



ANNUAL REPORT 2016



"Educating successful women of tomorrow in a Christian environment"

Introduction

PLC Armidale is an independent girls' school situated in the New England region of northwest New South Wales. The school's opening day as New England Ladies' College was in January 1887. In 1940 the school passed into the hands of the Presbyterian Church and was named Presbyterian Ladies' College, Armidale. In 2012 the school celebrated its 125th anniversary as a legal entity. The school has both boarding and day students and includes a Pre-Kinder based on the Reggio Emilia philosophy and offers classes from Kinder through to Year 12. It is in alliance with PLC Sydney and the schools are governed by one College Council.

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THEME 1: A MESSAGE FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

PLC Armidale Principal

Nicola Taylor
Principal

Long before the days of Google maps, GPS, or navigation instruments, sailors would use the stars in the night sky to guide their way. We are very fortunate in Armidale to have a clear and brilliant night sky so it makes sense that by tracking the pattern of stars in the sky and identifying one very bright star positioned close to the North Pole ancient explorers such as Marco Polo, Christopher Columbus or Vasco Da Gama were able to navigate and find their to places they weren't even really sure were there in the first place.

This bright star, known as a pole star would tell these sailors in the ancient world where north was, true north so they could journey accordingly.

At the Term One Commencement Assembly, students were asked to begin 2016 the way they wanted to end. To consider areas they were keen to grow, improve and extend themselves in. A Year Book provides a fitting opportunity to reflect back on the growth and change across the year. A series of Year Books will show this journey over time.

Dr GE Phillips made the following observation in preface to the book "The Golden Key or Educating For Life". *The world has changed immeasurably in recent years. Science has widened its horizons and extended our knowledge of the infinitely great as well as of the minutely small. Boundaries of nations have been broken down as never before. Life's whole system of values; economic, moral and social has been overturned, and at present change is the order of the day.*

Life has become more complex with its diverse moral and social standards and the youth of the world have more freedom with apparently very little knowledge of what to do with it. Once free of the constraints and prohibitions of school life, they are forced out into a world that is changing so rapidly that it hardly knows itself. Small wonder that we hear and read so much of the escapades of adolescence, its abnormal love of excitement, its adventures into the extremes... its rejection of the moral and social standards that sufficed for the preceding generations..."

These words were written nearly 90 years ago, appearing in a book authored by Dr Neil McQueen the second Principal of our sister school, PLC Sydney.

If the journey of adolescence was challenging then, we shouldn't think with advances in technology and a higher standard of living that there is automatic improvement in knowing how to navigate this journey.

At times it can seem that our actions and most meaningful relationships are directed by forces not in line with our "true north" that internal map of our values and belief. Without this, we can become reactionary, seeking to please at all cost, or to appease, to be driven by what others think of us or will make us socially acceptable, even if it doesn't match that true north of beliefs and values.

A key message at PLC Armidale is the importance of serving others; that each girl will make use of what she has and what her PLC Education has equipped her for to use these talents and experiences for the benefit of the community. Our school year ends with a focus on service, of being visible in the Community; at BUPA, Salvation Army, One of a Kind, Sewing bibs for Allowah Children's Hospital, Autumn Lodge, Landcare - the list goes on. Each year the College seeks to give to the community of Armidale through the service of Nine Lessons and Carols which was once more so exquisitely commemorated.

A key message that our Chaplain Ms Leahy shares day by day, week by week is that foundational to the true north of the Christian faith is the Pole Star of God's Word the Bible, a compass to guide throughout the seasons of life. It is a fixed point in a spinning world, "Your Word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path" says the Psalmist. The Christian faith is foundational to the operation of the College.

To finish with a quote from Dr McQueen which is just as applicable to PLC Armidale as PLC Sydney "the aim we have endeavoured to keep before the minds of the girls is to get the most out of their school life, so that they may get the most out of their later life; and the great lesson we have tried to drive home is that the secret of this is to put most into it. The influence of school should be felt throughout life; not merely as a memory, an atmosphere, a half-forgotten dream, but as a community which grown women can turn again to for help and inspiration." I trust that as you read through the 2016 Ad Astra, you will have a sense of the 'true north' influence of the College inspiring its community to aspire to the stars.

PLC ARMIDALE FOUNDATION

Deborah Martin

Chair

Foundation

Thank you to the many donors to the Foundation in 2016 - current parents, past parents, current and past members of staff, past students, and members of our extended College community. The value of your contributions to the Foundation's fundraising efforts, not only in dollar terms but also as a sign of your faith in the College and its future, cannot be overstated.

One of the most rewarding aspects of being involved with the PLC Armidale Foundation is the ability to make an impact on the wellbeing of the College and its students. Through fundraising and careful stewardship of its investments, Foundation is able to channel funds into projects and programs that change the lives of girls. PLC Armidale Foundation provides all the benefits of a tax-deductible donation that will truly make a difference to the lives of PLC Armidale students, today and into the future, through the provision of scholarships, bursaries and to undertake capital works.

As at October the Foundation had received donations of over \$100,000 to both the Building and Scholarship funds in 2016.

In 2016 the Foundation has been proud to be involved in fundraising for the Ignite campaign, supporting the much-needed upgrade of the College's science laboratory facilities. This project, jointly funded by the College and the Federal Government, has provided PLC Armidale with four state of the art science laboratories designed for the demands of modern-day science teaching. Thank you to our Deputy Chair, Greg Cotterell, for leading the Ignite campaign through his passion and his generous lead donation.

The primary function of Foundation is to advance the goals of PLC Armidale and to that end the Board has been engaged in a strategic planning process which will set goals which meet the needs of the College and its students in 2017 and beyond.

Thank you to all Board members and other supporters who have given their time and assistance to the Foundation this year. At its May AGM the Board elected Deb Martin to the position of Chair, Greg Cotterell to the position of Deputy-Chair, Jo McRae as Secretary and Joel Ruig as Treasurer. The Board warmly welcomed new members Darren Smitham, Greg Anderson and Keiran Breckenridge and confirmed ongoing members Kylie Alcorn, Kate Woodland-Smith and Brendan Peet. In addition, we thank the College's Director of Development, Shona Eichorn and Business Manager, Rita Brissett for their ongoing support of Foundation activities.

