**MISSION**

The mission of Mt Hira College is to inspire and encourage ‘Life Long Learning’ in each student by catering for their social, emotional, academic and spiritual needs within a positive, safe, caring, challenging and supportive learning environment. We are committed to raising upstanding and responsible citizens of tomorrow who will hold universal values in a globally and technologically advancing society.

**VISION**

Mt Hira College’s vision is to strive for excellence, in both academic and spiritual development, with continuous progress to develop confident students, proud of their Islamic identity, who are committed, compassionate and hard-working citizens, and are ready to contribute positively and productively to Australian society.

**VALUES**

Excellence      Respect      Honesty      Responsibility      Fairness
Mt Hira College is an Islamic co-educational Foundation to Year 12 College located in the South-Eastern suburb of Keysborough. The College was established in 2000 and has steadily grown to cater for more than 460 students in 2014.

Mt Hira College is a multi-cultural College with students coming from a wide range of backgrounds. The majority of students come from an Islamic background, but there are a few families from non-Islamic backgrounds. All nationalities, cultures and faiths are welcome at Mt Hira College.

Most students at Mt Hira College are bilingual. Currently the largest cultural group is Turkish (approximately 42%) with the other 58% coming from a range of backgrounds including: Albanian, Bosnian, Afghani, Iraqi, Lebanese, Iranian, Somalian and Pakistani backgrounds to name a few. More than twenty languages are spoken in the home with English the home language of just over 5% of students.

The College has spacious grounds including two well-maintained sports fields, basketball/tennis courts and an adventure playground. The wonderful modern facilities include light and spacious classrooms, an extensive library, three computer laboratories, two well-appointed art rooms, a modern Science Centre and a large gymnasium/multi-purpose hall with a fully functional stage for productions.

Mt Hira College offers many co-curricular programs including Inter-school Sports, Special Assistance Programs, Debating, Camps, Excursions, Swimming, Building Bridges Program and Student Leadership opportunities including a Student Representative Council. All Muslim students are required to attend noon prayer with the Secondary students attending the Mosque with other community members and the primary students learning how to pray in the primary hall.
Principal’s Report

The students from Mt Hira College continued to perform well during 2014. They achieved improved results in several areas and our student numbers continued to grow with just over a 13% increase from 2013 to 2014.

Our NAPLAN results are continuously improving, and our Grade 3 and Year 7 results were particularly pleasing. The focus on writing across the year levels seems to be showing with our nearly all year levels being at or above standard in this area.

In VCE, our results were slightly down from 2013 with the highest ATAR being a score of 73.75. Seven students who applied for a tertiary place was offered one in the first round offers. We still had some students not achieving to their potential and our overall results were not as high as we would like. This is an area we will focus on and we will strive to improve our results next year and continue this in future years.

A number of special programs and activities were organised to encourage the engagement of students in their learning and provide them with a range of experiences and opportunities. Students went on excursions related to the topics being studied in class including going to Scienceworks, the Immigration Museum, an Art Gallery and Imax. There were also a number of incursions including special speakers and specific learning activities. Students in Grades 4, 5 and 6 and Years 7 and 8 also went on school camps, while a ski trip was also organised for middle and senior school students in Secondary.

A number of special programs and competitions were run in the school including having a record number of students participate in the Australian Mathematics Competition, the Premier’s Reading Challenge and the Building Bridges Program.

Mt Hira College continued to be a part of the Intercultural Understanding Research Project (ICU). The project is being run by Deakin University and we are one of only twelve schools across the state included.

Mt Hira College believes that it is important for students to be fit and healthy and to assist with this our students were involved in a number of physical education events. Swimming was once again offered to all primary classes and some secondary year levels, Interschool Sports for both Primary and Secondary students, an Athletics Carnival for the whole school and Cross country.

Other special events were also organised to engage students including. We also had some visitors to the College during the year from Japanese students studying at Monash University.

The College also promotes care for people who are less fortunate. The College raises money to support a young orphan in Somalia and often raises money for special events. In 2014 this included raising money for victims of Gaza in Palestine.
The College continued to be involved in the Inter-Faith Building Bridges Programs. This program provides our Year 10 students with a broader picture of multi-cultural Australia and helps to break down barriers between different faiths and cultures. Students from a range of schools including Catholic, Anglican and Jewish school visit each other’s schools and learn about their religions and engage in a number of discussion groups about relevant topics. It has been very pleasing to see the positive interactions between the students and the breaking down of stereotypes often depicted in the media.

