

2007 Annual School Report

Hope Christian School

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INTRODUCTION

Hope Christian School is a newly established, Christ-centred, Independent School in the South West Region of Sydney which began operating as a Preparatory/Primary School in 2006.

In 2007 the vision of building a Christ-centred, low-cost Christian School, for the fastest growing region in Sydney entered into the second stage, with the introduction of the first high school class. This second stage involved the introduction of a Middle School structure which was a natural and gradual progression from the nurturing, family oriented primary school environment, to a more independent school environment that meets the needs of the 'Tween Years'.

Hope's vision is to continue growing towards a comprehensive, Christian based, Early Childhood to Year 12 program by the year 2012.

Hope Christian School Inc. (Hope) is registered and accredited with the New South Wales Board of Studies. The school is a member of the Christian Parent Controlled Schools Ltd.

The report is a legislative requirement under The Education Amendment (Non-Government Schools Registration) Act 2004. Copies of this report will be available on-line at www.hope.nsw.edu.au

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

As the Chairman of the Board of Hope Christian School I'd like to thank the staff, Board, students and parents for making the 2007 year a successful one. Since its inception, Hope CS has been blessed in so many ways. In 2 short years we've not only seen considerable growth, but also many great relationships made. Our aim has always been to nurture a family oriented culture in the school and this is certainly evident. The distinctive parent/teacher partnership is a characteristic we love and want to see strengthened.

During 2007, the Board's strategic plan has been to develop the High School structure through our Middle School. It is a great joy to see the way this has developed. The other role we find ourselves in, together with the Executive staff, is the liaison with local churches and other Christian Schools in the area. Our hope is that the partnerships that are formed will help take not just our school community into a great future, but also the greater community as a whole.

I would like to thank all our school community for your support and endeavours in this past year.

Pastor Mick Agius
Board Chair

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

It is such a joy to serve The Lord in being a part of the magnificent team walking out the vision of Hope Christian School. This second year in operation brought many new families and a change in school structure. A Junior and Middle School structure was introduced to provide a smooth transition for our new Year 7 students and to provide a clear identity for the different areas of our school. We began the year with 94 students and grew to 108 students by the end of the year.

The second year involved growing pains as did our first year, as we established our first year of high school. Providing a safe and nurturing environment for our 'Tween Years' was an important initiative in establishing our Middle School. With the introduction of new staff and students, a Middle School Camp was organised to build strong peer relationships and allow time for teacher and peer interaction in a fun and informal setting. This provided a strong platform for our students to launch into their first year of high school.

We are grateful to our Board and School Community for their commitment and passion for Christian Education. Let us continue seeking our Lord as we travel together on his journey in establishing Hope Christian School.

Mrs Michelle Brookes
Principal

A MESSAGE FROM HOPE'S PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

Hope C. S. P & F Association was launched in Term 2, 2007. The Association's primary function is to act as a fundraising body which supports Hope C. S. in securing specific resources for our students. Throughout the year with the enthusiastic commitment and hard work of our parents, (and some staff who are also parents of students at Hope), funds were raised through several activities.

Naturally two events that were very well patronised were the mother's day stall and the father's day stall. Disco afternoons/evenings were held for Junior School and Middle School in Terms 2 and 4. Many of our younger students went home weary and foot-sore from the activities provided at the disco, and from what parents tell us, slept like the proverbial logs that night.

Throughout each term a working bee was held to assist the school with some general maintenance and odd jobs for the teachers. These days also gave our families the opportunity to meet, mingle, and work alongside other families. For our students, the favourite parts of these events were the BBQ or the friendly game of softball.

With the knowledge and experience gained from our first year activities under our belts, the P & F Association looks forward to further supporting Hope C. S. with more exciting and diverse fundraising events.

Mrs Vibeke Stafford
President, P & F Association.

PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

The school surveys revealed the following:

- Students appreciate the Christian environment, enjoy learning about God and the Bible, feel safe at school and agree that their teachers show them how to live as God intends. The playground is a popular place with many children enjoying sporting games.
- Parents support the school vision; appreciate the nurturing and family sense of community. They also appreciate Hope's strong values and committed staff to Christ-centred education. Finalising a decision of the school site will bring relief; therefore investment can be made in facilities and specialist high school subjects.
- The staff is committed to the vision of the school and provide a caring and encouraging environment in which children can thrive. The staff agree that high standards were set for both students and teachers and that the school's policy framework is effective and consistent with its vision and values.

ENROLMENT

The introduction of our first Year Seven class brought exciting changes to the current school structure. With the beginning of the first year of high school, a Middle School (Stage 3 -Year 7 for 2007) and Junior School Structure (Prep - Stage 2) was established. We began the year with close to 100 students and had 75% school growth by the end of this year, being the second year of operation. In 2007 there were around 40 female and 60 male students.

As well as enrolments expanding in the top grades of the school we had significant enrolment growth in the lower grades of the school where we began our first Kindergarten class. The other classes making up the Junior School were Preparatory, Stage One (Years 1 and 2) and Stage Two (Years 3 and 4). The Middle School classes consisted of Stage Three (Years 5 and 6) as well as Year 7.

Hope is a Christian, co-educational school that serves a broad range of Christian families and other interested families from the Macarthur District. Our broad demographic area spans from The Oaks, Werombi, Camden, Douglas Park and across to Campbelltown. We seek to honour God in welcoming enrolment applications from all families who desire the educational programs we offer and who are willing to actively support the school's Christian framework.

Enrolment Policy

Purpose:

To serve Christian Families and others in the enrolment of their children at Hope CS in a way that is compassionate, just and efficient.

We believe:

1. Christ's love extends to children of all abilities, development and background.
2. Children are valued on the basis of who they are before God, not on their academic, cultural or sporting merit.
3. Both Christian and non-Christian families should have access to Christian education.
4. Hope CS has a responsibility to promote and maintain its distinctively Christian ethos.
5. Christians have a responsibility to care for the weak, disadvantaged and marginalised as they live Christ's story in their lives.

and we value:

1. Justice and compassion
2. Confidentiality
3. Christian families who perpetuate our Christian ethos
4. Harmony between the needs and desires of children and the resources and context of the school
5. Procedural fairness
6. The interaction of children with exceptional talent and those who experience learning challenges

therefore we will:

1. Welcome and consider all enrolment applications without undue delay and with open communication between school and parents.
2. Proceed applications to the interview stage, at the discretion of the Principal, only after all enrolment forms have been completed and the payment of the enrolment fee per student is received.
3. Have a maximum class enrolment of 30 students. Any increase will be at the Board's discretion and will be temporary.
4. Only enrol students in Kindergarten who have turned 5 by 30th March in the year they are starting school.
5. Consider the welfare of the whole school community, the school's Christian ethos and the capacity of the school to cater for the individual needs of an applying student when deciding whether to enrol a child.
6. If there is a vacancy, make an offer of enrolment in the following order, but always at the discretion of the Principal in conjunction with the Board or its representative(s), subject to individual assessment and subject to the date of application within each category:

- Christian family with a sibling who has attended Hope CS for longer than one term
 - Christian family who is transferring from another Christian School
 - Christian family
 - Non-Christian family with a sibling who has attended Hope CS for longer than one term
 - Non-Christian family
7. When possible, seek to accommodate those families for whom the school fees would impose a financial burden. This is at the Business Manager's discretion.
 8. Within the parameters of our Christian framework, comply with any government requirements (e.g. Data Implementation Manual for Enrolments, Anti-Discrimination, BOS Registration)
 9. Require that all parents allow their child to engage in the full life of the school, including its promotion of Christian belief and character, with due consideration to the child's abilities and background. This includes spiritual, academic, physical, cultural, off-site and social events.
 10. Terminate the enrolment of a student who, for example, undermines the school's Christian ethos, engages in serious unacceptable behaviour, repeatedly disrupts learning or jeopardises the welfare of other students (see Suspension and Expulsion Guidelines)
 11. Require that the parents will give the Principal a full terms notice in writing of the intention to withdraw a student. Failure to give such notice will incur a full terms fees at the ruling rate of the time of withdrawal (school holidays are not included in this time frame)
 12. Require parents to ensure that all enrolment information is complete and current at all times. Parents should inform the school of changes to these details immediately.

