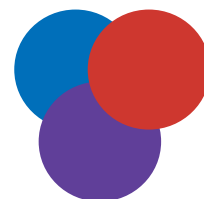


# BLACKSMITHS PUBLIC SCHOOL

## Annual Report



2015



4197

## Introduction

The Annual Report for 2015 is provided to the community of Blacksmiths Public School as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year. It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.



The Annual Report describes the school's high quality practices across the three domains of the School Excellence Framework of learning, teaching and leading. For more information about the School Excellence Framework please visit: <http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/school-excellence-framework>

Aaron Quinnell  
Principal

### School contact details:

Blacksmiths Public School

Amaroo st

Blacksmiths, 2281

[www.blacksmith-p.school.det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.blacksmith-p.school.det.nsw.edu.au)

[Blacksmith-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:Blacksmith-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)

0249711519



## School background

### School vision statement

At Blacksmiths Public School our vision is to engage students in a supportive and stimulating learning environment to prepare them to become successful, active and informed citizens for the 21st Century. Through effective partnerships between students, staff and our communities we strive to provide opportunities to work collaboratively for our children's future.

### School context

Blacksmiths Public School, located in East Lake Macquarie provides a nurturing environment where all 106 students are supported and challenged by quality educational programs within a varied and balanced curriculum. In recent years major initiatives in the areas of literacy, numeracy, the environment and sport have brought about widespread recognition of excellence within the school and the wider community. Our school is made up of students from a diverse range of socio economic backgrounds, with a small number of Aboriginal enrolments. The school currently has a FOEI (Family Occupation and Education Index) score of 100. Blacksmiths Public School is well resourced with wireless access throughout the school. The schools enrolments have slowly declined over the last 5 years, resulting in the loss of an Assistant Principal at the school in 2014. In 2015 the school will be staffed with 5 classroom teachers, a teaching Principal and a part time library teacher. The Principal's role incorporates the LAST (learning assistance support teacher) and RFF (release from face to face). The school aims to produce a culture of continuous improvement and quality service. We encourage the involvement of parents and community in every aspect of school life, as we work towards developing genuine and productive partnerships with our families. Our programs cater for individual needs, promoting critical thinking, creativity and problem solving across all Key Learning Areas. Our motto, 'Doing Our Best Together', underpins the Blacksmiths Public School attitude to learning, playing and living!



## **Self-assessment and school achievements**

### **Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework**

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, our school achievements and the next steps to be pursued. The Framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

This year, staff at Blacksmiths Public School have discussed the School Excellence Framework and its implications for informing, monitoring and validating our journey of excellence.

Time was dedicated during Term 4 weekly Teacher Professional Learning sessions to thoroughly examine the school plan to determine the elements of the School Excellence Framework that the plan most strongly addressed. Staff reflected on the progress being made across the school as a whole, based on the expectations identified in the School Excellence Framework. This provides an important overview to ensure our improvement efforts align with these high level expectations.

#### **Learning**

In the domain of Learning, our efforts have primarily focussed on Curriculum, Learning, Assessment and Reporting. The strong performance of the school in creating a culture where assessment plays a central role in learning has helped shape our learning journey in 2016. Curriculum programs and teaching practices effectively develop the knowledge, understanding and skills of all students, using evidence-based teaching practices and innovative delivery mechanisms. The use of school based and non school based data to inform teaching and learning programs has become a key feature of our progress in this domain. The results have been evident in the regular collection of comparative data in strategically targeted areas to support student learning. Attention to individual learning needs has been another component of our progress throughout the year. Students with high learning needs are being identified early and support structures are increasingly involved in planning and supporting the learning directions for them.

#### **Teaching**

In the domain of Teaching, our efforts have primarily focussed on effective classroom and collaborative practices. Opportunities have been provided to staff in relation to planning and teaching, which have allowed staff to continue to develop collegial relationships of the highest order. The use of teaching rounds have enabled staff to work collaboratively to refine their teaching practices and reflect on the implementation of school wide literacy and numeracy programs that reflect the strategic directions of the school. Through regular school wide data collection and analysis staff are developing our own evidence based practice through their reflections and evaluations of our collective work.

