

# Mount Isa Special School

## Queensland State School Reporting

### 2014 School Annual Report



Postal address	PO Box 1701 Mount Isa 4825
Phone	(07) 4745 0888
Fax	(07) 4745 0800
Email	the.principal@mtisaspecs.eq.edu.au
Webpages	Additional reporting information pertaining to Queensland state schools is located on the <a href="#">My School</a> website and the <a href="#">Queensland Government data</a> website.
Contact person	Principal: Reno Tieppo

## Principal's foreword

### Introduction

Mount Isa State Special School is a small, remote special school located in north-west Queensland. The school motto 'Moving Beyond Expectations' articulates our aims and endeavours to provide high quality education that makes a positive difference to the students and their families. Our strong focus on developing students' literacy, numeracy and independent life skills underpins our belief that all students can learn, all students can excel and all students can achieve great results. In addition to these beliefs is the understanding that our school is a community school meeting the educational needs of students in Mount Isa and surrounding areas. We strive to develop partnerships with parents/carers, businesses, government and non-government service providers in achieving the best student outcomes.

### School progress towards its Key Priorities in 2014

Key Priority	Actions	Progress
1. Deliver curriculum focused on high quality teaching and learning experiences.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement whole school curriculum plans in Maths, English and Science.</li> <li>Develop and embed all aspects of School's Pedagogical Framework throughout school operations.</li> <li>Develop and implement ASDAN principles for senior students.</li> <li>Continue with Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden to incorporate English, Maths and Science.</li> </ol>	<p>Whole school curriculum plan for 2014-2015 in Maths, English and Science developed and implemented.</p> <p>School's Pedagogical Framework underpins how the curriculum is planned, delivered, monitored, evaluated and reported.</p> <p>Post- school pathway plans developed and drive strategies of students' QCIA plans. Further development of ASDAN principles to occur.</p> <p>Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden is utilised as a key strategy in development of quality learning experiences that engage, motivate and</p>

		create opportunities for quality student outcomes.
2. Develop consistency with students reading levels and intervention strategies.	<p>1. Develop and embed principles of the school's Pedagogical Framework throughout school.</p> <p>2. Focus school operations on increasing student reading abilities.</p> <p>3. Increase school attendance.</p> <p>4. Incorporate principles of 'Putting Faces on Data'- Sharatt.</p> <p>5. Develop and implement School Reading Plan.</p> <p>6. Develop and implement Individual Learning Plans (ILP) for 6 month periods (April-September, October –March).</p> <p>7. Incorporate PATH (Planning Alternatives for Tomorrow with Hope) approach for all students.</p>	<p>School's Pedagogical Framework underpins how the reading skill development is planned, delivered, monitored, evaluated and reported.</p> <p>Curriculum team comprising of key teachers led development of targeting of resources towards this goal. Significant feature is the student data wall focusing on individual students' reading skills.</p> <p>School plan in place towards lifting student attendance rate.</p> <p>Staff participated in professional learning group to focus on data.</p> <p>Significant progress of School Reading Plan realised for school. Daily program reflects sharp focus on building students' reading skills.</p> <p>ILPs developed and target specific agreed goals.</p> <p>PATH plans developed in collaboration with parents/carers and guide school pedagogical practices.</p>
3. Develop a rich and positive Culture of Reflective Feedback that informs and improves school capacity for change and improvement.	<p>1. 'Explicit Instruction' (Archer and Hughes) underpins school pedagogy and School Pedagogical Framework.</p> <p>2. 'Visible Learning'- Hattie is adopted and implemented by staff.</p> <p>3. School's Professional Development Plan for year identifies and targets specific growth areas.</p> <p>4. Reflective Feedback process is embedded through</p>	<p>Staff participated in professional learning group to focus on data.</p> <p>Principles of 'Visible Learning' adopted and implemented across the school.</p> <p>Staff members accessed specific training and professional development to improve the school's professional capital.</p> <p>Staff members participated in this process and benefited from</p>

