fourteen	0.4	<p>HSC Community &amp; Family Studies</p> <p>Preliminary HSC Community &amp; Family Studies</p>
JANET TIERNEY	i	114307	<p>Postgraduate Diploma of Education (Secondary) University of NSW 2003,</p> <p>Bachelor of Asian Studies ANU 1999, Bachelor of Arts ANU 1999</p>	Nil	Fourteen	0.4	<p>HSC Japanese Beginners</p> <p>Preliminary HSC Japanese Beginners</p>
JAY HALAI	i	299156	<p>Master's Degree – ICT &amp; Education – University of Leeds 2009</p> <p>PGCE Secondary Science Education – University of Greenwich 2004</p> <p>BSc Pharmaceutical Sciences – University of Greenwich 2003</p>	Nil	Seventeen	1.0	<p>Deputy Principal</p> <p>Preliminary HSC Community &amp; Family Studies</p>

## Senior Secondary outcomes

### SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES

#### Year 12 Higher School Certificate

5 students were enrolled for Year 12 HSC in 2018.

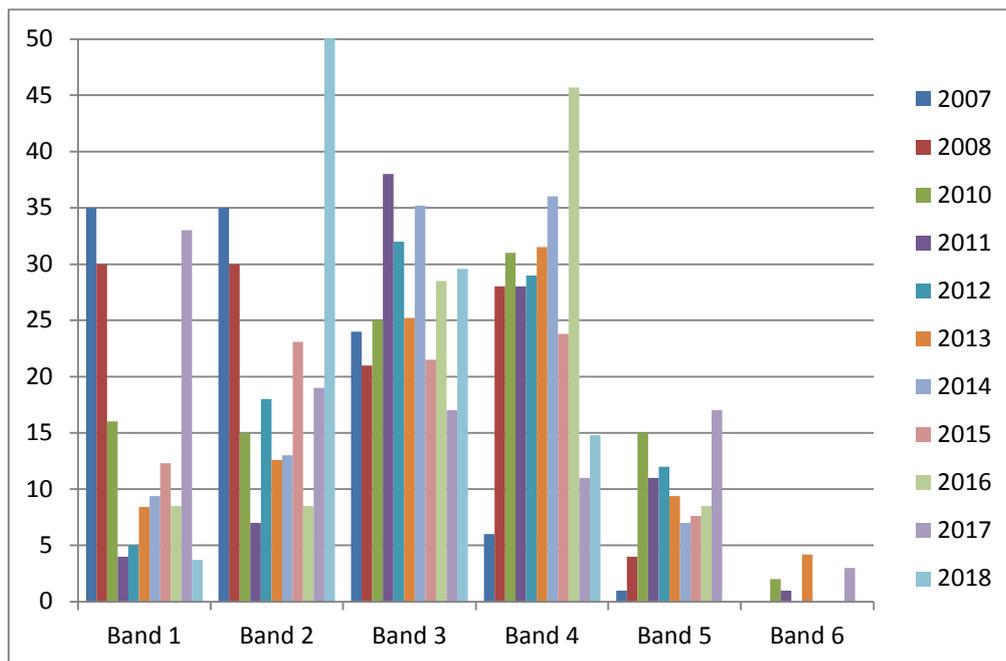
5 students were awarded their Higher School Certificate in 2018.

This represents 100% of the total enrolment.

#### Higher School Certificate RESULTS

The school enrolled a smaller group compared to that of 2017. Of the five students enrolled, all were awarded their Higher School Certificate. Student state wide results are a combination of 50% internal coursework assessment moderated against 50% external assessment via NESA regulated examinations.

#### Comparative Statistics – HSC Band Score Results



The above table represents a comparative look at the school's HSC results over a period of nine academic years (the school did not offer Year 12 HSC in 2009). It is an analysis on the basis of collective Band Scores generated by students in the spread of subject results. It indicates the percentage of Band Scores awarded. Given the relatively short history of the school, it is only recently that it can take a longitudinal analysis of its HSC results with comparisons now to be made in relation to ten consecutive groups. The most significant aspect of the results from 2018 is the dramatic decrease of Band 1 results. In fact, the Band 1 results recorded were the lowest in the school history and much has already been made about the school's improvement target of fundamentally shifting results up from the previous year. Consequently, there was a consolidation across results recorded at

both Band 2 & 3 and to some extent Band 4. The absence of Band 5 & 6 results accurately reflects the abilities of the class of 2018, but with results recorded from Band 2 upwards, the school is satisfied that all students were given every opportunity to achieve at a level consistent with their academic capacity. The absence of Band One results is testament to the success of those academic strategies employed as a response to results recorded in 2017.

