



# WARAKIRRI COLLEGE

ANNUAL REPORT 2015

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# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Warakirri College is an independent secondary school for Years 10 – 12, situated in Fairfield in South-West Sydney. The college commenced operations in 2007 to assist young people aged 16 to 22 years experiencing major difficulties in completing their secondary education.

The first students to complete Year 12 graduated in 2013. In 2014 there was a 100 % increase in the numbers with 8 students graduating from Year 12, in 2015, 12 students completed Year 12.

The College's name means to Stand and Grow; an Aboriginal term consistent with the school's commitment towards creating an adult learning environment encouraging students to engage with their teachers and peers respectfully; exercising acceptable values and good moral judgement.

In spite of the hardships that many students face, the school encourages and supports students to develop strategies that build resilience and character.

As a Special Assistance School, the College is proud of its culturally diverse staff and student body. Diversity is seen as a major advantage; with ancestral links from countries located in the Pacific Islands, Middle East, North Africa and Asia, as well as students from Aboriginal communities and of Anglo-Australian and European descent.

The College receives support from community organisations with enrolments often coming from young people connected to NGOs, charities and of course, local high schools.

Many community organisations support the College by presenting at the school's weekly assemblies and the school partners with a range of organisations through excursions, courses and camps.

Warakirri College engages a full-time registered Psychologist and the school assists students with emergency accommodation, welfare services and post school education and employment. The extent and depth of support for students is a key factor in enriching and diversifying the Warakirri educational experience.

Together with staff of MTC Australia, the teachers of Warakirri College celebrate the success of each student completing Year 10 or the HSC in 2015.

We acknowledge the students' commitment and tenacity and we wish them every success in the future as they transition to further education and employment.

Carolyn Blanden  
Principal  
Warakirri College

Warakirri means  
'Stand and  
Grow'...

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## MTC AUSTRALIA

MTC is a social enterprise that is committed to assisting people to gain employment through skills training, work-experience and career planning. As an integrated service provider, MTC offers support through a variety of training courses and services that include case management for young people and a range of community initiatives.

MTC is located in over 22 locations across the Sydney metropolitan area and includes a database of over 20,000 clients who are looking for work or are enrolled in courses that provide accredited training.

As a public benevolent institution, MTC reinvests funds from its surplus back into the community which includes its support of Warakirri College.

## WARAKIRRI COLLEGE

Warakirri College offers the NSW Board of Studies curriculum for Stages 5 and 6, preparing students for a Year 10 ROSA or the Higher School Certificate (HSC). The HSC is delivered via an accumulation pathway whereby students study 3 subjects per year, covering both preliminary and the HSC in a 12 month period.

The school provides assistance that includes covering the cost of school fees, stationary, textbooks and excursions. There is no school uniform and students are served a modest breakfast and lunch each day to assist with their nutritional needs and minimise any financial hardships. A number of students live independently and without the support of a family environment. The vast majority of students come from families that receive support from Centrelink, or the students themselves receive these benefits directly.

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## STUDENT OUTCOMES IN STANDARDISED NATIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TESTING

The College only offers Years 10 and the HSC. Students do not participate in the NAPLAN program.

## SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES – STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Results of year 10 - Table below:

Subject	Number of Students	Bands A B & C %	Bands D E & None %
English	31	16	84
Mathematics	31	42	58
Science	31	23	77
Australian History	31	19	81
Australian Geography	31	19	81
Commerce	31	19	81
PDHPE	30	28	72

Results of the Higher School Certificate - Table below:

Subject	Number of Students	Bands 1-3	Bands 4-5	School Moderated Mean	State Moderated Mean
Ancient History	15	14	1	48.4	71.34
Biology	10	10	0	47.1	71.13
Business Studies	12	12	0	52.3	74
English Standard	6	6	0	49	67.10
English Advanced	9	7	2	65	80.43
Geography	14	14	0	46	73.85
Mathematics General	15	11	3	54.3	73.85
Business Services Cert II VET	6	5	1	56	73

In 2015 a total of 12 students completed the HSC. This represented a 33% increase from the previous year's figures.

Warakirri College has a bi-modal candidature which is not reflected in the mean scores, see below:

- In Advanced English, 2 student results fell into Bands 4 to 5, with one student achieving a HSC mark of 84%.
- In Mathematics, 3 student results fell into Bands 4 to 5, with one student achieving a HSC mark of 88%.

Teachers with education qualifications: 7  
 Teachers with bachelor degree or AEI-NOOSR equivalent: 8  
 Teachers with TAE: 2

Teachers individually completed courses with accredited providers, most commonly at the Association of Independent Schools or with the NSW Teachers Training Association TAA.

