

# Annual Report 2011



great things come from a small package

**FINTONA**  
— Girls' School —

A photograph of a woman with blonde hair and glasses smiling warmly at a young boy with short brown hair. The boy is wearing a bright yellow shirt and is seen from the back. They are outdoors, with green foliage in the background.

**no.1**

NON-SELECTIVE SCHOOL  
IN AUSTRALIA

FOR NAPLAN  
RESULTS\*

\*Based on 2011 comprehensive NAPLAN scores for Years 3, 5, 7 & 9 as analysed by *The Weekend Australian* newspaper.





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TRUE TO ITS MOTTO  
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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

It gives me great pleasure to present to you the 2011 Annual Report. I hope it informs both the School family and those in the wider community of the School's position, outcomes and achievements. Whilst the Report concerns 2011 only, we have maintained a similar profile in the past and are committed to do so well into the future. Fintona has always held true to its motto, *Age Quod Agis* - do what you do well and there is no doubt that, looking at the evidence from many aspects of school life you read about in this Report, it continues to be the core ethos of the School.

THESE RESULTS ARE A TESTAMENT TO OUR PHILOSOPHY OF PROVIDING AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION IN A SMALL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT WHERE OUR GIRLS CAN ACHIEVE NOT ONLY OUTSTANDING ACADEMIC SUCCESS BUT ALSO PERSONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

2011 was our 115th year and our two major celebrations of that landmark were Founders' Assembly, which highlighted the life and contribution of Annie Hughston and her brother, who began the School in a sitting room in a house in Mayston Street Camberwell, and the 2011 Reunion which celebrated the Old Fintonians' Association's (OFA) members of the fifties, sixties and seventies.



We had many other things to celebrate during the year including the opening of Moss House, the new Middle School House and garden, named in honour of Sue Moss who retired at the end of the year after 30 years of wonderful service to the School, most latterly as inaugural Head of Middle School.

Our students performed admirably in any number of arenas including academic, co- and extra- curricula and within the wider community and enjoyed their interactions with the staff and their peers throughout the School. In particular, our VCE and NAPLAN results were outstanding. With a median ATAR score of 94.15 and two thirds of the class achieving an ATAR score of 90+, the results of the Class of 2011 maintain our proud history of achieving consistently high VCE scores. In relation to NAPLAN, Fintona Girls' School was Australia's highest-scoring non-selective primary and secondary school in 2011, according to an analysis conducted by *The Weekend Australian*. Our excellent

NAPLAN and VCE results cement our reputation as one of the highest performing girls' schools in Victoria as well as Australia. These results are a testament to our philosophy of providing an excellent education in a small school environment where our girls can achieve not only outstanding academic success but also personal growth and development.

It is a great joy and privilege to be the Principal of Fintona. It is opportunities such as compiling an Annual Report that enable reflection on our progress and achievements and on how to continue to provide an outstanding education for girls in the 21st century.

**Suzy Chandler**  
*Principal*

IN RELATION TO  
NAPLAN, FINTONA  
GIRLS' SCHOOL  
WAS AUSTRALIA'S  
HIGHEST-SCORING  
NON-SELECTIVE  
PRIMARY AND  
SECONDARY  
SCHOOL IN 2011

## WHO WE ARE

Fintona is an independent, non-denominational day school for girls, which is renowned for high academic and personal achievement.

Situated in the inner eastern suburb of Balwyn, we cater for girls from Prep to Year 12 and offer a co-educational early learning program for girls and boys. The International Baccalaureate is taught from ELC to Year 6.

Fintona holds fast to its motto *Age Quod Agis* - do what you do well. From its commencement in 1896, Fintona has espoused the view that 'girls can do anything' and has encouraged students to be critical, independent thinkers empowered to take their place as active, effective citizens and leaders.

With the extra attention we provide in a small school environment, our girls consistently achieve among the highest VCE and NAPLAN results in Victoria and Australia.

Our friendly, supportive and caring environment, together with our broad-based education programs, provide our girls with many experiences to stretch themselves beyond expectation and to cope with life beyond school.

Inspired by exceptional teachers, a Fintona girl will find the confidence to soar and achieve her highest academic and personal aspirations.



