

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



Shaping lives that change the world



NORTHCROSS
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

Northcross Christian School is a dynamic and vibrant, double streamed primary school. We are committed to delivering quality education within a caring, nurturing, supportive Christian environment. We partner with parents to train and equip students in their lifelong journey of learning. The school teaches a Christian world view and integrates biblical values and principles into the curriculum. We are a ministry of Ryde Baptist Church and a member of Christian Schools Australia. The school is registered with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

At Northcross we believe that a positive school experience in the early years of education lays the foundation for a child's learning. We recognise that each student learns differently. In response, we provide effective, interactive and varied learning experiences in every classroom.

The staff plan, teach and assess the mandatory outcomes in all Key Learning Areas (KLA) including English, Mathematics, Human Society in Its Environment, Science and Technology, Creative Arts and Personal Development/Health & Physical Education.

The foundational teaching of Literacy and Numeracy skills in Kindergarten to Year Two provides a strong platform for students to build upon as they progress through the Primary years.

In Years Three and Four, the foundational skills of numeracy and literacy are consolidated so that the basic skills of reading, writing, spelling and Mathematics form a solid foundation for Years Five and Six. During these years, students progress from concrete operational learning to a situation where they are encouraged to begin to engage in deep learning that involves abstract thoughts and concepts. The ability of teachers to differentiate for a wide range of learning styles and developmental stages at this level is important.

At Northcross, Years Five and Six form our Middle School. Middle School provides the students with a curriculum that prepares them for the transition to Secondary school by developing each student's leadership skills and responsibility for learning. We focus on individual needs by engaging students through multiple intelligences and higher order thinking skills to foster exciting learning. Integrated in Middle School is a strong pastoral care program, including peer support and community outreach. This ensures every student is personally cared for and supported through this transitional time of life.

We also have Learning Support programs offering enrichment, literacy and numeracy support and EAL/D. Extracurricular opportunities are provided in music, orchestra, band, choirs, dance, drama, numerous sporting events, environment club, camps, coding club, chess, debating and public speaking.

In 2017, we launched our Strategic Plan with our vision 'Shaping lives that change the world'. For further information please refer to our school website.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

During 2017, Northcross Christian School continued to implement our Strategic Plan, which includes the following elements; Excellence in Teaching & Learning, Pastoral Care & Spiritual Development, Curriculum & Co-Curricular, Quality Christian Staff, Church, School & Community Partnerships, Financial Stewardship, Facilities Planning: Size & Structure of School and Governance, Management & Administration.

In 2017 we;

- Implemented full double streaming of Year Five and Year Six
- Continued to articulate our core values to our community through visual prompts of graphic representation around the school
- Facilitated opportunities for teachers to lead staff meetings in their areas of interest and expertise, including debriefing staff as a result of external professional learning
- Continued development of Christian perspectives in the curriculum using 'Transformation by Design'
- Continued and extended service activities such as 'Community Outreach'
- Continued formalisation of Agreements of Cooperation providing continuity of Christian Schooling options for parents of Secondary students
- Developed a five-year financial plan including underlying budget principles
- Created flexible learning spaces
- Consolidated Australia Teacher Performance and Development Framework and TAA requirements introduced by NESA
- Developed the newly acquired site at 5 Myra Avenue
- Continued expansion of PCSchools (School Administration System)
- Developed a risk management and compliance reporting framework
- Implemented the administration restructure
- Consolidated the instrumental music program with the contemporary band and orchestra



PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

The P&F (Parents and Friends of Northcross) is a committee made up of parents of existing Northcross students who represent and serve the Northcross Community. Our aim is to make a positive contribution to the School. Northcross Christian School embraces and promotes a philosophy where parents and School work in partnership together to nurture and equip all our students.

The P&F meets each school term to discuss matters relating to the life of the School and to organise future fundraising and School community events.

The P&F Executive currently consists of a President, two Vice Presidents, a Treasurer, a Secretary, a Parent Representative to the School Board, a Canteen Convenor and a General Member. In addition, the P&F liaises with various sub-committees, such as the Hospitality Committee and Gardening Committee.

