Flourish, Contribute and Care - in a rapidly changing world

Strategic Plan
St Philip’s College
Alice Springs NT Australia
St Philip’s is an independent, co-educational day/boarding college of the Uniting Church. It offers secondary education from Years 7 to 12. In 2017 St Philip’s had an enrolment of well over 700 students, including 50 boarders.

A vibrant community characterised by the diversity of students’ backgrounds and aspirations, St Philip’s is renowned for its diversity of programs and opportunities. Our student body reflects Alice Springs’ multi-cultural mix of people, most of whom have come from somewhere else.

Conscious of our geographic isolation we work hard to ensure this is not a limiting factor for our students. From Years 7 to 12 students are encouraged to participate in a wide range of activities and opportunities which broaden their horizons.

Students are encouraged to strive for their best. Results obtained by the graduating students reflect this. St Philip’s graduates attend universities in Australia, the US and elsewhere, studying everything from medicine to outdoor education, music to information technology or they take on trades or go directly into workforce. Our aim is that every graduate leaves St Philip’s confident and equipped to thrive.

Statement of Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Central Arrernte people as the traditional custodians of Alice Springs and the land on which St Philip’s College is built. It is a place rich in culture, beliefs, heritage and relationship with the land and we respect this.

The College acknowledges the ongoing importance of the Arrernte people and is committed to upholding the values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage.
OUR VISION
To be a world-class school community that excels at striving, seeking, caring.

OUR MOTTO
To Strive, to Seek, to Care

OUR VALUES
Respect
Compassion
Integrity
Persistence
Responsibility
Accountability

Chairman’s Introduction
The Board members of St Philips are very cognisant that we have a responsibility to our whole school community to build on the fantastic work done by those who have preceded us. These solid foundations were initially laid by our founder, Rev Dr Fred McKay and built upon by many after that. Our students’ outcomes are our priority – preparing them for life’s challenges ahead.

We are committed to the future, acknowledging the world has never been static and is ever changing. As a Board we have a responsibility to not only think about today but what will the needs of our students be in the future.

Our primary purpose is to educate young adults. We have based much of our thinking on the educational leadership of the Principal, informed by a facilitated process to develop the Educational Framework that clearly articulates that we educate to prepare students for a future world that will be different to the one known to us today.

To complement this, the Board was very pleased to support the purpose statement that aligns with our overall core values and purpose.

Always striving to do better
Always seeking new and better ways
Always caring for each other.

It is our responsibility that the College has coherent and well thought out plans for the future covering all aspects of the College and that this is communicated to all our stakeholders.

Chairman of the College Board

Libby Prell
Chair of the College Board
Principal’s Introduction

St Philip’s College has a rich history of innovation combined with a strong caring culture. The school grew because of the inspiration and drive of some amazing people. Creators like Flynn, McKay and Tudor made St Philip’s College an educational oasis in Central Australia driven by the strong desire to provide students with an outstanding, yet affordable, education.

Recently staff accepted the challenge of how St Philip’s College can continue to be a leading Australian school with a strong international reputation in the digitally and socially disrupted world. Through collaboration, the newly designed Educational Framework drives this strategic plan to create an innovative and creative approach, combined with high flexibility, so that St Philip’s College can remain a forward-looking school-of-choice for all Central Australian students allowing them to flourish in this ever-changing world.

Roger Herbert
Principal

Our Purpose

Preparing students to flourish, contribute and care in a rapidly changing world
Preparing students...

That is what education is about. Preparation, helping to prepare the ‘whole’ person for their life ahead. It is certainly about being able to effectively read, write and do arithmetic but it is more than that. It is about young people learning how to navigate complexity, how to work well in teams, how to think about others, how to collaborate. The whole person – not just the head – needs to learn and prepare for a well-lived life.

to flourish,

Flourishing is a rich term. It evokes the picture of a plant growing well, reaching for the sky, thriving – full of good health and well-being, enjoying and growing into their fullest form. We want every St Philip’s student to grow and keep growing to be their very best, to be resilient and enjoy a sense of wellbeing and success.