#### **Leading**

In the domain of Leading, our efforts have primarily been focussed on leadership and school resources. Established links with our community of schools and the engagement of community members in a wide range of school activities, including school planning and evaluation, recognises that leadership is central to the notion of school excellence. Staffing resources are utilised in order to ensure curriculum implementation is at its most effective and systematic annual staff performance and development reviews are conducted.

Our self-assessment process will further assist the school to refine the strategic priorities in our School plan leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

## Strategic Direction 1

### Teaching & Learning

#### Purpose

To develop teacher capacity through staff engagement in best practice and meaningful professional learning, in order to improve student learning outcomes.

Assessment for and assessment as learning play a central role in learning. School based and non-school based data analysis informs teaching and learning programs.

#### Overall summary of progress

Our continued approach to implementing high quality learning programs, driven by a high standard of teaching, where learning programs are informed by school based and non school based data has enabled us to achieve significant progress in this Strategic Direction.

The implementation of Focus on Reading and L3 have built the capacity in staff to deliver quality learning programs and collect meaningful data through the implementation of the 'Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching' program.

Collaborative practices have been established, where teachers work closely together to develop programs and reflect on their teaching to enhance program delivery. This has built the capacity in teachers to plan together and differentiate their learning programs.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures		Resources (annual)
Improvement measure (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	
All students achieve grade appropriate achievement on PLAN	90% of Kindergarten students achieved grade appropriate achievement on plan. 76% of Year 1 students achieved grade appropriate achievement on plan. 70% of Year 2 students achieved grade appropriate achievement on plan. 72%% of Year 3 students achieved grade appropriate achievement on plan. 74%% of Year 4 students achieved grade appropriate achievement on plan. Data on year 5 & 6 student is unavailable in 2015	\$4504 for L3 & FoR teacher training (Literacy & Numeracy funding). \$2000 teacher relief to attend L3 training (low socio economic equity funding). \$4000 teacher release for data collection and analysis to implement PLAT (low socioeconomic equity funding).
All students to achieve expected growth in Literacy and Numeracy from Years 3-5 and 5-7	53% of students achieved expected growth from years 3 – 5 in reading. 82% of students achieved expected growth from years 3 – 5 in writing. 41% of students achieved expected growth from years 3 – 5 in Numeracy. 79% of students achieved expected growth from years 5 – 7 in reading. 36% of students achieved expected growth from years	\$1000 teacher release for collaborative development of mathematics assessment (low socioeconomic equity funding).

## Strategic Direction 1

5 – 7 in writing.

29% of students achieved expected growth from years 5 – 7 in numeracy.

## Next steps

To ensure the continued successful implementation of Strategic Direction 1 Blacksmiths Public School will:

- Continue to track student progress on the PLAN continuum to assist teachers in assessing, grouping students and directing future learning.
- Regularly collect and analyse student data to inform learning programs and identify students requiring support.
- Collaboratively review and plan assessment tasks
- Expand the implementation of the L3 program to Stage 1
- Continue to implement Focus on Reading Phase 2.
- Teachers will continue to engage in lesson studies, with a focus on collaborative planning, observation and feedback to ensure all staff continually develop their skills.





## Strategic Direction 2

Students

### Purpose

All students become successful, confident and creative learners, and active and informed citizens through effective student well-being programs, school systems and processes.

Students access the curriculum at an appropriate level and through dynamic and innovative approaches in order to optimise learning outcomes.

### Overall summary of progress

The school implemented the Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching (PLAT) program, which included the explicit teaching of content aligned to new syllabus content and the regular collection of student data. The collection of data has contributed to the fostering of an evidenced based culture within the school. At 5 weekly intervals data is analysed and used to target resources to support student development in areas of need.

IEPs and PLPs were developed for all Aboriginal students and those students in danger of not meeting national benchmarks in years 3 & 5.