Once again, 2017 was an active year with many parents involved in the following:

- Hosting and preparing gift packs for the Tea and Tissues morning tea for kindy's first day
- Catering and hosting the Open Day and Kindergarten Orientation morning teas
- Explaining PAL hours to new Kindergarten parents at TIPS night
- Providing support to teachers by assisting with reading groups, art classes, canteen, uniform shop, student banking, library, excursions and sports marshals.
- Organising Mother's Day High Tea in the garden
- Organising Father's Day fudge gift packs
- Holding a weekly prayer meeting to pray for students, staff, parents and School Board
- Annual Chocolate Fundraising drive
- Assisting with the musical Beauty and the Beast
- Fundraising through outside school promotions e.g. The Athletes Foot, Entertainment Books.

In addition to the above, the School operates a Parent Activity Levy (PAL) system. Parents are asked to volunteer their time to be involved in many and varied activities within the School (including assistance in classroom reading, art classes and canteen duties). The P&F administers the rostering of parents for some of these duties. By volunteering their time, parents are exempt from paying a levy that is charged in addition to normal school fees.

In total, \$22,769 was raised in 2017 through various fundraising activities and canteen.

During 2017, the P&F were delighted to have been able to support the school financially with the following donations/gifts:

Description	Amount
P&F Donation for PDHPE equipment	\$5,000
P&F Donation for Library resources	\$5,000
P&F Donation for ILT devices	\$10,000
P&F Donation for ipads for students	\$4,200
P&F Donation for Musical	\$5,500
Gardening and hospitality	\$378
Year 6 Bibles	\$997
Teacher Farewell Gifts & Flowers	\$750



The parent community at Northcross is a vital part of the school. We are thankful to God for the hard work, support and generosity of the parent body over the last year.

On behalf of all parents, the P&F Executive would like to thank the School Board for their continued dedication, and Ryde Baptist Church for the ongoing ministry of the school.

We look forward to everyone's continued service at Northcross in 2018.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Student Leadership Team includes School Captains, Vice Captains and House Captains. Students are elected by their peers and staff.

In 2017, Student Leader responsibilities included:

- Running and participating in school events such as Dedication Service, Thanksgiving Evening, Open Day, Teacher & Parent Information Nights, Northcross Limited AGM and weekly Assemblies
- Leading House Meetings and helping to lead the Swimming, Cross Country and Athletic Carnivals
- Organising sports equipment to be used at student breaks and Thursday sport
- Representing the school at various events including the Ryde Council Anzac Day Ceremony and Annual State Parliamentary Visit
- Corresponding with the school's sponsor child in the Philippines
- Organising the out of uniform days

In addition, the Student Leadership Team attended the National Young Leader's Day and took part in a mentoring program as part of their learning and development.

NAPLAN TESTING

2015

Year 3

In 2015 in Literacy, 89% of Year 3 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 51% in the State.

In Numeracy, 67% scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 37% in the State.

Year 5

In 2015 in Literacy, 70% of Year 5 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 35% in the State.

In Numeracy, 69% scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 31% in the State.

2016

Year 3

In 2016 in Literacy, 86% of Year 3 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 53% in the State.

In Numeracy, 75% scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 38% in the State.

Year 5

In 2016 in Literacy, 70% of Year 5 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 33% in the State.

In Numeracy, 79% scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 32% in the State.



2017

Year 3

In 2017 in Literacy, 92% of year 3 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 57% in the State.

In Numeracy, 92% scored in the top two bands (5 and 6) compared with 43% in the State.

Year 5

In 2017 in Literacy, 76% of year 5 students at Northcross scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 33% in the State.

In Numeracy, 73% scored in the top two bands (7 and 8) compared with 33% in the State.

TEACHING STAFF AT THE SCHOOL

Northcross employs teaching staff who are committed Christians and accept the school's Statement of Faith. All staff teach from a Christian world view across the curriculum.

In 2017, the school employed 39 staff members with 25 teaching staff, (both full-time and part-time). The school retained 94.74% of the full-time and part-time teaching and administration staff from the previous school year.