## 2011 ACHIEVEMENTS

Fintona celebrated 115 years since its founding in 1896

Middle and Senior School students performed 'The 39 Steps', a theatre production

Junior School students performed the musical, 'Scheherazade'

Senior School students participated in a Netball Tour in Hawaii

An inaugural trip to Central Australia was organised for all Year 7 students and encompassed Year 7 History, Geography, Art and Science curriculums

Replaced outdoor education component of Year 7 camp with a two-day program later in the year

Refurbished and opened the Middle School house – Moss House – which included a redesign of the Middle School playground

Two Fintona students reached the top 10% nationally in the Australian Science Olympiad (Biology)

Fintona was awarded a special prize in the Science Talent Search

Fintona's PYP program was favourably assessed by representatives of the International Baccalaureate Organisation

Over 150 students from Junior to Senior School participated in the Annual Music Concert

Students achieved a number of sporting successes, especially in Rowing, Athletics, Netball and Swimming/Diving

Refurbished the Tourmont courtyard

Refurbished the Year 5 and 6 classrooms

EM Butt building was recarpeted

Refurbished the Junior School bathrooms

Margaret Cunningham Hall was transformed into a more flexible and impressive space

New signage was installed on the Margaret Ross Centre as well as the Junior School

Developed an IT Strategic Plan

Redesigned the way Learning Support is delivered and by whom

Reviewed Study and Life Skills programs

Reviewed all Job Descriptions

Reviewed all policies including rewriting emergency policies and Allergy Aware Policy

Replaced current archive system with new storage and recording facility

Continued with our series of Thinking Curriculum initiatives

# OUTSTANDING RESULTS

## VCE SUCCESS

Fintona Girls' School is renowned for consistently achieving outstanding VCE results, placing Fintona among the top girls' schools in the State. The VCE results from the Class of 2011 once again affirm this position.

With a median ATAR score of **94.15** and two thirds of the class achieving an ATAR score of 90+, the Class of 2011 is to be commended for their wonderful achievements both academically and personally.

**OUR MEDIAN ATAR SCORE WAS 94.15 AND TWO THIRDS OF THE CLASS ACHIEVED AN ATAR SCORE OF 90+**

## 2011 VCE highlights at a glance

100% of our students successfully completed the VCE in 2011

67% of students achieved an ATAR of 90+ placing them in the top 10% of the State

38% of students achieved an ATAR of 95+ placing them in the top 5% of the State

4% of students achieved an ATAR of 99+ placing them in the top 1% of the State

The School Dux was Amanda Aitkins with a VCE score of 99.15

Two students received ATAR scores of 99 or above

Median VCE score was 36

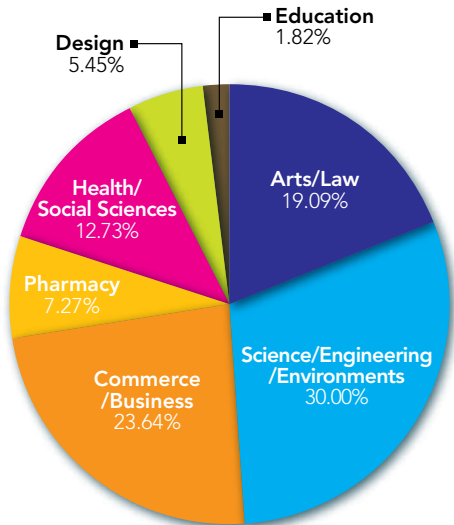
Six year median ATAR score is 93.9

## 2011 Tertiary Courses and Destinations

There were 55 students who completed Year 12 in 2011

100% of our students received a VTAC first round offer

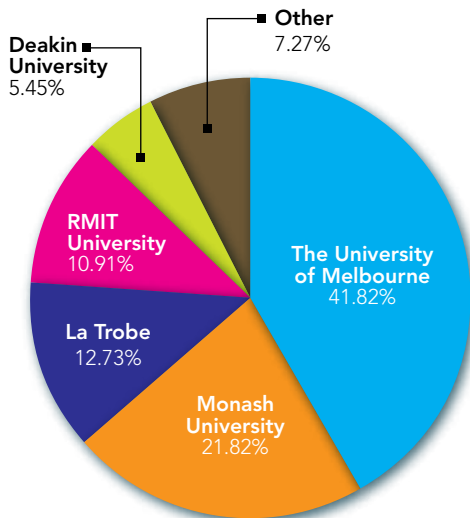
96% of our VCE students received a university offer in their first round and these offers show the diversity of interest among our students from Commerce to Fashion to Pharmacy



