



# Report card on schools

## MELVILLE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL THE BIG IMPROVER

**Jaime Shurmer**

MELVILLE Senior High School experienced the biggest academic improvement in three years, according to the Better Education website's school rankings system, while All Saints College suffered a slight slide.

Santa Maria was the most consistent in the rankings. Its students this year achieved the highest median ATAR of all local high schools in the City of Melville.

This was the first time the schools were ranked by median ATAR. In previous years they had been ranked according to the percentage of students with ATARs above 75.

Santa Maria College principal Ian Elder said school principals often disliked such tables because there was more to reading a school, but they were out in the public domain.

"We do not offer academic scholarships, so we're not selective," Mr Elder said.

"You have got to create an academic culture of success that doesn't just focus on the top or bottom but focuses on all girls."

He said it was about building confidence and

### HOW THEY RANKED

Schools	Median ATAR				
	2016	Rank	2014	2015	2016
Santa Maria	91.85	8	12	5	5
Corpus Christi	86.35	47	55	19	19
Applecross SHS	85.1	55	33	24	24
All Saints College	85	1	9	26	26
Kennedy Baptist	82.25	68	57	41	41
Melville SHS	80.55	91	61	52	52
Leeming SHS	79.1	97	47	64	64

incremental improvement, which was achieved through good counselling and tracking of students, plus the support of parents.

Fifteen years ago, the future of Melville Senior High School was in question with just 400 students, but since then it has grown to 1450.

Melville SHS principal Phillip White said it was 12th in the State among its public school peers.

"We've been working hard to win back the confidence of the community," Mr White said.

"We've been performing very well the past five years."

All Saints College principal Belinda Provis said the publication of league tables had been widely criticised for unfairly comparing schools and students using narrow and simplistic measures.

"All Saints' College is a non-selective school and we are very proud of our diverse and lively Class of 2016 for all they achieved in the classroom, for their wonderful leadership of our younger students, their kindness and their strength of character," Ms Provis said.

"All Saints' position at number 1 on the league table in recent years was calculated on the number of students achieving 75+, and All Saints typically has a particularly strong 'top end' - this year was no different from that, with many exceptional achievements.

"A median ATAR is also affected by a number of other factors, including whether or not the school imposes prerequisites on a student's right to choose subjects and academic pathways."