Some courses were delivered as webinars or online courses. These courses were specific to the teacher's subject areas or roles within the College. One teacher participated as a NAPLAN marker.

Course Name/Topic	Number of Teachers
Managing Difficult Behaviours	8
Teaching with Microsoft Office 365 - Education	8
Business Services - Certificate II 2015	1
TAE Training and Assessment - Certificate IV	1
Student Management System - IWISE	5
Information Computer Technology & Applications in Mathematics	1
Creating Supportive Schools - Sexuality & Gender Diversity	8
Advancing Science	1
Methamphetamines and young people	8
Managing complex behaviour in the classroom	1
Advanced English	1
Acceptance & Commitment Therapy: The Art of Mindfulness	1
Mentoring & Role Modelling	1
Chemical safety in schools	1
WHS Training - fire drills, bomb threats, emergency evacuation	2
Senior First Aid Course	1
Alternative Schools Conference	2

Teacher, Marjana Mitrovik wins The Pride of Workmanship Award 2015. Presented to Marjana this week at the Smithfield RSL Club by the Rotary Club of Wetherill Park for her services to her profession



## WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

In 2015 Warakirri College employed the following:

- A Principal, a Registered Psychologist, a Receptionist and a Business Manager;
- 5 full-time teachers and one part-time teacher with degrees and teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition guidelines;
- 1 part-time teacher with a TAE and a bachelor degree from a higher education institution in Australia but no formal teacher education qualifications (conditionally accredited with NSWIT) and;
- Over 70% of staff come from diverse ethnic backgrounds but none are identified as being of Australian Aboriginal background.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE, RETENTION AND POST-SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

Student Attendance 2015

Year Group	Semester 1	Semester 2
HSC (Year 11 & 12)	64%	60%
Year 10	51%	45%

The percentage of students who completed Year 10 and progressed to enrol in Year 11 for 2016 was approximately 60% of students.

A poor attendance rate is a common challenge for schools that cater to students from highly disadvantaged communities; particularly where families are experiencing financial hardships and other pressures such as intergenerational unemployment and mental health issues. The risk of these students disengaging from school is particularly high.

The College continues to review its policies and practices including building strategies to address student non-attendance. A range of measures to reduce non-attendance have been implemented including changes to teaching methods, systematic follow up for non-attenders, phone calls from the College's psychologist, letters to parents, caseworkers and care-givers as well revising documentation collection procedures for recording the reasons for non-attendance.

## POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

Students have the opportunity to complete Stage 5 and graduate at the end of Year 10 or continue onto Stage 6 and complete the HSC by an accumulation pathway approach. In the first year whilst studying for their HSC a student would have completed 3 HSC subjects (240 hours per subject). If they continue into their second year and complete 3 new HSC subjects (240 hours per subject), they are able to qualify for the HSC.

Some students decide to leave during the year from all year groups. While most students who leave the College do so to join the work force, a small number go to TAFE and some have been successful in securing apprenticeships or traineeships, principally in the child care, hospitality or construction industries.

The 2015 graduates had the following destinations:

- HSC studies at Warakirri College;
- Employment in areas such as retail, supermarket, construction, warehousing and child care;
- Australian Defence Force;
- Further education in areas such as nursing, hospitality, IT, graphic design, engineering, fitness and coaching; and
- Apprenticeships and traineeships in areas such as landscaping, plumbing and carpentry.

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## ENROLMENT POLICIES

Enrolment policies are largely unchanged from previous years and are in accordance with MTC Australia's Policies and Procedures. The Enrolment Policy for example reflects the mission of the school:

Warakirri College is a school specifically designed to re-engage disenfranchised and at risk young people.

In 2015 enrolment interviews were generally conducted by two staff including the Principal. In accordance with policies and procedures, the suitability of a student was determined according to the following assessment criteria:

- Assessing the student's capacity and preparedness to re-engage in education;
- Making note of any learning or behavioural difficulties and/or disabilities that would need support following enrolment;
- Ensuring that the student has achieved an academic level Year 9 or equivalent;
- Assessing the student's levels of social, cultural & economic disadvantage;
- Noting that applicants had a general proficiency in speaking, reading and writing English;
- Recording if the student is from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community background;
- Recording if the student is experiencing a range of issues that include being marginalised or isolated as well as some level of mental health or physical impediment; and
- Recording any mental or physical health issues reported by the student or parent/carer.

The school endeavours to liaise regularly with each student's family; caseworkers, youth-workers, Juvenile Justice workers and any number of health care professionals to ensure that the student's needs are being addressed holistically.