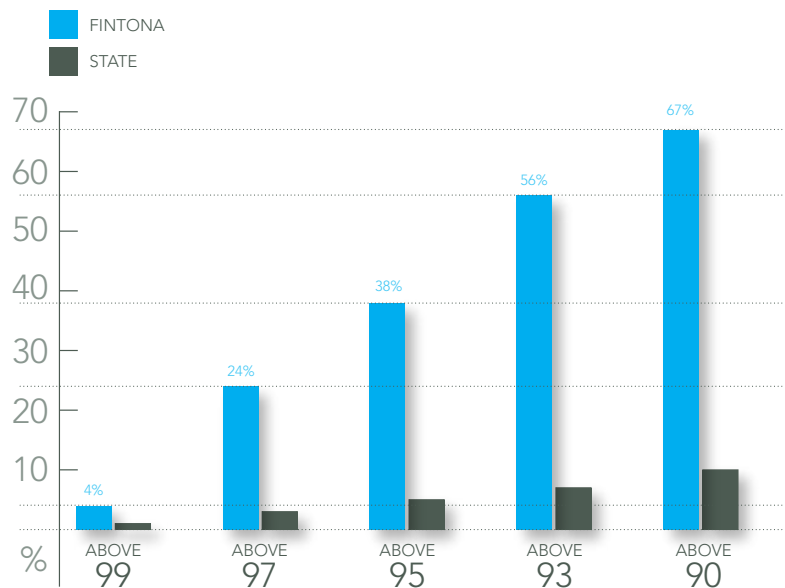
**Tertiary Courses for 2011**

**2011 ATAR scores comparison chart**

The following table is a comparison between Fintona's 2011 ATAR scores and those of Victoria as a whole.



**Tertiary Destinations for 2011**



## NAPLAN RESULTS

NUMBER ONE NON-SELECTIVE SCHOOL IN AUSTRALIA FOR BOTH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

The 2011 NAPLAN results for literacy and numeracy in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 rank Fintona as [the number one non-selective school in Australia for both primary and secondary](#). These excellent results are a reflection of the extra attention we provide in a small school environment as well as the dedication and commitment of our staff.

The following table provides the percentage of Fintona students performing ABOVE the national minimum standard in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy.

### Proportion of Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students achieving ABOVE the National Minimum Standard in 2011

2011	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Year 9
<b>Reading</b>	100%	100%	100%	98%
<b>Writing</b>	100%	100%	100%	98%
<b>Spelling</b>	100%	100%	96%	98%
<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	100%	100%	98%	100%
<b>Numeracy</b>	95%	100%	98%	100%

Source: NAPLAN Data Service, 2011



### 2011 NAPLAN results for Years 3, 5, 7 and 9

The following table shows Fintona's results compared to the Australian schools' average for each NAPLAN category. The performance of our students was substantially above the Australian schools' average for each category and at every year level tested.

...PERFORMANCE OF  
OUR STUDENTS WAS  
SUBSTANTIALLY ABOVE  
THE AUSTRALIAN  
SCHOOLS' AVERAGE

2011	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7		Year 9	
	Fintona	All Schools	Fintona	All Schools	Fintona	All Schools	Fintona	All Schools
Reading	527	416	604	488	627	540	656	580
Writing	504	416	592	483	620	529	676	566
Spelling	491	406	571	484	605	538	646	581
Grammar & Punctuation	518	421	611	499	627	532	649	572
Numeracy	467	398	608	488	637	545	658	583

Source: MySchool Website [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au) ■ Substantially above the Australian schools' average

## OUR STUDENTS

For approximately 600 students (including ELC), Fintona is a welcoming and safe environment where a sense of belonging and connectedness is experienced.

