



Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula

Hare Krishna School

Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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2016 Annual School Report

School Board's Message

2016 was another remarkable year for the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula with many pioneering initiatives successfully undertaken. We are delighted to report that as the school continues to progress and reach new historical horizons, more families and children are being attracted from the local area as well as interstate.

One of the historic and significant achievements of 2016 was obtaining accreditation and registration from the NSW Education Standards Authority to commence Year 11 and 12 courses and in this way provide our students with a continuum of education from Pre-K right through to the High School Certificate (HSC). In addition, the school was successful in securing a Commonwealth grant to begin the momentum construction of the High School campus. Planning and Development works have commenced, with construction expected to begin in September 2017.

Throughout 2016, the school continued to implement a number of best-practice research based literacy, numeracy and behaviour learning programs. Our pioneering approach to literacy coaching and the results achieved by our students were recognised by the NSW Minister of Education and the NSW Association of

Independent Schools during the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan Conference at the Australian Mint in Sydney. The approach facilitated real-time online coaching of our teaching staff via a three-camera video transmission of classes in progress, connected with some of the world leading academics and consultants in the areas of explicit direct instruction and classroom best practices. The consultants provided through an ear-piece, immediate feedback to the proxy coach and teacher during the class, in this way, modifying or refining the pedagogical practice real-time. The school also continued with the DIBELS diagnostic assessments of students' literacy progress, developed by the University of Oregon. The data collected three times per year provides clear evidence of the effectiveness of our teaching programs and allows the school to make timely decisions in terms of literacy support. Furthermore, the school began implementation of the school-wide Positive Behaviour and Intervention Support (PBIS) program, a framework that allows the school to consistently and effectively teach behavioural expectations rooted in the Vedic principles of compassion, truthfulness, cleanliness and austerity.

Another historically significant addition to the school in 2016 was the establishment of the Well-being Department, supported by funding from the NSW Chaplaincy program. The Department is headed by a team of highly qualified social and community workers to provide both in-school support and access to external community services for students in need, as well as offering general life-skills and strategies for a well-balanced and fulfilling life for the whole school community.

The school's unique approach to career development and work-placement was also further refined during 2016 with the introduction of the Year 10 Work Experience program. Students discussed their career aspirations with the high school mentors and opportunities were organised to experience a working environment within the area of their interest. Some of the locations students were placed in included the Tweed Shire Court House, SAE Film Institute, Murwillumbah Library, Murwillumbah Gym, a construction company and various retail shops and restaurants. The students undertook this work experience and career orientation during the school holidays twice during the year and received glowing appraisal from their employers on their conduct, maturity and work-ready skills., reflecting on the school in a very positive light.

In the summer of 2016, the entire high school was privileged to represent the school and perform on stage at the Sydney Opera House, chanting an auspicious Vedic mantra invocation to open the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Hare Krishna movement world-wide.

Finally, but not least, the School Board would like to recognise and give heartfelt appreciation to the parents and friends of the school who came together with a shared vision to form the school's very first P&C committee. Headed by Indranila as President, the P&C established regular nutritious prasadam lunches on Ekadasi days throughout the year and coordinated many successful fundraising

events including food stalls on festivals at the New Govardhana temple and at the school's annual Pandavas Sports Carnival. In addition, headed by Sanatani, the P&C also held the Clouds of Colour Festival which was an enormously successful family event. We are indebted to the generous contributions and services of all the many devotees, volunteers and parents who participated in these events and other programs over the year. We give thanks to our dear Mother Sri Hari Bhakti for continuing to volunteer her valuable services in the Gurukula administration and pay tribute to our superb team of dedicated teaching staff and the outstanding leadership of our principal, Vinod Bihari Prabhu.

In this context, the school staff, parents and the Hare Krishna community continue to be committed to the quality and diversification of the school's educational program, creating an engaging and inclusive learning environment for our students to thrive within and we look forward to further advancing this high standard in the new school year.

Venu Gopala Das, School Board Chairman.

About the School

Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula, being Australia's only Hare Krishna School, was established in 1980 in order to give children a comprehensive spiritual and academic education that will provide them with the skills, knowledge and values to pursue any chosen goal in life. Our aim is to offer our students an adequate foundation in order to make their lives successful and deeply fulfilling.

Being a registered independent primary school, we provide our students with all the key learning Kindergarten to Year 12 subjects as per the NSW Board of Studies syllabuses. However, being a part of the Hare Krishna movement, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and, thus, always deriving the values and inspiration from the teachings of His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, we extend the opportunities for our students to progress spiritually and to develop personal qualities of a devotee that will assist them throughout their lives. Qualities such as compassion, integrity and respect are not just taught, but also modelled and practiced on a daily basis in the accommodating environment offered by our school.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula provides a unique educational experience open to all families wishing to offer their children the most comprehensive educational start in life, integrating the aspects of devotional life, academic, physical and vocational education.