When analysing performances across the curriculum, the key learning areas of Languages and Mathematics continued to bring some of the best results. However, more specifically, the best results were recorded in Chinese & Literature, Mathematics General 2 and Community & Family Studies.

The school's success in raising student learning and performance outcomes is directly connected to the school's goal of recruiting and sustaining its quality of teaching. The professional development and performance reviewing of staff is an integral part of this goal and together with the implementation of a number of learning strategies, has helped in strengthening an academic culture focused on improving outcomes and overall results.

As previously referred to, Holmes Secondary College sits within a small educational sector. Its total enrolment is made up of International Students with English as their second language and results and general student performance should be measured with some of these factors in mind. Many of the students have only been in the NSW Education system for a period of two years and take a steep learning curve, firstly in continuing to develop their English Language skills, as well as coming to terms with the key language, vocabulary and concepts pertaining to each of the individual studies as well as the nature of the Higher School Certificate itself.

#### **NAPLAN**

As a senior secondary school, student outcomes in relation to NAPLAN are not applicable.

#### **ENROLMENT POLICIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY**

Enrolment into our Preliminary HSC was open to students with Year 10 or equivalent and with a suitable level of English proficiency. Progression to Year 12 was based on achieving a satisfactory standard in a student's Year 11 level study. For students coming into Year 12 HSC (Term 4) they need to have completed Preliminary HSC as confirmed through the NESA Transcript of Study. Students need to have satisfactorily completed all six subjects for study accumulating a minimum of 12 units to satisfy the prerequisite for entry into Year 12.

As the College is an international school, the composition of the student enrolment was drawn from many cultures with both genders equally represented. The dominant nationalities were Chinese and Vietnamese, but the school also received enrolments from students representing Korea, Japan, India, Middle East and parts of Europe. Enrolments continue to grow for students from the subcontinent. As previously identified, all students are from a Non English Speaking Background (NESB).

For students who may be identified as having 'special needs', the school endeavours to cater for these students to the best of its ability. Through the process of a student's application, the school evaluates its ability to cater for a student who can be considered one of 'special needs'. On accepting a student with 'special needs', the school takes responsibility to understand their requirements and to ensure that their needs are met. In the event where the needs of these students cannot be met by the school, it will provide assistance to the student to find an alternative placement in an appropriate institution.

There were no 'special needs' students identified in 2018.

## **RECORD OF SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT**

*Holmes Secondary College offers only a senior secondary program with a specific focus on international students who have joined the program from Intensive English Language courses. There is a small group who may have transferred to other High Schools, but invariably they have only completed the level of Year 10. Consequently, they do not qualify or can be granted a Record of School Achievement prior to the completion of their HSC Certificate. Further explanation is given below in relation to students who make the choice to leave before completion, but in all cases, they do not meet the criteria to be granted the Record of School Achievement (ROSA) given that their educational history, for most, effectively begins at Year 11. Instead they are provided with a Transcript of Study by NESAs.*

## **RETENTION OF YEAR 11 TO YEAR 12**

*As our primary focus is on senior secondary education, the majority of students remain with the school for the duration of two years in order to obtain their senior certificate. Students have the choice at the end of Year 11 to either take an academic or vocational program, but as previously indicated, nearly all aspire for an academic pathway, as represented by the completion of HSC, or a Foundation program. With some of the changes in VISA conditions for students on 500 Subclass Visa's, some will now apply directly into certificate or diploma courses, with only a small percentage returning to their home country.*

