

# ASSOCIATE

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## From the Chair

### PROFILE

Shaun Sargent was elected Chairman of ASBA Limited in April 2016 and has been a Director since 2009. He is a former Chairman of the ASBA Limited Professional Development Standing Committee and is also an Executive Committee member and Past President of the Tasmanian Chapter. Shaun is the Director of Business Affairs at The Friends' School in Hobart, Tasmania, a position that he has held for the past 15 years.



It is a great pleasure and privilege for me to write my first From the Chair column as the new Chairman of ASBA.

The ASBA Limited Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held at the Anglican Church Grammar School ("Churchie") in Brisbane on Friday 8 April 2016. The AGM included the election of office bearers and I am very pleased to be joined on the incoming Executive by Deputy Chairman, Lindsay Bovill (St Peters Lutheran College, Brisbane) and Treasurer, David Barker (Barker College, Sydney). Meanwhile Leanne Smith (Ruyton Girls' School, Melbourne) was elected as Chairman of the Professional Development Standing Committee.

The ASBA Board is thrilled with these appointments and has full confidence that these office bearers, professionally supported by our hard working Executive Officer, Pip Jones, will continue the development of ASBA as a leading professional organisation within the education sector.

So much has happened over the past few years to increase the capacity of ASBA

to support our members, and ultimately to achieve our vision *to be known as the leading professional organisation for school business administrators, promoting and driving improvement and business excellence in Australasian schools*. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the very significant steps towards this vision that were taken under the leadership of the highly energetic, committed and hard-working outgoing Chairman Kathy Dickson. Kathy, along with her Executive team of Deputy Chairman, Jenny Self and Treasurer, Ian Foster, oversaw the successful implementation of some important growth and capacity building initiatives for ASBA, including; the appointment of our first full time Executive Officer, the signing of sponsorship agreements with six National Strategic Partners, and the formation of an important strategic alliance with the Australian Institute of Management. We are indebted to Kathy and the other outgoing Executive members for their commitment and dedication to ASBA, they are leaving very big shoes to fill!

Earlier this year the Board commissioned a facilitated self-assessment of recent initiatives directed towards enhancing ASBA's governance practices. These have included a review of our sub-committee terms of reference, the establishment of a Finance, Risk & Audit Standing Committee, updating our constitution, and establishing new processes for Board meetings. The feedback from this self-assessment indicated that many aspects of our governance practices are highly rated by the Board. However some areas were also identified for future strategic focus, including the ongoing development of working relationships with our Chapters. This is an area that, working collegially with our Chapter Presidents, I am particularly looking forward to progressing during my term as Chairman.

I am very much looking forward to serving our association as Chairman over the next two years and I welcome contact and feedback from members at [chair@asba.asn.au](mailto:chair@asba.asn.au) at any time.

Shaun Sargent | Chairman

#### ASBA Executive

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Cover photograph: The Round – Ivanhoe Grammar School



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## Changes to Income Recognition for Independent Schools

The Australian Accounting Standards Board (“AASB”) released Exposure Draft 260 – *Income of Not-for-profit entities* (“ED 260”) in April 2015. ED260 proposes revised methods of accounting for revenue and contributions for Not-for-profit entities based on the principles in AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. In particular, it may have a significant impact on the accounting treatment for government grants, donations, bequests and non-refundable deposits.

ASBA, with the help of Nexia Australia, conducted a survey of Independent Schools on the sector’s preferred accounting treatment of various common revenue streams that may be impacted by ED260.

The survey did not ask for respondent’s views on the application of current accounting standards or the proposed new revenue recognition model. Rather, understanding the sector’s accounting treatment preferences will assist ASBA and Nexia Australia formulate their responses to the AASB’s project.

