

In November last year, Leonie McNair participated in a round-table discussion event hosted by the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment. This Centre was formed in 2015 as a partnership between the University of Tasmania and the Tasmanian State Government, strongly supported by the University Council and Government House. In the words of its Interim Director, Elaine Stratford, *“The Underwood Centre’s aim is to be a centre of excellence providing independent and non-partisan expertise to benefit Tasmanians and help them to flourish; its key focus is upon raising aspirations for educational attainment from birth to grade twelve in particular.”*

The event last year was led by writer and policy expert Tom Bentley, who is Principal Adviser to the Vice Chancellor at RMIT University and a Senior Fellow at Melbourne University’s Graduate School of Education and an adviser to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. From 2007 to 2013 Tom was senior adviser and deputy chief of staff to Julia Gillard and before that a director of Demos, an independent think-tank based in London.

He initiated last year’s conversation about how to foster the educational attainment of Tasmanians by sharing essential findings of his research reported on in *The Shared Work of Learning* which focused on the effectiveness of collaboration in education. As Leonie commented somewhat proudly during last year’s discussion, the seven most powerful collaborative characteristics of schools on their students’ educational attainment are also characteristics of The Launceston Preparatory School! These are:

- having all stakeholders sharing the same purpose – that is, student learning
- combining energy and longevity in staffing
- collaborative leadership
- community and professional trust in the school
- drawing on external expertise
- having permeable boundaries
- and having a joint focus on students’ well-being AND educational attainment, not just one or the other.

As that day’s conversation continued among leading Tasmanian educators, it became increasingly obvious that The LPS is paradigm of the collaborative approach that this internationally experienced expert had proven through research would lead to high standards and levels of educational attainment. Consequently, we have chosen to report and reflect upon the 2016 school year through the lens of those seven characteristics.

### **A shared purpose: the commitment to learning**

*Strength of commitment to student learning spurs people at these schools to seek out and develop new collaborations in order to achieve more and transcend the limitations of school organisation, resourcing and location. Combining this consistent long-term purpose with flexibility and clarity about specific*

*opportunities for collaboration enables the schools to sustain their focus on student achievement, and to build mutually reinforcing connections between academic progress and student wellbeing.*

*(Tom Bentley – Education Transforms, Papers and Reflections, 2015)*

The themes that we choose each term to scaffold the learning of students from Early Learning through to Grade 6 provide rich avenues for sharing learning across all age groups and with family members. Last year our four themes were “Our Cultural Tapestry”, “Growing”, “Go For Gold” and “Rhyme and Reason”. These themes provided many opportunities for parents and carers to engage with the students’ learning, such as coming in to school to share their knowledge and experience of another culture with the 5-7 year olds, tour the “Go For Gold” art and literacy exhibition, be involved in an afternoon of interactive ICT and Science activities, share poetry with the 9-12 year olds and throw paper planes with the entire school! We know that our parents lead very busy lives but many of them make special effort to take up these opportunities for being involved in the students’ learning and demonstrating their shared commitment to it.

For those parents who are able to donate their time in a myriad of ways in our school, the 7-9 year old students led a school assembly last September, recognising the generosity and value of our precious volunteers.

To keep our families well informed of learning activities that go on at school, our newsletter each week is filled with articles and photographs so parents and carers can see what we do and perhaps follow up on it outside school. Our newsletters are always filled with a variety of such rich learning experiences that our teachers plan for the students. In last year’s newsletters, one could read of such interesting activities as testing the insulation value of fat in science, experiential maths activities, indigenous games in sport, 3D art, hatching chickens – just to name a few! The Federal Government’s *Learning Potential* app was also promoted through our newsletter last year, providing further opportunities for families to participate in their children’s education. The frequent and regular communication afforded by our weekly newsletter is a vital element in ensuring that our commitment to students’ learning is shared and understood.