A number of special days and events were organised at the College including celebrating Diversity Day, International Children’s Day, Eid celebrations, Harmony Day, a Book Character Dress-Up Day, Turkish Republic Day, Book Week Activities, special dress up days and a whole school concert. Parents were invited into the school for special activities and information sessions. Early in the year we held a Family Picnic so families could meet each other and it helped new families settle into the school. Tea with the Teachers was conducted in the primary school so parents and teachers could meet. We also ran some information sessions for the Secondary students and parents. Parents were encouraged to assist in classrooms, on excursions and in many other ways. All parent volunteers must have a Working with Children’s check before they can assist in the school.

The Parents’ Association worked hard and ran a number of activities including Mothers’ and Fathers’ Day stalls. The efforts of the Parents’ Association are much appreciated by the school.

Mt Hira College offered a range of co-curricular programs and activities including Debating and Tournament of Minds. During 2014 we continued to perform well in Debating, our teams competed against many of the local schools who were much larger than us, but our results were very impressive. In Tournament of Minds we came third in the district in the area of Science & Technology.

Mt Hira College is continuing to grow and develop in student numbers, facilities and programs offered.

**STAFF ATTENDANCE**

Staff attendance was generally very good during 2014 and had slightly decreased from the previous year. The average number of days absent from school was 5.4 for the year. This is very good as we had one staff member who had considerable periods of time off school due to ill health. Over 60% of the staff had five days or less absence during the year, which is a wonderful effort. A small number of staff had planned leave during the year and these have not been included in the absence rate as they were taken as leave without pay.

**STAFF RETENTION**

At the end of 2014 there were a number of staff changes. One teacher went away on maternity leave at the end of term 3. Two teachers went overseas to work while another was looking for a
challenge and went to another school. Two senior staff members left; one when the College was restructured and due to rapid growth and their position no longer existed, while the other went into retirement.

**Teacher Qualifications**

All teachers at Mt Hira College are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. Most teachers have full registration, with six at the beginning of 2014 being provisionally registered. Two Language teachers have Permission to Teach registration.

No teachers are or will be employed unless they are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching and have completed a full Criminal History Check.

**Teacher Participation in Professional Learning**

As part of whole school planning, school based professional learning was provided drawing on the experience and expertise from within the school and from external experts. There was a focused approach with either groups of teachers or the whole staff participating in Professional Development as research shows that one off sessions for one teacher does little to bring about change in practice.

All graduate teachers attended professional development programs aimed at their specific needs. All VCE staff attended conferences and information sessions related to their teaching area.

All staff attended Curriculum Days, which focused on improving student learning outcomes and school improvements – e.g. improving literacy and numeracy, utilising the Interactive LED panels, dyslexia focus, data analysis and so on.

In the primary school the Learning and Teaching Coordinator continued to work with teachers to improve their planning and teaching. She suggested planning tools; team taught with teachers and advised them on the best ways to improve student-learning outcomes.

The College spent approximately $12,000 on professional development for the 2014 school year and teachers spent on average more than 33 hours attending professional development. This money did not cover the cost of all programs or the teacher replacement costs. We were also able to get some free professional learning activities as they were funded through other organisations.

**Student Enrolments**

Enrolments have increased during the last few years and there has been an increase of 50.6% from 2009 to 2014. The graph below demonstrates this increased enrolment from 2009 to 2014. These enrolment numbers are taken from the February Census each year, and each year we enrolled more students during the year. Interest for 2015 continued to be high during 2014.
**STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

During 2014 student attendance for some students was extremely poor. We continue to have a substantial number of families who take extended overseas holidays to visit family members. These extended overseas holidays have a major impact on our average attendance rates. Many of our families are first or second generation migrants to Australia and therefore they have the majority of their extended family living overseas. The overall average noted is for all students and includes the overseas absences. This clearly demonstrates that the students who take extended overseas holidays are skewing our data. It is also something that we are addressing with the school community.

This year we also had three students who spent considerable time in hospital or at home recovering from major surgery and another student who has an on-going medical condition. These absences had an impact on some year levels.

During 2014 we continued to have some students who had five or less day's absence for the year. The average number of days absent for the whole school increased from 14.05 days absent in 2013 to 15.32 days absent in 2014.

There were also a small number of students who had considerable absences during the year for unspecified reasons. A few families allow their children to take a considerable number of days off during the year for non-legitimate reasons. These will be closely monitored during 2015.

The average for the secondary school was marginally better that the primary school. The following data shows the average number of days absent for each year level and the overall primary and secondary sections of the school. These averages include the students who had extended absences for overseas travel.
The Primary school average was 17.7 days absent per year. This has gone up from 2013. There are a few particular families where non-legitimate absence is a real concern. We will be following up with these families.