In order to maintain their enrolment, students must not engage in bullying, violent behaviour or conduct that harms other students, staff or school property. The most common reason for students' enrolment being terminated is persistent non-attendance, followed by behaviour that is threatening to students or staff.

The Enrolment Policy was last updated September 2014 - see Appendix 1.



## 9 SUMMARY OF OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

The Student Welfare Policy (Pastoral Care Policy) outlines the College's commitment to addressing the holistic needs of the students who are acknowledged as having particularly difficult life circumstances that result in challenging behaviours. This policy was reviewed in September 2014.

The Discipline Policy outlines the processes that are followed in the event of a breach of the disciplinary code. The Discipline Policy applies the principles of procedural fairness and involves parents or care-givers in these processes in the event of a suspension or expulsion. This policy was reviewed in September 2014.

The Discipline Policy is read in conjunction with the Corporal Punishment Policy which states that "Corporal punishment of students at Warakirri College is prohibited and excluded as an unacceptable method of disciplining students. Warakirri College does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-college persons, including parents/carers to enforce discipline." This policy was reviewed in September 2014.

The Complaints and Grievances Policy outlines who can make a complaint or suggestion and includes the form in which that complaint or suggestion can be lodged and to whom including what processes are used in responding to the complaint or suggestion. This policy was reviewed in September 2014.

The Student Anti-bullying Policy and the Student Code of Conduct (Appendix 2) highlights the importance of respect, responsibility, honesty and describes the actions that staff or students should take to preclude the existence of any form of bullying or harassment including cyber bullying. This policy was updated in September 2014.

## 10 SCHOOL DETERMINED PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

In 2015 the College implemented a range of strategies designed to improve its operations to the following areas:

- As student enrolment numbers have increased staff numbers have increased commensurately;
- A new student Management System was purchased and implemented in 2015 and teachers were trained in using this system for reports, marks collection and pastoral care issues;
- Using a grant received from the Commonwealth Government via the AIS, the school completed the construction / fit out of a science laboratory with a completion date of October 2015;
- The School devised an extensive ICT Strategic Plan;
- Students participated in an outdoor education program;
- A special Needs teacher was appointed part – time during the year;
- More laptops, iPads and Class TV screens were purchased; and
- Educational & financial reporting obligations were met in a timely manner.

## INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

Teachers and Administration staff work diligently to promote a culture of respect and responsibility. This is found in the Student Code of Conduct (Appendix 2) and staff work tirelessly to implement processes to assist students with understanding the expectations and protocols of the College. For example workplace expectations in terms of dress, punctuality, and peer relations are often the subject of class discussions.

Staff frequently discuss strategies during weekly meetings and as part of regular Staff Development Days, triggering processes engineered around developing values and building a culture of respect. The College has always taken a strong position about the unacceptability of bullying. As already mentioned intolerance to bullying, makes the school a safe haven that many students have never experienced previously.

In 2015, the College maintained a full time psychologist who not only provided one on one counselling support for students but also conducted a range of assessments and tests. The School Psychologist attends Pastoral Care meetings and presents relevant information regarding mental health issues, learning difficulties and personal challenges.

During Life Skills classes, students covered such areas as positive relationships, ethical communication and more practical topics such as goal setting.



## PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

During the year, Warakirri students were asked to complete a Student Satisfaction Survey, which was reported to the students at a whole school assembly and all students who leave the College are asked to complete an exit survey. From those surveys and comments that students have made it is clear that:

- Teachers are widely considered to be caring, and accepting of student differences;
- The College is a place where students feel safe and allowed to be individuals and where they have a chance to achieve their goals, despite being excluded from or uncomfortable with mainstream educational pathways; and
- The students like the facilities provided by the College and acknowledge the value of the structure provided by the teachers and staff.

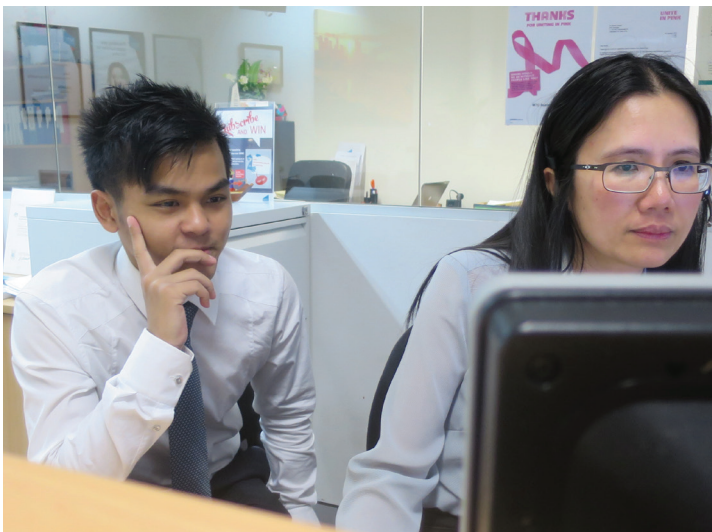
Very few of the students have parents who are involved with the school. While most students live with one parent, others live independently. There is no Parents and Friends Association, even-though the school frequently contacts parents of students via the telephone. Approximately 35% of students are 18 or over.

