

BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI GURUKULĀ

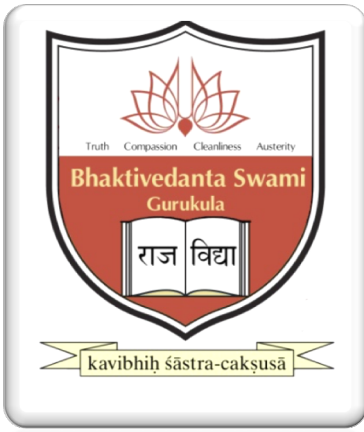
Hare Krishna School

Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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2017 Annual School Report

School Board's Message

Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula has continued to progress and reach new milestones in 2017. With many pioneering initiatives, diligent and dedicated work of our staff, support of our parents and the broader community of devotees, the school is continuing to attract families and children from the local area and interstate.

In Term 3 of 2017, Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula celebrated the enrolment of its 100th student. This was a significant milestone and first in the school's 38 year history. His Holiness Mukunda Goswami, senior member of the Hare Krishna movement, parents, students and representatives of the press joined the celebrations at the school hall. We would like to thank Dhriti Gopi for preparing a wonderful cake to mark this special occasion of the enrolment of 100 students.

The start of term 4 of 2017 was also the historical moment when the school's first group of Year 12 students commenced their HSC studies. The courses offered to the HSC students include English, Business Studies, Community and Family Studies, Mathematics, Design and Technology, Religious Studies and Biology. The staff and students worked hard to reach this moment and we wish them all success in this new undertaking.

Our HSC students will sit their exams in Term 4 of 2018.

We would also like to thank Ute, our committed parent, who, in 2017, along with the devotees from the administration team, worked determinedly to re-open the Gurukula library. Our library space is now a vibrant location with many exciting, colourful and properly catalogued books for all ages. Ute is also continuing to be an inviting and friendly librarian for the school students. The members of the school community are welcome to use the library with their children.

The school is also continuing with the bi-annual educational program that offers our students an opportunity to visit the holy places in India. In 2017, the group of thirty high school students and staff visited the Holy Dham of Mayapur. Sri Mayapur is the birthplace of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the land on which many of His transcendental pastimes were performed and where His glorious sankirtan movement began. It is also the headquarters of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Every inch of Sri Mayapur is worshipable and bestows immense mercy. Holding this appreciation in their hearts, the students and staff were fortunate to participate in this inspiring trip. We would like to extend our thanks to the staff and volunteers who

worked tirelessly on organising and running such a memorable pilgrimage.

In late 2017, the school also commenced the site works for the construction of the Gurukula's high school campus. Sophisticated engineering structures are still being erected to ensure the integrity of the slope and provide four significant flat pads to allow for further construction works. We would like to thank Ajita Prabhu and Mahamantra Prabhu for their relentless efforts in developing this project.

The school's mission is to foster the spiritual, intellectual and emotional development of our students by basing its practices on the teachings of Srila Prabhupada, the Founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and supported by contemporary and evidence-based teaching methods. The focus of the school's community is to assist students in reaching their full potential as open-minded, inspirational and thriving contributors to society at large, with a firm foundation in the principles of compassion, cleanliness, self-regulation and integrity. On behalf of the entire Gurukula community, I would like to thank the school staff, parents and students for their dedication to this mission in 2017 and look forward for further progress in 2018.

Vasu Shrestha 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 Areas from Kindergarten to Year 12 as per the NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) 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 2017 the total enrolment of the school was 100 students, 51 girls and 49 boys. The school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) was valued at 1061 points. Current SES score for Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula is 89 points.

Student Performance in National Tests

Each year, students in years 3, 5, 7 and 9 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 2017, 100% of students participated and were assessed in the NAPLAN tests. In 2017 the school

achieved scores substantially above the national average in Reading and Numeracy results for its Year 5 students and above the national average for Reading and Grammar for the students in Years 7 and 9. The other results for Writing, Spelling and Numeracy were close to national averages. The school will require to focus attention on the Numeracy skills of its Year 9 group and provide remedial programs in Spelling and Grammar for its Year 3 students.