Attendance rates were maintained above state averages. Students were rewarded with end of term attendance awards and regular information regarding attendance was included in the newsletter to help develop an awareness of the importance of a good attendance rate.

At the end of 2015 a review of our student well being program was begun.

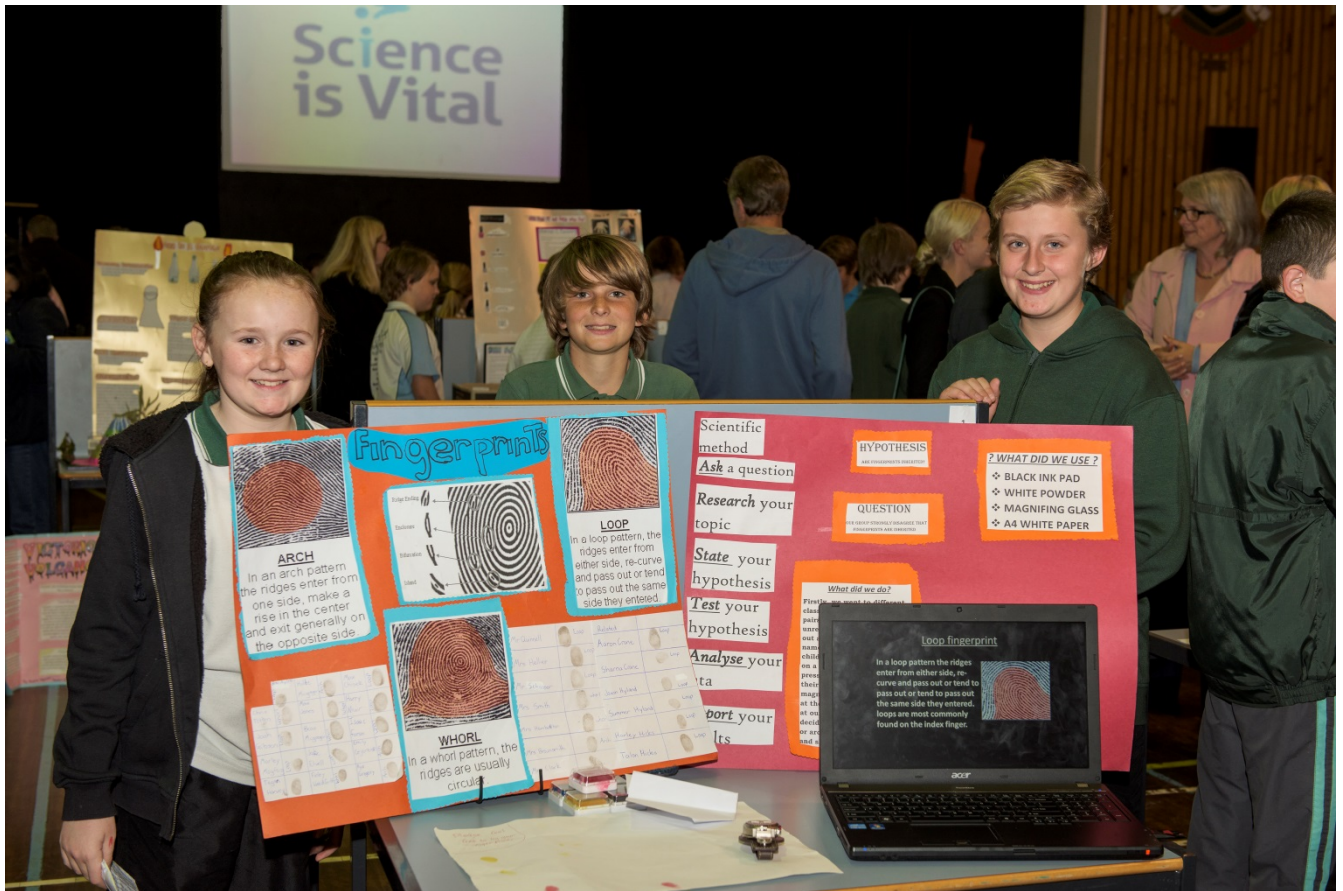
Progress towards achieving improvement measures		Resources (annual)
Improvement measure (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	<\$>
At least 80% of students achieving in the PLAT(Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching) zone of achievement	74% of students achieved in the zone of achievement for comprehension markers  67% of students achieved in the zone of achievement for reading and fluency markers.	\$9000
PLPs and IEPs written in consultation with parents, for targeted students (Aboriginal students & those identified at risk of not meeting national benchmarks in Years 3 & 5) and updated regularly.	Throughout 2015 all Aboriginal students participated in PLP meetings with parents and teachers to formulate their Personalised Learning Plan (PLP). These PLPs were reviewed throughout the year and used as a basis for passing on information to the student's anticipated 2016 teacher.  Students identified at risk of not achieving national benchmarks in years 3 & 5 were also given an IEP. These individual Education Plans (IEPs) were also reviewed and updated throughout the year.	\$1000
Maintain student attendance rates above state average	Blacksmiths Public School maintained an attendance rate of 94.9% in 2015, which was above the State average of 94%.	