In 2016 the total enrolment of the school was 90 students, 49 girls and 41 boys. The school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) was valued at 1127 points. Current SES score for Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula is 89 points.

Student Performance in National Tests

Each year, students in years 3, 5 and 7 are tested for literacy and numeracy skills, and their performance is compared to nationally established benchmarks in the areas of reading, writing and numeracy.

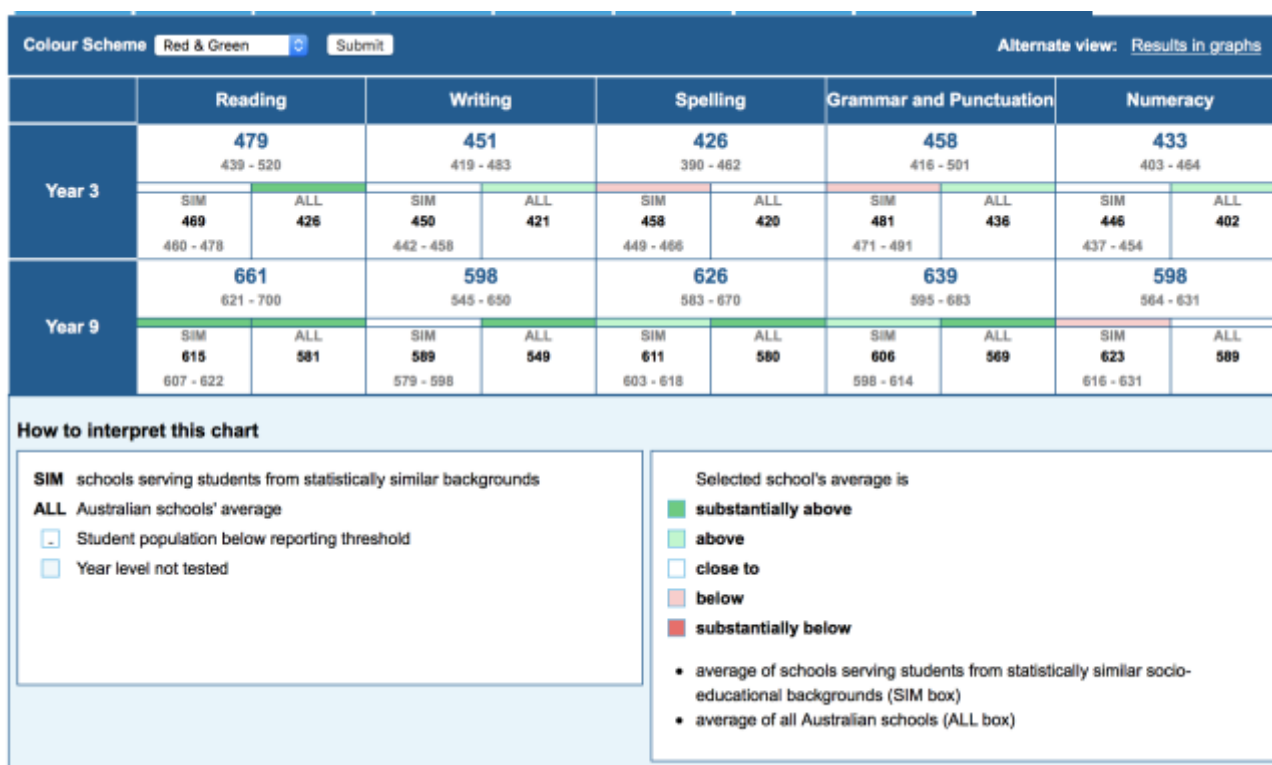
In 2016, 100% of students participated and were assessed in the NAPLAN tests. In 2016 the school outperformed the national average for all schools in Years 3 and 9 in all the categories of the compulsory literacy and numeracy exam.

In Year 3, 90% of students were in the top bands of 5 and 6 in their reading, while in Year 9, 86% of students achieved band 8 and higher.

The results of the NAPLAN test (*Fig. 1*) in graphs, numbers and bands, as well as student gain description and performance comparison with similar schools are also available at <http://www.myschool.edu.au>.

