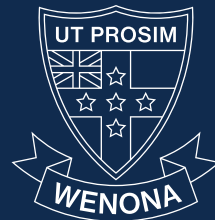


WENONA ANNUAL REPORT

2023



Message from key bodies

As a proudly non-selective school, we were delighted with a maximum ATAR of 99.95 last year, and with approximately 30% of our students attaining an ATAR greater than 95. These outstanding results would not have been possible without our teaching and professional services staff, from Kindergarten onwards, who settled our students down to a post-COVID routine, creating a culture where mutual support and respect can thrive.

From a societal perspective, 2023 has been an interesting year. For us, three years of disruption have required a renewed emphasis on how we grow and work together in community. While the world seems to have become increasingly defensive, protective, and polarised, we have focused on the basics - saying good morning, looking people in the eye, being respectful, hard working, and persistent.

Young people are like seeds. Whether they grow wild, are pruned into the shape of a little bonsai tree, or allowed to grow healthy and strong - so much of this is about the culture we accept and the culture we create.

You don't go from a seed to a fully grown tree overnight. From 'little things, big things grow'... but they have to be allowed to grow. They need time, to be watered, to be gently pruned, to go where they sense the sun, to be cared for but not overwatered.

I hold my breath every time we drive past a cemetery, because my mum has ever since I can remember. I draw an extra line through my sevens because my Year 4 teacher, Mr. Robens, told me that's how the real mathematicians do it. During sports games, I always clap when the other team scores because I had a soccer coach in Year 7 who would rave about the importance of good sportsmanship.

We are all living mosaics - beautiful, colourful collages of every person who surrounds us; complex tapestries made of the strings of every experience and interaction we've ever had. Every person we have ever met adds a small, unique tile that contributes to who we are.

With 2023 coming to an end, we have collected a multitude of new experiences, new people and new tiles to reflect upon. Despite how negative some global events may seem, they are integral to creating the year that has been. This same knowledge can be applied to us as people - some of our most devastating moments have been critical in forming who we are today.

Young people have to be allowed to own their mistakes, to sit in the uncomfortableness of having said or done the wrong thing, to engage in the consequences, and then move on - without judgement. Rescuing them again and again does them no favours.

Late last week, I listened as a Year 6 leader articulated, with great humour, what it felt like to pass the leadership baton onto a Year 5 student and to effectively be made redundant. It was all said with grace - no rescuing and no pity.

This is what we're doing here in this School. We create a culture where young women stretch and challenge themselves, out of their comfort zones into the "challenge zone", while avoiding the danger zone. Anxiety as a reason for avoiding life is a beast that is easy to feed. But no growth happens in this rapidly diminishing comfort zone.

We want our young women to grow up to be able to do whatever they choose in the world. We are raising them to be kind and strong, courageous and determined. We want them to be able to hold their own without being arrogant and speak up rather than quietly condemning the behaviour of others while doing nothing about it.

It will not always be sunshine and rainbows. Oftentimes there will be melancholy blues and dark blacks, and that is perfectly okay. The more colours we have in our collages, the more unique and intricate we become.

The challenge lies within accepting these tiles. If we limit our knowledge of the world to its negativity, we can often find that same negativity reflected within ourselves. Our mosaics aren't static - they are ever-changing, adapting to the ebb and flow of our surroundings.

Whilst there has been blue and black, in the very same year, we have seen just as much pink and yellow. We must simultaneously acknowledge the positive growth as well as the negative setbacks to fully see the beauty and diversity of our mosaics.

We must prevent ourselves from trying to control the uncontrollable. However, we all have the capability to change one another. The smallest acts of kindness and compassion may form an integral part of someone else's mosaic.

This is also why, for the record, Wenona is proudly single-sex, and will not be changing anytime this century. We are dedicated and committed to courage and to egalitarian leadership.