EXTERNAL TESTING RESULTS

In our second year in operation our school's results were very encouraging overall; especially for the first time that we have undertaken the Year 7 SNAP and ELLA Tests.

Year 3 Basic Skills and Primary Writing Assessment

In 2007, 10 students sat for the Basic Skills test.

- 100% of students scored above the benchmark in Writing.
- 90% of students scored above the benchmark in Reading.
- 100% of students scored above the benchmark in Numeracy.

Year 5 Basic Skills and Primary Writing Assessment

In 2007, 9 students sat for the Basic Skills test.

- 100% of students scored above the benchmark in Writing.
- 100% of students scored above the benchmark in Reading.
- 100% of students scored above the benchmark in Numeracy.

Year 7 ELLA and SNAP

In 2007, 19 students sat for the ELLA and SNAP tests.

- 95% of students scored above the benchmark in Writing.
- 89% of students scored above the benchmark in Reading.
- 56% of students scored above the benchmark in Numeracy.

As a Christian school, our focus is on the whole child as we believe in the importance of developing knowledge and skills together with a student's character, by providing real life experiences. As our philosophy is driven by the Gospel we welcome students of all academic abilities, gifts and challenges.

Therefore, these results form only part of what we aim to achieve at Hope Christian School.

STUDENTS

ATTENDANCE

The average student attendance rate was 93.7%

RETENTION RATE

As Hope was a Prep to Year Seven school in 2007 there is no report on student retention rates.

STUDENT WELFARE

Pastoral Care is paramount to Hope Christian School as we aim to provide a safe and happy school environment which honours God.

We believe in:

1. Loving one another as God has loved us - unconditionally and self-sacrificially.
2. Treating each student as precious - as a unique creation of a loving and awesome God.
3. Appreciating Christ's death is the highest price for every pleasure and the deepest comfort in every pain.
4. Caring for young people in partnership with their family and church.
5. Building self-esteem that is founded upon the layers of value in God's eyes, the Gospel, self-confidence (and meaning - not sure what this means), love from others and resilience.
6. Acknowledging that our world can be exciting, beautiful, good and challenging as well as broken, ugly, troubled and evil.
7. Compliance with all Child Protection requirements and adherence to the school's Pastoral Care Policy, Communication Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Crisis Management Policy.

Our Student Welfare Policy was reviewed this year and a number of programs introduced as a result. We implemented our first school Chaplaincy Program which provided quality counselling for our students, families and staff. Along with small group and one on one counselling sessions the Chaplain provided professional training and support for teaching staff.

With the introduction of the first stage of a middle school structure we aimed to provide a safe, nurturing environment to meet the social, emotional as well as the academic needs of the 'Tween Age' and therefore provide a smooth transition from a primary structure to a high school setting. Our first Christ centred school camping program was implemented for our middle school students and staff, where opportunities were given for personal challenges, building self esteem and developing positive peer relationships amongst students, while building rapport with their teachers.

Copies of the Student Welfare Policy are available to members of the school community from the administrative office.

TEACHERS

As we welcomed our first year of high school students into our second year of operation and saw the school structure change from just primary to Junior and Middle School structures, we also welcomed high school and primary trained teaching staff to Hope. There were six full-time teaching staff and one part-time teaching staff.

All seven of these teaching staff hold teaching qualifications from higher education institutions within Australia.

In 2007 we had nine staff development days during which the following areas were addressed:

- Christian perspective in education
- Philosophy and teaching in a Middle School
- Student Welfare/ Pastoral Care
- Discipline
- Building Resilience REID
- ICT - 'webquest' design
- Compliance
- First Aid / Anaphylaxis
- Emergency procedures
- Curriculum development for Literacy in the Junior School - Jolly Phonics

All teaching staff attended team meetings appropriate to their staged class and Key Learning Area.

ATTENDANCE RATES

(N.B. Hope Christian School was a Prep -7 school in 2007)

There were 6 full-time teachers and 1 part-time teacher at Hope.