Flourishing has a defined term in Positive Education – flourishing refers to the experience of life going well – when we are feeling good and functioning effectively (Williamson & Baumeister, 2012; Seligman, 2011).
to contribute,

Individual success at the cost of others is not what we are about or what we educate for. We know that our world, our civic society and our enduring relationships are based on giving and contribution, not just taking. And we recognise that humans are happiest and flourish when contributing to something ‘beyond themselves’.

Contribute - St Philip’s College strongly believes in encouraging its students in serving something greater than the self and deliberately engaging in activities for the benefit of others (Positive Purpose). It encourages students and staff to draw on their character strengths in ways that contribute to the welfare of others and the wider community.

to care

Caring for other people reflects not only our faith-based values and beliefs, it’s good for the giver. Caring for others is a proven essential precursor for a flourishing life. Growing and building empathy, concern and care for others is foundational to our purpose.
in a rapidly changing world

The world is changing fast – too fast to predict what it will be like when the students of today are their parents’ age. The last decades has seen remarkable change but the rate of change is accelerating. The very nature of ‘work’ is changing. Many jobs of today will be gone in a decade. New jobs will be created. People with the right perspectives, competencies and skills will flourish.

Artificial intelligence, driverless cars, clean energy, changing trade and political balance across the globe will change our world beyond our imagination...

What is needed to flourish, contribute and care?

The St Philip’s College motto encapsulates what’s needed:

Striving - ambition, pushing forward, working hard

Seeking - scanning ahead, looking for the next opportunity, learning, excellence

Caring - thinking about others, caring for self and active compassion

Coupled and linked to these we believe that the following capabilities will best prepare students to flourish in this ever-changing world. A St Philip’s College graduate is:

• A contributor
• A change navigator
• A critic al and creative thinker
• Literate, numerate and digitally intelligent
• Resilient
• A collaborator
• Good hearted

It is these capabilities that will enable graduates to flourish, contribute and care in an ever-changing world.

STRIVING

• Inquisitive
• Imaginative
• Focused

SEEKING

A Contributor:
• Shares
• Thinks and acts beyond themselves
• Informed and engaged citizen

A Collaborator:
• Team Player
• Team Builder
• Communicator

A Change Navigator:
• Confident
• Grounded
• Responsive

A Critical and Creative Thinker:
• Takes responsibility
• Determined
• Emotionally intelligent

Literate, Numerate and Digitally Intelligent:
• Proficient
• Competent
• Lifelong learner

Good Hearted:
• Informed by Uniting Church values and spirituality
• Caring
• Moral compass

CARING
We educate to build these capabilities

The whole College is geared towards achieving our Purpose and building these perspectives, capabilities and competencies in our students, from the Board, to staff, to students and, we hope, the wider school community.

Academic prowess is very important but we acknowledge and celebrate that our student body is diverse with a significant range of skills, abilities and preferences. We aim to empower every student to achieve their own personal best and to flourish.

Education Framework strategies

We have identified six strategies to realise our ambition to best prepare students for the world they will live and work in, which can be found in greater detail in our full Educational Framework.

1. We will keep ‘learning while doing’
2. As educators we need to be what we want our students to be
3. We prioritise our relationship with students
4. We consider the whole-person
5. We are very intentional in pursuing our Educational Purpose
6. We measure success against whole-person outcomes

College Strategies

Our strategies support and drive our actions to best achieve our Purpose:

1. We pursue international excellence and educate for purpose

We are purpose-driven to best prepare students for an ever-disrupted world. We strive for the highest standards of success in achieving this purpose, ever-learning to be more effective in facilitating the learning and growth of our students, and each other.

