



The
Pacific Group of Schools
Strategic Direction
(2016-2020) **EXPANDED**

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Teaching and Learning for a 21st Century

The Strategic Direction document is intended to capture a picture of Christ focused 21st Century Learning at the Pacific Group of Schools. This expanded version defines each of the terms used in a way that both describes the Christian educational experience at the Pacific Schools and captures the direction in which the schools are moving.

The Pacific Group of Schools includes three K-12 schools:

- Pacific Hills Christian School
- Pacific Coast Christian School and
- Pacific Valley Christian School

It also includes three Hope schools designed to meet the needs of students with an intellectual disability

- New Hope School (on the PHCS campus)
- Pacific Hope School (on the PCCS campus)
- Valley Hope School (to be opened in 2017 on the PVCS campus)

The three key areas defining the educational experience are drawn from the Schools Vision Statement

- Teaching
- Learning
- Serving

Clearly these areas are intrinsically linked. For the purposes of a description of the educational experiences, 'Teaching' centres around the teacher's practice, 'Learning' around the learner's experience and 'Serving' as a primary focus in all interactions in all areas of school life and as a means of reaching out beyond our school community. The description of each of the areas is broadly defined and will be realised in distinct ways in each school.

“ To be a Christian Educational Community as a centre of teaching, learning and serving excellence, founded on Biblically based beliefs, values and behaviour. ”



Teaching



Teaching Strategic Focus	Description
Discipleship	<p>Teachers pattern themselves on Jesus. Students are encouraged to pattern themselves on teachers but ultimately to learn to love and follow Jesus. Discipling a student in the classroom context could involve experiences as broad as modelling behaviour, work practices and skills. It may involve being aware of pastoral concerns of students or engaging in learning together where a teacher is modelling thinking and action and giving effective feedback. Radical discipleship means being prepared to question what others consider a given, being prepared to stand up for the weak and oppressed, being personally accountable to God.</p> <p>Matthew 28:19 'go and make disciples of all nations'</p>
Pastoral Care	<p>All teaching is pastoral care, the care exemplified by Jesus. Teachers seek to know students well, establish positive relationships with students and to exercise prayerful ministry to students in and out of class. Through school wide and immersive pastoral care, the student will learn about physical, emotional and spiritual health and how to care for themselves and others. The practice of pastoral care extends beyond the needs of the student. Pastoral care involves supporting the wellbeing of all members of our school community including staff and families.</p> <p>1 Thessalonians 4:9 'taught by God to love each other'</p>
Excellent Pedagogy	<p>Teaching is vocation, art and science. Teachers seek to learn through their working lives so they are up-to-date with content and conversant with innovative approaches. Teachers hold themselves accountable to consider a range of pedagogical strategies within a Biblical framework. This may involve taking appropriate risks in trialling varied strategies to meet the needs of a range of learners, differentiating the curriculum in ways that make learning adjustments for individuals and being actively involved in current syllabus initiatives and requirements in NSW. Excellent pedagogy involves collaboration with colleagues and the sharing of teacher gifts and talents in growing students and other staff members.</p> <p>Colossians 1:28 'admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ'</p>
Innovation	<p>Teachers should be constant learners through involvement in professional development, professional reading and networking. The school encourages and supports innovation and accepts the reality that not all innovation will be successful, as innovation involves experimentation. Teachers will be thoughtful in their choices developing teaching and learning strategies not simply recycling teaching material, approaches and resources. New technology in particular will constantly offer the potential for important new teaching strategies. All innovation will be investigated thoughtfully and in the light of our operation as a Christian educational community. Students should be encouraged to innovate through special projects, and by becoming involved in teacher innovations.</p> <p>Romans 12:2 'do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind'</p>