P&F Report

Deb Hiscox and Janine Ranck

P&F Co-Presidents

Our fundraising this year has seen canteens for PLC, Duval and Ben Venue athletics carnival, an Olympic themed Trivia Night, Starry Night of Music supper and drinks, the continuing sales of our supporters' merchandise and our bi-ennial signature High Tea. Other contributions the P&F have made to the College this year have included the morning tea at both the Junior and Senior Swimming Carnivals and producing the contact book for families. It is through these events that we provide avenues for parents to meet new people and form friendships. The major task of re-working our Constitution has been finalised and we owe a huge thank you to Fiona Miron for steering the ship on that project.

The funds the P&F work hard to raise over the course of the year are largely dedicated to the Wish List comprising of requests for resources from across the whole college which will enhance the girls' education and life at college. This year the P&F has funded the majority of the requests received and represent a range of departments across the college. This year we set about spending the funds allocated to the P&F in the 2015 Wish List. We have purchased 100 white foldable chairs, which were used at the High Tea last week and received rave reviews. We have also started planning and quoting of the canteen refurbishment which we hope to have complete before our College athletics events early next year. We decided to annually fund a wooden picnic table for the girls' daily use and money to Stephanie Newman for the upkeep of our beautiful gardens. We were happy to fund items from the following departments: Renovation of the Science block courtyard, French, Cattle team, Hospitality/Food Tech, Junior School and PDHPE.

The P&F's role to provide a welcoming and supportive forum for parents to be informed, heard and to explore and encourage interest from parents and friends, remains the most important focus of our association. We continue to help build a sense of community within our College and our Liaison Parents are vital to make this happen. We have again had a wonderful group of year level Liaison Parents and we would like to thank all of them for their hard work and willingness to be involved and support the P&F and the College.

Thanks must go to the 2016 P&F Executive and Liaison Parents for their support and good humour. We thank everyone for their quiet behind the scenes work and for being great team members. It is a privilege to work along-side people who believe in our P&F values and strive to make our College a better place for everyone.

PREFECT

Genevieve Walsh

Head Prefect 2016

2016 has been an incredibly busy and enjoyable year for the Prefects and it has been with pleasure that Maddie and I have led this fantastic group of girls. Working closely with Mrs Taylor, we managed to organise and initiate a large number of activities to enrich the PLC student community in a variety of ways.

Term 4 2015 started with a fantastic night at the Annual Sports Dinner, organised by our Sports Prefect Annaliese Harrington. This was a great opportunity to celebrate all the hard work and dedication the girls at PLC have invested in their sports and to acknowledge the many successes this has led to. The whole of Year 12 also worked hard together to prepare Christmas songs for students at TAS in order to raise money for the Heart Foundation.

To finish off our first term of prefecture, the Guild Captains, assisted by the whole of Year 12 wrote and directed the Guild Drama productions. This provided a great opportunity to get to know the Guilds, build strong relationships between the Year 12 girls and to show off the many talents of PLC girls in all years. Forrest Guild Captains Madison Taylor and Georgina Cornall were able to secure first, place, however, all Guild Captains produced outstanding plays.

Term 1 2016 the Prefect Body prepared Valentine's Day songs to be sung to TAS students and organised chocolates and cards to be given along with this. Many rehearsals of Grease "You're the one that I want" and "Wonderwall" payed off as a significant amount of funds were raised for the Heart Foundation. The Prefects also hosted the annual Prefect Afternoon Tea, which proved to be a valuable opportunity to share ideas with prefects from all Armidale schools.

As always, the Swimming and Athletic carnivals were a great success with participation from almost every student in the College. This was the first year that the Junior and Senior school swimming carnivals were combined and the Guild Captains and Year 12's proved invaluable in the organisation of this. Gregory Guild Captains Mimi Raymer and Freya Bartlett came away with a win at the swimming carnival, while Wentworth Guild Captain Stephanie Keeping led her Guild to victory at the Athletics Carnival. The much anticipated marching event was also won by Wentworth.

The 2016 Starry Night of Music was organised by Creative Arts Prefect Jessica Tan and she should be congratulated on a fantastic night that truly displayed the range of talent in the College.

As a Year 12 collective, we initiated a new award as part of our Social Service called the 'Ad Astra Award'. This is a points based system which takes into account the standard of uniform, cleanliness of locker bays and the number of hymn books being taken to assembly as well as the overall attitude of the year group towards teachers and all students. Year 8 won the prize of a sandwich toaster all to themselves during the cold winter months.

The focus for the Prefect Body this year was to cultivate relationships with younger year groups and to achieve this, we organised both tutoring during lunchtimes as part of the 'Big Sister Program', as well as games in the DKC once a week. This proved successful as it provided more activities for students, encouraged healthy lifestyles and created long lasting relationships with girls from Year 7 to 12.

The opportunities this role has provided to assist in building the PLC Armidale community have been countless and leading the prefects has been just one aspect Head Prefect that I have thoroughly enjoyed. Madeline Atkin and I wish next year's Prefects all the best and hope that they find it as rewarding as we have.

YEAR 12 LEADERS 2015/2016

HEAD PREFECT	Genevieve Walsh
DEPUTY HEAD PREFECT	Madeline Atkin
SPORTS PREFECT	Annaliese Harrington
CREATIVE ARTS PREFECT	Jessica Tan

GUILD CAPTAINS AND PREFECTS

Forrest	Madison Taylor
Gregory	Mimi Raymer
Macquarie	Laura Tindale
Wentworth	Stephanie Keeping

DEPUTY GUILD CAPTAINS AND PREFECTS

Forrest	Georgina Cornall
Gregory	Freya Bartlett
Macquarie	Sophia Bohlsen

BOARDING HOUSE CAPTAIN AND PREFECT

Zoe Swan

SPIRITUAL LEADERS

Georgina Cornall
Emily Seaman
Simone Foley
Jessica Tan

Student Representative Council Annual Report

Madeline Atkin

Deputy Head Prefect

This year, Genevieve Walsh and I have had the honour of running the SRC meetings, commencing with the SRC workshop where each of the representatives nominated their social service projects for the year. As a collective, we decided on a variety of key charities that we wanted to support as well as followed the tradition of eating pizza. After there was an array of suggestions presented on the white board, we decided on supporting Beyond Blue, organising the Guild Olympics for the last day of Term 3 as well as to promote hallway etiquette.