Absences for 2007:

Term 1 22 days

Term 2 16 days

Term 3 18 days

Term 4 9 days

Total: 65 days

Number of Teacher Attendance Days in 2007: 201 days

Our average teacher attendance rate was: 95%

RETENTION RATE

As Hope was established as a primary school in 2006 and grew into Year Seven in 2007 our retention rate was 100%.

At the start of 2006 there were 2 full-time teachers and at the conclusion of 2007 we have grown to 6.6 equivalent full-time teachers.

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

This policy covers what is commonly known as Grievance Procedure and has continued to be implemented from its inception in 2006.

We believe:

1. Complaints, compliments and suggestions are part of the daily adventure of living in an educational community.
2. Encouragement and discouragement (?) are vital aspects of the one purpose - building up one another.
3. Self-sacrificial love as evidenced in Jesus' life and death must underpin the way in which we seek to build up one another. Placing the interests of others before one's own is an essential aspect of following Jesus.
4. We are free to cast all our concerns on Jesus, for He cares for His people.
5. Confidentiality, respect for privacy, peacemaking and right motives that issue from the guidelines of scripture are vital.

Therefore we will:

1. Encourage and welcome the input and feedback of all Hope C S community members.
2. Channel complaints, compliments and suggestions via the relevant staff member in the first instance in person, by phone, in writing or by email.
3. If any matter remains unresolved or incomplete after having contacted the person involved, then speak with the relevant executive or the Principal. If the unresolved matter involves the Principal, parents should contact the Chairman of the Board.
4. Contact the Chairman of the Board if the matter continues to be unresolved or incomplete and is of a serious nature.
5. Raise broader matters with the relevant authority only if unresolved within the school.
6. As they seek to live Christ's story in their lives, staff members will accept and deal with complaints, compliments and suggestions from parents and others with humility, openness and a desire to live in harmony. School community members will be listened to and thanked for their input.
7. Not deal with anonymous complaints, compliments and suggestions unless of an important nature and supported by evidence.
8. Not deal with issues that are considered trivial, frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith.
9. Enact procedural fairness.

The full copy of the Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Policy are available to members of the school community from the administrative office.

2007 GOALS

The goals for 2007 were achieved or progressed as follows:

1. Compliance was maintained in the following areas:
 - NSW Board of Studies Registration & Accreditation requirements
 - Legal policy requirements
 - Evidence of this was the school's successful BoS application for Year 7 and 8 Registration and Accreditation. Inspectors made positive comments.
2. Secure a school site:
 - Investigations were conducted of prospective local land parcels
 - Proposals put forth to applicable holders of land for sale
 - Meetings were held with local council and land holders
3. Establish Middle School Structure (Years 5 - 8)
 - Experienced middle / high school staff employed
 - Trained whole school staff in the philosophy of middle school
 - Allocated appropriate home room for Year 7
 - Established middle school section of classrooms including specialist rooms
 - Introduced middle school camping program
 - Purchased and setup of furnishings
 - Purchased and set up of classroom resources
4. Continue Library set up
 - Accessed 'Investing in our Schools Program' to purchase administrative computer software, multi media and data technology as well as book resources
 - Continue set up of furniture and finalise library layout
 - Catalogue and shelf resources

2008 IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

1. To further student progress
2. To maintain policy development and review
3. Pastoral Care /Chaplaincy Program
4. Secure a school site
5. Further develop professional teaching standards
6. Consolidate Preparatory Teaching and Learning program

PROMOTE RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

At Hope Christian School we aim to provide a safe nurturing, family environment with stimulating and challenging experiences that encourage respect and promote value of one's self and others. As a Christian school we believe in honouring and serving God through the teaching of his word and His principles in all aspects of the school. We teach our students to act with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control to their fellow peers, adults, visitors and all regardless of their circumstances. We also believe in teaching the importance and responsibility of good stewardship of our immediate and global environment.

In 2007 we aimed to promote respect and responsibility at Hope in the following ways.

