



SCHOOL REPORT 2016

Contextual Information

Set in a peaceful bushland setting, NCS is a co-educational K-12 school, with high expectations for student competence, character and faith. The school was established in 1984 by a group of local Christian parents who had a vision for education that was authentically Christian in outlook and practice.

At the end of 2016 the school's enrolment was 391 which was a sizeable increase from the 358 in 2015. The school has begun a process of moving from single to double streams. In 2016 we have double streamed classes in Kindergarten, Year 1, Year 6 and Year 8. It is anticipated that the double streaming process will continue in a planned and measured way in 2017. The intention is to maintain a close-knit community as we continue to grow.

There is a range of student ability, talent and interest at Nepean. The school is not selective. Our indigenous students enrich the life of the school. Abilities range from students who are extremely gifted to those who struggle with aspects of their schooling. Whatever the case, all students are valued and there are no procedures that might indicate to students that one is valued more than another e.g. there are no academic prizes. The prize for any pursuit of excellence is the pursuit itself, the accompanying pleasure of having been faithful to God and the opportunity to have authentic impact in people's lives.

NCS serves Christian families (from a broad range of Christian backgrounds) and other interested families from places around Mulgoa (in particular Glenmore Park, Wallacia, Silverdale, Warragamba, Penrith, Werrington and the Lower Blue Mountains).

Our school is:

- Driven by Christian faith and action
- Distinguished by authentic learning excellence
- Delighting in wise, happy, obedient and kind students

In seeking to present truth in a spirit of love, teachers at NCS are to:

Be what they believe ...live Christ's story in their lives

Relate in a Christ-like way

Unfold the curriculum in the shadow of the Cross

Inspire students in the light of Christ's resurrection and return

Structure procedures and strategies that are in harmony with our Christian outlook

Enable students to be responsible followers of Jesus in an exciting, yet broken world

Messages from Key Bodies

A message from the Principal

Nepean Christian School's mission statement is to deliver 'quality, affordable Christ-centred education in an environment where God is glorified and enjoyed.' It is the endeavour of the school to make that deeply embedded in all aspects of school life. Our Christian focus is not simply an add-on to the task of learning, but rather it informs and directs every part of school life.

As a close-knit community, our school works to promote respect and responsibility. We have high expectations for all our students and this is monitored through pastoral care and discipline process. In the primary school, the classroom teacher guides and mentors the relationships of students. In the secondary school, that responsibility falls to the Impact Group teacher, with whom the students meet daily.

Our school is directed by the maxim of Wisdom, Happiness, Obedience and Kindness (WHOK). WHOK runs through the fabric of the school and guides the way in which we talk to students about their behaviour and relational choices. Rather than running on a list of rules, our school emphasises community. WHOK helps define what we expect relationships and behaviour within the community to be like. Our emphasis is therefore not on conformity but rather building integrity. Over all this, is laid our foundational belief in the grace of Christ.

In 2016, we celebrated a number of key adventures:

- Building of a new library and classrooms
- Strong results in our third HSC cohort
- Successful school musical tour to northern NSW and southern Queensland
- Our second service trip to Vanuatu and hosting teachers from Vanuatu at NCS

Cameron Nunn

A message from the Chairman of the Board on behalf of parents

Nepean is a dynamic learning community that is enhanced by its active parent and grandparent involvement. This relationship between home and school is deeply valued and forms the basis of the school's structure of governance.

The vision of the school's pioneers is being perpetuated by a band of faithful parents, who are always exploring ways in which to grow their number.

Our school has a robust and real platform of values that emanate from the person of Jesus Christ. It is His story that compels us to action. It is His grace that comforts us. It is His Lordship that demands our allegiance in all areas of life, including the education of our wonderful children.

Frank Jobse

Satisfaction from Key Bodies

Parents and care-givers satisfaction

In 2016 the school undertook an extensive satisfaction survey of its community. There was strong confirmation for the direction of the school. The table records the percentage of families indicating they agreed or strongly agreed with statements.