Professional Learning and Teacher Standards

In 2016, to provide a quality learning environment for both the primary and secondary sections of our school: Years K to 2, Years 3 to 4, Years 5 to 6 and Years 7 to 10, we employed 12 teachers and 9 auxiliary staff in various full-time and part-time roles. All the employed staff possessed formal teacher qualifications from higher education institutions that are recognised within Australia. Throughout 2016, the school staff participated in



a range of training seminars dedicated to the improvement of instructional practices and classroom management.

In particular, all primary the primary teaching and assisting staff continued the training for the best practices in the delivery of the Reading Mastery, the whole-school Direct Instruction program from McGraw Hill Education Australia. Moreover, teachers were provided by the on-site support and training by the NSW Association of Independent Schools consultants in the areas of literacy, numeracy and special needs education.

The specific courses attended by our staff included:

- School Wide Positive Behaviour and Intervention Supports
- Explicit Direct Instruction programs – Reading Mastery and Spelling Mastery – training and coaching
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) training
- Anita Chin’s Inspired Mathematics Teaching
- AIS NSW Numeracy Training by Lynelle Campbell

The standard of education is also monitored through direct evaluation of all Scope and Sequence and Unit Planning documentation developed by the teaching staff of the school. The plans are examined and discussed prior to the teaching term. Consequently the plans, student performance and work samples are examined and evaluated upon their completion. Throughout the term, teacher performance is also assessed through principal and peer observations. Each observation is formally discussed and the relevant strategic plan is formulated to address the required needs.

Workforce Composition

<i>School staff 2016</i>	
Teaching staff	12
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	9.3
Non-teaching staff	9
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	3.2

Student Attendance

Student attendance rates

Student attendance for 2016 has been recorded at 92%, with the 7% increase in the attendance rate from 2015. The details of the student enrolments and attendance are available at www.myschool.edu.au.

Management of non attendance

Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula students are expected to be at school by 8:55 am, Monday to Friday. The first teaching period commences at 9:00 am. At the time of class-roll marking at 9:35 am, the students who are not present are marked ‘absent’. Should students arrive after the role is marked for the day, they are required to bring a note signed by a parent explaining the reason for being late. If a ‘late reasons note’ is not provided, the office administrator will issue a ‘late arrival form’ to a child and request that it is returned signed by parents the next school day. If this is not forthcoming, the administration will follow up with the parents and will refer the matter to the school principal should the attendance issues persist.

When children return after being away from school for one or more days, they are required to bring a note signed by a parent stating the day(s) they were away, and the reason for absenteeism. If such a note is not provided, then the school

administrator shall send home a 'student absence form' and request that it is returned completed and signed by a parent. Again, if this is not forthcoming, the administrator will follow up with the parents and inform the principal of the above. It is the responsibility of the principal to liaise with the parents and discuss the matter of regular absenteeism.

In the event of any student displaying a regular absence pattern from the school, even where explained by parental notes, the teacher will advise the principal of the situation. The principal will be required to discuss with the parents the issue of a repeated absence, the effects of non-attendance on the student's performance and learning, remind the parents of their legal requirements to send their child to school on a daily basis and discuss the strategies that can assist to improve the regularity of attendance. An appropriate record of the history of student non-attendance, discussions with the parents and implemented strategies needs to be entered into the student's file.

Enrolment Policies and Characteristics of the Student Body

Enrolment process

Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula, the primary school of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness in Australia is open for enrolment to all students, irrespective of their religious, cultural and social backgrounds.

As such, it is our policy that any child can be enrolled in the school and it is our commitment to liaise closely with the families of our students to assist with the understanding and adherence to the lifestyle and behavioural practices that are the

accepted norm amongst the Hare Krishna devotees.

Enrolment procedures of this school include a four step process applied to all candidates:

1. Consideration of each applicant's supporting statement/interview responses regarding their ability and willingness to support the school's ethos.
2. Consideration of each applicant's educational needs. The school may require to gather additional information from the parents/family and other relevant persons.
3. Identification of any strategies which need to be put into place to accommodate the applicant before a decision regarding the enrolment is made.
4. Informing the applicant of the outcome.

Continuation of enrolment is subject to the student's adherence to school rules and payment of all school fees.

Student body characteristics

<i>Students 2016</i>	
Total enrolments	90
Girls	49
Boys	41
Full-time equivalent enrolments	90
Indigenous students	0%
Language background other than English	0%
Student attendance rate	92%

Reference: <http://www.myschool.edu.au>

School Policies

A. Student welfare policies

The welfare of students is a high priority at the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula. For the primary school students, it is expected that their classroom teacher / home teacher is the person responsible for ensuring that they are given the required help or assistance needed to achieve their best potential.