Each of the teaching staff at Northcross have formal teacher education qualifications. There are no teachers employed lacking formal teacher qualifications (category ii and iii). The school aims to provide staff and students with support through teachers' aides and support staff. Small group, one-on-one or in-class support is offered to students who require additional, specialised instruction in EAL/D, Literacy and Numeracy, as well as students with additional needs. An Enrichment program extends students who excel in various KLA.

Staff were provided with frequent opportunities to improve teaching practice through professional development in 2017. As a whole school, the staff were developed in the following areas – ILT planning and skill-building, understanding 'growth mindset', compulsory accreditation, WH&S/anaphylaxis, Spalding/Spelling Mastery and curriculum revision and design.

In order to meet the specific professional development needs, staff attended the following courses or conferences:

- Learning Difference Conference
- Middle Leader's Program
- Christian Schools Australia Principals' Meeting
- 'Behaviour management for beginning teachers' course
- 'Teaching filmmaking' workshop
- 'NCCD support and moderation' session
- 'Improving outcomes for students with hearing impairments' training
- MULTILIT training
- K-6 Physical Activity and Health Conference
- 'Coding' workshop
- 'Strategies and support for students with ASD' session
- Christian Schools Australia Conference
- 'Seven steps to writing success' workshop
- 'Managing anxiety disorders at school' session
- 'Capital Grants' workshop
- Student Wellbeing Conference
- Spalding Training.

The Principal attended CSA National Leadership Retreat and CSA Child Protection Training.



STUDENT POPULATION OF THE SCHOOL

The total student population of the school in 2017 was 341, with 153 girls and 188 boys in Kindergarten to Year 6. These numbers allow for any students moving in or out of the school throughout the year. The students are predominantly from the Ryde area and represent a mix of diverse cultural backgrounds. The students are encouraged to value the differences from within the community and to work harmoniously as a community.

The average student attendance was 95.6% school days, with absences largely being accounted for by approved leave or student illness.

Year	Attendance	Year	Attendance	Year	Attendance
Kindergarten	96.1%	Year 3	96.0%	Year 5	95.9%
Year 1	95.4%	Year 4	95.4%	Year 6	95.4%
Year 2	95.0%				

SCHOOL POLICIES

Enrolment Policy for Northcross Christian School

Rationale

The enrolment policy we adopt to assist our determination of families who become part of our school community, reflects our attitude toward the role of Christian Schooling generally, as well as the type of educational community we wish to develop for our students. To maintain our strong Christian ethos, it is vital that we at all times ensure that those coming into our school are fully supportive of, if not actively pursuing, the same attitudes, values and relationship with our Lord and God. As a school we believe that our primary ministry is towards those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord in their lives, and are active members of their respective congregations. We also believe, that when space permits, there is a role for our school to encourage parents who are yet to make that commitment to Christ. These families must understand and be able to sign the conditions of enrolment before enrolment can proceed.

Aims:

- To provide an efficient process of enrolment that satisfies the needs of both families and the school.
- The School Board has ultimate authority for the enrolments of students at Northcross, and has delegated to the Principal the authority to enrol students in accordance with the school's enrolment policy.

Implementation:

- Each family will be considered on an individual basis, with the Principal and, in some cases the School Board, carefully assessing whether enrolment of a child in the school is in the best interests of the child, his/her family and the school as a whole.
- To be enrolled in Kindergarten, students must turn 5 on or before April 30 of the year in which they start school to be accepted for enrolment. Exceptions to this age limit will be determined at the discretion of the Principal.



Class Size Limitations

The maximum number of students entered into each K-6 class will not generally exceed 26. However, special consideration will be given where siblings are seeking a place and the rest of their family has been catered for, or again, when the Principal feels it is appropriate to offer a position.

Gender Policy

It is the school's aim to have broadly equal numbers of boys and girls in each year level. The school's enrolment policy does not discriminate between males and females.

Role of the School Board in Enrolment of Students

The School Board is responsible for setting the enrolment policy and is the final avenue of appeal in matters relating to it.