• We benchmark ourselves against the best in the world and strive to be amongst the best of the best
• As educators we are on an ongoing journey to refine and evolve our Educational Framework and our practice through measurement, evaluation, adjustment and learning
• We structure ourselves and how we operate to maximise flexibility, stability and educational impact
• We actively build and support the essential partnership with parents/caregivers to help create the best life-learning opportunities for students
2. We aspire to lead and we build leadership

We strive to be recognised leaders in preparing students who live in the remote locations to flourish.

We support, encourage, develop and celebrate leadership across all of the College – students, volunteers, educators, other staff, executive and the Board – because everyone has the opportunity to ‘step up’ and ‘step out’ to be their best and to work for the best of our learning community.

- Benchmark our educational leadership, growing and building on strengths, fearlessly addressing weaknesses
- Partner with educational thought-leaders and grow our own educational thought-leadership
- Build on and strengthen student leadership programs
- Co-design, launch and continuously refine a staff leadership development program

3. We value and invest in our people

Our team is the very heart of our College – setting the culture, tone, and relationships essential for best learning. As our Educational Framework identifies, we cannot help students become what we are not ourselves. We therefore invest in our people so they have the perspectives and competencies they need to best serve our students.

- We are intentional about matching our workforce to the needs of our Educational Framework through a structured Workforce Development Plan
- We invest heavily in professional development, in line with the needs identified in the Workforce Development Plan, including digitally-mediated learning
- We resource a Professional Learning Community so that our educators can learn from each other
- We value and invest in our non-academic staff because they are integral to St Philip’s College and they ensure we succeed together
4. We build and strengthen our organisational partnerships

We cannot achieve our purpose and aspirations on our own. We continue to build on our existing formative partnerships, such as with the Uniting Church, Round Square and our Outdoor Education partnerships. Our partnership with parents is particularly important.

- Strengthen our partnership with parents and caregivers
- Strengthen our engagement with our local community
- Consolidate and strengthen existing key partnerships
- Identify and build key partnerships needed to take forward our Educational Framework

5. We match our place and learning spaces with the educational need

Place and space directly affects learning. Different learning approaches need different spaces. The learning infrastructure must match and support our educational strategy and needs. And our environment must also support the culture of respect and the values of the College. Atmosphere and tone matters.

- Invest as necessary to maintain quality infrastructure appropriate to student numbers
- Continually undertake Campus Master Planning to refine the longer-term infrastructure priorities to best support the emerging learning needs
- Identify key projects to seek funding support through the St Philip’s College Foundation and other avenues as appropriate
- We are committed to being good stewards of the environment and plan and invest accordingly
6. We ensure financial sustainability and develop resourcing

We generate enough core revenue to sustainably provide the quality education and continuing improvement our Purpose demands of us. We generate additional resources to invest in educational infrastructure, innovation and development.

- Establish and pursue a College Resource Development plan to grow income, ensure sustainability and secure additional resources to fund innovation, capital developments and projects
- Grow the Education Innovation Fund to seed-fund trials, research and other education investments
- Build up the St Philip’s College Foundation to grow philanthropic and other giving

7. We govern to support our educational aspiration

How we govern ourselves affects how well we educate. We continue to refine and strengthen organisational structure and governance to best support our educational purpose into the longer term.

- We continue to strengthen Board governance, benchmarked against best practice
- We streamline, support and improve governance practice using digital technologies
- We ensure we have the most effective legal structure to support the College’s educational aspiration, maximise agility and ensure long-term relevance and sustainability
- We continue to build on our ties and connection with the Uniting Church

Digitising governance for best efficiency and effectiveness

Examples of digital investments include market-leading digital solutions to:
- manage and monitor policies and risk
- streamline and improve governance reporting and interaction
- data integration across departments
Chaplain’s Message

As a Uniting Church school it is our mandate to offer a welcoming community that is committed to equal opportunity for each student to flourish as they become citizens of the world. We believe that staff and students have the right to feel loved and of value as they appreciate their uniqueness with a responsibility as strong contributors and carers of this world. We uphold the values and beliefs of the Uniting Church as the foundation for our community to follow.

Pastor Sarah Pollitt
College Chaplain
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