When it comes to raising our young women, there is no date in the future when they become empowered, courageous, or educated. Their seed will germinate day by day. Our job is to help this tree grow to its full glory - from a seed to a tree; from a child to a woman, in line with the Chinese maxim "women hold up half the sky".

Dr Briony Scott

Principal

We might not be able to make large changes directly, but we can change those around us for the better, one tile at a time. When we recognise this power and focus on the small and gradual changes of those around us, we begin to understand our influence. It's just as important to realise the impact others have over you. Every person adds depth and richness to our tapestry of existence. We are each a masterpiece made of the hundreds of people who have brought us to where we are today.

Be grateful for every person you meet and greet them with an open mind. Embrace uniqueness and celebrate the qualities that make individuals stand out. The more colours present within our own mosaics, the more depth we have as people.

If you are ever feeling alone or powerless, understand that a part of you lives on within the mosaic of someone else. Understand you have the great power to enact change, just one tile at a time.

Mali Dunn

Head Prefect 2023/2024

Characteristics of the Student Body

The Wenona School motto, *Ut Prosim, that I may serve*, is a strongly embedded principle within the School community. The legacy of this motto stems from 1886, and a heart for service remains a strong characteristic of the student body today.

Students from Kindergarten to Year 12 participate in service to the community locally, nationally and overseas. Wenona students are encouraged to recognise that they are recipients of a world-class education and that with this privilege comes responsibility. Giving of time, playing music, listening to another person's story, cooking for homeless shelters, fundraising for a range of organisations, supporting young children and the elderly, help our young people appreciate the needs of others, exercise compassion and recognise they can make a difference.

The School values of courage, strength, grace, wisdom and kindness further shape and define the Wenona culture. These character attributes are explicitly taught in Assemblies, embraced and encouraged by senior student leaders, and modelled by staff in interactions with students, colleagues and the wider Wenona community.



Student outcomes in NAPLAN

The National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) was completed online by students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. NAPLAN results indicate that Wenona students are performing well above the national standard in all areas of literacy and numeracy.

Summary Year 3

Proficiency Level	Numeracy		Grammar & Punctuation		Reading		Writing		Spelling	
	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State
Needs additional support (NAS)	2.1	8.6	4.2	11.4	2.1	7.7	2.1	4.6	6.3	9.2
Developing	10.4	21.6	8.3	27.9	6.2	20.9	0	14.0	8.3	23.0
Strong	45.8	52.9	47.9	47.7	31.3	49.6	54.2	67.9	39.6	45.4
Exceeding	41.7	15.4	39.6	11.4	34.4	20.1	43.7	11.8	45.8	20.7

Summary Year 5

Proficiency Level	Numeracy		Grammar & Punctuation		Reading		Writing		Spelling	
	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State
Needs additional support (NAS)	1.0	8.3	0	9.5	0	6.6	0	8.3	2.1	7.5
Developing	8.3	19.5	7.3	22.8	5.2	16.6	3.1	20.6	3.1	18.6
Strong	51.1	55.3	55.2	50.3	36.5	51.7	49.0	55.8	45.8	48.1
Exceeding	39.6	15.6	37.5	16.0	58.3	23.7	47.9	14.0	49.0	24.5

Summary Year 7

Proficiency Level	Numeracy		Grammar & Punctuation		Reading		Writing		Spelling	
	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State
Needs additional support (NAS)	0	8.2	0	9.7	0	8.1	0	9.1	0	6.1
Developing	8.6	20.3	9.1	22.6	6.9	19.9	7.4	23.3	10.3	15.9
Strong	58.8	54.3	48.0	50.1	40.0	49.0	49.7	49.6	44.0	50.7
Exceeding	32.6	15.8	42.9	16.1	53.1	21.5	42.9	16.5	45.7	25.8