Summary of Safe and Supportive Environment Policies

Our school has a number of policies in place to ensure student welfare and a supportive environment for the students. Our desire is to make the school a safe, caring and nurturing place to be. These policies include Workplace Health and Safety and First Aid, Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policies, Supervision, Evacuation and Lockdown Policies. These can be accessed from the Office.

Northcross provides a Chaplaincy program with the funding it receives as part of the National Schools Chaplaincy Program. The Chaplain is available to cater for the pastoral needs of the school community.

Management of Non-attendance

Northcross is committed to ensuring every child has the opportunity to learn. In partnership with our parent community, it is our expectation that students attend school and participate in learning and activities that support their growth and development.

The following procedures are used to manage student non-attendance:

- Attendance is taken at the commencement of every day;
- Parents must notify the school if their child is going to be absent from school;
- A note of explanation is to be given to the school upon return from the absence;
- Unexplained absences are followed up by the school;
- Parents may be called to meet with the Principal to discuss ongoing concerns as a result of habitual student absences.
- Certificates of Exemption Leave and Attendance/Enrolment are granted by the Principal when the applicant has clearly demonstrated that the exemption is in the student's best interests and when, if appropriate, other alternatives have been explored.

Summary of Anti-Bullying Policy

One of the most prominent characteristics of a Christian School must be its commitment to maintaining a safe and inclusive context for all students. All members of the school community are entitled to feel and to be safe while in the school or participating in any school related events.

Harassment, victimisation and bullying are unacceptable behaviours at Northcross. Any student experiencing harassment, victimisation or bullying can expect to be taken seriously when reporting an incident. Any student found responsible for repeated or intentional acts of harassment, victimisation or bullying will be disciplined according to the Northcross Discipline and Pastoral Care Policy, as deemed appropriate by the Principal or their delegate.



Summary of Discipline and Pastoral Care Policy

At Northcross, we believe that children thrive on encouragement and praise. The teachers endeavour to provide an environment which recognises and values the positive efforts and attitudes of the students. A number of methods are used to reinforce the positive attitude of the students in the school including verbal words of encouragement, achievement certificates, house points and sharing of excellent work samples with other students.

When there are situations which need correction and intervention, the classroom teacher will follow the school's procedure to maintain the correct behaviour and positive attitudes.

Communication between the teaching staff and the parents about the child's behaviour, attitude and work ethic ensures that the child is surrounded with consistent values and standards both in the home and at school.

Northcross Christian School prohibits corporal punishment as a means of disciplining a student. Northcross Christian School does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

Summary of Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy

From time to time a parent may have concerns over their child's relationship with another student or teacher, as well as concerns in relation to other aspects of their child's education. Should a parent wish to address this we would want them to follow the appropriate grievance process. In general terms, this procedure means that initial contact is with the teacher involved, and if required, then to the relevant Executive Staff Member, Deputy Principal or Principal and ultimately the School Board.

There were changes to the Anti-Bullying to include technology and the Attendance Policy to include the use of the School App.

There were no changes to Discipline and Pastoral Care and Complaints Policies since the previous report.

The Enrolment and Management of Non-Attendance policies were reviewed during the year and updated accordingly.

All the above policies are available on the school website.



SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

During 2018 the key priorities include;

- Successfully renewing Registration of Northcross as a School and Accrediting Northcross as Teacher Accreditation Authority
- Continuing to realign Management & Operation of the School policies in line with NESA registration requirements
- Continuing to building resilient children
- Providing professional development opportunities and mentoring teachers
- Setting and tracking Culture - Developing an integrated framework that includes reporting on parent feedback, staff feedback, pupil feedback and other stakeholder views
- Successfully implementing the new Executive structure
- Implementing the new Financial Report Framework
- Creating a Board/RBC Building Working Party
- Creating a Risk and Compliance Working Party
- Creating a 'Board Dashboard' incorporating educational indicators, student and other stakeholder/user indicators, financial performance and people/capability
- Continuing to implement the transition to digital management of forms and records

PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

At all times, Northcross Christian School aims to promote respect and dignity amongst all members of the school community. Through daily devotions and interactions, our students are reminded of their individuality and uniqueness and are encouraged to demonstrate an attitude of understanding and respect to each person – child, teacher and adult – demonstrating acceptance and tolerance of those who are different to themselves.