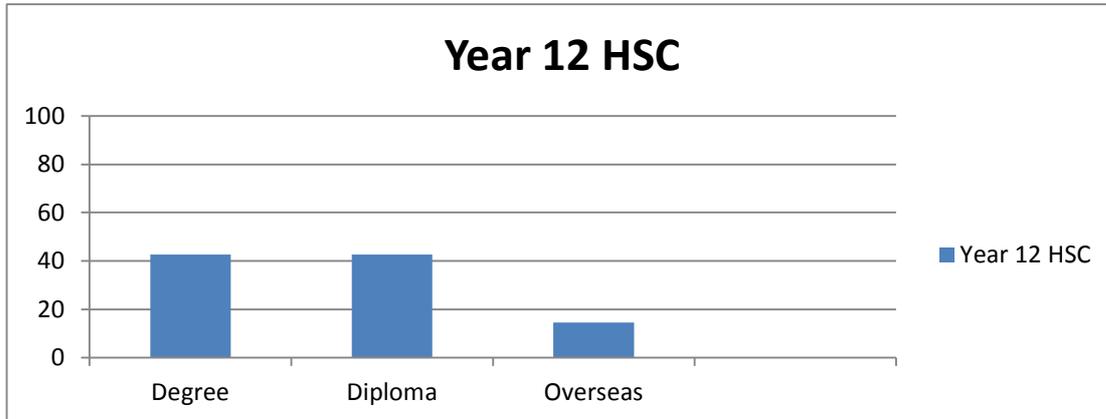
*An ever increasing challenge continues to be the pathway presented to students for Foundation courses. The school works hard to counsel students about the natural progression from Year 11 Preliminary HSC into Year 12 HSC. However, an increasingly attractive option is to complete Year 11 and accept offers into Foundation Streams across many providers. The attraction relates to the perception that Foundation avoids a process of assessment, examination and university application in the awarding of ATAR's. There is also the misconception that Foundation represents an easier academic choice in not possessing the rigour of Year 12 HSC. Throughout the course of their Year 11 HSC year, the school undertakes a series of information sessions, career and course counseling as well as individual consultation in order for students to make an informed choice. At times, this choice is determined by the role of their Education Agent and the school can feel disempowered by this outside intervention, even after meaningful discussion with parents.*

*An improvement target for 2019 is to work closely with students, parents and Education Agents to help make informed and appropriate choices for students when they begin to look ahead to Year 12.*

## **POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS**

*The following table represents the percentage of student destinations once they complete their Year 12 study. This includes the full Year 12 cohort of 2018 through the study of the Higher School Certificate.*

*The significance of the table is that a similar percentage of school leavers in 2018 received and accepted offers into Higher Education via the UAC application process in comparison to the 2017 figure. For those others, they have successfully moved into vocational study via certificate or diploma study. Again, this reflects directly their achievements from Band Scores and how this has translated into ATAR's. This spread also relates partly to each of the student's desired pathway, where choices are made for vocational options as part of a longer term employment plan beyond the time frame of their Student Visa.*



### **SCHOOL POLICIES**

*The school continues to maintain clear and concise policies clearly expressed to staff and students via both the Staff Manual and Student Study Planner.*

**Student Welfare policies** are underpinned by the philosophy that all students are entitled to the rights given by the laws of the land and arising from the educational philosophy of the College.

*All children who come to Holmes Secondary College have a right to feel and be safe. Holmes Secondary College is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people who are in our care and the welfare of our students will always be our first priority. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, children and individuals involved in this school.*

*Holmes Secondary College has a duty of care to ensure that all persons are provided with a high level of safety and protection within the school.*

*This policy and related procedure is designed to ensure that Holmes Secondary College:*

- *Reflects this school's philosophy, which include values, ethics and a code of conduct for all its staff and community*
- *Establishes the procedures for child protection matters including identifying, documenting, reporting and managing concerns or incidents*
- *Maintains procedural fairness and natural justice concepts in all circumstances*
- *Identifies safe protective behaviours for all persons who access the school's premises, facilities and/or programs*
- *Abides by state legislation including the Child Protection and Community Services Act 1998; the Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998; the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998; and the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection Act) 1998.*
- *Provides written definition in relation to Child Protection as described in Part 3A Child Protection and Community Services Act 1998*
- *Details complaints, grievances and disciplinary procedures*

Holmes Secondary College' **Discipline Policy** is as follows:

- Students who transgress the rights of others at Holmes should be disciplined.
- Students should have a clear understanding of the consequences of depriving others of their rights at Holmes.
- Penalties for transgressing the rights of others will be decided in accordance with the principle of procedural fairness.
- Under no circumstances will corporal punishment be used by staff on our students.
- Under no circumstances does the school sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

Holmes Secondary College' **Bullying & Harassment Policy** is as follows:

Harassment, intimidation and bullying are not acceptable behaviour at the College, by a student or staff member.