	<p>the school and informs staff members of strengths and areas for further development.</p> <p>5. Staff engage with our Professional Learning Group to progress principles of 'Explicit Instruction', 'Putting faces on data' and 'Visible Learning'.</p>	<p>observation and feedback provided as strategy of increasing staff expertise.</p> <p>Staff participated in professional learning group to focus on data.</p>
4. Develop stronger connections with our school community.	<p>1. Celebrate achievements of school.</p> <p>2. Celebrate student achievements.</p> <p>Continue to promote student and school achievements.</p> <p>3. Implement Certificate 1 in Hospitality and Work Readiness for students in senior schooling with partnership with TAFE.</p> <p>4. Continue to improve students' and families' holistic development through the School Chaplaincy Program.</p> <p>5. Provide opportunity for development of Pastoral Care Programs with local high schools.</p>	<p>School's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary highlighted significant importance of school in Mount Isa.</p> <p>Student data wall, class awards, formal ceremonies and weekly assemblies focus on student achievements.</p> <p>Our partnership with TAFE is developing with Work Readiness course. Further progress dependent on availability of teachers for TAFE.</p> <p>School Chaplain appointed and implementing Chaplain AOP.</p> <p>STEPS program with Spinifex College and Pastoral Care Program from Good Shepherd College created opportunities for our students to develop positive friendships.</p>

### Future outlook

The trend of the past two years of the school population continues to grow. Student attendance has improved steadily. This school continues on a trajectory of continual improvement of its curriculum, pedagogy, analysing and utilising data, building its professional capital, partnerships and facilities.

Following review of school performance and student achievements of 2014, the school community collaboratively agreed on the following Six Key Priorities for 2015:

1. Increasing attendance rates for all students to 89% or higher.
2. Creating a school culture that reflects high levels of collaborative planning and delivery of curriculum that is highly engaging and focused with quality teaching and learning experiences with additional focus on Positive Behaviour School.
3. Developing high level of staff expertise in collecting, analysing and utilising student data that results in improved school performance.

4. Developing a rich and positive Culture of Reflective Feedback that informs and improves school capacity for change and continual improvement.
5. In partnership with post school service providers, creating innovative, clear and sustainable post school pathways for students in Senior Secondary Schooling.
6. Developing consistency and improved student outcomes with students' reading levels through highly effective intervention strategies.

## Our school at a glance

### School Profile

**Coeducational or single sex:** Coeducational

**Year levels offered in 2014:** Prep Year - Year 12

**Total student enrolments for this school:**

	Total	Girls	Boys	Enrolment Continuity (Feb – Nov)
2012	17	6	11	75%
2013	16	6	10	100%
2014	18	7	11	88%

Student counts are based on the Census (August) enrolment collection.

### Characteristics of the student body:

Mount Isa State Special School is a co-educational school which caters for the needs of students from preparatory year to Year 12. Located in the city of a well- established major mining city, Mount Isa, the school is the only special school in this city. The majority of students are of Aboriginal culture with some students of non-Aboriginal culture. Of these students, some are of Out of Home Care family arrangements. The students are grouped into three distinct levels- Junior, Middle and Senior class with most of current students in Middle and Senior age groups.

### Average class sizes

Phase	Average Class Size		
	2012	2013	2014
Prep – Year 3			
Year 4 – Year 7 Primary			
Year 7 Secondary – Year 10			
Year 11 – Year 12			

### School Disciplinary Absences

Disciplinary Absences	Count of Incidents		
	2012	2013	2014*
Short Suspensions - 1 to 5 days	0	0	3
Long Suspensions - 6 to 20 days	0	0	0
Exclusions <sup>#</sup>	0	0	0
Cancellations of Enrolment	0	0	0

<sup>#</sup> Exclusion is an abbreviated title which reflects suspensions with recommendations for exclusion, which may result in an exclusion or be set aside through an appeals process.

\* Caution should be used when comparing 2014 data with previous years SDA data as amendments to the disciplinary provisions in the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006, passed in late 2013, created a time series break.

## Curriculum offerings

### Our distinctive curriculum offering-

Australian Curriculum-specifically English, Maths, Science and Music. Students are grouped into ability streams in the delivery of English and Maths. Science and music is delivered in home class groups.

Each student has a collaboratively planned and agreed set of goals and strategies targeting specific areas of improvement documented in Individual Learning Plans which consider students' needs and parent/carer aspirations.

Each student has a PATH (Promoting Achievements for Tomorrow with Hope) document that captures a collaborative understanding of schooling and long term aspirations of the family.

Intensive interaction is a key strategy with students with significant high needs.

Daily living skills including food preparation, cooking, self-care and gardening are offered towards encouraging independent living skills.

Stephanie Alexander Kitchen and Garden Program assists students to better understand the reason for growing good food and preparation of this food.

Multi-Sensory Environment Program is delivered in a purpose built classroom that enables students with sensory needs to be engaged and participants in a range of stimulatory activities.