Summary Year 9

Proficiency Level	Numeracy		Grammar & Punctuation		Reading		Writing		Spelling	
	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State	% School	% State
Needs additional support (NAS)	0	9.2	0.6	12.0	0	10.4	0.5	10.8	0	7.0
Developing	2.9	23.0	7.0	28.8	4.1	24.4	9.4	28.3	4.7	18.0
Strong	73.1	53.5	54.4	42.8	48.5	45.5	48.0	41.2	63.7	53.0
Exceeding	24	12.7	38	14.8	47.4	18.0	42.1	18.0	31.6	20.2

*does not total 100% as a proportion of students are exempt

Results in HSC

Distinguished achievers

72% of students achieved a mark of 90 or above in one or more subject

ATAR

50% - Percentage of students above 90

23% - Percentage of students above 95

Combined Band 5 and 6 HSC Results in comparison to state

Subject	Wenona	State
Aboriginal Studies	100	36.72
Ancient History	90	32.37
Biology	73.21	31.82
Business Studies	79.58	35.75
Chemistry	76.92	38.2
Chinese Continuers	80	70.09
Chinese Extension	100	98.08
Dance	100	68.75
Design & Tech	100	47.21
Drama	100	60.29
Earth & Environmental Science	75	33.39
Economics	80	48.34
EAL/D	66.66	21.59
English Standard	33.33	13.12
English Advanced	92.53	67.12
English Ext 1	100	94.23
English Ext 2	100	85.52
Food Technology	60	29.67
French Continuers	83.33	58.9
French Extension	100	84.06
Geography	75	41.63
Legal Studies	96.56	42.18
Mathematics Standard 2	72.57	31.42
Mathematics Advanced	73.16	49.72
Maths Ext 1	84.61	71.8
Maths Ext 2	69.22	85.67
Modern History	80.94	34.86
History Extension	100	85.21
Music 1	100	68.7
Music 2	100	85.28
Music Extension	100	96.86
PDHPE	70.72	30.7
Physics	66.66	38.8
Science Extension	91.48	77.95
Spanish Continuers	33.33	60.15
Spanish Extension	100	100
Studies of Religion 1	80	48.56
Textiles & Design	100	51.42
Visual Arts	100	65.44

Qualification attainment

1.4% of students undertook vocational training*

0% of students in Year 12 participated in a Pathways program

100% of students in Year 12 attained Year 12 certificate or equivalent VET qualifications

* completed in Year 11

Record of School Achievement



All students in Year 10 achieved a Record of School Achievement (ROSA).

Student retention rates and attendance

98% of Year 10 students in 2021 were retained through to Year 12 in 2023.

Year Group	Average Days Absent	Average Attendance
K	6	96.45%
1	10	94.18%
2	6	96.65%
3	7	96.29%
4	7	96.22%
5	9	94.98%
6	11	94.10%
7	9	94.99%
8	12	93.27%
9	13	92.99%
10	15	91.84%
11	11	94.09%
12	8	94.45%

Post School Destinations – Class of 2023

Institution	No. of students
The University of Technology, Sydney (UTS)	34
The University of Sydney (USYD)	29
Australian National University (ANU)	23
Macquarie University	14
University of New South Wales (UNSW)	11
The University of Newcastle	10
International (USA, UK)	9
Australian Catholic University (ACU)	3
The University of Notre Dame Australia	2
University of New England (UNE)	2
University of Adelaide	1
Bond University	1
Charles Sturt University (CSU)	1
Griffith University	1
University of Melbourne	1
Tafe NSW	1
University of Wollongong	1

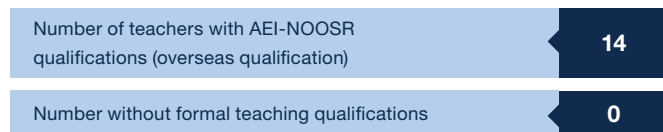
*correct as of 25 February 2024

Colour Code

- NSW/ACT Institutions
- VIC Institutions
- QLD Institutions
- Other Institutions