Our Year 7 girls selected to support Type 1 Diabetes by running a lolly guessing competition, wore and handed out blue ribbons, decorated the school with posters as well as presented in assembly. Year 8's social service was to take part in Operation Christmas Child, where empty shoeboxes are filled with an assortment of helpful items for children in developing countries to receive as a gift for Christmas.

The Year 10 students supported Beyond Blue, with the help of the Years 6 and 8, through conducting a presentation in assembly, established a pastoral care session as well as held a bake sale in order to raise awareness as well as to fundraise for the campaign. In total the girls were able to raise \$333.80 for the Beyond Blue cause to support people who are struggling with their mental health. Year 11's social service was to inspire as many people in their year as possible to donate blood and, to date, 15 girls have 'rolled up their sleeves', as well as played a vital part in the overall SRC initiative of hallway etiquette. Finally, Year 12 were involved in the Autumn Festival where we organised the props and decorations as well as established the Big Sister Program to help younger students with homework as well as ran activities at lunchtimes. We also initiated the Ad Astra Award to improve behaviour, cleanliness of locker bays and the standard of the uniform within the overall school environment.

Furthermore, the SRC has also led a number of initiatives to enhance the school environment. Promoting hallway etiquette through the use of a traffic system was a major activity that the SRC were involved in as well as planning for the Guild Olympics on the last day of term where the Year 11 students played a vital role in the development of this day.

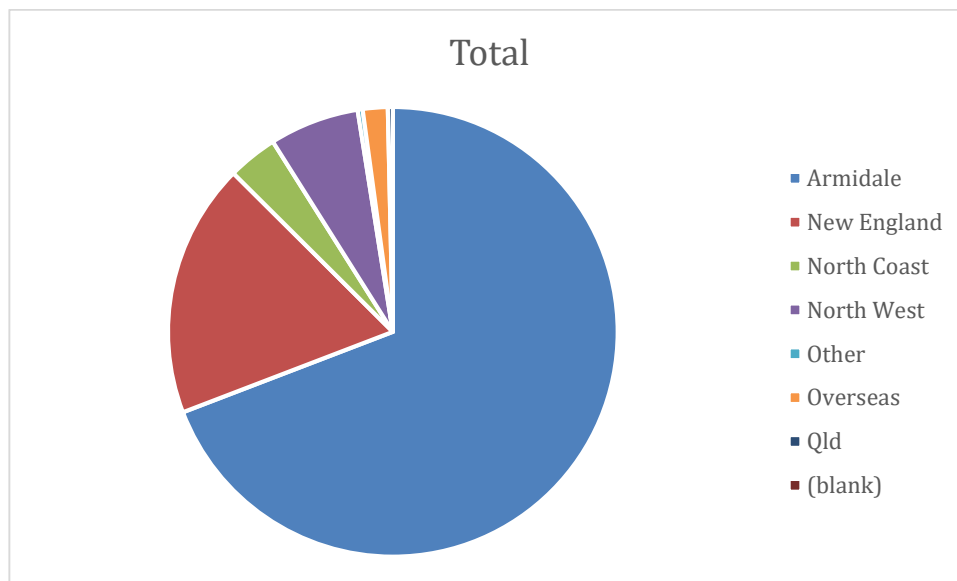
It has been a joy to work with the girls in the SRC as they have worked extremely hard and generously given up time to support their social service activities as well as attend the numerous meetings throughout the year. We would like to sincerely thank Mrs Miller as well as the other staff members for all of the work and effort that they have put into the SRC in making it another successful year. Genevieve and I wish the best to Ragavi and Kate as they lead the SRC team this coming year and we have no doubt that it will be another year of wonderful things for PLC Armidale under their guidance.

THEME 2: CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

This information is found on the My School website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au>.

Characteristics of the Student Body

PLC Armidale has students from many varied backgrounds. 69% of students come from the Armidale area, 18% from the New England region, 6% from the North West region NSW, 4% from the North Coast NSW and 2% from Overseas. In 2016 Queensland and Other areas were lower than 1%.



**THEME 3: STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND
NUMERACY TESTING**

This information is available on the My School website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au>.

THEME 4: SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES (STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT)

Record of School Achievement (ROSA)

The RoSA is a cumulative credential. It is for Year 10, 11 and 12 students leaving prior to the Higher School Certificate.

Stage 5

In 2016, 22 students completed the Stage 5 component of their Record of School Achievement. Each student was provided with a grade A - E for NSW board developed courses studied at the school. Subject teachers awarded the grades, based on the students' attainment against the course performance descriptors.

Preliminary

This year, 37 students completed the Preliminary HSC qualification. Each student was provided with a grade ranging from A - E for each NSW board developed course and board endorsed course studied at the school. Subject teachers awarded the grades based on the Board of Studies A - E grade scale. No Record of School Achievement was issued to students who left prior to the completion of the HSC.

Higher School Certificate

This year, 23 students completed their Year 12 program and all qualified for their Higher School Certificate.

27% of the cohort achieved at least one Band 6.

83% of the cohort achieved at least one Band 5.

A comparison of the schools six most popular subjects over the past three years is represented in the tables below:

Subject	Year	No. of Students	Performance band achievement by number and percentage			
			Bands 4 - 6		Bands 1 - 3	
English Advanced	2016	16	School: 16 (100%)	State: (90%)	School: 0 (0%)	State: (10%)
	2015	17	School: 16 (94%)	State: (91%)	School: 1 (6%)	State: (9%)
	2014	20	School: 20 (100%)	State: (92%)	School: 0 (0%)	State: (8%)
	2013	21	School: 20 (95%)	State: (86%)	School: 1 (5%)	State: (14%)

Performance in this course has remained consistent with the school continuing to perform better than the State average for students achieving a Band 4 and above.