The Secondary school average was 12.4 days absent per year. This is lower than the 2013 data.

**Improvement Plan**

During 2014 the College continued to focus on improving learning and teaching with the aim of improving student learning outcomes. There was focus on students with additional needs with a focus on dyslexia. Teachers shared learning and teaching activities in order to be more collaborative and share resources. An analysis of data such as NAPLAN, PAT-R, PAT-M was conducted and presented to staff to pinpoint concepts that students had not comprehended. Developing teachers’ skills has been a focus and the Learning and Teaching Coordinator worked closely with teachers in the primary school to assist them in their development.

**Student Achievement and National Benchmarks**

The results were not that different from last year. Some areas gained while some areas saw a drop. A closer analysis of NAPLAN data will need to be done to see which areas our students excel in and in which areas they are weak.

**Year 3**

**Reading** – 97% of all Grade 3 students were at or above the National Minimum Standard, with all but one students being below the National Minimum Standard.

**Writing** – 97% of all Grade 3 students were above the National Minimum Standard, many well above (92%). There has been a steady improvement during the last few years which is pleasing to see.

**Spelling** – 95% of our students achieved above the National Minimum Standard in Spelling. With two students being identified as being below the National Minimum standard.

**Grammar and Punctuation** – 100% of all students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard in Grammar and Punctuation. This was an improvement on last year.

**Numeracy** – 100% of students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard in Numeracy with 92% being above the standard. This area has remained consistent with last year.
GRADE 3 NAPLAN RESULTS 2014

WRITING

Band

Key
National
State
School

YEAR 5

Reading – 93% of all Grade 5 students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard, whilst 7% were below the Minimum standard. Students were identified and placed on ILP’s.

Writing – 97% of students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard for writing, with 90% achieving above the standard. There was only one student who was below National Minimum Standard with all others being above. This result has dropped a little from the previous year.

Spelling – 95% of students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard for spelling which again was slightly down from last year.

Grammar and Punctuation – 88% of students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard for Grammar and Punctuation. This is an area that needs to be focused on in 2015 and beyond.
Numeracy – 82% of all Grade 5 students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard in Numeracy. There were 3 students who did not achieve the standard and these students have been identified and ILP’s put in place. This area has improved slightly on last year.

GRADE 5 NAPLAN RESULTS 2014

WRITING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Girls</th>
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Key

- **National**
- **State**
- **School**
YEAR 7
Reading – 90% of all Year 7 students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard in reading.
Writing – 97% of all Year 7 students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard in Writing. There was one student who failed to reach the standard. This student has been identified and an ILP has been put in place.
Spelling – 96% of all Year 7 students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard in spelling.
Grammar and Punctuation – 96% of all students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard. This was pleasing and it was a slight improvement from the previous year.
Numeracy – 93% of all students in Year 7 were at or above the National Minimum Standard in Numeracy. There was a slight decline on the previous year.

The Year 7 students had improved results in all areas. The chart below show the improvement made by the students in Grammar and Punctuation. On the Five Year Trend Chart it is pleasing to note the gradual improvement during the last few years and that the students are now almost equal with the State and National means.

YEAR 7 NAPLAN RESULTS 2014
GRAMMAR & PUNCTUATION

<table>
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All Girls Boys LBOTE ATS
YEAR 9

Reading – 98% of all Year 9 students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard. This is a slight improvement on last year’s results. One student was below the National Minimum Standard.

Writing – 95% of all Year 9 students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard in Writing. This was a significant improvement on last year’s results, with just under 10% increase.

Spelling – 98% of our students performed at or above the National Minimum Standard. Again, this was a slight increase in last year’s results, which was pleasing to see.

Grammar and Punctuation – 93% of all students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard, which again was significantly up from last year’s results.

Numeracy – 98% of students achieved at or above the National Minimum Standard in Numeracy. This result maintained the positive improvement from the previous years. Overall, the year 9 results improved across the board from the previous year.

Below is the five-year trend data for Spelling showing a steady improvement during the last few years.
Overall, students’ achievements have improved from 2013 to 2014 when looking at the percentage of students achieving at or above the National Minimum Standards. The improvements made are positive and they provide us with a solid base to work from. Greater emphasis had been placed on the teaching of Writing, Reading, Grammar and Punctuation and Spelling and this is reflected in the results. Numeracy and the Grade 5 results are the areas that need to be focused on, while Numeracy still remains low.
Professional Learning Teams (PLT’s) were given a greater focus during 2014. Each team, at year levels in the Primary School and Faculties in the Secondary School, were to identify areas to target. This has had a positive impact on student learning, but more still needs to be refined in this area to ensure greater success. The timetable was restructured in 2013 to create an extra period in both the primary and secondary school. This extra period continued on until the end of 2014. This extra period was used to provide greater assistance to students who required more support in Literacy and Numeracy, along with other activities.