### Next steps

## Strategic Direction 2

To ensure the continued successful implementation of Strategic Direction 2 Blacksmiths Public School will:

- Continue to implement PLAT, with a focus on reading fluency and Grammar, Punctuation & Vocabulary.
- Implement the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) program as our student wellbeing focus.
- Continue to develop PLPs and IEPs for targeted students.





## Strategic Direction 3

### Partnerships

#### Purpose

Engagement of students, staff, parents, the wider community and local LMG schools through school practises that encourage and promote meaningful relationships and support transition to and from Blacksmiths Public School.

Students engage with their own learning, school, and community and make global connections.

Staff engages with students, parents, LMG and the wider DEC community to inform learning programs, build relationships and build capacity to improve student learning outcomes.

#### Overall summary of progress

The school continued to implement high quality transition programs, ensuring that students were given the best possible start to their kindergarten journey. The kindergarten orientation allowed for students to develop relationships with both teachers and their buddies, ensuring a successful transition to school.

In collaboration with Swansea High School, Year 5 and 6 students were given a range of opportunities to develop their relationships with the high school. Student needs were identified and support structures put into place for those students requiring further support.

Parent engagement levels were also a result of the many opportunities parent were given to help celebrate students success and achievements.

The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program continued to provide students with engaging experiences both inside the classroom and during recess and lunch breaks. All students in years 4 – 6 were engaged in explicit kitchen and garden lessons using food grown in the school garden.

The P & C once again played a pivotal role in the success and direction of the school. P & C meetings were well attended and provided consultation in developing and reviewing a range of school policies and supporting school initiatives through targeted funding of P & C funds.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures		Resources (annual)
Improvement measure (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	<\$>
Parent and student engagement levels at or above state norms	<p>The 'Tell Them From Me' survey indicated that parent and student engagement levels were both above the state norms.</p> <p>This is reflected in the use of volunteers to open the canteen 2 days per week in 2015. We had an average completion of survey and evaluation activities over 20% and an average P &amp; C meeting attendance of 5 members.</p> <p>The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program was implemented with 2 classes participated in weekly kitchen/garden lessons.</p>	\$7300 (course fees and casual relief for teacher training)
School community is well informed about school systems, policies, achievements.	End of term recognition assemblies were implemented. Six policies were reviewed at P & C meetings. The Skoolbag app was introduced and used to communicate school events and achievements.	\$300 for skoolbag app

## Strategic Direction 2

### Next steps

To ensure the continued successful implementation of Strategic Direction 2 Blacksmiths Public School will

Implement a new schools finance and student management system (LMBR)

Continue to implement a strong and well-structured transition program both into and when exiting the school.