In 2017, in Reading, 58% of Year 3 students achieved the top bands of 5 and 6 and 76% of Year 5 students achieved the top bands of 7 and 8. In Writing, 86% of our Year 3 students achieved band 5.

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 2017, to provide a quality learning environment for both the primary and secondary sections of our school (Years K to 2, Years 3 to 6 and Years 7 to 12),

we employed 16 teachers (12 full time equivalent teachers) and 5 auxiliary staff (2.8 full time equivalent auxiliary staff) in various full-time and part-time roles. All the employed teachers hold formal teacher qualifications from higher education institutions that are recognised within Australia. Throughout 2017, the school staff participated in a range of Professional Developments dedicated to the improvement of instructional practices and classroom management.

In particular, all 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 on-site support and training by the NSW Association of Independent Schools consultants in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy and Special Needs Education.

The Professional Developments attended by our staff included:

- School Wide Positive Behaviour and Intervention Supports
- Explicit Direct Instruction programs – Reading Mastery and Spelling Mastery – training and coaching

Compare to ● Schools with similar students ● All Australian students ℹ Interpreting this table					
	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
Year 3	440	433	383	394	430
Year 5	558	483	499	531	532
Year 7	565	499	553	563	555
Year 9	597	540	575	594	560

Selected school's average when compared to all Australian students is:

■ Substantially above
■ Above
■ Close to
■ Below
■ Substantially below

- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) training
- Anita Chin's Inspired Mathematics Teaching
- Leadership Training by Nick Clarke (AIS NSW)

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.

The school also encourages the teachers to identify their annual professional goals within the framework of the Australian Professional Teaching Standards and work conjointly with the team leaders and the Principal towards achievement of those goals. Mentoring programs, Professional Development, observations and support are organised to assist our teachers in reaching their professional goals.

Workforce Composition

<i>School staff 2017</i>	
Teaching staff	16
Full-time equivalent teaching staff	12
Non-teaching staff	5
Full-time equivalent non-teaching staff	2.8

Student Attendance

Student attendance rates

Student attendance for the first semester of 2017 has been recorded at 88%, increasing to 89% in

term 3 of 2017. The attendance rate decreased from 2016 attendance rate of 92%. The decrease in attendance was mostly caused by the international pilgrimage travel undertaken by a number of families from the school. The school, however, worked on the plan to improve student attendance. We are looking for an improved attendance rate in 2018. 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 roll 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 reason 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 matters of repeated 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 the 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.

A comprehensive description of the school's approach to attendance is available in the Attendance and Enrolment Records Policy available on <https://www.krishnaschool.nsw.edu.au/policiesandprocedures>

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 2017</i>	
Total enrolments	100
Girls	51
Boys	49
Full-time equivalent enrolments	100
Indigenous students	0%
Language background other than English	0%
Student attendance rate	89%

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 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. At the same time, Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula has a well-established chaplaincy program that focuses on the student's well-being by conducting individual coaching sessions and group activities to assist students with developing skills and knowledge for a healthy and wholesome lifestyle.

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 a system of recognising and encouraging positive engagement and behaviour of the students.
- * 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. The grievance policy is also available on the school's website at <https://www.krishnaschool.nsw.edu.au/policiesandprocedures>. 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 2016 Annual Report

2017 Priorities	2017 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, with the specific focus on continuing to develop the coaching model of staff training and support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NSW Literacy and Numeracy Action Plan entered its consolidation stage. • The DI programs are maintained and improved. • The school library was opened to assist with the plan implementation • A number of auxiliary staff were trained to assist with the intervention and small group programs • DIBELS demonstrates the improvement in students' development of literacy skills. • The coaching model is implemented.