Therapy programs (physiotherapy, occupational and speech language) assist in the accessing of the curriculum for students with physical, sensory and speech needs.

Swimming and water safety skills program is delivered in Terms One and Four of each school year. The school engages a qualified swimming instructor accessing the Mount Isa Aquatic Centre and the disability hoist chair for some of our students.

### Extra curricula activities:

The school is equipped with a 15 seater bus that allows Community Based Instruction Programs to transport students to various venues and sites. With the bus, students were able to participate in the Challenge Games conducted in Townsville in July 2014.

Bike riding and road safety skills are taught with the school equipped with a variety of bikes and a bike path set within the school grounds.

Horticulture and Sensory Garden are a key feature of our school and despite lack of water being a challenge, we were able to engage students in this program with great results.

Drumbeat is offered every Tuesday lunch break and is very popular with the students.

NAIDOC Week Activities were conducted in July by joining up with another local primary school.

Mining Expo visitation occurs in May each year and provides opportunities for our students to see machinery used in the mines.

Variety Club of NT and their 'Bash' team were provided a BBQ lunch as they journeyed through Mount Isa. Our students, staff and P and C members provided the 'Bash' teams with their meals.

### How Information and Communication Technologies are used to assist learning:

Access to the Curriculum:

Mount Isa State Special School offers access to learning using a range of information and communication technologies. Each classroom is equipped with an electronic whiteboard offering highly visual learning opportunities and every student has been provided with an iPad device for focused

learning through a range of appropriately selected apps. Software such as Boardmaker, Prolo To Go, Writing with Symbols, Communicate with Print and Clicker 6 enhance student access to the curriculum.

Cerebral Palsy League from Townsville liaise with this school regularly on enhancing its ICT capability. Audit from Jeff Souter from Education Queensland conducted in late 2013 provided direction for this school around 'Cause and Effect' devices.

#### Student Ability Levels:

The program, Communication Matrix has been deployed in mapping student communication skills for students with severe communication needs. The data is utilised in mapping specific goals for these students.

#### Building School Capacity:

Each teacher is equipped with a laptop computer and desktop computers are positioned in the staffroom for access by teacher aides. Each classroom has desktop computers for student access and switch devices enable identified students to interact with specific software.

The strong emphasis to use digital material such as video and photos continues to enhance student learning and for assessment procedures. Staff members are able to access ICT training, such as One School, as required.

### Social Climate

The school's three rules are-'Be Safe, Be a Learner' and 'Be Respectful'. Our School has finalised review of the Responsible Behaviour Plan in late 2013 and through School Wide Positive Behaviour Support process developed a Behaviour Matrix that guides how the school manages behaviour. Specific behaviours are taught for a fortnight period by the teachers and students are recognised at school assemblies. In an endeavour to evaluate effectiveness of our SWPBS, data is collected from One School and used to determine individual, student and school performance. Whilst parent and student survey data this year was not available, indications from P and C meetings, face to face contact and phone contacts, lead to the belief that parents believe that their children are getting a good education and are safe whilst at this school.

The School Chaplain has been instrumental in building a positive and supportive environment with students, staff and parents/carers. This was most evident with weekly activities in building of social skills during recesses.

Staff members enjoy coming to work at this school (100%) and agree that the school encourages the students to do their best (100%). There was high agreement by staff (92%) that their school is a safe place to work and that they receive useful feedback about their work (92%).

### Parent, student and staff satisfaction with the school

Performance measure	2012	2013	2014
Percentage of parent/caregivers who agree <sup>#</sup> that:			
their child is getting a good education at school (S2016)		100%	DW
this is a good school (S2035)		100%	DW
their child likes being at this school* (S2001)		100%	DW
their child feels safe at this school* (S2002)		100%	DW
their child's learning needs are being met at this school* (S2003)		100%	DW
their child is making good progress at this school* (S2004)		100%	DW

Performance measure			
Percentage of parent/caregivers who agree# that:	2012	2013	2014
teachers at this school expect their child to do his or her best* (S2005)		100%	DW
teachers at this school provide their child with useful feedback about his or her school work* (S2006)		100%	DW
teachers at this school motivate their child to learn* (S2007)		100%	DW
teachers at this school treat students fairly* (S2008)		100%	DW
they can talk to their child's teachers about their concerns* (S2009)		100%	DW
this school works with them to support their child's learning* (S2010)		100%	DW
this school takes parents' opinions seriously* (S2011)		83%	DW
student behaviour is well managed at this school* (S2012)		100%	DW
this school looks for ways to improve* (S2013)		100%	DW
this school is well maintained* (S2014)		100%	DW