Subject	Year	No. of Students	Performance band achievement by number and percentage			
			Bands 4 - 6		Bands 1 - 3	
English Standard	2016	7	School: 6 (86%)	State: (49%)	School: 1 (14%)	State: (51%)
	2015	10	School: 7 (70%)	State: (42%)	School: 3 (30%)	State: (58%)
	2014	11	School: 5 (45%)	State: (43%)	School: 6 (55%)	State: (57%)
	2013	10	School: 1 (10%)	State: (34%)	School: 9 (90%)	State: (66%)

Performance in this course has continued to improve and there was significant growth in the number of students achieving a Band 4 or above in 2016. The school has now performed better than the State average for the last three years.

Subject	Year	No. of Students	Performance band achievement by number and percentage			
			Bands 4 - 6		Bands 1 - 3	
Mathematics	2016	9	School: 5 (55%)	State: (76%)	School: 4 (45%)	State: (24%)
	2015	11	School: 11 (100%)	State: (81%)	School: 0 (0%)	State: (19%)
	2014	9	School: 5 (56%)	State: (81%)	School: 4 (44%)	State: (19%)
	2013	10	School: 10 (100%)	State: (77%)	School: (0%)	State: (23%)

Performance in this course for 2016 was similar to that in 2014, with a similar differential between school and State average in Bands 4 or above. There was a decline in comparable performance against the State average from 2015 to 2016.

Subject	Year	No. of Students	Performance band achievement by number and percentage			
			Bands 4 - 6		Bands 1 - 3	
Mathematics General	2016	11	School: 8 (73%)	State: (52%)	School: 3 (27%)	State: (48%)
	2015	15	School: 10 (67%)	State: (50%)	School: 5 (33%)	State: (50%)
	2014	14	School: 12 (86%)	State: (51%)	School: 2 (14%)	State: (49%)
	2013	15	School: 9 (60%)	State: (42%)	School: 6 (40%)	State: (58%)

Performance in this course against the State average has continued to be stronger. The differential between school and State average performance in Bands 4 or above increased in 2016.

Subject	Year	No. of Students	Performance band achievement by number and percentage			
			Bands 4 - 6		Bands 1 - 3	
Biology	2016	8	School: 4 (50%)	State: (65%)	School: 4 (50%)	State: (35%)
	2015	16	School: 13 (81%)	State: (60%)	School: 3 (19%)	State: (40%)
	2014	15	School: 10 (67%)	State: (61%)	School: 5 (33%)	State: (38%)
	2013	13	School: 8 (62%)	State: (68%)	School: 5 (38%)	State: (32%)

Performance in this course for 2016 for Bands 4 - 6 was lower than previous years and an anomaly. Student performance in this subject was consistent throughout the completion of the course but was at variance from previous cohorts' performance in this subject.

Subject	Year	No. of Students	Performance band achievement by number and percentage			
			Bands 4 - 6		Bands 1 - 3	
Modern History	2016	6	School: 6 (100%)	State: (73%)	School: 0 (0%)	State: (27%)
	2015	9	School: 9 (100%)	State: (72%)	School: 0 (0%)	State: (61%)
	2014	14	School: 13 (93%)	State: (75%)	School: 1 (7%)	State: (25%)
	2013	11	School: 11 (100%)	State: (77%)	School: 0 (0%)	State: (24%)

Performance in this course has remained consistent with the school continuing to perform well above that of the State average for students achieving Band 4 or above.

This table is a more comprehensive look at the 2016 results compared to the State averages for the corresponding bands. As evidenced, PLC Armidale's performance is generally stronger.

Subject	PLC Armidale students achieving in these bands (%)	Students in State achieving in the same bands (%)
Ancient History Band 5	43	30.68
Chemistry Band 5	57	40.94
Design & Technology Band 5	50	40.80
English Advanced Bands 5 & 6	69	61.92
Geography Bands 5 & 6	100	40.93
Mathematics Extension 1 Bands E4 & E3	100	79.37
Mathematics Extension 2 Bands E4 & E3	100	85.34
Modern History Bands 5 & 6	83	40.84
Music 1 Band 6	100	18.41
Music 2 Band 5	100	89.53
Music Extension Band E2	100	99.55

Subject	PLC Armidale students achieving in these bands (%)	Students in State achieving in the same bands (%)
PDHPE Band 6	29	11.1
Physics Band 5	50	29.94
Visual Arts Band 5	100	54.48

Please note that the results presented in this table only include results where all students were taught at PLC Armidale.

In 2016 100% of students in Year 12 completed their HSC. Two students participated in and completed TVET courses.

Year 12	Qualification/Certificate	Percentage of Students
2016	HSC	100%
	AQF Certificate II or above	9%

THEME 5: TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Category		Number of Teachers
(i)	Teachers having teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines	35
(ii)	Teachers having a bachelor degree from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher education qualifications	1

Professional Learning

All teaching staff participated in professional learning on four staff days and six after school meetings which included courses in the following:

- First Aid
- Child Protection Workshop (Online)
- Professional Learning Teams
- THRASS Training (Junior School)
- Cracking the HSC Code (Senior School)
- The Senior Executive participated in workshops conducted by CIRCLE Consultancy focused on the development of a College Strategic Plan.

Professional Learning Teams

As a follow on from the work developed during the Embedding Excellence program, the school developed Professional Learning Teams focussing on the seven following areas:

- Differentiation
- Growing the Guilds
- Staff Wellbeing
- Professional Review
- Senior School Specialisation
- STEM
- ICT Integration

As well as this, staff also attended specialist area professional development courses run by the Association of Independent Schools and other organisations.

Professional Learning Activity	Number of Staff Participating
Boarding	2
Chaplaincy	2
English	7
History	7
Languages	1
Leadership	4
Pastoral Care	8
Pedagogy	5
Science	9
Visual and Creative and Performing Arts	3

This information is available on the My School website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au>.

THEME 6: WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

According to the 2016 Census, the school's workforce composition was:

School Staff 2016	
Teaching Staff	35
Full-Time Equivalent Teaching Staff	29
Non-Teaching Staff	20
Full-Time Equivalent Non-Teaching Staff	15

PLC Armidale did not have any staff members who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in 2016.

This information is available on the My School website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au>.