Other occasions when this shared purpose was demonstrated were:

- having parents join in with recorder-playing sessions with Group 2/3 children
- Harmony Day activities with the whole school
- before-school reading programmes with P/1 students
- parent information sessions prior to the *Bravehearts* (3 – 8 year olds) and *Body Safe* (9 – 12 year olds) programmes
- enjoying one parent’s visit to Early Learning and Kindergarten every week to take Japanese lessons

- information sessions for parents of children entering Early Learning, Kindergarten and Prep.

Such activities reinforced last year the shared commitment to students' learning and well-being.

Our wonderful Parents' Club provides another avenue through which this commitment is shared. Meetings were held every month through term times of 2016, providing opportunities for parents to discuss issues and be informed. They hosted an informative session on "positive parenting", led by a representative from Relationships Australia. The Parents' Club also raised funds for the purchase of playground equipment to improve the resources available to our students. In these ways our parents demonstrate their support for and involvement in what we do at school and we are very grateful for it.

Another way in which our school continues to demonstrate its commitment to student learning is through its provision of a very broad curriculum. In this age where there are increasing demands on schools to include more and more material in the school day, The Launceston Preparatory School still manages to timetable for ALL subjects EVERY week, as well as in 2016:

- Outdoor Education camps to Mt Cameron, Waddamana and Port Sorell
- interschool sports matches in boys' and girls' cricket, T-ball, hockey, netball and soccer
- inter-school swimming, cross-country and athletic carnivals
- debating and public speaking and other extra-curricular activities
- several orienteering sessions through support from the Federal Government's *Sporting Schools* grants.

Students at our school love to share their learning, which is an indication of the way our shared purpose is embedded in our school culture. The school's cross age tutoring programme, which continued last year, is an obvious demonstration of this. During Book Week 2016 the senior students presented readings of picture books to younger students, a wonderful way in which to share learning.

Our school's commitment to *all* students' learning continues to be demonstrated by our small class sizes and provision of teacher aides. In 2016, our average class size was 15.6 (Prep – 6), 13.0 for Kindergarten and 7.2 for Early Learning. These averages do not include the four aides we employed to work with students across the school – with those who needed extra support to access the appropriate curriculum as well as those whose skills demanded extension. We take this opportunity to recognise the value of our TAs and thank them for all they do in our school.

From the results of our exit survey distributed to both Grade 6 students and their parents at the end of each year, it is clear that our shared purpose and commitment to learning is foremost in their minds as they reflect on their time at The Launceston Preparatory School.

Top Student Responses to Leavers' Exit Survey	Top Parent Responses to Leavers' Exit Survey
<b>What are the 3 best things that happen in our school?</b>	<b>What are the 3 best things that happen in our school?</b>
Camps x7	Outstanding education x3
Small class sizes x3	Small class sizes x2
Friendships x2	Friendships x2
Sports x2	Sense of community x2
Variety of subjects offered x2	Approachable teachers x1
<b>What are the 3 worst things that happen in our school?</b>	<b>What are the 3 worst things that happen in our school?</b>
Checking lunch boxes x2	Only go to year 6 x2
Swimming lessons x2	No yearly calendar with important dates x2
School uniform design x2	Small numbers effect on sporting teams x1
Lack of sport choices x1	
<b>What are the 3 things you will miss most? (Students)</b>	<b>What are the 3 things you will miss most? (Parents)</b>
Friends x8	Sense of belonging and community x4
Being in a small school x5	Teaching staff x3
The Production x2	The family atmosphere x1
Teachers x1	Small class sizes x1
	The Production x1

We also ask the families that choose to leave our school before the end of their child's primary years to complete a Family Exit survey. This provides valuable information to us about the strengths and perceived weaknesses of our system and is used to make changes and improvements to service we provide.