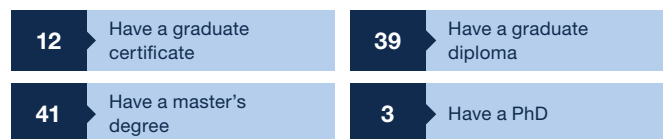
Accreditation of teaching staff

(As defined by the teacher Accreditation Act 2004)



Qualifications of teaching staff

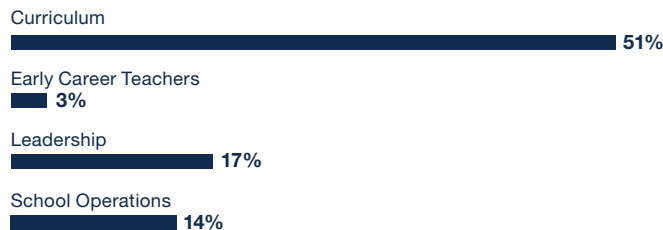
Wenona staff frequently invest in further tertiary education and among the 143 teachers on staff in 2023:



Wenona also employs a small number of teachers who are in the final year of their Bachelor of Education or the final semester of their Masters of Teaching degree.

Professional learning undertaken by teachers

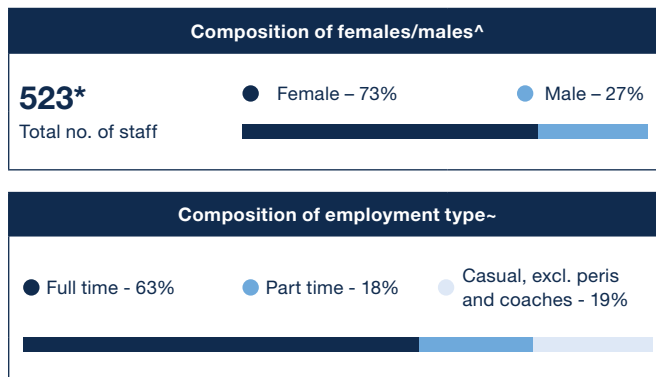
Professional Development Category



In 2023, annual professional development was provided in the areas of Child Protection, Mandatory Reporting, and Disability Legislation. Accredited Provider First Aid courses were offered to complement annual refresher training for all staff in Asthma Management, Anaphylaxis Management and CPR. Boarding Staff completed Duty of Care training, and some Boarding staff joined the Aquatics, PDHPE and Sports staff to complete Pool Lifeguard training.

Teaching staff were participants in professional development for Writing Interventions in Stages 3 – 5 funded by a grant from the Association of Independent Schools NSW. Further onsite workshops in Mental Health First Aid, Accidental Counsellor, and the Neuroscience of Girls' Brain Development were made available to all staff.

Workforce composition



^{*}Workforce composition comprises all full time, part time and casual staff, including coaching and peripatetic staff (e.g. music tutors and sports coaches).

[^]Composition of females/males based on Support and Teaching staff only, excluding coaching and peripatetic staff (e.g. music tutors and sports coaches).

[~]Composition of employment type based on full time, part time and casual staff, excluding music tutors and sports coaches.

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

Teacher satisfaction

212 Wenona staff participated in a survey designed to inform operational and strategic planning. The following five areas were identified as meeting or exceeding expectations:

- Quality of teaching
- Holistic and rigorous education
- Focus on student wellbeing, providing a safe and caring environment
- School's management and leadership
- Academic Standards

Wenona staff nominated the collegial atmosphere as one of the most valued aspects of their employment. They also valued working with the students, the caring and supportive work environment and the high standard of education and professionalism at the School.

The weekly staff Friday Morning Tea fosters staff connection and engagement. The Wenona Staff Induction program, including the provision of onboarding buddies, supports new staff with Wenona's policies and procedures.

Parent and student satisfaction

Wenona provides a range of communication options for parents and students to connect with the School and provide feedback.