Performance measure			
Percentage of students who agree# that:	2012	2013	2014
they are getting a good education at school (S2048)	100%	100%	
they like being at their school* (S2036)	100%	100%	
they feel safe at their school* (S2037)	100%	100%	
their teachers motivate them to learn* (S2038)	100%	100%	
their teachers expect them to do their best* (S2039)	100%	100%	
their teachers provide them with useful feedback about their school work* (S2040)	100%	100%	
teachers treat students fairly at their school* (S2041)	67%	100%	
they can talk to their teachers about their concerns* (S2042)	100%	75%	
their school takes students' opinions seriously* (S2043)	67%	100%	
student behaviour is well managed at their school* (S2044)	100%	100%	
their school looks for ways to improve* (S2045)	33%	100%	
their school is well maintained* (S2046)	100%	100%	
their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things* (S2047)	67%	75%	

Performance measure			
Percentage of school staff who agree# that:	2012	2013	2014
they enjoy working at their school (S2069)		100%	100%
they feel that their school is a safe place in which to work (S2070)		100%	92%
they receive useful feedback about their work at their school (S2071)		100%	92%
students are encouraged to do their best at their school (S2072)		100%	100%
students are treated fairly at their school (S2073)		100%	83%

Performance measure			
Percentage of school staff who agree# that:	2012	2013	2014
student behaviour is well managed at their school (S2074)		100%	67%
staff are well supported at their school (S2075)		89%	75%
their school takes staff opinions seriously (S2076)		100%	83%
their school looks for ways to improve (S2077)		100%	100%
their school is well maintained (S2078)		100%	92%
their school gives them opportunities to do interesting things (S2079)		100%	92%

\* Nationally agreed student and parent/caregiver items were incorporated in the School Opinion Survey in 2012.

# 'Agree' represents the percentage of respondents who Somewhat Agree, Agree or Strongly Agree with the statement. Due to a major redevelopment of the surveys (parent/caregiver and student in 2012; staff in 2013), comparisons with results from previous years are not recommended.

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

### Involving parents in their child's education

Parent/carer involvement is central to the development of students' Individual Learning Plans and the Promoting Alternatives for Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) plans. Meetings are arranged just prior to the Easter recess with documents formalised soon after. Where parents/carers have been unable to attend the meetings face to face, phone meetings have allowed participation and input. The school's Parents and Citizen's Association is another vital link between home and school and is made up of a number of devoted parents keen to advance the educational and social outcomes of students of the school. These parents are supporters of fundraising activities and key parents involved in day to day conduct of the school and in their child's education. For students who are in a care arrangement, carers are involved in the development of the Education Support Plan with the school guidance officer, the Principal and officers of the Department of Child Safety.

The school newsletter is a vital link between home and school offering information and news of events from the two week period of schooling. The school website also offers opportunities for parents/carers to know what is happening with the school.

Each student has a communication book that provides opportunities for parents/carers to maintain communication with the class teacher. For some students, parents and staff meet on a daily basis during drop off and pick up times and these occasions offer opportunities for discussions.

Parents are invited to our weekly assemblies where student acknowledgement is the focus. Formal ceremonies such as Presentation of School Leaders' Badges, NAIDOC and special events provide opportunities for parents to feel welcomed and be part of our school community.

### Reducing the school's environmental footprint

Significant efforts are made by all staff and students to reduce electricity and water usage where possible. Due to the climate in Mount Isa which predominately hot most of the year, air conditioners are a necessity of life to maintain good learning conditions. For our some of our students with severe and profound disabilities, it is essential that air conditioner are in good working order to ensure that their wellbeing is maintained. In spite of increase student enrolments from 2013 to 2014, electricity usage decreased significantly.

Years	Environmental footprint indicators	
	Electricity kWh	Water kL
2011-2012	60,373	23,111

2012-2013	61,278	8,206
2013-2014	49,715	15

The consumption data is compiled from sources including ERM, Ergon reports and utilities data entered into OneSchool by each school. The data provides an indication of the consumption trend in each of the utility categories which impact on the school's environmental footprint.