Designing the program and launching the classes for Year 12 in term 4 of 2017.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Year 12 program has been developed • Year 12 classes were launched in term 4 of 2017. • Both teachers and students are demonstrating commitment and enthusiasm to this new undertaking by the school.
High school campus and facilities development and construction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site works are 90% complete with the erection of specially engineered retaining walls and creation of four flat pads to enable further construction. • Tweed Shire Council is reviewing the CC application
Soft launch and the official launch of the Positive Behaviour and Intervention Supports System school-wide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Behaviour Management System (PBIS) was contextualised to the Gurukula values and was launched. Students participate in the weekly focus value learning and practice the behaviours associated with the values.
Best teaching practice model of coaching and training of teachers school-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The model is continuing to be developed.
Continuing the implementation of the 'Embedding Excellence' project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership team of the school was formed from the team leaders of K-2, 3-6 and 7-12 sections of the school.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership team identified the priority goals for 2018
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B. 2018 Priority areas for improvement

1. Analysis and Discussion of Data

Intended outcomes:

- All teachers know how to analyse and interpret data for improving student learning and achievement
- All teaching staff have access to a broad range of student achievement and wellbeing data
- Teachers regularly engage in collegial conversations about student assessment and data concepts at a sophisticated level
- Within the school a culture of self-evaluation and reflection is evident and based on the use of data
- The school actively evaluates the development of Krishna Consciousness in the students

2. Building Teacher Capacity

Intended outcomes:

- Teachers use evidence-based teaching practices
- Teachers have a high level of content knowledge in the subjects they teach
- Teachers are available and willing to engage with students about issues relating to their well-being
- Teachers regularly collaborate with colleagues in their work
- Whole school professional learning activities are based on clearly identified school goals
- Professional learning plans are based on individual need

- Teachers engage in relevant and meaningful professional learning activities
- School leaders model good professional learning

3. High School Campus Construction

Intended outcomes:

- The school completes the architectural drawings for Phase A and B of the high school construction
- The school completes Phase A of the construction and commences Phase B

4. Policies and Procedures Review and Awareness

Intended outcomes:

- Beginning with Child Protection and Behaviour Management Policies, all school policies are reviewed and propagated amongst staff and school community.

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-realization.

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Throughout 2017, 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 the 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>)

A 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.

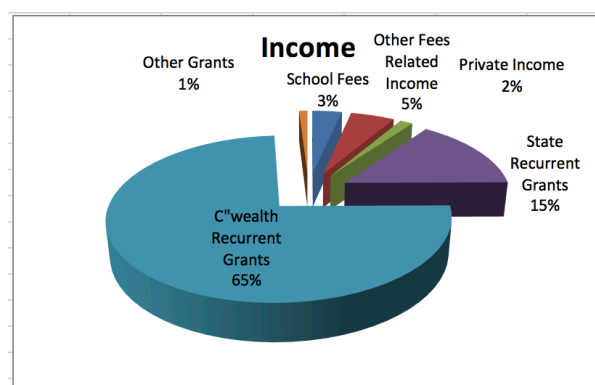
The data demonstrating the degree and areas of satisfaction was collected using the Embedding Excellence Survey Platform provided by the NSW Association of Independent Schools, Transforming Organisational Culture and Practice Unit.

Summary Financial Information

The following summary data is presented according to the audited reports of Bhaktivedanta Swami Gurukula for 2017.

Income Categories

Capital and Recurrent Income	
School Fees	\$ 44,508.00
Other Fees and Charges Related Income	\$ 66,092.00
Donations & Private Income	\$ 19,114.00
State Recurrent Grants	\$ 194,567.00
Commonwealth Recurrent Grants	\$ 966,286.00
Other Grants	\$ 12,667.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,303,234.00



Expenditure Categories

Recurrent Expenditure	
Employee benefits	\$ 931,530.00
Operating expenses	\$ 67,479.00
Academic and co-curricular	\$ 170,475.00
Depreciation	\$ 59,839.00
Maintenance	\$ 44,237.00
TOTAL Recurrent Expenditures	\$1,273,560.00