In our daily discussions and interaction, staff reaffirm the Values for Australian Schools from a biblical perspective. At Assemblies, the values were also reinforced in the context of a whole-school approach. The Peer Support Program is an opportunity for student leaders to develop a unified approach to promoting respect and responsibility from all members of the school community. Our aim is to raise future generations that will make valuable contributions to the society in which they work and live. In addition, we have implemented a 'growth mindset' approach in order to equip students when confronted with challenging situations in order to help them in their journey of life-long learning.



SUMMARY OF PARENT, TEACHER & STUDENT SATISFACTION

A percentage of the parent community, staff and students were surveyed to determine the general satisfaction of the wider school community.

Parents:

All parents surveyed indicated that they are pleased that their child attends Northcross. They see the school encouraging a sense of community where parents have the opportunity to participate in school activities. They see Northcross as a positive and nurturing environment where children are encouraged to try their best and work with others. They highly value the curriculum being taught is from a Christian world view. They feel the school provides a sound educational foundation for their children. They are thankful for the many opportunities students have to participate in school activities including sport, music, dance, choir, public speaking and the school musical.

They appreciate the highly competent staff who are devoted to the development and well-being of the whole child. They see the teaching staff as providing challenging and stimulating lessons. They value the way in which students are encouraged to care for one another. They believe that the school makes good use of very limited space and facilities. Parents would like to continue to see the development in the technology including the provision of courses like typing and coding.

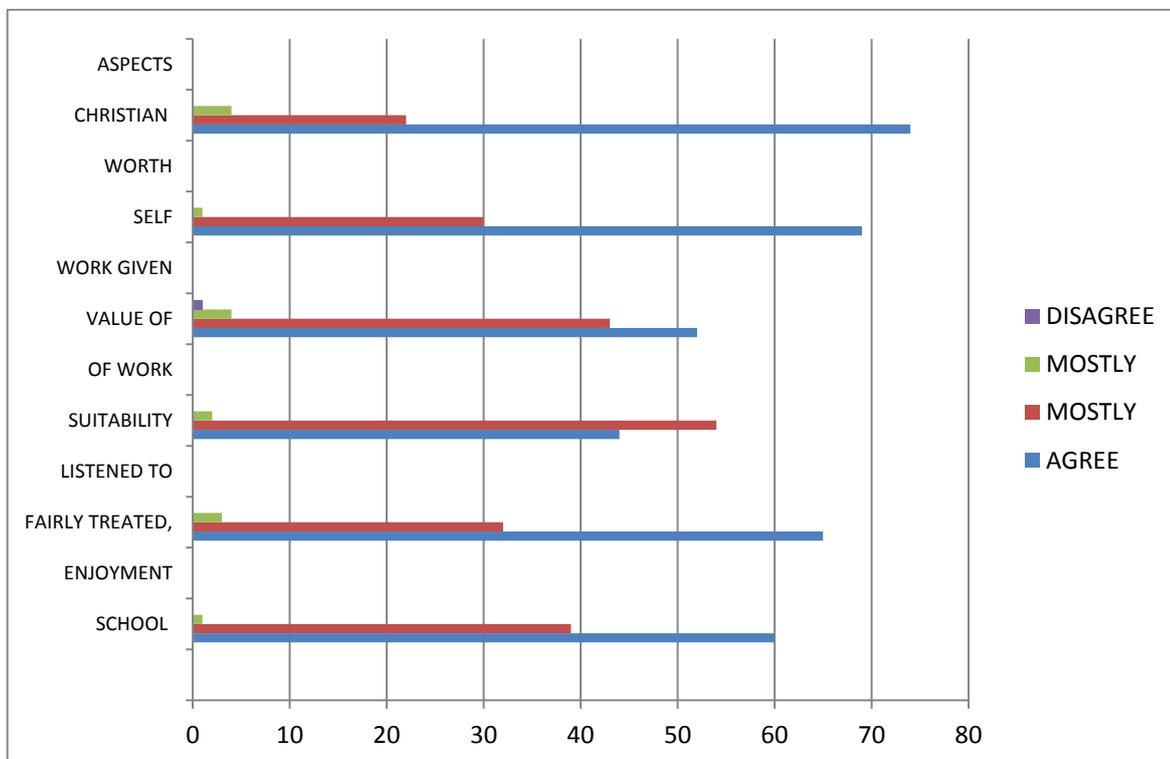
Staff:

Staff described the school as a living Christ-centred community and are thankful to be part of a dedicated team. They enjoy working alongside genuine, supportive and caring people who are committed to the whole child's well-being. They believe they are able to give their students a solid faith and educational foundation that will equip them for life. They would like to see mentorship developed and time to complete compliance documentation.

Students:

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS [Given in percentages]				
AREAS	AGREE	MOSTLY AGREE	MOSTLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE
SCHOOL ENJOYMENT	60	39	1	
FAIRLY TREATED, LISTENED TO	65	32	3	
SUITABILITY OF WORK	44	54	2	
VALUE OF WORK GIVEN	52	43	4	1
SELF WORTH	69	30	1	
CHRISTIAN ASPECTS	74	22	4	





The table above summarises the responses of our student leaders in a range of areas related to their experiences at Northcross Christian School. Responses indicate that 97% of them either agreed or mostly agreed that they were fairly treated and listened to. 98% agreed or mostly agreed that the work was suitable with 95% agreeing or mostly agreeing with the value of work given. Within the category of School Enjoyment, 99% of the student leaders either agreed or mostly agreed to statement such as; ‘My school is a place I like to be’, ‘I enjoy what I do in class’, to ‘The other students are very friendly’.

The teaching they receive and preparation for the future continue to be high on our students’ list of priorities. It is encouraging that they see themselves as successful learners. In the category of Self Worth with questions such as; ‘I learn to get along with other people’, ‘I feel proud to be a student’, ‘People trust me’ and ‘People can depend on me’, 99% either agreed or mostly agreed with these with these statements. In relation to Christian Aspects, 96% of student leaders agree or mostly agree to statements such as; ‘Teachers act out the Christian values they are teaching us’ and ‘Students act out the Christian values we are learning’.

Participation levels in Assemblies and Devotions indicate the high value placed on the Christian input students receive at Northcross and it has been a delight to see our students willingly lead worship at School events.

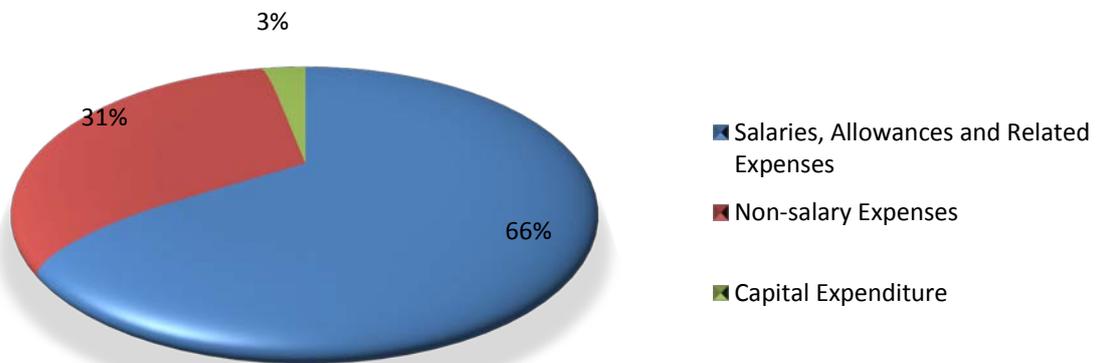
Anecdotal comments indicated that students value their ‘Buddies’ and enjoy opportunities where they can work and socialise together in co-curricular programs such as Peer Support and Community Outreach. Students have appreciated the opportunities to lead Assemblies, represent the School at official functions, speak at Open Days and conduct School Tours.



FINANCIAL INFORMATION

A summary of the sources of the School's income and expenditure for 2017 is shown below.

Northcross Expenditure 2017



Northcross Income 2017