**VALUE ADDED**

A number of programs and activities were maintained or implemented during the year to provide extra support to our students.

- Excursions and Incursions were organised to support the curriculum and student learning.
- A swimming program was offered for all primary school students and some secondary year levels.
- A Primary school family picnic was offered early in the year to encourage families to meet and create a sense of community.
- Students entered competitions to provide extra stimulus and encourage engagement. Large numbers participated in the Australian Mathematics Competition with a number of students achieving distinctions and credits.
- Students participated in an Inter-Faith Program – Building Bridges – to learn more about different faiths and engage with students from other schools and communities.
• Debating teams participated in competitions and achieved very positive results, often competing against and beating much larger schools.
• Cultural Diversity Week and International Children’s Day were celebrated.
• Inter-school sport was organised for primary and secondary students.
• An orientation program was developed to assist with a smooth transition from Kinder to Prep and all the way through to Year 12.
• Information sessions and Tea with the Teachers were held for students and families to inform them about the year ahead.
• Work experience was organised for the Year 10 students.
• The VCE/Senior School Coordinator continued to provide excellent support to senior students and manage the VCE program.
• The Learning and Teaching Coordinator assisted teachers to develop a more stimulating and challenging curriculum and provided advice on catering for under-achieving students.
• An Induction Program was utilised to assist teachers in their transition to a new school.
• Special Event days were conducted in the primary school to engage students.

Each of the programs and events will be evaluated and modified on an annual basis. Staff members will continue to plan and implement a range of activities to continue to add value during 2014.

**Senior Secondary School**

In the secondary school VCE students were given assistance to maximise their potential by use of the following strategies:

• Holiday classes for VCE students to ensure all content was covered in detail.
• After School classes and individual assistance were offered and provided.
• The College organised practice examination periods for the students during Terms 2 and 4. This assisted in preparation for their VCAA November Examinations.
• A trial GAT (General Achievement Test) was also organized for all students completing a VCE Unit 3/4 sequence.
• Students were encouraged to attend examination preparation seminars.
• Ongoing modifications, where necessary, were made to the students’ in-school study environment, for example most student Study Periods were supervised by teachers.
• Continued development of educational resources and technological improvements such as the introduction of the schools Laptop policy and Interactive LED panels in every learning space.
• Teachers offered and provided 1-to-1 assistance.
• Variety of assessment tasks provided in full accordance with relevant study designs and the VCAA.
• Completion of either one or two Unit 3/4 subject options in VCE in 2013 for Year 11 students (which students generally performed satisfactorily in.) This provides Year 12
students with more time to complete study and revision in 2014, as well as to have direct contact with teachers.

- There was a significant focus placed on discussion taking place between teachers, students and parents. The purpose of this discussion was to try to improve student outcomes.

**Senior School Outcomes**

**VCE Results**

Sixteen students completed Year 12 in 2014. Of these fifteen undertook VCE and one student completed a modified year 12 program without officially completing any VCE subjects. There was a range of scores with the highest ATAR being 73.75. The mean was 47 (which is lower than the state ATAR average). These results were generally lower than the 2013 Year 12 VCE performance. We were disappointed by a few students who did not achieve their potential and when you have a small cohort this can impact greatly on the overall results. In comparison with previous years it was our lowest level of performance since our 2008 cohort.

With only having a very small cohort it meant that options were limited but also that students were able to have more individual attention.

The school will continue to put in place new strategies to ensure the continued development of student performances.

As the student numbers increase we believe the results will also improve.

In the future students will be encouraged to complete the following activities to maximise their potential.

- Students further develop their ability to utilise study periods effectively.
- The development of efficient and productive revision techniques.
- Greater engagement in after-school classes and focus on performance in trial examinations.
- Enhance students willingness to seek their teachers assistance for support and advice in regards to their particular VCE subject
- Develop greater student motivation through the use of motivational speakers and improved goal setting and strategies.
- Greater prioritisation of attention to specific career choices and setting achievable goals.

**Proportion of Year 9 Students Retained to Year 12**

15 out of 21 students, 71%, who completed Year 9 at Mt Hira College went on to complete their VCE certificate in 2014.