Although as a small school, we do not provide counseling and other assisting services on-site, we are able to assist students in need of such services to gain access to the public health services in Murwillumbah, NSW. It is our experience that such assistance is readily available, and therefore our reliance on such outside services does not leave our students at a disadvantage.

It is required that all teaching and administrative staff undertake regular training in basic first aid practices. The school administration is responsible for the maintenance and restocking of the First Aid Kit.

It should be noted, that the school will only provide medications to children in situations where we have been given written permission to do so by the parents. If the administration of specific medications is required, parents must advise the principal in writing, and supply him/her the necessary medications.

In the event of accident or illness, it is the school's policy to provide First Aid treatment and inform the parents. If required, the school will transport a student to the nearest hospital in Murwillumbah. In less serious accidents, the transportation may be done by one of the school vehicles; however in serious accidents and emergencies, the principal will contact the NSW Ambulance service, of which the school is a member.

The complete text of the Gurukula's Student Welfare policy can be viewed on our site: www.krishnaschool.nsw.edu.au

B. Discipline policies

The Management of student behaviour in Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula is a shared responsibility of the school community, including staff, parents and students. Its success is based upon the recognition of the dignity and worth of all individuals. Through the implementation of this policy we aim to:

- * Create a positive environment within our school and classrooms, so that teachers and students can work together in harmony.
- * Create a caring school environment where the rights and responsibilities of the individual are recognised and respected.
- * Establish a set of rules that protect the rights of all individuals.
- * Establish a clear set of consequences for individuals who do not accept their responsibilities and break rules, so that they are encouraged to recognise and respect the rights of others.
- * Establish procedures so that conflicts can be solved in a positive, non-violent manner.

It should be noted that the Gurukula discipline policy explicitly prohibits the use of corporal punishment in behaviour management practices. The complete text of the behaviour management policy (Safe and Supportive Environment) is available on the school website: www.krishnaschool.nsw.edu.au.

C. Reporting complaints and resolving grievances

The school board of the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula has endorsed a policy that outlines a set of procedures that can be undertaken by individuals desiring to report a complaint or grievance, providing a number of channels for communication. Anyone desiring to obtain a copy of the grievance policy is welcome to request one from the school administration. It is to be noted that the management of the Gurukula always welcomes any input regarding the development and improvements that could be made to the school policies and operational procedures.

School Determined Improvement Targets

A. Achievement of priorities for identified in the school's 2015 Annual Report

2016 Priorities	2016 Achievements
Continuation of the implementation of the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan initiatives, consolidating the literacy program and developing the strategies for improving numeracy outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff coaching in DI program – Reading Mastery and Spelling Mastery • Whole school approach to Reading is maintained • Ongoing staff training in the Effective Numeracy Instruction • DIBELS Next literacy assessment data demonstrates significant improvement of student performance • NAPLAN results support the implementation of the literacy and

High School development to include subject specific trained teaching staff, introducing the electives program.	<p>numeracy programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school opens and successfully conducts the instruction in Year 10 (Stage 5). • The NSW Board of Studies inspects the implementation of Stage 5 (Year10) curriculum and recommends the school for the accreditation. • Stage 5 students are offered a number of electives, including Commerce, Industrial Technology, Food Technology and Digital Media and Design.
Designing the program and systems for introducing the new levels of education Year - 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school designs the program for Stage 6 classes. • The program is inspected by the NESAs • The school is recommended for the initial accreditation and registration for teaching courses leading to the High School Certificate.
Developing the new high school facilities construction project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The High School facilities architectural design is complete • The school is successful in securing the BGA grant for the construction of the first phase of the high school campus. • The engineering assessment of the drawings commences.
Continuing to implement the 'Embedding Excellence' project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school continues the implementation of the 'Embedding Excellence' project • The student, staff and parents surveys are completed and the areas of school improvement are

	<p>identified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school continues the implementation of the three segments of the project: 'organic to strategic' in relation to the school's operational procedures and administration, 'embedding values in our daily life' in relation to behaviour management and 'values all around' in relation to the signage and visuals around the schools.
Initiating the PBIS (Positive Behaviour and Intervention Systems) project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school staff undergo training in the PBIS systems The school forms the PBIS team The team is developing the PBIS curriculum and trials the behaviour classes.
Commencing the program for Preparatory Class of students to enter Kindergarten class the following year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school opens the 2 days per week program for children one year below the Kindergarten age. Children are introduced to the school environment and participate in the play-based program along with the MiniLit literacy foundational development.