### RETENTION RATE

Our student retention rate across the School is 98%.

### Student Attendance Rates 2011

Prep	95.67%
Year 1	94.68%
Year 2	94.92%
Year 3	94.27%
Year 4	96.95%
Year 5	95.72%
Year 6	96.79%
Year 7	96.10%
Year 8	96.34%
Year 9	95.45%
Year 10	95.26%
Year 11	96.15%
Year 12	96.21%

## OUR STAFF

At Fintona, we believe that our teachers are one of our greatest assets. We are very proud of our staff and recognise that they work tirelessly to produce outstanding outcomes for their students. In 2011, the average staff attendance was 98.67% while the retention rate was 85%.

The Professional Learning attended by staff was part of the School's Professional Learning Plan which aims to provide staff with the opportunities to strengthen their academic knowledge and teaching skills whilst at the same time encouraging participation in broader areas of interest.

Staff attended Professional Learning sessions outside the School on 96 days during the year.

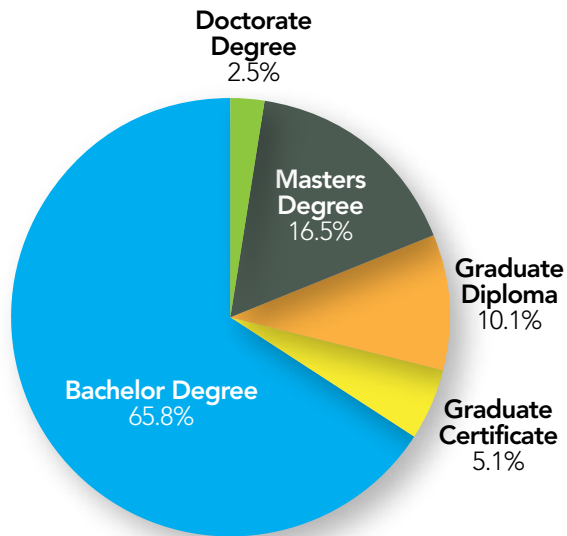
As well as this, all staff attended Professional Learning sessions provided by experts in various fields, brought into the School for Staff Days at the start of each term and on other occasions during the year.

## OUR STAFF ARE HIGHLY QUALIFIED AND ENJOY WORKING IN A CLOSE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY

Staff attended a wide variety of conferences and seminars. Many were subject and VCE related but others dealt with such topics as Leadership, Anxiety, First Aid, Asthma Awareness, Risk Management, Conducting Appraisals and Drafting Contracts.

The average expenditure per staff member was approximately \$700.

Our staff are highly qualified and enjoy working in a close and supportive community. There was a total of 79 academic staff and 18 support staff employed in 2011. The following chart provides an analysis of our teachers' highest qualifications and shows that 85% of our teaching staff has a Bachelor Degree or higher qualification.



Teachers' Highest Qualifications

## PARENT AND STUDENT SATISFACTION

Although we did not formally survey parents and students in 2011, we have held informal focus and discussion groups to gauge parent and student impressions of our strengths and challenges and their satisfaction levels.

On the whole, both groups spoke positively of the following key features of the School:

- The small size enabled outstanding teaching and pastoral care so that students felt known and acknowledged as individuals
- The teachers were always willing to spend time with students outside of the classroom to support their endeavours and enjoyed their interactions with them
- Students were very positive and behaved well both within school and in public
- The School was able to provide a variety of interesting and stimulating activities which catered for every student as far as possible.

## TEACHERS WERE ALWAYS WILLING TO SPEND TIME WITH STUDENTS OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In 2011, much discussion took place in various forums regarding future directions in a number of areas.

We planned for the introduction of a new model for Curriculum Support which would be delivered through timetabled staff from the Mathematics and English Faculties, ensuring a flexible, well-informed and responsive support system. This would work in tandem with a new database which would track student testing and interventions over the duration of a student's time at Fintona and be easily accessible to Heads of School, the Head of Curriculum and Assessment and the Principal.