In total 6 Students left and the reasons for this were;

- Two students left as they felt they would perform better at another school
- One student left the College as he felt VCE and career options would be more suited to him another school
- One students left to attend her local state school
• One student ceased her education to take up an traineeship/apprenticeship
• One left school to get paid employment

Retention rates are improving significantly and we are now seeing many less students leaving at the end of year 9 or 10. This growth is expected to continue. The school's previous results and the significant improvements that have been made across many areas such as; extra-curricular, teaching programs and student personal and character development have led to an increase in student stability throughout the secondary school. This is positively impacting on student retention rates and will also elevate student performance levels.

Offering a greater range of subjects and achieving better results will also have a positive impact on retention. The school is gradually increasing the amount of VCE subjects that we are able to offer to our students because of the increase in class sizes.

**Post School Destinations**

Fifteen students successfully completed their VCE in 2014. Of these students seven of them accepted enrolment into university courses and eight students enrolled in TAFE courses. All of these students were offered places in the first round.

**University Enrolments**

The following is a list of the University/TAFE courses that our 2014 graduates were offered by VTAC:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Institution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Science/Social Work</td>
<td>Monash University (Caulfield)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Science</td>
<td>Monash University (Caulfield)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Management</td>
<td>Victoria University (Footscray)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Deakin University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/Communication</td>
<td>Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
<td>Victoria University (Footscray)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business (Diploma)</td>
<td>Swinburne University of Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computing (Diploma)</td>
<td>MIBT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children’s Services (Diploma)</td>
<td>Swinburne TAFE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building &amp; Construction (Diploma)</td>
<td>RMIT TAFE</td>
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<td>Building &amp; Construction (Diploma)</td>
<td>Holmesglen TAFE</td>
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PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

During 2014 the College undertook a number of surveys. Members of the school community completed surveys to provide feedback to the College. Parents, Students and Staff completed the relevant surveys. The surveys were conducted in November of 2014.

PARENT SATISFACTION

Parents were surveyed to attain their views on the 2014 school year. Overall the parents were mostly satisfied with the College. On closer analysis it was noted that parents feel the school is a safe place in which to learn. This score was particularly high with 92% of parents agreeing that the school was a safe place for their child. This has remained consistent with 2013 results. Both primary and secondary parents felt that there were good opportunities for contact with the teachers and that the staff were approachable. 96% of parents were happy to recommend the College to other parents, which is a 15% increase from the previous year. Areas that need improvement include increasing the range of co-curricular activities offered at the College. Parents also feel that we need to challenge students more and develop special skills and talents in students.

The chart below shows the willingness of parents to recommend the school to other people.
STUDENT SATISFACTION
Students from Grade 5 to Year 12 were surveyed to attain their views on the 2014 school year. Overall the students were mostly satisfied with the College, but there are some areas that need to be focused on for further improvement. It was interesting to note that the primary students had a more positive outlook on school than the secondary students. When asked whether teachers make learning interesting 44% of secondary students agreed in comparison with 74% of primary students. Overall when asked whether students were happy at the school 58% of Secondary students said they were happy, 32% were neutral, while 10% stated that they were unhappy at the school. On the other hand in primary school 76% of the students stated that they were happy at the school, 24% neutral with no students stating that they were unhappy. More effort will need to be made in the following years to ensure the well being of all students and make sure that students find the College and enjoyable one to attend with lasting positive memories.

The chart below shows a comparison between primary and secondary school students.

![Chart showing comparison between primary and secondary school students]

STAFF SATISFACTION
Teaching staff and general staff were surveyed to attain their views on the 2014 school year. Overall the staff were mostly satisfied with the College, but there are certainly some areas that need to be focused on during 2015. Staff collaboration was very positive with 65% of staff agreeing to frequently discussing and sharing teaching methods and strategies, 29% were neutral while only 6% disagreed. This shows that staff support each other. When discussing
communication between staff and leadership 48% believed that the communication was good, 29% were neutral while 22% believed that communication between staff and leadership was not good. This is certainly an area that needs to be looked at to ensure that there is effective communication between staff and leadership. This will be improved in 2015 by implementing a new structure using the Australian Professional Standards and incorporating the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership Self Reflection Tools to aid discussions.

The chart below shows staff perceptions in some areas.

![Staff Perceptions Chart]

**FORWARD PLANNING**

Mt Hira College intends to continue to improve student-learning outcomes and increase enrolments during 2015.

Professional Learning Teams (PLT’s) will be allocated specific meeting times to meet on a regular basis to assess students’ learning, identify individual student learning needs and plan specific learning activities for groups of students. They will be expected to plan and teach the same things and moderate all assessments.

In 2015 we plan to continue developing the skills of teachers in their Professional Learning Teams. They will continue to be given professional development on how teams should run and how they can be most effective.