**180 schools responded to the ASBA survey and this report analyses the survey results.**



### The thematic findings from the survey indicated:

- A strong preference to recognise operational grants as income in the same periods as the funds are expended, irrespective of any conditions attaching to those grants;
- A preference to recognise capital grants and appeals as income in the period the grants and appeals are received, and
- A strong preference to recognise donations and bequests as income in the same periods as the funds are expended.

### Operational grants income – sufficiently specific performance obligations

The survey asked three questions on recognising income from an operational grant with varying levels of detail regarding the performance obligations. The key themes identified were:

- The overall response to all three questions indicated a strong preference for the matching principle (i.e. recognising income in the same period as the related expense);
- The specification of the period over which a grant relates appeared to be a key determining factor in the preferred treatment by the respondents. ED 260 proposes that a stipulation of the period over which goods or services must be transferred is not, by itself, considered to be a performance obligation and is not a reason for deferring income recognition.
- Where the period of time was the only grant condition, 93% of respondents preferred deferring the income;
- Even where more detail on the purpose of the grants were included but the period of time condition remained, the survey results indicated that the preferred treatment did not change from the above (92%).
- Where the time condition was removed but there was more conditionality regarding the purpose of the grant funding, the majority response (72%) remained the same. However, there was a stronger preference for recognising the income immediately when no time period was specified in the grant (22%).

Most operational grants currently received by Independent Schools relate to the year they are received and are usually spent within the year. Under the current funding models and payment dates, we do not expect a change to the current accounting treatment for these operational grants under ED 260.

### Capital grants – is there a preference for matching?

AASB 120 *Accounting for Government Grants and Disclosure of Government Assistance* is only applicable to for-profit entities. That standard requires for-profit entities to recognise government grants in profit or loss on a systematic basis over the periods in which the entity recognises as expenses the related costs for which the grants are intended to compensate. This requirement applies to both operational and capital grants and would achieve a matching of income with related expenses.

For example, a for-profit entity receives a \$1m government grant to construct a building. Under AASB 120, the entity can either defer the grant and recognise the \$1m as income over the same period as the building is depreciated or the grant can directly offset against the cost of the building; therefore reducing the asset's carrying value and future depreciation expense.

This accounting treatment is not available to Independent Schools either under ED 260 or the existing accounting standards. The survey included a question to gauge the sectors' interest in having the ability to apply the same accounting choices as for-profit entities under AASB 120. The survey indicated:

- The majority (74%) preferred to recognise the capital grant immediately in the profit or loss;
- 20% preferred to apply a model similar to AASB 120; and
- A number of respondents suggested highlighting the effect on the income statement of recognising the capital grant as income by separately disclosing the capital grant either below the operating profit line (ie, outside the profit and loss statement) or as an abnormal item within the profit or loss statement.

## Bequests and donations

The accounting treatment for bequests and donations is one area of significant complexity under ED 260. As an example, some Independent Schools receive gifts and bequests that impose conditions upon the recipient to maintain the corpus of the donation in perpetuity and to use any investment proceeds that are derived from the corpus for a particular purpose. In the case where an arrangement gives rise to perpetual conditions, ED 260 may result in the corpus of the donation never being recognised as income. This is because the performance conditions attaching to that receipt can never be satisfied thereby preventing the recipient to recognise income. Should this proposal prevail in the final accounting standard, such amounts previously received and accounted for as income may have to be restated from retained earnings to non-current liabilities (unearned income) on transition to the new standard.

The survey asked a number of questions on the sector's preferred treatment of bequests and donations:

### Capital appeals:

- The survey results were mixed between those who would prefer to recognise donations for capital appeals in the profit or loss when received (51%) and those who would prefer to only recognise the income when the funds are spent on construction of the buildings (34%).

### Bequest with no stipulations on how money spent:

- The majority (73%) preferred to recognise the bequest immediately in the profit or loss;
- There was still a significant minority (24%) who would prefer to defer the bequest and recognise the receipt as income as the funds were spent.