- Students are to be encouraged to report bullying and to discourage their fellow students from engaging in such conduct.
- Teachers must be alert to any signs of bullying and act accordingly in such situations.
- Cases of bullying should be reported to the relevant parties.

Informing Students about Bullying & Harassment

- Students are to be advised about the unacceptability of bullying during Orientation.
- Staff should respond swiftly to acts of bullying and to express disapproval of such action to those perpetrating the offence.

The school has in place a **Grievance Policy** which is a procedure for receiving, considering and acting on complaints. These procedures include guidelines for lodging a complaint, lodging an appeal, as well as lodging an external appeal. Students and their parents'/care providers will be informed of our complaints procedure.

Holmes Institute has established a fair, objective, informal and accessible dispute resolution procedure. It is the policy of Holmes Institute that any grievance lodged by a student will be resolved as swiftly as possible with fairness and equity to all concerned and at no cost to the student. Whilst the school provides students with internal mechanisms in the hearing of complaints, students on International VISA's are given further provision as part of the National Code (of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students).

A summary of Holmes Secondary College policies is as follows:

Teaching & Learning Resources	Assessment & Reporting
Student Welfare	Discipline
Grievance	Bully & Harassment
Safe Environment	Mandatory Reporting
Occupational Health & Safety	First Aid
Anaphylaxis Management	Off-Campus
Student Supervision	Pastoral
Internet	Homework
Student Attendance	U18 Overseas Student

*Important developments and revisions have been made as a result of the NES A Accreditation and Registration. A strong focus was given to policies surrounding Child Protection, Student Safety and Welfare, Discipline and Student Attendance.*

*In keeping pace with the legislative requirements associated with the protection of children, including the Children and Young Persons Act, Child Protection Act and the Ombudsman Act, the school provided greater definition of its policy in identifying the legislation, policy and procedures related to prevention, roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, risk assessment in relation to allegations of reportable conduct and the investigation of reportable conduct. The school's record keeping and interaction with all parties involved an investigative process was also more clearly expressed with a commitment made to reviewing its policy at least every two years.*

*The student attendance policy, whilst already descriptive by nature, and one that is underpinned by the National Code for International Students - Standard 8, was revised to incorporate the policy and related procedures in accordance with the legislative requirement as defined by Attendance Register Codes. The coding procedures involved the implementation of a coding spreadsheet that is completed at various steps, beginning in the classroom and then finalised by the program manager in the completion of a weekly summative record. A greater understanding of reasons for absence and patterns in behaviour related to attendance has enabled the school to develop improvement strategies as a means of tackling what continues to be ongoing issue for a particular group of students. A direct outcome of this has seen improved attendance with a percentage increase across the whole of the school, with specific increases for our Year 11 Preliminary HSC cohort.*

## **RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY**

*In a school made up largely of international students, its core values are directly connected to its multi-cultural population, where respect for others is a key value in ensuring that students work together accepting their responsibility in creating a harmonious learning environment. With this multi-cultural student population, teachers place strong emphasis when together in assemblies, Homeroom and in class, for students to accept their responsibility in respecting others.*

*An excellent forum for the promotion of respect and responsibility is within the Homeroom context where activities and discussions are designed to reinforce the schools core values. It is further expressed via both the Student Study Planner and Student Information Booklet with a series of rules prescribed supporting a student code of conduct. Transgression of this code may result in activities that require students to give something back to the school and its environment. Students were awarded Certificates of Merit at Assemblies in recognition of their contribution to the principles of respect and responsibility and Guest Speakers and Presentations were held as special events that took a similar theme.*

*Staff are expected to act as good role models and promote actively these principles in all contexts, particularly that of the classroom.*

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF NON-ATTENDANCE**

*The school has maintained a strict approach to its management of non-attendance.*

*Attendance rolls are entered into a computerised student management system (BECAS).*

*Attendance rolls are marked for every period of the day. Each staff member completes absence slips by the end of Period 2 & Period 5. Student follow up is then conducted daily by the School Administrator with contact made to parents, guardians, Homestay families and/or Education Agents.*