Continue the implementation of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program

## Key initiatives and other school focus areas

Key initiatives (annual)	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
<b>Aboriginal background funding</b>	<p>All Aboriginal students, their parents and teachers collaborated in developing a Personalised Learning Plan. These plans were reviewed and evaluated throughout the year in order to maximise individual student achievement of personal goals.</p> <p>All students participated in NAIDOC celebrations that included a smoking ceremony and performances by a local didgeridoo group, resulting in an increase in awareness and appreciation for Aboriginal culture.</p> <p>A number of resources were purchased to support Aboriginal perspectives across KLAS and year levels.</p>	\$2100
<b>Socio-economic funding</b>	<p>Teachers collect data every 5 weeks in the area of reading and comprehension. This data is analysed and used to inform teaching programs and target LAST and SLSO support.</p> <p>The L3 program was implemented. This resulted in kindergarten students accessing high quality Literacy programs.</p>	\$7584
<b>Low level adjustment for disability funding</b>	An SLSO was employed to support students not meeting benchmarks in the areas of reading, comprehension and Maths. LAST time was also allocated to students requiring support.	\$5365 0.2 staffing
Other school focus areas	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
<b>Other areas, including Early Action For Success</b>	The school does not receive funding in this area.	



## Mandatory and optional reporting requirements

### Student information

It is a requirement that the reporting of information for all students be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

#### Student enrolment profile

Class Sizes					
	Roll class	Year	Total in class	Total per year	
1	K/1	K	11	16	
2		1	5	16	
3	1/2	1	12	20	
4		2	8	20	
5	3/4	3	10	20	
6		4	10	20	
7	4/5	4	10	23	
8		5	13	23	
9	5/6	5	5	26	
10		6	21	26	

#### Student attendance profile

		Year	2013	2014	2015
School		K	96.7	95.6	97.2
		1	95.4	95.7	95.7
		2	94.0	94.5	95.1
		3	95.6	95.1	95.8
		4	96.8	95.3	94.2
		5	94.5	94.6	95.1
		6	95.9	94.7	92.8
		Total	95.5	95.1	94.9
State DoE		K	95.0	95.2	94.4
		1	94.5	94.7	93.8
		2	94.7	94.9	94.0
		3	94.8	95.0	94.1
		4	94.7	94.9	94.0
		5	94.5	94.8	94.0
		6	94.1	94.2	93.5
		Total	94.7	94.8	94.0

### Workforce information

Reporting of information for all staff must be consistent with privacy and personal information policies.

#### Workforce composition (mandatory)

Position	Number
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	0
Assistant Principal(s)	0
Head Teacher(s)	0
Classroom Teacher(s)	5
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Learning and Support Teacher(s)	0.2
Teacher Librarian	0.2
Teacher of ESL	0
School Counsellor	0.1
School Administrative & Support Staff	1.406
Other positions	0.2
Total	8.106

The Australian Education Regulation, 2014 requires schools to report on Aboriginal composition of their workforce.

There are currently no staff that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

#### Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	70%
Postgraduate degree	30%

#### Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Blacksmiths Pubic School undertook significant professional learning throughout 2015. This included:

- L3 training
- Focus on Reading Phase 1
- Quality Teaching Rounds
- Powerful Learning Accountable Teaching

There were no teachers required to complete teacher accreditation in 2015.

## Financial information

### Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

A full copy of the school's 2015 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by

Date of financial summary	30/11/2015
<b>Income</b>	\$
Balance brought forward	110674.86
Global funds	89328.51
Tied funds	50226.89
School & community sources	0.00
Interest	2926.31
Trust receipts	11558.60
Canteen	0.00
Total income	312906.03
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	24860.01
Excursions	13964.09
Extracurricular dissections	13076.76
Library	1137.52
Training & development	1266.14
Tied funds	65634.66
Casual relief teachers	19767.75
Administration & office	30596.91
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	11073.69
Maintenance	
Trust accounts	12374.77
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	201204.39
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	111701.64

contacting the school.

## School performance

### NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

For detailed information for Blacksmiths Public School the *My School* website provides detailed information and data for national literacy and numeracy testing. Click on the link [My School](#) and insert the school name in the *Find a school* and select *GO* to access the school data.

## Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school. Their responses are presented below.

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the school.