THEME 7: STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION RATES AND POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

YEAR	ATTENDANCE
Kindergarten	95.60%
Year 01	94.70%
Year 02	94.70%
Year 03	96.00%
Year 04	95.20%
Year 05	97.10%
Year 06	94.30%
Year 07	98.00%
Year 08	96.70%
Year 09	96.10%
Year 10	93.30%
Year 11	96.10%
Year 12	97.40%
Whole School	95.60%

Student Attendance: Average attendance rate per day was 96%. This showed a slight improvement compared with the previous three years.

Unexplained absences and managing non-attendance

Each week the Secondary Assistant and Primary Assistant receive a report for any unexplained absences in the previous week. An email is then sent to the parents to enquire as to a student's absence. Parents are requested to verify absences, including providing Medical Certificates for repeated absences.

Retention of Year 10 to Year 12

85% or 23 of the 2014 Year 10 cohort completed Year 12 in 2016. Four students left between Year 10 and Year 12. This variation reflected students relocating out of the area or enrolling in other schools.

Post school destinations

School leavers from 2016 have received offers for courses of tertiary studies from universities or tertiary facilities in New South Wales, ACT, Queensland and Victoria. More than 95% of the cohort is known to have received offers from tertiary institutions and the figure may be higher. One third of the cohort (approximately) has delayed the start of their tertiary studies, choosing to take a GAP year, with some travelling and working overseas, some staying locally. These students have expressed the intention of eventually taking up deferred offers for tertiary courses either in 2017 or 2018.

The number of students choosing to study at regional universities is slowly increasing, with the most common reason for the choice being the high cost of living in capital cities, especially Sydney, distance from family and increased course flexibility.

Early entry opportunities were sought by 80% of the cohort and as far as we can ascertain, all applicants were successful in being offered their first or second choice. Some took up these offers; a majority found they had more favourable offers when the UAC placements were finalised.

THEME 8: ENROLMENT POLICIES

2016 PLC Armidale Enrolment Policy and Procedure

Conditions of Enrolment and Withdrawal

In enrolling a student at Presbyterian Ladies' College Armidale the parent(s) or guardian(s) accepts and agrees to be bound by these Conditions of Enrolment, jointly and severally and acknowledges liability for all fees and charges.

- 1 Once a student is in attendance at PLC Armidale at least one term's notice of withdrawal must be given in writing to the Principal. Such notice must be given no later than the first day of the school term at the end of which the notice expires. In default of such notice an amount equal to one term's fees (tuition and/or boarding) of the full annual fee will be charged (*any fee discounts do not apply and will not be deducted*). If a student is to change status from boarding to day student the same notice applies or an amount equal to one term of the annual boarding fee will normally be charged.
- 2 Annual fees are charged in three equal instalments at the beginning of Terms 1, 2 and 3 with interim accounts sent out at the end of terms 3 and 4. Payment options are cheque, cash, BPay, direct deposit, credit card (MasterCard, Visa or American Express) and Direct Debit Scheme. Payments made by credit card will attract a 1% surcharge (not applicable to building/scholarship fund donations). In the event of financial difficulty, special arrangements may be applied for. Early notification of problems will assist in preventing debt collection action. Please contact the Accounts Department to discuss payment plan options.
- 3 The school is authorised to charge to accounts items (but not limited to) such as photocopying, uniform expenses, excursion costs, sporting costs, textbook levies, technology fees and medical expenses (overseas students only).
- 4 A \$50 Administration Fee may be charged on accounts not paid in full by the due date of the account unless an authorised payment plan has been approved.
- 5 Each family will be charged \$100 Life Membership of the PLC P&F Association. The P&F Association supports the school in the vital role of fundraising for resources and facilities needed by the school.
- 6 I/We understand that payment of my/our account is my/our responsibility, jointly and severally. Should my/our account be placed in the hands of debt recovery consultants, then I/we hereby agree to pay all expenses relating to the recovery of my/our account and any default debt may be reported to a credit reporting agency.
- 7 Respecting and caring for others are Christian values foundational to PLC Armidale. In accepting enrolment, girls and parents acknowledge their intention to follow the policies of the college.
- 8 It is an expectation of PLC Armidale that all students will participate in the Christian activities provided in the school.

- 9 In case of the need for urgent medical or hospital treatment for a student and if parents or guardians are not readily contactable, a member of the school staff is authorised to give authority for such treatment without the school or staff member incurring any legal liability to the parent, guardian or student. In this regard, the parent or guardian indemnifies the staff, the school management and the Trustees against any claims which might arise as a result of such treatment.
- 10 The Principal reserves the right to suspend or terminate an enrolment. No remission of fees will be made in the case of suspension or removal of a student for unacceptable conduct or failure to pay fees.
- 11 These conditions of enrolment together with the general policies of the school as outlined in the current Information Booklets constitute the terms of the contract between the parents and/or guardians of the student/s and PLC Armidale.

2016 Enrolment Procedure - Australian Citizens

Initial Enquiry

The first approach from parents to enrol their children is usually made by telephone enquiry or email. This is responded to as follows:

- Recording of enquiry particulars on an Enquiry Form, which is then transferred onto the Edumate Database under New Enquiry.
- A prospectus is forwarded to the parent / guardian.
- The Enrolments Manager then schedules the enquiry for follow-up.

Enrolment Guidelines

A registration form is to be fully completed and lodged with a registration fee prior to consideration for enrolment.

Following registration, an interview with parents and the student will be conducted by the Principal (or delegate).

During the interview, the Principal (or delegate) will discuss the financial commitments that are generally required to enrol a student at the College. This will also be re-enforced in documentation that is attached with the "Conditions of Enrolment" form.

When a student transfers from another independent school, a payment history of the parents / guardians at that school will be obtained by Presbyterian Ladies College Armidale unless waived by the Principal.

Upon completion of this process, a formal offer is made. New student enrolment forms should then be completed in conjunction with the appropriate medical forms.

Acceptance of Enrolment

The enrolment of a student is formally accepted when:

When the student has presented herself for an interview and all relevant enrolment documentation is completed in full, signed by all parents / guardians and returned to the Enrolments Manager. These forms include:

- Registration Form
- Enrolment Form (including "Conditions of Enrolment").
- Medical Form

An enrolment fee is lodged and receipted by the College.