Section 1 – About the School	Scored 1-5 (1= True to 5=False)
How the school nurtures and encourages the children	100% scored at 1
Student moral/access to and appreciation of the Arts and Technology	100% scored at 1
Strong morals and values/comprehensive co-curricular program	100% scored at 1
Manners as a priority/student confidence/dedication of staff	100% scored at 1
Teacher partnerships with students and parents	100% scored at 1
Sense of community/communication/reporting to parents	100% scored at 1
Principal is approachable/parent concerns taken seriously/friendly office staff	100% scored at 1
Section 2	Comments
Positive aspects of the school	Friendships x1 Increased confidence in child x1 Warm and inviting atmosphere x1 Staff x1 School Philosophy x1
Negative aspects of the school	It doesn't have a strong Christian focus
Could the school have better met needs?	Have a place available for sibling x1
Years as a parent	11 x1 1 x2
Section 3	Comments
Reasons for leaving	We are leaving the area x2 School fees too high x1

## Combined energy and longevity in staffing

*All the schools in the case studies showed a distinctive combination of long-serving senior teachers with younger, newer staff. This mix appeared to maximise the value of long professional experience, and to bring fresh waves of ideas and new experience to bear.*

*(Tom Bentley – Education Transforms, Papers and Reflections, 2015)*

Thirteen hard-working and dedicated teachers were employed at The Launceston Preparatory School in 2016, four of them full-time, with the remaining nine teaching staff loads totalling to 6.11FTE. Of those thirteen teachers, eleven had worked at The LPS for eleven years or more, two had been employed for five to ten years at our school, and three had been employed in the last three years.

<b>Commenced employment 2013 – 2016</b>	<b>Commenced employment 2008 – 2012</b>	<b>Commenced employment before 2008</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>

We believe that having a long-term teaching staff brings a wealth of experience and quality to the teaching and learning at all school. As you can see from these figures though, we also have several relatively new teachers who bring with them new perspectives, methodologies and insights. This mixture of new and experienced teachers though will not **of itself** lead to better outcomes for students. It is the collegial way in which our teachers share knowledge, discuss issues and help each other that is the essential ingredient. In this way, ideas are shared for the good of all. We thank all our teaching staff for their commitment to the education of the children in our care and the professionalism they bring to the workplace.

Our teachers, parents and students are so capably and superbly supported by wonderful office staff. We continue to be very appreciative of the warm and helpful work of our Business Manager, Jody Onn-Wilkinson, and Secretary, Karen Fenton, throughout 2016.

Whatever the longevity of teachers, we also need to be acutely conscious of the need to keep our more experienced teachers reinvigorated, and support our less experienced teachers through Professional Learning. A wealth of such learning occurred throughout 2016! How we drew on external expertise to support our teachers will be explained later in the report, but many sessions of in-house Professional Learning and Development also occurred. Teachers' (and general staff) annual appraisals always include reflection and discussion on individual staff members' learning needs. The in-house Professional Learning conducted throughout 2016 included:

- policy reviews
- the use of Epi-pens

- a second suite of online learning modules (following those completed in 2014) on the Disability Discrimination Act and the Disability Standards for Education
- speech pathology advice on voice care for teachers
- assessment and reporting
- online learning modules through Child Bereavement UK to help all staff (teaching and non-teaching) support students through bereavement and loss.

### **Collaborative leadership**

*Distinctive and sustained forms of leadership by principals and other stakeholders supports collaboration and enables schools and communities to have clear directions. This leadership was exemplified by the school principals who took part personally in collaboration and intentionally extended it to others. All of the principals studied maintained an explicit commitment to teaching and learning and to modelling and leading professional learning, but they placed it in a broader context of community relationships and shared purpose.*

*(Tom Bentley – Education Transforms, Papers and Reflections, 2015)*

The Launceston Preparatory School has a model of leadership of which we are extremely proud. The Co-Principalship has been a feature of the school since its inception and has continued to operate effectively for many years. In 2016 Susan Wright and Leonie McNair led the school on its eternal quest to maintain the ethos, practices and standards of the school and build on them where possible. The Co-Principal model allows the school's leaders to share and test ideas and shoulder in tandem the workload of the Principal.

Last year, the Co-Principals continued to maintain a significant (0.6FTE) teaching role, albeit a slightly reduced one. Susan continued to teach Mathematics to the older students (handing over the teaching of Philosophy to Sarah McCambridge) and Leonie continued to teach English to the same age group (after handing on "Studies of Society and the Environment" to the capable hands of Edward Barnes).