Their responses are presented below.

The following is a snapshot of the Tell Them From ME surveys completed in August of 2015 in regard to parents perspectives and satisfaction. Scores are out of 10.

Parents feel welcome = 7.4

Parents are informed = 7.2

Parents support learning at home 5.4

The school supports learning = 8

School supports positive behavior 8.4

School is a safe environment 7.7

Students are included 6.9

## Policy requirements

### Aboriginal education

Blacksmiths Public School received Aboriginal background funding in 2015. The school addressed the learning needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children by:

- Rigorous data tracking and monitoring by classroom teachers
- NAIDOC experiences
- The inclusion of Aboriginal Perspectives across all key learning areas.

As a result of this all students both indigenous and non indigenous have improved their understandings and appreciation of Aboriginal culture.

Aboriginal students across the school have continued to meet their own personal goals and state benchmarks.

## Multicultural Education and Anti-racism

Our school students come from a variety of backgrounds. We promote inclusive initiatives such as Harmony Day to promote an appreciation for the diverse range of cultures that make up our society. Class and school programs include multicultural perspectives wherever relevant. Studies in HSIE in all grades help develop an appreciation for the diversity

of all cultures, providing the opportunity to celebrate the cultures represented in our school community.

Senior students learn about different religions and also study specific cultures and countries, including Bali and Antarctica.

## Other school programs

### Student Leadership

The school continues to have a strong focus on giving students a real and meaningful voice in the decisions which affect them and their school. Every year, four school leaders are elected by the student body. They are responsible for running assemblies and school functions, representing the school at community events and presenting student views, concerns and ideas to the principal at regular leader's lunches. The sport leaders, also elected by students, assist with the running of all sporting carnivals and with our annual Presentation Day. Students also have leadership roles in the environment and other areas, where they are encouraged to show and develop initiative, responsibility and have a voice in decision making.

Twelve Year 6 students participated in the David Sykes Young Leaders program in 2015. This program supported students in identifying what makes a good leader and how they can develop their own leadership skills. The program culminated in a presentation by students to parents and our local MP, Mr Garry Edwards. Students were also presented with a leadership certificate.

Apart from elected leaders, all students are encouraged to have an opinion, express it respectfully and to develop ideas and initiatives which may improve the school. Recently, this has included students organising fund raising events, running activities for younger students at lunch time and selecting charities for the school to support.

### Environmental Education for Sustainability

Our school has continued to be proactive in promoting sustainable living with our school community.

We have continued a binless program for waste management at our school. During recess and lunch eating times, students volunteer to supervise several reciprocals for students to place their food scraps and recyclable food packaging. Food scraps are either placed in buckets for the worm farms and compost and

other appropriate food scraps are placed in buckets to feed the school chickens.

Every class and office has recycling bins for students and staff to put recyclable materials in. Our efforts with our waste management was again recognised with our school being recognised as the Overall winner of the Lake Macquarie Councils Environment Awards. We have also continued our support of community events such as Clean Up Schools Day.

During Sustainability Education Lessons students have learnt about how our food gets from the farm to our plate, waste and landfill issues and the importance of conserving water for our future.

Students also have the opportunity to maintain native, herb and vegetable gardens within our school grounds.



### DEBATING

Blacksmiths Public School participated in the local Debating competition for the second time. Mrs Laurindah Taylor Hambleton coordinated the team consisting of Year 6 students.

Blacksmiths Public School's debating team were successful in winning their group in the local competition for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year running. The growth in the confidence and skill of students was considerable as they were keen to build on tactics to overcome areas of weakness.

Year 6 Students honed their speaking and listening skills as they learnt to write as a team and prepare strong and engaging arguments and skilful rebuttal. They took on the advice of adjudicators and began to fully engage the audience, growing in confidence even whilst the topics grew more challenging.





All students benefit from the school's participation in debating, even those who do not debate. Debating provides an opportunity to see a real argument with rich language in a formal setting. Students from all stages have an opportunity to be an active audience in our debates independently deciding who they believe.