1. In my dealings with staff, I have found them to be:	
Caring	86%
Professional	86%
Knowledgeable	82%
2. In my dealings with executive staff I have found them to be:	
Caring	84%
Professional	88%
Knowledgeable	86%
3. NCS offers high quality learning opportunities for all students.	
	86%
4. Teaching and learning at NCS reflects the Christian values and beliefs of the school.	
	87%
5. All students are made to feel included in the learning community.	
	87%
6. NCS offers good classroom and other facilities.	
	83%
7. If I had a concern, I would feel confident in raising it with the school.	
	83%
8. As a parent, I feel valued and included in the school community.	
	70%
9. NCS offers a safe and supportive environment for my child/children.	
	90%
10. The school communicates well with families.	
	84%
11. The school maintains firm but fair expectations of student behaviour.	
	76%
12. I feel school fees offer good value for money.	
	78%
13. How satisfied are you at NCS?	
	80%

Staff Satisfaction

Staff continue to be extremely positive about the school. Staff morale is very high. Regular feedback is given regarding the enjoyment that staff have in working at NCS. The school undertakes team building activities in July. There are regular social gatherings outside of school. Each Wednesday, there is a morning tea that is attended by the whole of the staff.

The greatest measure of satisfaction can be seen in staff retention, which continues at an extraordinarily high rate. At the end of 2016, one member of the teaching left to take up a position in another school and three support staff left as they moved to other areas of the state.

The school conducts an annual staff satisfaction survey, which is reported back to staff for discussion.

Student Satisfaction

Retention rates are extremely high, particularly considering the recent addition of Years 11 & 12. A number of students who left NCS returned after experiencing other schools. Students are involved in a broad range of school activities.

Staff

Our school had nineteen full-time teaching staff (14 in 2014), and thirteen part-time teaching staff (14 in 2014) in 2016. Thirty-one of these teachers had teaching qualifications from a higher education institution. One teacher had a bachelor's degree from a higher education institution but lacked formal teacher education qualifications. No teacher had an indigenous background.

Professional Learning and Teacher Standards

Teacher standards are diligently maintained via:

- Ongoing classroom visits by supervisors
- Submission of Teaching Programs with ongoing feedback
- Professional Development days.
- Statistical analysis of external testing (NAPLAN and HSC results)

Our school enacts a Professional Development Policy (Professional Pathways Policy and Procedures). In addition, the school also has a programme for nurturing new teachers into the teaching career and teachers who are new to NCS. New teachers meet fortnightly with the principal to discuss their teaching journey and as part of the Accreditation process.

Professional Development

<p>In 2015 there were ten Pupil Free Days and many staff meetings during which the following areas were addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Teaching Standards• National Curriculum• Child Protection• Report writing• Edumate training• First Aid training• Regular technology tips• Teachers also attended network meetings appropriate to their class or KLA Visual Arts, TAS, Library, Teach Meet• CCE Design course	<p>Teaching staff attended a wide range of professional development courses which addressed the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• KLA specific courses• New Teacher Induction• Edumate Training
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Students

Student Attendance

Whole School Student attendance for 2014 was 97.9%.

Student attendance rates for each Year level were:

Kindy:	98.3%
Year 1:	96.9%
Year 2:	96.2%
Year 3:	95.5%
Year 4:	97.1%
Year 5:	97.4%

Year 6:	97.9%
Year 7:	95.5%
Year 8:	96.9%
Year 9:	95.6%
Year 10:	97.0%
Year 11:	96.9%
Year 12:	91.6%

The School managed student non-attendance by:

- anticipating and avoiding any difficulties e.g. we are proactive at special school events such as sporting carnivals
- requiring parents of secondary students to inform the school on the morning of any absences
- following up any absences that have not been notified
- speaking with parents about regular absences
- activating an Absence Reminder Note / Email as needed
- counselling students as needed
- checking for patterns of non-attendance and making mandatory reports as needed

Retention rates

	Original number at end of Year 10	Continued 2015	Left for other school	Left for TAFE and workforce
Year 11	26	19	7	0
Year 12	23	10	3	10

Post-school destinations

Tertiary Study	TAFE or similar	Workforce	Unknown
50%	20%	10%	20%

VET

In 2015 13 students were enrolled in VET Courses: Construction, Automotive, Electrotechnology, Early Childhood Education and Care, Entertainment, Hospitality and Beauty. 3 students completed Statements of Attainment towards Cert II or III during the year.