One of the many benefits of have the two Co-Principals working much of their time as teachers is that decisions and issues affecting students can be discussed collaboratively with all members of the teaching staff. This is in direct opposition to the popular model of leadership at present where school leaders are quite remote from the day to day work, problems and joys of the staff. Unlike their counterparts in many schools, our teachers have direct input to the Co-Principals and are consulted widely. In 2016, this consultation included such matters as:

- the timetable
- classroom organisation
- student welfare and behaviour management issues
- decisions on visiting performances

- professional learning needs
- ideas for the implementation of Strategic Planning goals
- purchase of special resources (often bigger ticket items) – e.g. iPads and furniture in 2016
- best ways of providing for the needs of individual students.

Their teaching roles also enabled the Co-Principals to model, lead and participate in Professional Learning experiences, reinforcing the shared quest for improvement and purpose for teaching.

Last year we adopted a model of professional appraisal with our teaching and non-teaching staff that was very collaborative. Staff members completed self-assessments against the AITSL Professional Standards (for teachers) and their Position Descriptions (for general employees) and the Co-Principals independently did the same. These documents were then discussed in a collegial and collaborative manner to acknowledge successes and determine goals and Professional Learning needs for the following twelve months.

In 2016 our school operation was once again overseen by our Board of Management. This skilled group of people volunteer their time and have a strong vision for the development and progress of The Launceston Preparatory School. We thank them for their hard work and dedication to the school.

2016 was the last of Susan Wright's twelve years as a Co-Principal of The Launceston Preparatory School. During her service in that capacity, Susan worked tirelessly for the betterment of the school, its students and its teachers. The wealth of kind comments that showered on Susan in her last weeks at our school paid tribute to her kindness, many skills and work ethic. Leonie always felt it a great privilege to work alongside Susan for the past twelve years.

The good fortune of The Launceston Preparatory School continued when the Board's efforts over much of 2016 resulted in the appointment of Harriet Thyne as the new Co-Principal. Our school continues to be in safe hands with her as its leader.

### **Community trust, professional trust**

*Correspondingly, significant time and energy is invested in building trust between professionals and the wider community and among teaching and support staff.*

*(Tom Bentley – Education Transforms, Papers and Reflections, 2015)*

Increasingly, The Launceston Preparatory School is becoming regarded as a viable, attractive and progressive educational institution that is respected and trusted by educational professionals, the local and wider Tasmanian community. This is something that we have



worked to build over the lifetime of the school and will continue to spend time and energy in developing further.

In 2016 the following features and activities contributed towards this development of trust in our school:

- The students themselves, who demonstrate every time they interacted with the community outside our school the way The LPS can be entrusted to foster and develop good citizens;
- Our own school ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services and participation in Launceston's March of Remembrance where students of all ages confirmed we can place significant trust in them to take up the mantle of commemoration for future generations;
- House fundraising – Bass collected used mobile phones and raised funds to assist with the preservation of gorillas in Africa, Esk House supported the Flood Appeal and Ossa House collected warm blankets, clothing and funds on behalf of the Salvation Army's Winter Relief Appeal. Such activities contribute to the building of trust in our school by the wider community.
- Our teachers showing their professionalism as they participated in a wide variety of cross-sectoral Professional Learning events.
- Most teachers took on the role of mentors to trainee teachers in their observation program through UTAs.

#### **Drawing on External Expertise:**

*"In their quest for student achievement, all schools consistently pursue and use expertise and specialist knowledge from outside."*

*(Tom Bentley – Education Transforms-Papers and Reflections, 2015)*

In line with our school philosophy having the students at the heart of everything we do, last year we continued to direct our teaching staff towards reflecting upon, appraising their skills and setting direction for improvement in their professional practice using the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. During 2016 at The Launceston Preparatory School also continued to pursue and use expertise and specialist knowledge from outside to further the learning of both staff and students.