2007 became the first year Hope CS provided financial and prayer support for mission work. The school engaged in 'Project Hope' which involved extensive fundraising to provide money for the purchase of reading books for the students at Hope Junior School in Uganda. Our Stage Three students planned, costed and implemented a number of fundraising activities across the whole school community. Towards the end of the year one of these students had the great pleasure of participating in their church's mission trip to visit the staff and students of Hope Junior School, Uganda and to present to them, the money raised by Hope CS.

This wonderful mission project provided opportunities for our students to learn and demonstrate the act of service and self-sacrifice to help others in need. It helped to promote within our students, a sense of compassion while reinforcing the value of reading. The project helped to open their eyes to the unequal levels of wealth in different societies across the world. Many lessons were learnt and the revelation that many needs that western nations consider as basic and therefore can be taken for granted, are in limited supply to other nations. Our students were able to develop an appreciation and respect for the affluence that many Australians enjoy.

Hope CS believes that the opportunity for students to participate with their local community, helps foster a sense of ownership, leading to respect and honour of others. One such opportunity arose when Hope CS received a flag pole and Australian Flag from the Australian Government. We held a flag raising ceremony which was attended by The Hon. Mr Pat Farmer, Federal MP. Mr Farmer addressed the ceremony and presented an insightful talk about honouring our flag.

A further opportunity for community participation arose when our students represented Hope CS at the ANZAC Day ceremonies in Campbelltown and Camden. This ceremony provided yet another opportunity for our school to demonstrate love, respect and a sense of pride of our national flag and Australia as our home.

To reinforce our strong foundation of unity, goodness and respect, further improvements were made to our whole school 'Celebration' chapel services, with a focus on improving delivery and development of student responsibility. A new format of worship was introduced to improve the quality of sound and promote student participation. A team of students became responsible for the setup of the hall for celebration time, promoting responsibility and encouraging an attitude of service.

The introduction of a whole school morning assembly provided a great opportunity for our students to be taught actively; the values of respect and responsibility. It has provided a time for our students to come together to listen and participate in a formal school setting. Particular sections of the ceremony promote respect to our Heavenly Father, people in authority and of our nation and flag. A time of prayer and announcements were introduced as well as the singing of our national anthem with the raising of our Australian flag.

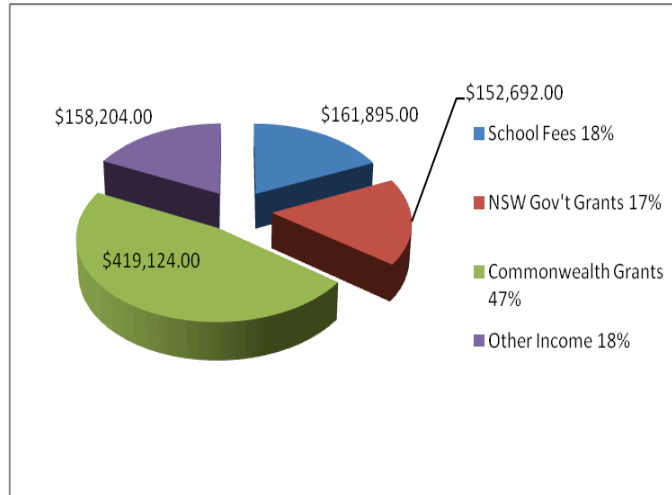
The New South Wales Premier's Reading Challenge helped to foster a love of reading; which assisted in developing students' respect and value of books and learning. The support of this initiative was made possible with the use of or local community library facilities and by a visit to the school from Australian author Jeni Mawter. The sharing of books and public space, has helped to teach our students respect for property and for the people around them.

Hope Christian School Finances - 2007

Hope CS Income 2007

School Fees	\$161,895.00
State Gov't Grants	\$152,692.00
Commonwealth Grants	\$419,124.00
Other Income	\$158,204.00

Total Income:	\$891,915.00



Hope CS Expenses 2007

Employee Costs:	\$655,561.00
Classroom Expenses:	\$76,291.00
Occupancy Expenses:	\$144,982.00
Administration:	\$75,775.00

Total Expenses:	\$952,609.00