Results

NAPLAN

NAPLAN results are available on the My School website. The improvement of our students from one basic skills test to the next continues to be encouraging. As a response to its Christian ethos, NCS is a welcoming, rather than a selective school, and hence, student progress is of paramount importance. Students with learning, physical or emotional needs are welcome at Nepean and we are happily blessed by brokenness.

We expect more than just knowledge or skills. The educational rubber must hit the road of real experience where character and belief come into effect. Basic skills results form part of the picture of what happens at school and part of the development of our students. We want individual excellence in basic skills ... and much more! We expect our students to live their learning faithfully.

		Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar and Punctuation	Numeracy
Year 3	NCS	438	437	444	444	398
	National	426	421	420	436	402
Year 5	NCS	527	480	499	531	501
	National	502	476	493	505	493
Year 7	NCS	534	502	527	531	531
	National	541	515	543	540	550
Year 9	NCS	599	553	591	597	596
	National	581	549	580	569	589

ROSA

One Record of School Achievement was granted to a student in Year 11.

HSC results

Our school offers a compressed model of HSC studies meaning that students complete up to two of their HSC subjects in Year 11 and the remainder in Year 12. In 2016, students completed studies in Biology, Community and Family Studies, Design and Technology, English (Advanced and Standard), Mathematics (General, 2-unit, and Extension 1), Modern History, Music 1 & 2, and Physics. 2015 was our first Year 12 cohort; therefore limited comparative performance data over time is available. Over the years we have demonstrated that we have the capacity and willingness to assist students who would not have completed their schooling in other schools. At the same time, we also have academically gifted students. Our aim is that all students set high goals and work diligently to achieve those goals. HSC results were in line with expectations and reflect the general ability of the cohort. Many students exceeded their academic expectations. Our highest ATAR result was 79.85.

Course	School Mean	State Mean
Biology	67.8	73.7
Community and Family Studies	71.6	72.2
Design and Technology	73.1	76.4
English Advanced	74.3	80.7
English Standard	61.3	68.7
Mathematics General	59	68.5
Mathematics 2 unit	91.2	77.8
Modern History	68.2	74.5
Music 1	79.9	80.9
Music 2	79.4	87
Physics	71.3	72.7

Key Policies

The following policies can be found on the school's website. They were updated at the end of 2016.

Welfare and anti-bullying (summary)

As a Christian school, we seek to be proactive in promoting; expecting and modelling the sort of kindness that Jesus lived. This means that as a community of staff, students and parents and care-givers, we seek to treat each other in a Christ-like way. The well-being of our students is inseparable from our mission as a Christian school. Anti-bullying is therefore a natural part of our school's approach in this area, but "Kindness" is more proactive, more encompassing, more vibrant and more powerful in building Christian community.

Our pastoral programme is unfolded in the context of our Christian faith:

- Acknowledging that our world is exciting, beautiful, good and challenging as well as broken, ugly, troubled and evil.
- Loving one another as God has loved us – unconditionally and self-sacrificially.
- Treating each student as precious - a unique creation of a loving and awesome God
- Caring for young people in partnership with the family and church.
- Building self-esteem that is founded upon the layers of value in God's eyes, the Gospel, self-confidence and meaning, love from others and resilience.

At NCS we are committed to the care of students through:

- Providing a safe and secure learning environment for our students
- Maintaining the principles of the National Safe Schools Framework
- Integrating systems of counselling, reporting and discipline which are responsive and reactive to the needs of students.
- Compliance with all Child Protection requirements and adherence to the school's Student Code of Conduct, Pastoral Care Policy, Communication Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Crisis Management Policy

Layers of our pastoral care program involve:

- Daily Pastoral Care meetings for small groups of Secondary students
- Home Class time for each Primary class
- Training of Student Leaders to care for school mates
- Teachers address issues as needed at weekly or fortnightly assemblies

We are equally determined to prevent bullying and heal relationships through:

- Affirming that bullying and harassment have no place at NCS
- Promoting kindness in all relationships, interactions and attitudes
- Countering views that bullying is an inevitable part of life (eg. that the only thing we can do is tolerate it) and encouraging parents, staff and students in the building of a climate of respect, love and care for others
- Supporting and training victims of bullying and reform those who engage in bullying
- Encouraging students to reflect on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as the ultimate way of dealing with wrongdoing

Discipline (summary)

Layers of discipline and consequences are easily accessed via the Student Handbook, Organisers, Parent Handbook and Staff Handbook

Nepean's discipline policy reflects our commitment to our Christian values of acting both justly and mercifully. It emphasises the importance of repentance and restoration as central qualities to a discipline policy built around relationships. Nepean CS does not use nor condone the use of physical punishment.