All additional documentation that is relevant to the enrolment of the student is provided and once all items listed above have been satisfactorily completed and all information on the forms have been provided, the Principal will acknowledge the acceptance of the enrolment by sending a letter of enrolment confirmation to the parents / guardians.

2016 Enrolment Procedure - International Citizens

If not residing in the PLC Armidale boarding house, international students must have a guardian to represent them. The guardian must be:

- Over 25 years' old
- Able to communicate effectively with the College in English
- Appointed by the parents (or agent)
- Resident in New South Wales
- Willing and able to care for the student at home in a period of ill health
- First point of contact in emergencies and when problems arise

Please note: For students educated overseas, results of an Assessment of English Competence (AEAS test report) must be submitted with their application.

Overseas Agents

Some parents of overseas students prefer to use an agent to represent them, who speaks their own language and is familiar with enrolment procedures in Australia.

Enrolment Documents - International Student Registration

The first step in the enrolment process is to submit an International Registration Form with the relevant documentation (AEAS Test report) and pay a non-refundable application fee. Applications may be emailed or posted to the Enrolments Manager.

Once the registration form and fee have been received and processed, the family will be notified that their daughter has been placed on a wait list for the year requested.

Interview and Confirmation of Enrolment

The family will then be invited to attend an interview with the Principal (this may be via Skype). After the interview, the student may be offered a place, conditional upon the provision of the following supporting documentation:

- Current Passport
- Visa
- Birth Certificate
- Immunisation Certificate
- Past student Reports
- PLC Registration Form
- PLC Enrolment Form
- PLC Medical Information Form

Families are then required to pay a non-refundable Enrolment Fee to secure a place at PLC Armidale.

Once all items listed above have been satisfactorily completed and all information on the forms have been provided, the Principal will acknowledge the acceptance of the enrolment by sending a letter of enrolment confirmation to the parents / guardians.

THEME 9: OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Policies are available on our website in the Current Families area under 'Policies and Information': <http://www.plcarmidale.nsw.edu.au/current-families/policies-and-information>.

Student Welfare / Anti-Bullying

The full text of our student welfare policy and code of conduct (anti-bullying and student discipline) is available in the student diary, a copy of which can be obtained from the school office. The staff code of conduct is published in the staff handbook and is also available from the College. This policy was updated in 2016 to make reference to the 'Flourish' Pastoral Care Program.

Student Discipline

The student discipline policy of the College is based upon principles of natural justice and procedural fairness. Students have a right to be heard when an allegation is made against them and always have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. A full copy of this policy and suspension procedures is available from the College. Parents are involved in the processes of procedural fairness when sanctions may result in suspension and expulsion of a student. Disciplinary actions do not include exclusion.

The College expressly prohibits corporal punishment and does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school. All behavioural management actions are based on principles of procedural fairness.

The College Discipline Policy was amended to reflect the new executive structure in the Senior School.

Reporting Complaints and Resolving Grievances

PLC Armidale is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all students, staff and members of the PLC Armidale community. Parents, students and staff have a right to raise concerns and have them addressed in a timely manner by an appropriate member of staff. In the first instance, complaints should be addressed to the class teacher, Year Patron or relevant head of section according to the nature of the complaint. Complaints will be handled objectively and with sensitivity. PLC Armidale is committed to settling complaints of any nature in a timely manner, using procedural fairness and respect for all.

The above policies were reviewed and updated this year to ensure accuracy and currency.

THEME 10: SCHOOL DETERMINED PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Achievement of priorities identified in the 2015 Annual Report

Goal Areas	2016 Priorities	2016 Achievements
Resources and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Science Lab occupancy ○ Senior School interior courtyard ○ Junior School exterior working bee areas ○ Improve Boarding facilities ○ Increased enrolment of International Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Four state of the art Science Labs were completed and opened ○ The Senior School interior courtyard was fully renovated and opened for student use ○ Planning began for the refurbishment of the Austin Boarding House ○ Direct recruitment and a focus on ESL provision saw an increase in the International student population
Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create Head of Senior School role and recruit for suitable candidate ○ Create Pastoral Care Coordinator Role (responsible for <i>Flourish</i>) ○ Development of Strategic Plan (Senior Executive) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Executive structure was reviewed resulting in the appointment of a Head of Senior School with responsibility for the day to day operation and pastoral care oversight of the Senior School ○ The Pastoral Care Coordinator role was incepted and the Flourish program and resources developed ○ CIRCLE Consultancy undertook work with the Executive Team to prepare the parameters for a revised Strategic Plan
Student Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction of the <i>Flourish</i> Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The <i>Flourish</i> program consisting of a sequential and structured program focusing on the identified character strengths

Goal Areas	2016 Priorities	2016 Achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Envisage the Pastoral Care roles/ responsibilities for all Senior School staff ○ Introduce Year Patron and Year Specialist roles ○ Review of the merit/demerit system (Senior School) ○ Improved Guild activity/activities across the College ○ Reintroduce the Senior School Big Sister program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New Pastoral Care roles and responsibilities for staff were formed allocating each staff member as either a Year Patron, overseeing the welfare of a student cohort or a Year Specialist overseeing the programs of each year group ○ Senior School staff worked with the Head of Senior School to develop a more consistent approach regarding merits and demerits ○ Guild Pastoral Care Sessions were introduced on the first Wednesday of each month ○ The Prefects hosted a range of 'Big Sister' mentoring activities on a rotational basis occurring mostly at lunchtime
Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluate whole staff professional development ○ Implement video conferencing facility assist in staff PD and student activities ○ Review Junior School Programming ○ Preparation for BOSTES Registration and Accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff professional development days reviewed to make provision for whole school training on a rotational basis for First Aid, Child Protection and Risk Awareness/WHS training ○ Video conferencing used for the delivery of an HSC Legal Studies course as well as Inter-schools debating and virtual excursions
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of new marketing collateral with consistent branding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A range of marketing collateral was designed and developed. The theme of Flourish was woven throughout ○ Promotional material for the International Student market was also developed