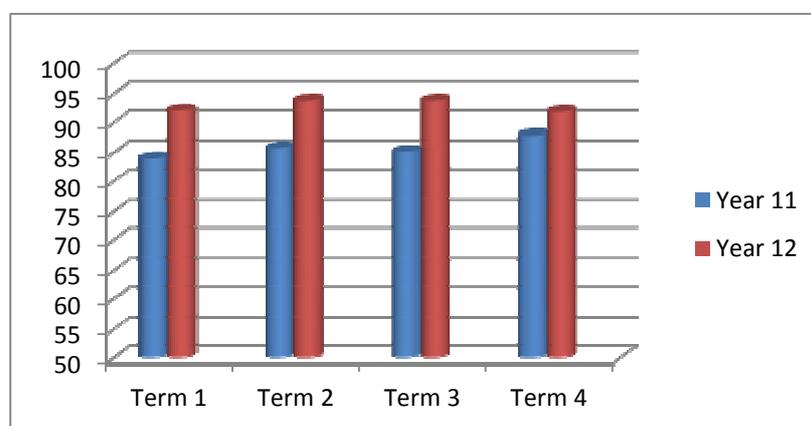
Attendance monitoring meetings are held with Principal, Program Manager & Student Administration on weekly basis.

In accordance with the National Code (of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018), if an overseas student's attendance falls below 85% of scheduled classes in the term, then the Principal/ Campus Administration will issue a written warning of possible future breach of the student's visa conditions. If an overseas student's attendance falls below 80% of scheduled classes in the term, then the Principal/ Campus Administration will issue a notification of intention to report the student to DOHA for breach of visa conditions. The student will be reported unless a successful written appeal is lodged in accordance with Holmes Secondary College's 'Complaints, Appeals and Disputes' policy.

Furthermore, as indicated previously with the full implementation of Attendance Register Codes, further recording takes place via an electronic spreadsheet with the recording of variation in attendance that includes lateness to class, explained or unexplained absences. This statistical analysis has further informed the school's approach towards improvement strategies as a means of management of non-attendance.

The school has worked very hard in further resourcing its efforts in immediate follow up for student absence, lateness and general tardiness in terms of attendance at school. The inclusion of roll call at the beginning of each school day within the school timetable has been one strategy to instill a discipline of attendance, and particularly, punctuality. Whilst absence slips are recorded at two points in the day, the student services team begin a process of communication directly with the student at the beginning of the day through contact numbers provided. This begins with the students themselves and then can extend to that of guardians, agents and, where time appropriate, families residing overseas. A large contingent of our students are over 18 years of age and not required to live in homestay through guardianship arrangements. The school is reliant on the discipline of each student to meet the timings of the scheduled day, and whilst this occurs, still deals with a smaller percentage in meeting the school's attendance expectations.

The following table provides a term by term breakdown of student attendance figures across the whole academic year. It represents some small increases, particularly across its Year 11 HSC cohort on attendance percentages from the previous year. The school's average attendance for 2018 was at 90.12% which was consistent with that of 2017. In separating the year levels, Year 11 recorded an average attendance of 86%, whilst Year 12 was at 93%.



## **SCHOOL-DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS**

*The Holmes Secondary College's 2017 Annual Report presented a number of improvement targets and its important now to reflect on how successful the school has been in meeting some these for the 2018 year.*

*The first of these improvement targets has its history in a decision made by the School Board in December 2015 to implement a strategic marketing plan as a means of growing numbers through increased enrolments. There were a number of aspects to this, including marketing offshore and working closely with Agents within Sydney. Part of the Board's decision was to allow for direct recruitment for offshore students and so all applications were openly received for assessment. Further to this, was to work directly with Agents here and through the course of 2018 there were at least 60 Agent visits conducted by the Deputy Principal in order to raise the profile and presence of the school as a provider of choice for onshore students. The success of this recruitment drive will be measured by enrolments into 2019 and will be a feature of the next Annual Report.*

*We can continue to report on the challenge of improving attendance and punctuality and over an extended period of time have implemented a number of strategies in which to do this. At a point in 2016 we were able to report on improved attendance figures and since then it has remained stable including what is reported for the past year. One particular strategy has been the inclusion of a Roll Call within the timetable as a means of disciplining the student to meet all expectations of their school day. In reviewing this, it has certainly had some effect in communicating to students the importance of this aspect of their school life, but has yet to have had a significant impact on lifting attendance rates to a more desired level. There is much more to do and the ongoing challenge still exists in exploring and implementing further strategies, where this issue no longer becomes a focal point for improvement, but rather, for consolidation.*