Professional development for our staff remained a priority and alongside many in-house professional learning opportunities led by the Co-Principals, our teachers attended external training or experts were called in from outside to facilitate further education in our quest to improve student achievement. We used external expertise for this purpose in the following ways:

- annual updates of First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis and Asthma qualifications for all teachers and two teacher aides;
- annual updates of swimming qualifications for teachers supervising water-based learning;
- the development of an effective writing programme;

- improving fluency across mathematics (F-6) run by the Mathematics Association of Tasmania;
- attending State-wide Early Childhood Network meetings with a focus on literacy in the early years;
- a workshop entitled *Musical Futures – Just Play*;
- a workshop to promote student involvement in the Tasmanian Science Talent Search;
- recording and using PIPS assessment data for our Prep students;
- gathering and interpreting assessment data using the CELF and YARC (literacy) assessments;
- a music workshop run by the Tasmanian Orff Schulwerk Association Inc.;
- the ACHPER State Conference workshops and networking with other professionals in the HPE area;
- a workshop for music teachers discussing and analysing learning intentions and success criteria for teaching Music and exploring the use of technology for collecting evidence of learning in Music;
- a workshop run by The Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra’s education unit inviting input into the TSO’s programme for schools in 2017;
- attending the “Aquavate” conference of the Royal Lifesaving organisation covering issues such as risk management around water activities and skill development for teachers of swimming and water safety;
- a workshop entitled *“Is Handwriting Still Relevant in this Digital Age?”*
- a workshop on music education technology;
- workshops on Prep reading and writing and developing a balanced literacy programme;
- an information session for teachers run by the Royal Flying Doctor Service;
- a Coach Development course in Touch Football.

When our staff attend these external workshops, meetings and conferences, it is expected that they then share their learning with the other teachers at subsequent staff meetings, as much of this professional learning is useful to many subject areas in our curriculum.

We not only use external expertise for the education of our staff but for our students as well. There are many talented and knowledgeable people in our community that we can call upon to enhance our programmes to further facilitate student achievement. This expertise may come from our school families, particular community groups or professionals in a field. In 2016 specialists that augmented our teaching programme included:

- Ms Alexis Lawson teaching the 2/3 children about coding;
- Sarah from Stomp Dance Company conducting dance sessions with all our students;
- The Footsteps Dance Company holding workshops with K-6 students culminating in an evening disco;
- Dr Nick Clements, author of “The Black War” talking to our senior students about Indigenous Tasmanians;
- author Tristan Bancks inspiring our senior students (Groups 4-6); and
- a violin group performance (which included two of our students as part of the group).

## Permeable Boundaries:

*“They are able to draw in external knowledge effectively because each of them sustains ‘permeable’ boundaries of organisation. While they keep clear organisational routines and timetables, these structures do not prevent sharing time, funds, physical resources and knowledge when there is a clear purpose or benefit for students.”*

*(Tom Bentley – Education Transforms-Papers and Reflections, 2015)*

Whilst The Launceston Preparatory School has clear organisational routines and a very full timetable, we relish the opportunity to seek ways in which we can “spread our wings” into the local community to share our time, funds, knowledge and love to benefit the children and enhance their learning. As previously mentioned, each of our school houses undertakes a fundraising event to raise funds for local causes and raise awareness amongst our school family of groups that operate in our community to help those in need or who are less fortunate than ourselves.

Another programme dear to our hearts is where our children visit residents at Peace Haven each term. Our school choir and various groups sing, chat and read stories to the elderly citizens, putting into practice our school’s strong belief in the importance of giving the children opportunities to interact with the people in our community. Excursions like these help the children to learn that no matter what our age or how we look or speak, we all have things in common and worth sharing.

In 2016 many other chances were provided for the children to learn outside our four walls. Our school walls are “thin” and permeable, allowing interaction both with people coming in to visit and us going out to find these opportunities. The many occasions where this interaction occurred included:

- attending a session at The Launceston International Tennis Tournament and meeting an international referee;
- attending the Glover Art Exhibition, provoking the student’s ideas and discussions on artistic techniques and processes;
- using our technology to “Chat to a Champ” in Rio (Jessica Trengrove) during the Olympics;
- attending the Science Week expo at the QVMAG and learning about the Planetarium, the Megafauna of Australia, electricity, robotics, flight, light and sound;
- participating in Clean Up Australia Day;
- organising a school ANZAC Day service along with attendance at the March of Remembrance and laying a wreath dedicated to our indigenous servicemen and women on behalf of the school at the cenotaph;
- experiencing a wonderfully engaging musical performance from KABOOM;
- participating in National Tree day activities by planting semi-mature saplings at the Greenfield and cultivating seeds received through Forestry Tasmania that once well-established will be planted in our school grounds;
- attending a performance of “Alice” by SOC secondary students; and
- four teams of students in Grades 4-6 competing against SOC Grade 6 students in their first ever inter-school debating contest;

To create the vast array of learning opportunities for our students, staff at The Launceston Preparatory School draw on a large range of resources. We have already outlined the many community members and groups that either came into our school or we visited who shared their knowledge and experience but it is also our use of community facilities that are an integral component to the success of our educational programmes.

The students from Prep to Grade Six undertake a gymnastics programme at the PCYC, complete a Swim and Survive course at either Launceston Swim School or Launceston Aquatic and we run our school athletics carnival at the St Leonards Athletics Centre. Each year we hold our cross country carnival at the Birch Avenue soccer ground and our swimming carnival at the Riverside Pool. Using these facilities develops in the students a strong sense of place and belonging which we feel are essential to the development of the whole child

### **Well-being and attainment: Co-evolution:**

*“All the case study schools recognise the positive long term relationship between wellbeing and attainment, and prioritise both accordingly, even when the two goals might compete for resources or attention in the short term.”*

*(Tom Bentley – Education Transforms-Papers and Reflections, 2015)*

At the core of our school’s Paideia philosophy lies the need to cater for the well-being of students as well as their learning needs. The very word Paideia refers to the “whole child”, which of course takes into account students’ emotional, social, artistic and physical development alongside their academic progress. Thus the co-evolution of students’ attainment and well-being is deeply embedded in the school’s daily practices, as well as in special activities that we conducted in 2016 to enhance them.

Our pastoral care of students is comprehensive and evident most clearly in home group activities, the care we take of our students in class and in the playground, and in all our interactions with them. We support them through a myriad of personal challenges and successes that they experience outside school as well as during school hours. At The Launceston Preparatory School we firmly believe that the well-being of students has a direct effect on attainment. When there is a supportive school environment with a focus on developing social and interpersonal skills, creating a sense of connectedness and engagement, student attainment can follow.

As well as the many *incidental* ways in which we care for the well-being of our students, we also *plan* specific activities and programmes to enhance their social and emotional development. One such activity with proven success that we continued in 2016 was providing one lunchtime a week in which the children could choose to play a game, read or draw inside. At times children need time away from the hustle and bustle of a busy playground and relish the opportunity to do something quiet either alone or with a friend. Other activities that children could choose to join during lunchtimes last year were our school choir and Art Club, both of which extend the children’s skills, ignite their interests and facilitate their well-being.

We continued to recognise the strengths of the students with special awards like “Student of the Week”, Golden Certificates presented at weekly assemblies, our “Aussie of the

Month” award and the ASPIRE medal to a student who displays the Australian Olympic Team’s set of values – Attitude, Sportsmanship, Individual Responsibility, Respect and being able to Express themselves. Such recognition supports children’s self-esteem and well-being.

To ensure staff members of the school are well equipped to assist the children with the broader scope of their needs, much expertise was called upon during 2016 to train us in areas that are not often covered in typical teacher training. These workshops, webinars and professional development sessions assisted the staff in developing the confidence and knowledge to work alongside the parents with children that need extra support during their time at school. These included:

- learning needs meetings discussing issues regarding student mental health, Students with Disability support, Nationally Consistent Collection of Data and students with hearing loss;
- a webinar presented through the Early Childhood Learning Hub using a research-based approach to help participants understand and assist young children to manage their emotions;
- Sarah Barratt conducted an in-house professional learning session for all teaching staff on child bereavement. Teachers and teacher aides then worked through online learning modules (through Child Bereavement UK) which equip school personnel to support our students at times of bereavement and loss;
- information was shared from a local speech pathologist on voice care for teachers;
- a professional development session entitled “Early Years in the Frame-Engaging Families: Forming Partnerships, Birth – Grade 2” focussed on deepening participants’ understanding of the complexities of family engagement and ways to build genuine partnerships to improve outcomes for students’ learning;
- Louise Ferrier, Senior Audiologist at Australian Hearing, took the staff through a workshop on the technology being used to assist one of our students with a severe hearing impediment.