Goal Areas	2016 Priorities	2016 Achievements
Communication and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review website ○ Planning for electronic data storage and electronic flow of forms ○ Introduce SkoolBag app 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A complete redesign and rebuild of College Website was undertaken ○ After considering and trialling a number of options, investigation into a more systematic use of the Google suite was commenced. Google forms were trialled and evaluated ○ The SkoolBag app was customised for PLC Armidale and introduced primarily to make announcements regarding sporting teams and scheduled events at the College
Professional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cracking the Code (Senior School) ○ THRASS (Junior School) ○ First Aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cracking the Code professional learning workshop provided Secondary staff with an overview of the HSC architecture and importance of teaching students to understand the structure of a subject, assessment task, etc not just content ○ THRASS is a foundational literacy program which is used systematically across the Junior School to develop core literacy skills and phonemic awareness ○ First aid and resuscitation training was undertaken by the whole staff using the Royal Life Saving Society program. This has been incorporated into the ongoing Professional Learning Cycle of the College

Goal Areas	2016 Priorities	2016 Achievements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establishment of Professional Learning Teams ○ Preparations for College Registration and Accreditation (BOSTES) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Professional Learning Teams were incepted with the areas of review determined by staff who also nominated themselves for inclusion to a group. Open to both teaching and non-teaching staff, the Professional Learning teams will meet at a minimum once per term for planning and review. Requests and recommendations from each group will be required by the end of 2017 at the latest. ○ The BOSTES process for Registration and Accreditation was undertaken providing a good opportunity for review and development of teaching programs, policies and procedures across the College
IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dancrai review of IT Structures and Processes ○ Opening of the Edumate 5 parent portal ○ Review of the BYOD approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An external review of the IT Infrastructure and services of the College was undertaken with a view to creating a sustainable, service focused and integrated IT strategy across the College. One outcome was the establishment of an IT Strategy Committee meeting fortnightly for review and future planning ○ The Whole School Information Evening in Term One focused on the key features of Edumate with special reference to the Parent Portal in the Senior School ○ The terms of reference for a review of the BYOD strategy were developed.

Goal Areas	2016 Priorities	2016 Achievements
STEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expansion of Robotics program ○ Involvement with CSIRO Scientist in Schools program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lunchtime groups for students to explore Robotics were developed in both the Junior and Senior School ○ Links with the CSIRO Scientists in Schools program were forged in the Junior School initially, though involvement with the UNE Science in Schools programs and competitions continued
Creative Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extend scope and reach of music program and ensemble participation across the College ○ Host 2016 IPSHA Travelling Arts Show 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The appointment of a new Director of Music saw the expansion of music programs, ensembles and performance opportunities. PLC Performs was added to the performance calendar of the College and was well received by students and families ○ The IPSHA Travelling Art Show provided an opportunity to host a Junior School Art Show opening which families were invited to attend. Students submitted works which were auctioned off and guest professional artists also displayed their works on the night
PLC Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore the feasibility of establishing an intensive English Language Centre at the College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An application was lodged and initial approval granted by BOSTES to open an English Language Intensive Course of Study program (ELICOS) at the College. The Program is due to commence in 2017 and will be fully residential providing an introduction to Australian independent schooling as well as intensive English language learning

2017 Targets

Structures

- Restructure Academic Leadership
- Formation of Humanities and STEM faculties
- Creation of Faculty Coordinator position
- Restructure of Sport oversight and development of sporting pathways

Resources

- Formation of Humanities and STEM Faculty Rooms
- Renovation of Austin Boarding House
- Maker Space

Student Welfare

- Focus on strengthening Guild activities
- Focus on middle adolescent development challenges

Professional Learning

- Child Protection Mandatory Reporter Briefing
- Creating Safer Independent Schools
- Google Classroom Training
- Risk Awareness Training

IT

- Increased use of Google Apps for Education
- Review of BYOD strategy

Teaching & Learning

- Academic Leadership Committee
- Review of assessment practice
- Timetable Review
- Trial of HSC Hub and increased use of Education Perfect resources

Marketing

- Develop a suite of promotional videos highlighting key aspects of College life which distinguish us from other schools
- PLC Armidale 130th Celebrations

Strategic Plan

- Development of 2020 Strategic Plan for the College

PLC Pathways

Creative Arts

- PLC Production
- Expansion of Eisteddfod Presence (Sydney)
- Year 7 and Year 3 Orchestra Programs

THEME 11: INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Social Service

At PLC Armidale, the commitment to Social Service is highly regarded and is an integral element of school life. Year groups focus on projects such as assembling boxes of gifts for Operation Christmas Child, working in local opportunity shops, assembling birthing kits for third world countries, knitting blankets for 'wrapped with love', visiting nursing homes and retirement villages on a regular basis, donating blood through Red Cross, collecting 5c coins for the 'Change for Change' YGap campaign and participating in the annual pilgrimage to Fiji in support of St Christopher's Home in Nakasi.

Whole school initiatives include fundraising for various charities, including supporting our foster child in Pakistan and our sponsor child at The School of St Jude, Tanzania. There are annual service learning trips to Fiji, Thailand and Vietnam. Other whole school fundraising events include the Cancer Council's Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, Beyond Blue initiatives and initiatives to support Women's Education.

The program 'PLC Serving the Community' involves all students in Years 6 to 10 in various community service projects in the Armidale community. This takes place in the morning session of Activities Week at the end of Term 4.

Peer Support

The Peer Support Program is run throughout both the Junior and Senior schools. Year 6 participate in Peer Support Leader Training and then they initiate three sessions with their Guilds in the Junior School. The Junior School leaders run 'Guild Gathering' days in Terms 2 and 3. The Year 6 leaders also take a leadership role in SRC/Action Group initiatives throughout the year.

All Year 10 students participate in a one-day leadership program and are invited to apply for the position of a Peer Support leader in Year 11. The students selected become mentors to a group of Year 7 students and accompany all Year 7 to Friendship Camp early in the year. This provides an opportunity to develop strong bonds of friendship and support, which continue throughout the year.

Once a month the Senior School meets in their Guilds and the Year 12 Guild Leaders take their Guild through Peer Support Program activities and initiatives. The Year 11 students will take over from the Year 12 students in running these sessions, which will assist with their leadership development prior to prefect elections.