Teaching Strategic Focus	Description
Leadership	<p>Teachers are leaders in the classroom, being given authority within the school context and authority from a Christian perspective in the classroom community. This means envisioning goals with students, communicating the goals and working relationally to help students reach their goals. Leaders are real (authentic), are honest and open in relationships and model Christ's servant leadership. As a leader the teacher will actively seek to encourage leadership in students. As a member of the school community a teacher will often have an official or unofficial leadership role amongst other staff, and will exercise that with prayer, love and discernment.</p> <p>Hebrews 13:17 'those who must give an account'</p>
Resilience	<p>Teachers will prayerfully seek to be resilient despite the pressures of work and the potential difficulties of relationships. For the Christian teacher this means seeking a mentor, being embedded in a church, honouring their family responsibilities and relationships, and growing in their knowledge of God. A teacher will work in and out of the classroom to build resilience in students. This means sharing God's truth, sharing personally when appropriate, making time to follow up individual students, being encouraging and fostering hope and a focus beyond the student's daily life and experience.</p> <p>Ephesians 6:10 'be strong in the Lord'</p>
Community	<p>Teachers develop the classroom as a learning community and part of the wider community of the school. Teachers seek to build relationships with students that are positive and appropriate and seek connection and communication with parents. Events and structures are developed in the school context that highlight community, caring for each other and care for the weak and vulnerable. All in the community will be careful in communication, seek to be good listeners, and be respectful of different points of view.</p> <p>Colossians 3:14 'put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity'</p>
Academic Excellence	<p>Academic excellence is not the same as high marks obtained by formulaic responses to predictable tests. Instead it represents love of learning, the development of a critical facility for each student as is appropriate for their age and ability, as well as encouragement and resources that enable students to reach academic potential.</p> <p>Colossians 3:23 'whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters'</p>
Motivational Experiences	<p>Teachers design learning that motivates and engages their students. Passion is contagious. Through teacher presence, passion for the areas they are teaching and appropriate teaching and learning activities, teachers will endeavour to motivate their students. Motivational experiences should be appropriate to the age and ability of each student and should result in students developing internal motivation to do their best to glorify God in whatever they do.</p> <p>Luke 6:40 'but the student who is fully trained will become like the teacher'</p>

Learning



Learning Strategic Focus	Description
Creativity	<p>Students should be taught to value creativity as a gift from God, the great Creator, and taught approaches to work and problem solve that emphasise creativity. Class work and projects should include expressive modalities and be designed to elicit creative solutions. Students should learn how to nurture and develop creative ideas, and how to work with others to critique and support. Students should understand that creativity is able to operate within constraints and does not mean the abandonment of ethics. Creativity can be used to be used to bless and serve others.</p> <p>Genesis 1:27 'so God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created Him; male and female He created them'</p>
Critical Thinking	<p>Students should be encouraged to develop and use critical thinking. This includes learning the language of reasoning, learning thinking tools and approaches including systems and big-picture thinking. Students as they develop should be encouraged to identify assumptions behind statements and learn about various systems of thought, understanding not what to think but how to think, particularly in the light of Christ's revelation. The goal is for students to be able to use reflection, analysis and synthesis naturally in all domains according to their individual capacity.</p> <p>Proverbs 14:15 'the prudent gives thought to his steps'</p>
Core Values and Beliefs	<p>Students and teachers should be encouraged to understand that human thought and action take place within certain frameworks (worldviews). As a Christian school the Bible provides the foundation for a Christian worldview. Students are encouraged to discern the core values and beliefs behind issues they encounter. This will be facilitated for example through class discussion and intentional consideration in the curriculum planning process. The school should be active and clear in the core beliefs it endorses, based on the Bible.</p> <p>Matthew 28:20 'teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you'</p>
Digital Technology	<p>Students and staff should be confident users of digital technology, able to function with technology in a knowledge economy and digitally dependent world. The school promotes instructional strategies that work based on research, thus as far as possible the school should have access to technologies that enhance teaching and learning. Teachers should be using digital technology to provide engagement, differentiation, accessibility, and to support independent learning and research. Students should be actively supported to be safe in the digital realm, and to develop sound digital citizenship based on Biblical principles of care for others and love for the things of God.</p> <p>John 1:3 'all things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made'</p>

Learning Strategic Focus	Description
Collaboration	<p>We are created to live in community. Collaboration and teamwork are significant features of community, and are also prized in the 21st C adult world. Students should be given the language, experience, skills and attitudes that enable successful collaboration. This includes the ability to work with diverse team members in an inclusive way, the ability to accept accountability to the team, knowledge of group dynamics and of ways to effectively communicate within and for the group. Students should be exposed to a range of types of collaborative frameworks and technologies including shared documents, assigned roles (including leadership) and project management.</p> <p>1 Peter 4:10 'as each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace'</p>
Communication	<p>Effective communication should be demonstrated in all aspects of the school, and actively taught to students. This should include understanding the value of communication for showing care and support to others and how to use varying registers and how to communicate without hurting others. Communication involves feedback to students in relation to their learning and contact with parents. Various communication technologies are utilised in a God honouring framework including digital communication, social media, forums, visual communication, video communication, presentations and more substantial writing.</p> <p>Psalms 37:30 'the mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks justice'</p>
Curriculum	<p>Curriculum includes far more than the mandated curriculum documents provided by BOSTES delivered in a classroom context. Curriculum encompasses a broad range of experiences in the school context such as musical, mission and sporting activities and underlying thinking about teaching and learning. All areas of curriculum implementation in the school context are underpinned by an understanding of God, the individual and the story of His relationship with and redemption and renewal of humanity. Curriculum designed for the classroom will authentically integrate a Christian worldview.</p> <p>Colossians 2:3 'in Him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge'</p>