### Bequest with very specific stipulations:

- This question proposed a situation where it was highly unlikely that the bequest stipulations would be met;
- The majority (70%) preferred to defer the income and recognise the bequest as income as the funds were spent;
- There was still a significant minority (24%) who would prefer to recognise the bequest as income in the profit or loss on receipt.

### Donation for a 50-year scholarship:

- There was a large majority (78%) who would prefer to defer the funds and recognise them as income over the 50-year period of the scholarship;
- The results indicate the sector would prefer different accounting outcomes based on the degree of stipulations attached to bequests/donations.

### Bequest – capital preserved:

- The situation proposed a donation where the capital would be preserved in perpetuity;
- The results were more mixed with 52% of respondents preferring to defer recognition of the donation as income in perpetuity, thereby accepting that the corpus would never be recognised as income;
- However, 37% of respondents would still prefer immediate income recognition of that bequest;
- The responses indicate that, although the stipulations are important to determine the accounting treatment, a stipulation that can never be satisfied may need to be considered differently.

### Non-refundable admission fees

The current practice for non-refundable enrolment or admission fees has been to recognise them as income immediately on receipt. However, under the new revenue recognition model, non-refundable up-front fees are only recognised as income where there is a transfer of a promised good or service to the customer at that time. Otherwise, the receipt is treated as an advance payment for future services and is therefore recognised over that future service period; eg, over the expected period of the student's stay with the School.

The survey asked for the preferred treatment of non-refundable admission fees with 94% of respondents preferring to recognise the fees immediately in the profit or loss.

### Next steps

Nexia Australia has been appointed to the AASB's project advisory panel on ED 260 to provide technical input and industry expertise on the project and intends to present the survey results on behalf of the ASBA members.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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# Working Smarter to Deliver More



## *Mentone Girls' Grammar School and Ruyton Girls' School eBook consortium*

All workplaces are increasingly expected to work more efficiently and effectively and school libraries are no different. This article outlines how two Melbourne Schools were able to deliver more eContent to support broader reading by working together and implementing best practice. In 2014, the establishment of a groundbreaking eBook consortium between the libraries of Mentone Girls' Grammar School (MGGS) and Ruyton Girls' School (RGS) was awarded the School Library Association of Victoria (SLAV) Innovator's Award. The Heads of each library, David Feighan (MGGS) and Julie Purcell (RGS) were the co-recipients of this award, in recognition of their work in setting up the first independent eBook consortium within a Melbourne educational setting. This consortium was developed and implemented in response to the need for modern libraries to constantly respond to changing circumstances and strive for best practice.

It is important to note that the two schools do not share a governing body, nor are they in the same vicinity. However this consortium allows these libraries to share resources, and in this way maximising their investment in the eBooks. It is a wonderful example of how school libraries, even those geographically distant, with different library management systems and no shared IT network, can still work collaboratively to deliver better education outcomes and better value to their schools. The adoption of this eBook consortium is a clever and economical way to facilitate and support student literature engagement, anytime and anywhere. This service is both responsive and flexible. New release eBooks are available faster, and text selection is responsive to student feedback and items can be borrowed and returned 24/7 using any device with internet access.

This movement to an eBook consortium brings with it all the acknowledged advantages of using eResources within libraries, including:

- a reduction in processing time
- the provision of self-weeding collections
- the prevention of items being lost or stolen
- the automated return of items increasing access and availability as items can no longer be held overdue.

It is important to note that in setting up the eBook consortium the two schools did not set out to spend less on eBooks. However, by working together each school has been able to deliver a much broader and deeper eBook collection than would be possible if they worked independently of each other.

The extra depth and breadth of the eBook collection allows the two schools to:

- Offer a more diverse and engaging eBook collection for students at both schools for no additional cost.
- Reduce unnecessary duplication as access to important but low use titles can be shared across both schools.
- Allow the cost of purchasing duplicate copies of high use and popular titles to be shared across both schools.