Connect teachers are the first point of contact between home and the School. They are supported in their care for students by Year/Stage Coordinators, Heads of Department, Heads of Teaching and Learning, Heads of School and the Counselling Team.

Parent/teacher/student interviews enable students and parents direct contact with subject and Connect teachers. The Wenona Parent Education series provides another opportunity for parents to learn about the academic and wellbeing programs in place to support students. These events, which often feature industry experts and academics, are hosted by Wenona staff who take feedback from attendees and the discussion to the School. Annual Learning Exhibitions, HSC Showcases and Subject Specific Events are well attended by students and families and provide face-to-face examples of student learning and progress.

Parents are represented on Wenona's Board of Governors and its sub-committees. The Principal and members of the School Executive present reports to the Wenona Parents' Association (WPA) meetings held once each term, to keep parents up to date with events and projects. Students are also involved in the Student Representative Council and meet with the Senior Leadership Team to discuss issues and progress student-led initiatives.



School-determined areas of priority for improvement



Quality Teaching

Implemented specific professional learning opportunities to support effective teaching practices.

Individual professional learning plans that target key areas for development.

Mentoring of new career teachers - pedagogy and subject-specific/ stage knowledge.

Seeding grants and fellowships promote professional learning opportunities.

Increased the number of HSC marking applications and senior appointments, including Supervisor of Marking and Chief Examiner.



Quality Learning

Deliberate continued focus on writing and literacy through the AIS Writing Project.

Continued revision of curriculum offerings as student interests diversify.

Renaissance Studies implemented across additional school sectors.

Preparation for implementation of new NESA Syllabus across K-12.



Empowering School Leaders

Targeted senior Leadership, Academic and Wellbeing conferences for key leaders.

The Senior Leadership team expanded to provide opportunities for staff to develop their leadership capacity.

Professional learning opportunities for key staff to refine their leadership skills in professional supervision.



Meeting student needs

Offered specific staff professional development through mental health first aid workshops and practical skills.

Increased staffing in the Wellbeing team and Health Clinic.

Increased number of co-curricular offerings.



Providing Detailed Communication to the Community

Heads of Schools provide regular correspondence to parents highlighting key events and initiatives, as well as an overview of teaching and learning.

The Wenona Parent Education Program, including Year group information sessions and parenting workshops, address a range of age and stage-appropriate developmental topics.

School promotion of respect and responsibility

The School promotes respect and responsibility through the Wenona student code of behaviour and through embedding the School values of courage, strength, grace, wisdom and kindness. Staff interactions with students within and beyond the classrooms help to develop a respectful School culture. The Junior School and Connect Group Social and Emotional Learning programs address personal responsibilities and reinforce School values. The School community service programs seek to build on the School values, encouraging a heart of service and a spirit of compassion toward others.

Actions undertaken to promote respect and responsibility

The Wenona School values are foundational to sustaining our culture and the promotion of respect and responsibility in our interactions with one another. Courage, strength, grace, wisdom and kindness are character attributes explicitly taught and modelled amongst students and staff and expected in our engagement with our parents and broader School community.

The Student Code of Behaviour and Expectations of Students as part of the Wenona Community are published in the Student Diary, and the Community Code of Behaviour is published on the School Portal. These documents outline ways of respecting the rights and views of others in order to promote a positive learning environment, an effective learning experience, clear and respectful communication, a safe and beautiful School, a caring school community, and a School of which students can be proud.

In addition, the adoption of the 10 Child Safety Standards provides practices and informs procedures that recognise and uphold the rights and responsibilities of young people and those caring for them within our School context.

Non-attendance policy

A description of how the school manages non-attendance

In cases of habitual non-attendance, or ongoing unexplained absences, the following process is followed.

A text message to a parent is generated for all unexplained student absences.

On the 3rd day of a student's absence (explained or unexplained), the Connect teacher phones home to check on the wellbeing of the student. Any concerns are reported to the Year Coordinator.