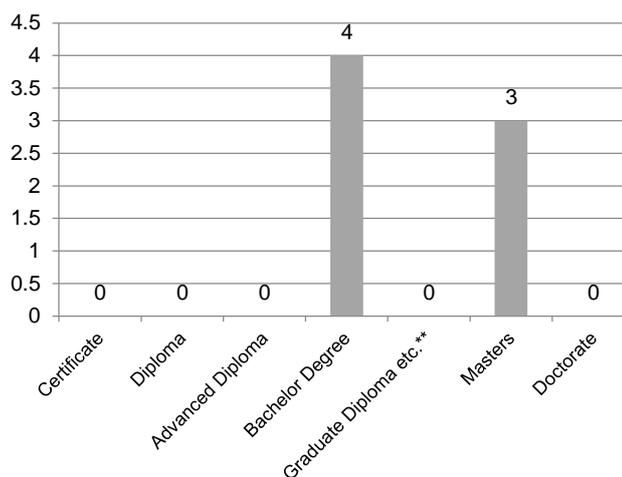
## Our staff profile

### Staff composition, including Indigenous staff

2014 Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff*	Non-teaching Staff	Indigenous Staff
Headcounts	9	8	<5
Full-time equivalents	6	5	<5

### Qualification of all teachers

Highest level of attainment	Number of Teaching Staff *
Certificate	0
Diploma	0
Advanced Diploma	0
Bachelor Degree	4
Graduate Diploma etc.**	0
Masters	3
Doctorate	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>



\*Teaching staff includes School Leaders

\*\*Graduate Diploma etc. includes Graduate Diploma, Bachelor Honours Degree, and Graduate Certificate.

### Expenditure on and teacher participation in professional development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2014 were \$ 14,833.58

The major professional development initiatives are as follows:

- Intensive Interaction
- First Aid Qualifications and CPR training
- Queensland Inclusion School Leaders Conference
- Fierce Conversations
- QASEL State Conference
- Special Education Curriculum Cluster Conference
- One School Training
- Complex Health Procedures and Medication
- Disability specific professional development activities
- Australian Curriculum professional development

The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2014 was 100%.

Average staff attendance	2012	2013	2014
Staff attendance for permanent and temporary staff and school leaders.	99%	99%	97%

### Proportion of staff retained from the previous school year

From the end of the previous school year, 80% of staff was retained by the school for the entire 2014 school year.

### School income broken down by funding source

School income broken down by funding source is available via the *My School* website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

To access our income details, click on the *My School* link above. You will then be taken to the *My School* website with the following 'Find a school' text box.

#### Find a school

Search by school name

Search by suburb, town or postcode

Sector  Government  
 Non-government

Where it says 'Search by school name', type in the name of the school you wish to view, and select <GO>. Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to accept the **Terms of Use** and Privacy Policy before being given access to the school's *My School* entry webpage.

School financial information is available by selecting 'School finances' in the menu box in the top left corner of the school's entry webpage. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of income by funding source.

## Performance of our students

### Key student outcomes

Student attendance	2012	2013	2014
The overall attendance rate for the students at this school (shown as a percentage).	77%	74%	72%

The overall attendance rate in 2014 for all Queensland Special schools was 89%.

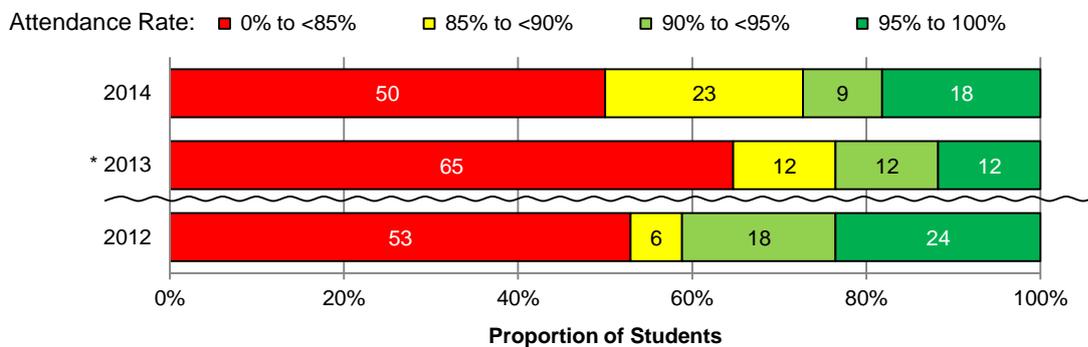
**Student attendance rate for each year level (shown as a percentage)**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
2012												
2013												
2014												

DW = Data withheld to ensure confidentiality.

**Student attendance distribution**

The proportions of students by attendance range.



\*The method for calculating attendance changed in 2013 – care should be taken when comparing data after 2012 to that of previous years.