Serving



Serving Strategic Focus	Description
Behaving and Engaging In our World	<p>Staff and students are encouraged to have a global view, understanding how others live, investigating other cultures, faiths and languages. The school engages with mission and community service both locally, nationally and overseas. Students come to understand global issues including inequality, poverty, environment and refugees. Opportunities are provided for students and staff to serve and support others. Students learn to be respectful of other cultures at home and abroad.</p> <p>Mark 16:15 'go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation'</p>
Glorifying God	<p>The aim of Christian education within the school is to give glory to God in all things, understanding the nature of grace and God's love, the nature of one's own gifts from God, and His call to serve and glorify Him through relationships and work. Students are encouraged to acknowledge God and His work through creative expression, devoted lives and service which is modelled by staff at the school.</p> <p>Habakkuk 2:14 'for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea'</p>
Humility	<p>Humility is understanding God is God and we are not, acknowledging Him as maker and sustainer of the universe and of each individual. Humility involves embracing His call to 'seek to serve', living for others rather than self. The school community models the ideal of serving without seeking praise or being self-promoting through areas including serving in the context of the classroom, the school, the local community and broader mission trips.</p> <p>Philippians 2:3 'in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others'</p>
Stewardship	<p>Stewardship is accepting responsibility for each asset and gift that we have, acknowledging God as the source of all that is good, and that all that we have is entrusted so that we might effectively serve others. Showing special care for the weak and vulnerable is an area of stewardship of the schools' financial and people resources and involves generosity in areas as diverse as fundraising and hospitality.</p> <p>John 3:27 'a person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven'</p>
Inclusivity	<p>Inclusivity is a core value of the school and is a rejection of any inclination to discriminate between people based on race, culture, religion, age, gender or ability, while retaining the distinctive of being a Christian school. The school seeks to support all students to perform excellently with the gifts and abilities they have, actively creating structures, symbols and events that celebrate inclusion, mutual respect and care within the community. The Hope Schools are a special way in which to realise this aim.</p> <p>Matthew 25:40 'truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'</p>

Serving Strategic Focus	Description
Others Focused	<p>The school is globally aware, and aware of other nations, cultures and religions. Activities within the school encourage care and respect for each other. The school adopts policies and practices that keep students safe physically and emotionally at school and in the digital realm. Through mission, community service activities and individual service projects, students are encouraged to be involved with serving others, supporting church work, and volunteering. There are opportunities within the school for parents, friends and students to be involved in volunteer work. There is an active teaching of Biblical principles that underpin a focus on ministering to others physically, emotionally and spiritually.</p> <p>Matthew 22:39 'love your neighbour as yourself'</p>

Resources used

P21 2015, P21 Framework Definitions, Partnership for 21st Century Learning
http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/docs/P21_Framework_Definitions_New_Logo_2015.pdf

McGaw, B, 2013, Developing 21st century competencies through disciplines of knowledge
http://www.acara.edu.au/_resources/Developing_21st_century_competencies_Prof_Barry_McGaw.pdf

Using the Strategic Direction Document

The Strategic Direction Document and the Expanded Strategic Direction Document sits under the School Vision and Mission Statement will be used by each of the Pacific Schools to inform their Strategic Management Plans and their Annual Action Plans. The documents will be used in the planning of teaching and learning and in the design and practice of teaching and learning in the Pacific Schools.

Measuring the Strategic Direction

To enable the school to make strategic improvements, it is helpful to measure what we do. To this end, we will ask all Year 10 students and Year 12 students to take a survey.

The questions will be in each of the three areas, teaching, learning and serving. By taking two measures we can compare the stages of learning to measure how we are progressing in our intention of the Strategic Direction document.



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