The key **elements** of our Policy are:

- Encouragement of Christ-likeness
- Acceptance of self-direction
- Development of solidarity and common purpose
- A spirit of celebration, relationship and restoration

The **layers** of our Discipline Policy are:

- **Relax and rejoice** when students are behaving (Level 0)
- **Remind** students on the run when things are going wrong (Level 1)
- **Reprimand** students whose poor behaviour is substantial (Level 2)
- **Recompense** with justice those students whose behaviour is getting serious (Level 3)
- **Reform** very serious levels of behaviour through programs of restoration and monitoring (Level 4)
- **Refer** to specialists and experts as needed (Level 5)

The **scaffolding** for our Discipline Policy is formed by:

- Dynamic student teacher **relationships**
- Vibrant learning **engagement**
- **Justice**
- **Forgiveness and grace**
- A spirit of **restoration**

Grievance (summary)

This policy is available in the Parent Handbook, Staff Handbook and school website. As we seek to live Christ's story in our lives, staff members are encouraged to accept complaints, compliment and suggestions from parents and others with humility, openness and a desire to live in harmony. The school is committed to ensuring fair process and a right to be heard before any determination is made.

Some **elements** of our policy are:

- Encourage and welcome the input and feedback of all NCS community members
- Channel complaints, compliments and suggestions via the relevant staff member in the first instance.
- Speak with the relevant Team Leader, Deputy or the Principal if any matter remains unresolved or incomplete after having contacted the person involved.
- Contact the President of the Board if the matter remains unresolved and is of a serious nature.
- Not deal with anonymous complaints, compliments and suggestions unless of an important nature and supported by evidence (established by the Principal).
- Not deal with issues that are considered trivial, frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith.
- Enact procedural fairness.

Enrolment Policy (summary)

Nepean Christian School welcomes and considers all enrolment applications. Decisions on enrolment are at the discretion of the principal, who makes offers within the parameters of our Christian framework, and in compliance with all government requirements e.g. Anti-Discrimination, Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Standards) and Disability Discrimination Act.

- In accepting an enrolment, the principal will 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.
- The school will normally only enrol students in Kindergarten who have turned 5 by 30 April in the year they are starting school. Exceptions to this are at the discretion of the Principal.
- It is a requirement 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.
- The school has a preferred class enrolment of 30. Any increase will be at the Board's discretion and temporary
- If there is a vacancy, offers of enrolment are made in the following order, but always at the discretion of the Principal in conjunction with the Board:
 - Christian family with a sibling who has attended NCS 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 NCS for longer than one term
 - Non-Christian family
- When possible, we seek to accommodate those families for whom the school fees would impose a financial burden. This is at the Business Manager's discretion. NCS has no program of scholarships.
- The school board reserves the right to terminate the enrolment of a student who, for example, undermines the school's Christian ethos, engages in serious unacceptable behaviour, repeatedly disrupts learning or jeopardizes the welfare of other student

Targets for growth and improvement

As a school we are committed to continuous reflection and targeted improvement. In 2017, NCS have identified the following areas in which we will measure our continued development:

- completion of the new library complex and commencement of Infants block
- Increased retention from Year 6 to Year 7 and Year 10 to Year 11
- Half of HSC subjects at or above state average
- All NAPLAN results at or above state average
- Development of the Community coordinator role
- Implementation and consolidation of primary literacy programme
- Stage 1 of implementation of French lessons in primary
- Complete reworking of Teacher Accreditation programme
- Introduction of the Professional Pathways programme
- Evaluate reporting system
- Begin to explore the use of an LMS

Financial Information

NCS is a low-fee independent school, committed to our mission of affordability. The majority of our funding comes from recurrent government grants. Including all income from fees and grants, the school operates an average cost of \$13 263 per student. Our per student expenditure is inclusive of tuition, excursions and camps, textbooks and all other instructional materials.