**Description of how non-attendance is managed by the school**

Non-attendance is managed in state schools in line with the DETE policies, SMS-PR-029: Managing Student Absences and SMS-PR-036: Roll Marking in State Schools, which outline processes for managing and recording student attendance and absenteeism.

Teachers mark the attendance roll twice per day on One School. In addition, our school maintains a daily record of student arrivals and departures by either parents/carers or through taxis. Parents/carers are encouraged via the school newsletter to notify the school directly when their child is absent from school. When three unexplained absences occur, the principal or class teachers made contact with the family for reasons for absence and record the contact on One School. Our school Indigenous Liaison Officer conducts home visitations in an attempt to encourage attendance. In addition and if required, the Police Liaison Officer will visit families to encourage attendance. Student attendance is encouraged through a positive incentive scheme. When a student attends school for the whole week, the student is acknowledged at school assembly with a certificate and opportunity to select a prize from the Prize Box. In addition, the name of parent/carer of that child is placed in end of the month competition for a prize. School fortnightly newsletter acknowledges students and their families who attend school on a regular basis. The school maintains student attendance chart which is updated at mid and end of each term in identifying trends in non-attendance.

**National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results – our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7, and 9.**

N/A

Our reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy results for the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are available via the My School website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

To access our NAPLAN results, click on the My School link above. You will then be taken to the My School website with the following **'Find a school' text box**.

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Search by suburb, town or postcode

Sector  Government  
 Non-government

Where it says **'Search by school name'**, type in the name of the school whose NAPLAN results you wish to view, and select <GO>.

Read and follow the instructions on the next screen; you will be asked to accept the **Terms of Use** and Privacy Policy before being able to access NAPLAN data. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the school for a paper copy of our school's NAPLAN results.

## Achievement – Closing the Gap

A significant number of students of this school are of Indigenous culture. Due to disabilities and hospitalisation, indigenous students can be absent from school for extended periods of time. Where absenteeism is unexplained, a proactive approach has been adopted to provide a very strong incentive for Indigenous students to attend school. This has created success across the classes with most students and is supported by the parents/carers. Our Parent and Carer Engagement framework focused this year on significant celebrations such as our school's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and activities such as the Townsville Challenge Games to build partnerships with all families. As a result, students have been provided maximum opportunity to achieve to their maximum potential outcomes across the curriculum.

Apparent retention rates Year 10 to Year 12	2012	2013	2014
Year 12 student enrolment as a percentage of the Year 10 student cohort.			
Outcomes for our Year 12 cohorts	2012	2013	2014
Number of students receiving a Senior Statement	2	3	
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement.	1	3	
Number of students receiving an Overall Position (OP)	0	0	
Number of students who are completing/continuing a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SAT).	0	0	
Number of students awarded one or more Vocational Educational Training (VET) qualifications (incl. SAT).	0	0	
Number of students awarded an Australian Qualification Framework Certificate II or above.	0	0	
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) at the end of Year 12.	0	0	

<b>Outcomes for our Year 12 cohorts</b>	2012	2013	2014
Number of students awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD).	0	0	
Percentage of OP/IBD eligible students with OP 1-15 or an IBD.			
Percentage of Year 12 students who are completing or completed a SAT or were awarded one or more of the following: QCE, IBD, VET qualification.	0%	0%	
Percentage of Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) applicants receiving an offer.			

As at 19 February 2015. The above values exclude VISA students.

<b>Overall Position Bands (OP)</b>					
Number of students in each Band for OP 1 to 25					
Years	OP 1-5	OP 6-10	OP 11-15	OP 16-20	OP 21-25
2012	0	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0	0
2014					

As at 19 February 2015. The above values exclude VISA students.

<b>Vocational Educational Training qualification (VET)</b>			
Number of students completing qualifications under Australian Qualification Framework (AQF)			
Years	Certificate I	Certificate II	Certificate III or above
2012	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0
2014			

As at 19 February 2015. The above values exclude VISA students.

### Post-school destination information

At the time of publishing this School Annual Report, the results of the 2014 post-school destinations survey, Next Step – Student Destination Report (2013 Year 12 cohort) for the school were not available. Information about these post-school destinations of our students will be uploaded to the school's website in September.

### Early school leavers information

The destinations of young people who left the school in Years 10, 11 and prior to completing Year 12.

In 2014, one student left school prior to graduation. The school engaged Disability Services Queensland to support and provide advice for this student.