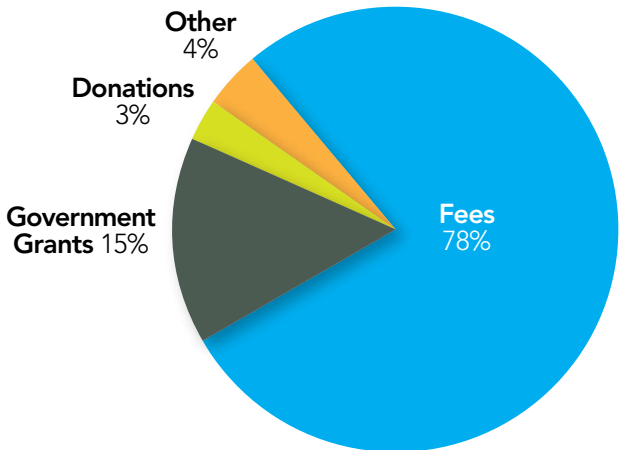
During the year, a group of staff also attended a series of workshops with Julie Landvogt regarding a thinking curriculum and at the end of the year, she also ran a workshop for senior staff, *The Kind of School We Want*.

The Marketing Manager researched and planned for a new prospectus to be launched in 2012. We hope this document reflects the core values the School has always espoused but is also focused on the future and the fact that

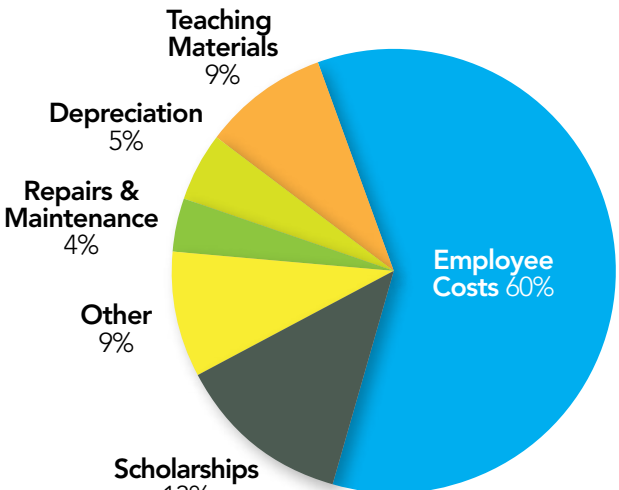


## FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

### REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2011



Revenue Sources 2011



Expenses 2011

Fintona is a vibrant place which responds well to new challenges and the need for innovation in the face of a changing educational and social landscape.

The IT Department embarked on their Strategic Plan which will be launched at the beginning of 2012 and whilst it is always hard to second guess an evolving future, especially in regard to technology, the strategic plan will set the parameters for staff regarding how they might introduce new technology and how to ensure it aligns with our educational aims and School ethos.

2011 saw a huge amount of renovation on both sides of Balwyn Road and whilst we have not embarked on another major building program as yet, there are many changes underway that will enhance the built environment and our ability to deliver a first class education. Economic uncertainty and the release of the Gonski report in early 2012 have made us take a 'wait and see' approach to future development to ensure that we retain our strong financial position and can ensure we still deliver the results that put us continually amongst the top performing schools in the country.

AT FINTONA, WE BELIEVE THAT OUR TEACHERS ARE ONE OF OUR GREATEST ASSETS. WE ARE VERY PROUD OF OUR STAFF AND RECOGNISE THAT THEY WORK TIRELESSLY TO PRODUCE OUTSTANDING OUTCOMES FOR THEIR STUDENTS.



Median ATAR score of 94.15





A Fintona student can be recognised as one who faces her life with the simple belief that to live is to learn.



Fintona celebrated 115 years since its founding in 1896



96% of our VCE students received a university offer in their first round





A photograph of two young girls in school uniforms and dark blue hats, laughing joyfully in front of a wooden building. The girl on the left has brown hair and is looking upwards and to the right. The girl on the right has blonde hair and is looking towards the camera. They are both wearing blue and white vertically striped short-sleeved shirts with white collars and dark blue buttons. The background is a rustic wooden wall with vertical planks.

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NO.1 NON-SELECTIVE SCHOOL IN AUSTRALIA FOR NAPLAN RESULTS