B. 2017 Priority areas for improvement

1. Continuation of the implementation of the NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan initiatives, consolidating the literacy program and developing the strategies for improving numeracy outcomes, with the specific focus on continuing to develop the coaching model of staff training and support.
2. Designing the program and launching the classes for Year 12 in term 4 of 2017.

3. High school campus and facilities development and construction.

4. Soft launch and the official launch of the Positive Behaviour and Intervention Supports System school-wide.

5. Best teaching practices model of coaching and training of teachers school-wide

6. Continuing the implementation of the 'Embedding Excellence' project.

Respect and Responsibility

The vision of our school is to prepare every student to contribute to, and thrive in their future by providing enriching educational experiences within a safe, supportive and challenging environment. We encourage children to develop intellectual, physical, social and aesthetic skills which will serve their necessities and those of the community, while also helping them to build the foundations of respect for all living beings; responsible and active participation in the community, at a local, national and global level; and the development of spiritual consciousness and self-realisation.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Throughout 2016, the Gurukula continued to maintain and improve the communication channels set up between the school, parents and the community. The school administration widely utilized the program of regular email updates and Short Text Message notifications related to Gurukula's programs and activities. The school continued the active use of a Facebook page, providing an additional communication channel and engaging our parents and community

(<http://www.facebook.com/bhaktivedantaswami.gurukula?fref=ts>)

Variety of communication channels and the openness of the school to parental involvement continued to result in a relatively high level of satisfaction of our parents and friends.

Students' satisfaction has been expressed with the school's involvement in the cultural programs of the Hare Krishna movement during the festivals and drama performances depicting traditional stories of Vedic literatures, the preparation of which was assisted by our volunteering parents and other devotees.

The teaching and non-teaching staff of the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula have expressed their satisfaction with the increase of mutual involvement and collaboration in the organization and management of the school as well as improvements in the facilities and educational resources made available for the successful delivery of the curriculum.

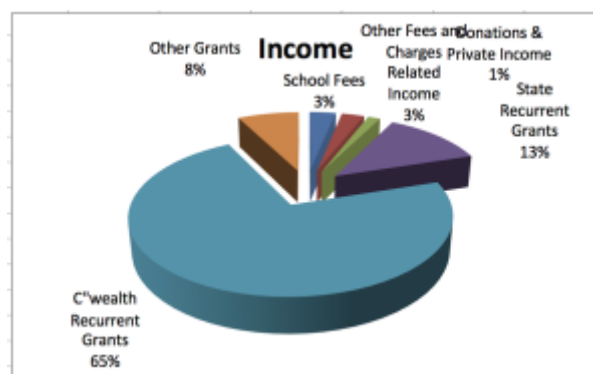
The data demonstrating the degree and areas of satisfaction was collected using the Embedding Excellence Survey Platform provided by the NSW Association of Independent Schools, Transforming Organisational Culture and Practice Unit.

Summary Financial Information

The following summary data is presented according to the audited reports of the Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula for 2016. Further financial information regarding 2016 will also be available at www.myschool.edu.au later this year.

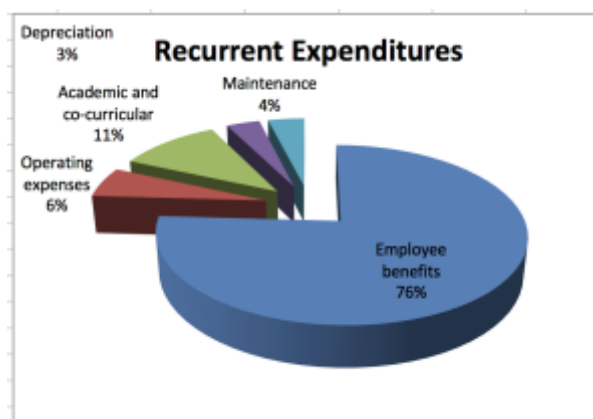
Income Categories

Capital and Recurrent Income	
School Fees	\$ 40,185.00
Other Fees and Charges Related Income	\$ 34,409.00
Donations & Private Income	\$ 18,836.00
State Recurrent Grants	\$ 155,650.00
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants	\$ 899,490.00
Other Grants	\$ 93,636.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 1,242,206.00



Expenditure Categories

Recurrent Expenditure	
Employee benefits	\$ 774,193.00
Operating expenses	\$ 58,683.00
Academic and co-curricular	\$ 110,707.00
Depreciation	\$ 36,426.00
Maintenance	\$ 39,864.00
TOTAL Rec and Capital Expenditures	\$ 1,019,873.00



Capital Expenditure	
Additions to buildings	\$ 106,013.00
Additions to furniture and equipment	\$ 50,317.00
Total capital expenditure	\$ 156,330.00