*A very clear directive expressed in the school's Annual Report last year was to respond to a less than satisfactory set of results from the class of 2017, particular in relation to the high percentage of Band One results. A number of strategies were implemented including additional tutorial classes, study periods, intensive academic mentoring and counselling and ongoing communication with the parent body. As reported, the school has been successful through these strategies in which to lift all recorded Band Scores that is now more consistent with the results recorded over a sustained period of time.*

*Much of this focus was directed to the Year 12 group, but also an educative process was undertaken with the Year 11 Preliminary HSC group. The first point of entry of school is critical in exposing students to the school's academic culture and level of expectation in preparation for Year 12 HSC. Each student was subjected to an intense level of scrutiny and evaluation of their progress as part of this preparation and instilling within them the desire to succeed.*

*The appointment of a Deputy Principal for the school was put in place at the beginning of Term 2 2018. This role was created as part of a review of the school's structure in a close look at all its programs, teaching and learning, and staff. The role was created for the express purpose of day to day management of the program, but to also critically review the workings of the school and to implement, if required, changes necessary for its development. Another aspect of this appointment was directly related to recruitment of students, particularly onshore students in developing relationships with Agents in raising the profile and presence of the school for students already in study in NSW schools.*

*The impact of this appointment has been felt in a number of areas, including Staff Evaluation, Student Learning Outcomes, Attendance Improvement Strategies and Onshore recruitment.*

*So attention now turns to improvement targets for 2019 and there is much relevance to those that were presented for 2018.*

*A central aspect of building school numbers through active recruitment remains an important focus. Strengthening our relationship with Onshore Education Agents in order to raise the presence and profile of the school should continue and extend to offshore, particularly in markets such as China, Vietnam, Cambodia and now, the Subcontinent. Participation in High School Exhibitions held across various parts of Asia will also aid development of a network with Agents and their connection with families. The support of revised marketing material providing the most current information and profile of the school and its point of difference will be a feature for both onshore and offshore recruitment.*

*The strengthening of an academic culture has also been central to the school's philosophy and over a sustained period of time has continued to deliver important and satisfying results for all of its students. In more recent times however, the calibre of students has been somewhat compromised by cohorts that have transferred from other schools and are largely disengaged from their study, displaying a lack of motivation and commitment to their HSC. This has translated to poor HSC results and the school has had to work very hard through a process of re-education to make these better students. An improvement target will continue to be the educative process undertaken with the Year 11 Preliminary HSC group. The first point of entry of the school is critical in exposing students to the school's academic culture and level of expectation in preparation for Year 12 HSC. Each student will be subjected to an intense level of scrutiny and evaluation of their progress as part of this preparation and instilling within them a genuine desire to succeed.*

*We remain confident that the addition of further strategies to combat issues related to attendance will over a period of time have the desired effect of making further improvements in this area. These strategies have already been outlined and the school will continue to put this issue forward as a desired improvement target in order to enhance its culture and the attitude of part of its community.*

### **PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION**

*The school endeavours to monitor its performance in open communication with that of its community. Much of the feedback in this regard surfaces through one on one discussion with students via the forum of Homeroom. A teaching staff member is allocated the responsibility of the Homeroom program and included in this is regular counselling with students regarding their school life. From this point of view, Homeroom teachers take on an important mentoring role in order to assist the student on any matter of concern. The information shared in this context is a powerful indicator in gauging student satisfaction. This will remain a focus and genuine target for development in 2019.*

*The parent community is not as accessible given that they reside in other countries, but every effort is made to communicate matters of importance to them. At times this is done via translation through the telephone or even where appropriate, via email. In this way, this type of interaction is an important point of contact and opportunity for all families to share their views on the performance of the school, or at least to discuss issues of concern impacting on their child. An even more critical player in this relationship is the student's Education Agent. They act as the conduit between the school and family and are heavily involved in the student's educational life. The school regularly schedules meetings or discussions with the agent in support of the student's education and are a consistent provider of feedback to the school. The agent receives all correspondence including reports and assessments.*



### **SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

*Holmes Secondary College is a division of Holmes Colleges Sydney Pty Ltd which is a member of the wider, highly regarded and most successful Holmes Education Group.*

*Holmes Colleges Sydney Pty Ltd is a robust and financially well managed company with net assets and total equity at 30 June 2018 of \$4,084,144. The principal purpose of the company is education; it receives no government funding and is therefore self-sufficient. Tuition fees for 2018 were \$16,250 per year.*