Therefore only small fragments of anecdotal evidence are available regarding parental satisfaction. Most parents are very grateful to the College as many students are recognised as having had a range of challenges at their previous schools.

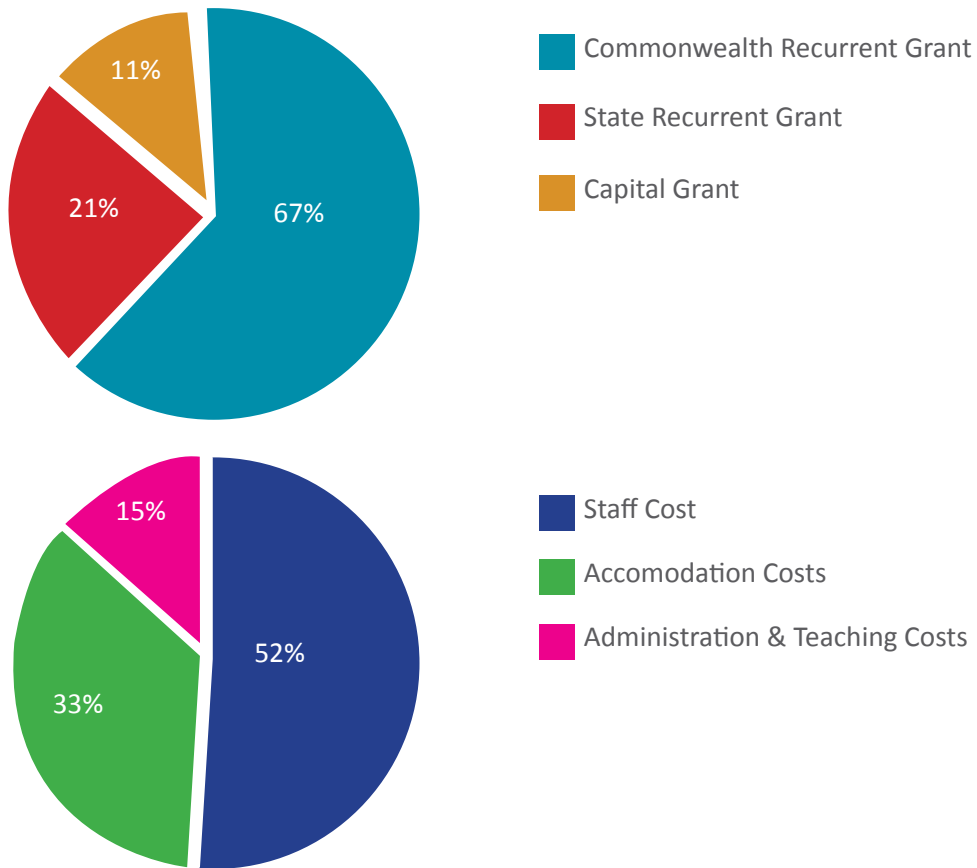
Referrals to the College are from local community organisations like Salvation Army, Mission Australia, Marist Youth Care, Juvenile Justice, DEC Home School Liaison Officers, Woodville Community Centre, Community First Step, Lotus House and local high schools to name but a few.

Other community organisations support the school at assemblies or supporting the students to attend presentations on Keeping Safe Online, Controlling Gambling, Sexual Health and Contraception, Drug and Alcohol issues. The Cabramatta PCYC is the venue for the students' PE classes and the club has supported the students' membership and offered a most favourable rate for the school's use of their facilities. The PCYC also sends speakers to the College; in support of the values and goals of the College which are consistent with those of the club. The Fairfield Council Libraries support the College by regularly donating books and resources.

During 2015 there were no staff resignations.



## 13 SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL INFORMATION



## 14 PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The school has always complied with the reporting and publication requirements which includes making available the Annual Reports to the NSW Board of Studies, state and federal education agencies and the Minister – the latter, upon request.