Where there is ongoing non-attendance, the Head of School liaises with the family, inviting the student and parents to a meeting. The aim of the meeting is to engage with the student, to listen, reassure and seek to understand the challenges or obstacles preventing the student from attending. Clearly identifying issues enables wellbeing staff to offer the most appropriate support to address the concern.

These interventions may include but are not limited to, engaging with the School Counselling Team or external psychologist/ specialist, seeking support from the Learning Enrichment Team, creating an adjusted assessment program, or intervening to manage an issue within the peer group.

Where a pattern of school refusal is developing, the case is managed by the Deputy Principal (Student Wellbeing), who liaises with external specialists and parents in the development of an Attendance Improvement Plan, creating an agreed approach to managing challenges, and creating a staggered return to school, if appropriate.

In cases of habitual non-attendance/school refusal, the matter may be reported to the Department of Communities and Justice. In the development of further support plans, follow-up meetings and reporting obligations, Wenona is guided by the Association of Independent Schools' publication, Guide to School Attendance Requirements and Attendance Improvement Planning.

In circumstances where, despite the implementation of attendance improvement strategies, attendance remains a serious concern, parents may be requested to attend a Secretary's Compulsory Schooling Conference. The purpose of the Conference is to discuss the issues and to explore ways of resolving the situation. The conference will seek to identify further support a family may need to effectively improve the student's school attendance.

Enrolment and other school policies

Wenona's Enrolment Policy and policies relating to Child Protection, Student Welfare, Discipline, Managing Complaints and Grievances, and Anti-Bullying can be found on our website at:

<https://www.wenona.nsw.edu.au/wenona/policies-and-statements>

In 2023, the following were updated:

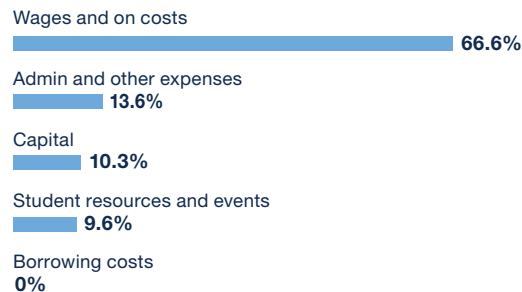
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures
- Enrolment Policy
- Privacy Policy

Financial information summary

Income



Expenditure



About Wenona

Celebrating excellence in girls' education since 1886, Wenona is an independent day and boarding school for girls from Kindergarten to Year 12 in North Sydney, close to Sydney's cultural centre.

Under Principal Dr Briony Scott, our vision is for Wenonians to graduate as creative, resilient, articulate, and well-educated women, filled with a sense of humour and a capacity for adventure. We aim to develop integrity, grace, a sense of purpose, and a strong moral and ethical outlook in our students, raised to value service and to be a proactive and positive voice within the local, national and global community. With 1,349 students, including 45 boarders, Wenona offers a rich array of academic and co-curricular opportunities within a creative and caring community.

Wenona's impressive results are influenced by an academic peer culture, professional teaching and learning, and innovative use of ICT. We operate Evening Study Centres for Senior College students, and students tend to seek an increasingly diverse array of university pathways. Wellbeing is enhanced through age-appropriate small-groups and our vertical House system, together with professional counselling, an Allied Health Clinic, and a strong careers pathway.

The school's innovative learning environment includes a blend of heritage and new spaces, including The Athenaeum, a new multi-purpose building, opened in 2020, that includes Waterpolo and Learn to Swim pools, Cardio and fitness facilities, state of the art STEM Labs and a Senior College university-style Learning Commons. Leadership and teamwork skills are fostered through international and local service learning initiatives, guided by our motto, Ut Prosim, that I may serve.

See also Wenona's profile on the My School website at <https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/43868/profile/2023>



Publication requirements

Wenona's 2023 Annual Report is available for download on the Wenona website at www.wenona.nsw.edu.au/Wenona/publications, and has been provided in electronic form to NESA on RANGS Online.

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