Student Representative Council (SRC)

Students from Year 6 to Year 12 are members of the SRC. Nominations are called, the students nominated present a manifesto and a speech to their peers and voting simulates a formal election with ballot boxes and a preferential system of counting votes.

There is a similar Junior School SRC in which students from Kindergarten to Year 6 participate.

Members of the SRC meet regularly to discuss any proposals, which are then presented to the class groups. The SRC is active in fundraising around the school and many projects in the school and the community are funded from monies raised.

In the Junior School, the SRC takes on four initiatives a year from a school, local, national and global focus.

Pastoral Care Groups

Each Year group forms a Pastoral Care class. All pastoral care classes meet each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for 20 minutes to discuss pastoral, academic, discipline, World News and other issues that may affect a particular class, year group or the whole school. Each Year group works through a sequential Pastoral Care program called 'Flourish' which is embedded with Positive Psychology and Christian Values Education. It includes the importance of having respect for themselves and all others and the importance of taking responsibility for their actions. The program also develops a student's sense of self, sense of belonging and builds self-esteem and resilience and focuses on the importance of relationships. Students also participate in various National initiatives including Naidoc Week, Reconciliation Week, Harmony Day, Happiness Day and Bullying No Way Anti Bullying Week.

Leadership

Throughout the school, students have the opportunity to take on positions of responsibility. In the Junior School there are class monitors for various activities including sport and library and the Year 6 students take on the positions of Guild Leaders and leaders of the Junior School SRC. This year saw the introduction of Year 6 Junior School Captain position.

In the Senior School, each year group undergoes leadership training that is relevant to their stage and development. Year 10 participate in Peer Support Leadership training, Year 11 participate in Leadership training in preparation for the transition to Year 12 and Year 12 participate in a one-day Leadership Training day and then the elected prefect body have further leadership training to assist them with their specific roles. Ongoing leadership training for every year group is done through the Pastoral Care Program.

Prefects and Other School Leaders

At the beginning of Year 11 all students are made aware of the criteria for eligibility for prefect nomination regarding behaviour and participation in compulsory school events. Prefect elections are held in Week 7 of Term 3. This follows several weeks of leadership preparation in pastoral care sessions, which includes the discussion of the job description of each prefect position. The election process involves students being nominated, preparing a manifesto and giving a speech to the whole school.

A panel including the Principal and members of the Executive interviews the nominees for the positions of Head Prefect and Deputy Head Prefect. These positions are then decided on by the number of votes, as well as the interview. The other positions are decided on votes.

The Head Prefect and Deputy Head Prefect become the President and Secretary of the Student Representative Council as well as leading the prefect body. The prefects have particular portfolios such as Creative Arts, Sport and the Guilds. The Guild Prefects are supported by Deputy Guild Prefects.

Spiritual leaders provide Christian leadership within the school and are appointed on the basis of interviews conducted by the Principal and the Chaplain. Other appointed leaders are the captains of various sporting and musical groups. These appointments are made by the Sports and Music Directors and are based on students' participation and involvement throughout the year as well as their demonstration of leadership potential.

Inter-School Exchanges

Students in Years 8, 9 and 10 have the opportunity to participate in our Exchange Program. Up to four students in Year 8 go to Strathcona, Melbourne, two students in Year 9 go to Columba College, Dunedin, New Zealand and two students in Year 10 go to St Andrews College, Christchurch, New Zealand. Due to a restructure of their exchange program, this was out last exchange with Strathcona, Melbourne. A new exchange opportunity is being established with PLC Melbourne, which will commence next year.

Another exchange opportunity exists within the Language Curriculum. Students in Year 10 go on an extended exchange with a college in Germany, immersing themselves in another culture and language.

Students apply and are interviewed for the exchange experience opportunity. This opportunity allows them to experience a new educational setting, make new friends, live with other families and appreciate wider cultural backgrounds and beliefs.

THEME 12: PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

Satisfaction with the College has been evidenced through an increase in student enrolments as well as indirect feedback provided by parents, student and teachers.

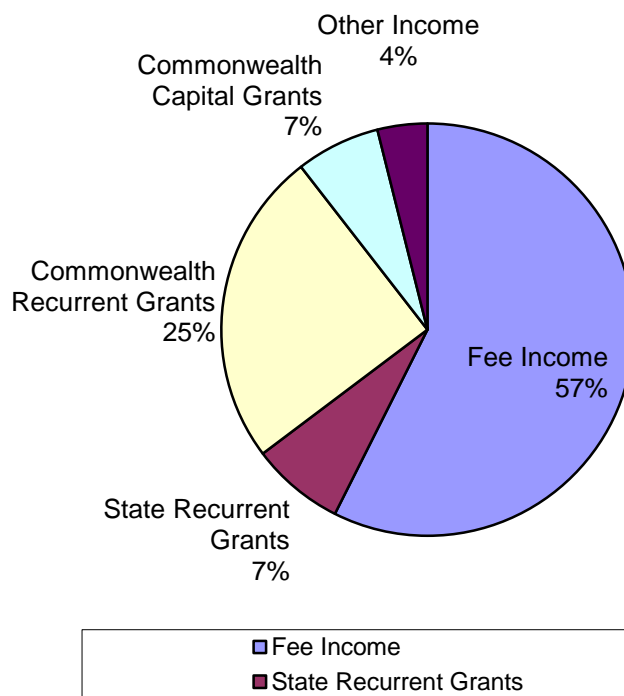
Feedback has been encouraged and actively sought through the Comments, Complaints and Compliments section of the College Website along with anecdotal feedback. Staff retention remains a stable factor of the College with the revised Executive Structure and clearer delineation of executive responsibilities appreciated.

The newly created Professional Learning Teams provide a forum for staff to contribute positively and proactively towards improvement across a range of domains within the College.

The College sought to facilitate communication and feedback from parents, students and staff through two significant review processes in 2016. One was the review of IT structures and services across the College, the other was the data capturing exercise for the development of the College Strategic Plan. In both of these review processes, a formal survey was issued with a return rate in both instances of over 75%. The survey responses were analysed and then focus groups formed and held again featuring groups of parents, students and staff providing valuable feedback to the College but affirming high levels of satisfaction also.

THEME 13: SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Income



Expenditure