The Warakirri College Annual Report 2015 (and all previous reports) are able to be accessed on MTC Australia's web site.

If an individual or a group, does not have access to a web site the annual report is able to be printed upon request.

# APPENDIX 1 – ENROLMENT POLICY

“The School’s policies which are made from time to time are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the Education Act and of the Board of Studies for registration of the school.”

## 1. PURPOSE

To guide staff in the selection of students for Warakirri College, acknowledging that the aim of the College is to assist young people to reconnect with education and complete their schooling.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Warakirri College and MTC staff involved in the process of enrolling new students.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

N/A

## 4. REFERENCES

N/A

## 5. POLICY

### 5.1. Selection

5.1.1. Warakirri College primarily seeks to support students suffering from social or financial disadvantage, medical or emotional challenges or who have become disconnected from education.

5.1.2. Warakirri College cannot cater for students who are functionally illiterate in English or who require intensive behaviour or health support. Case management is available to all students who are enrolled in the school, but the College is not in a position to manage students who cannot operate within the adult learning environment.

5.1.3. All students who apply to attend Warakirri College within the designated intake times will be required to attend an interview as part of the application process. If there is a Parent / Guardian / Caregiver they are required to attend to learn about the College and contribute to the information shared.

5.1.4. A student’s acceptance into the program is dependent on their presentation at interview and their demonstrated ability to work within the policies and philosophy of Warakirri College

5.1.5. All applicants must provide proof of age and evidence of Australian citizenship or permanent resident status. Photocopies of the supporting documents are placed in the students’ files.

### 5.2. Enrolment

5.2.1. Students enrolled at Warakirri College may be required to undergo a Literacy and Numeracy assessment or other cognitive testing, if the teaching staff deems it necessary. This assessment may be conducted prior to enrolment or post enrolment.

5.2.2. Prospective students are to provide evidence of prior learning and a copy of the most recent school report. If necessary, contact with a past school will be made, to confirm details of enrolment and reasons for leaving. Contact with other relevant organisations may also be made before a student’s enrolment application is accepted.

5.2.3. Students entering Year 10 enrolment are to have had significant participation in year nine studies, or equivalent as determined by the Principal.

### 5.3. Acceptance

5.3.1. Successful applicants will receive a letter confirming their enrolment.

### 5.4. Withdrawal

5.4.1. Warakirri College recognises the commitment they ask of their students will not suit everyone’s needs and respects the right of any potential student to withdraw their application for inclusion in Warakirri College.

5.4.2. If a student makes the choice to withdraw their application for enrolment this does not mean they cannot apply again at a later date.

5.4.3. Should a student terminate their enrolment at the College, following a period of attendance, the College will consider a request to re-enrol, at the discretion of the Principal.

## APPENDIX 2 – STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

As a student at Warakirri College, I know I have the right to:

1. Enjoy a safe and supportive learning environment free from discrimination or harassment;
2. Speak to Warakirri staff about any issues in my personal life or life at school that may adversely affect my education or welfare either at school or at home.

As a student at Warakirri College, I know I have the responsibility to follow the Student Code of Conduct and I understand that my position in the College will be at risk if I breach this code.

### Warakirri College Student Code of Conduct

At Warakirri College students agree to:

1. Act in a manner that is respectful and supportive of staff and students;
2. Take responsibility for their actions;
3. Come to class on time, prepared for lessons with appropriate books, completed homework and necessary equipment;
4. Supply a note for all absences, including partial absences;
5. Participate in a conscientious and responsible manner in all College activities;
6. Be co-operative in class and support other students' learning;
7. Take responsibility for personal belongings and respect those of others;
8. Dress in a manner that is respectful of others, in keeping with workplace dress codes and the Warakirri College Student Dress Code;
9. Turn off electronic devices during class time and hand in mobile phones as requested by teachers;
10. Not bring weapons or dangerous items of any kind to the College;
11. Not bring or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or non-prescribed medication;
12. Not graffiti or damage any item on College premises;
13. Not smoke less than 10m from any College premises;
14. Not commit or engage in any dishonest or unfair act in relation to an examination or other form of academic assessment;
15. Not engage in any offensive conduct or unlawful activity.

I have read and understand all items in this contract and I agree to comply with it to the best of my ability. I understand that if I do not honour any part of this contract I can expect to face disciplinary action and that my position at the College will be under review. I understand that I am able to discuss or get clarification on any item in this contract or related College policies and procedures at any time upon request.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(If applicable)

Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/ Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



[www.mtcaustralia.com.au/warakirricollege](http://www.mtcaustralia.com.au/warakirricollege)