At school level we make sure the children are kept safe by annually reviewing all our policies and in 2016 a lay-by was created outside the multi-purpose hall on Olive Street to ensure the children could be collected safely by parents and carers at the end of each day. This provided more space for the children and parents to congregate at a safe distance from the street, which had been identified in the school’s last strategic plan as a necessity.

There are many other ways in which The Launceston Preparatory School looked after the well-being of the children including:

- our SUNSMART status successfully renewed until 2019;
- participating in Walk Safely to School Day;
- providing yoga lessons;
- our many and varied sporting programmes (discussed by Leonie);
- attending “The Fairest of Them All” performance that included positive messages about cyber-safety;

- running a speedball competition for the senior children during lunchtimes to promote fairness and inclusion;
- participating in The Captain’s Challenge – a Cricket Tasmania initiative;
- participating in a Bush to Beach Safety programme;
- running an after-school “Mini Olympics”;
- providing after-school sports training for our teams;
- running weekly resilience sessions throughout the school in which we discuss behaviour, issues that arise in the playground, friendships and actively encourage the children to work out solutions to problems that arise in the playground;

Student attendance is often regarded by governments as a measure of schools’ success and an indicator of student well-being. The Launceston Preparatory School completed the year with an average attendance rate of 95%.

All these examples of continuing school practices and special activities conducted last year are evidence that The LPS places a high priority on student well-being. But we place **equal** emphasis on student attainment in academic areas; one is not prioritised to the detriment of the other.

Student attainment is measured in many ways and it is important to note that we chart students’ progress against their own individual capacities, as well as standardised measurement against age-appropriate norms.

The National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is the most obvious way in which we gather objective data to quantify our students’ levels of attainment. The data collected from this process is also a valuable teaching tool and can be used to assist students with their future learning needs. The NAPLAN results for 2016 give the most recent evidence of The Launceston Preparatory School’s accomplishment in producing successful learners.

<b>YEAR 3</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>The LPS</b>	464	427	427	475	410
<b>Tasmanian average</b>	414	414	400	418	394
<b>Australian average</b>	426	421	420	436	402

<b>YEAR 5</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>Grammar &amp; Punctuation</b>	<b>Numeracy</b>
<b>The LPS</b>	579	493	511	580	542
<b>Tasmanian average</b>	495	472	479	494	481
<b>Australian average</b>	502	475	493	505	493

During the year, teachers use many other forms of assessment to measure student attainment. These can be measures OF learning and measures FOR learning and include YARC, CELF and PAT standardised tests, as well as specific assessment tasks in each subject area and anecdotal evidence of children as they learn. All these measurements feed into

the ways our teachers develop and revise ways to promote the educational achievements of every child. We use this data to report back to parents and again in 2016 we had parent/teacher interviews – in first term with families of students in EL, Kindergarten, Prep, Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, with the Grade 5 interviews being held in second term. These were supported with the usual written reports in June and December.

When reviewing the 2016 school year, looking at all the activities and operations of the school and then reference this against Tom Bentley's research on the effectiveness and importance of collaboration in education, it is plain to see that The Launceston Preparatory School is on the right track. It is a place where our stakeholders share the same purpose; we draw on external expertise as we enjoy the benefits of having permeable boundaries and we have a strong focus on both well-being and student attainment. The collaboration that exists between all our stakeholders and the community in which we live is the overarching reason we have such a wonderful environment in which teachers can teach and children can learn and it works.

**Further information on The Launceston Preparatory School can be found on the school's website ([www.lps.tas.edu.au](http://www.lps.tas.edu.au)) or the MySchool website ([www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au)).**