Ultimately with the movement of MGGS to OCLC Worldshare, the same library management system used by RGS, the streamlining of the cataloguing of eBooks and back end processing will be further streamlined as cataloguing is shared across the two libraries. This will deliver additional operational efficiencies to both schools. This is important as labour costs represent a significant part of any school library budget. Further down the track the two libraries will be able to explore ways to benchmark their collections, workflows and service delivery. This will ensure they continue to deliver the most efficient and effective school library service to both schools.



An additional benefit is that this consortium reduces time each library has had to spend on collection development and text selection tasks. Sharing this responsibility not only saves time but facilitates enriching professional discussions concerning trends in youth literature and the importance of building collections that are truly diverse, resulting in both schools offering larger, richer and more engaging eBook collections to their students. These deeper and broader collections assist students to satisfy diverse reading needs and interests, providing popular titles while also accommodating the more eclectic reader. The inclusion of Chinese eBooks supports language students in both schools.

The consortium creates new and exciting opportunities for literature-based conversations between the two school communities. Using this eBook collection opens the way for students to share their reading experience within a broader

community. Working collaboratively across the two schools, opportunities arise to establish shared online spaces and literature workshops, to not only reinforce digital citizenship skills, but provide students with opportunities to share their thoughts and responses to the literature within this collection. More immediately, the consortium enabled the two libraries to implement a more high profile launch and marketing campaign. This extra profile and has helped drive better use of the eBook collection and therefore delivered extra return on investment.

In what is traditionally a highly competitive private school market, where knowledge is held in silos, this consortium provides opportunities for the building of pathways of communication between schools. The work in establishing this project has reached far beyond the library doors. The Principals of each school, Fran Reddan (MGGS) and Linda Douglas (RGS) demonstrated remarkable vision in

their willingness to imagine possibilities beyond their own school boundaries and explore the concept of sharing resources through the use of a consortium, as did Robert Konoroth (MGGS) and Leanne Sparkes (nee Smith) (RGS) the Business Managers of each school. Now that the consortium is established, communication and collaboration continues between the library teams and the English and LOTE departments. This ongoing relationship strengthens us, it is an active demonstration that we are more than the sum of our parts.

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

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## Our Schools

# *The Round – Transition to Tertiary*

After more than 16 months' construction, Ivanhoe Grammar School's, The Round, opened its doors to excited students and teachers. The School was honoured to have the building officially opened by the Governor of Victoria, Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AM on Tuesday 22 March.

The Round is more than a new building – in the few months since it has been opened, the School has seen a transformation in the culture of teaching and learning at Ivanhoe Grammar School. The building has been designed to meet the specific learning needs of Years 10, 11 and 12 students as they prepare for tertiary education and move to more independent learning.

The Deputy Principal/Head of Plenty Campus, Mrs Deborah Sukarna and a team of teachers researched how buildings could influence and support modern, collaborative teaching methods and worked with the Architect McBride Charles Ryan to design a flexible and innovative learning space.

Mrs Deborah Sukarna said, "We are absolutely thrilled with our Senior Years and Science Centre. Underpinning the learning spaces is a clearly defined pedagogy for teaching and learning that is reflected in current educational research. Classrooms are modelled on tertiary settings allowing for flexible and collaborative learning spaces with small break out areas for private study and social hubs. It has been wonderful to see our students and staff using The Round, in a myriad of ways. From a Year 12 Biology or Prep Science class, in the new cutting edge Science precinct, to impromptu concerts being held in the central courtyard, this centre truly has something for everyone. Learning spaces are interconnected and the classroom design and new technology engages our students in innovative learning that reflects life beyond Ivanhoe."

The Plenty Campus caters for students from Prep to Year 12 and the landscape retains a native character.

The Round is situated in the heart of the Campus and its circular shape reflects the School's original masterplan. Rather than just adopting a circular pattern, the Architects overlaid angular geometry to define the central courtyards and light wells and the multitude of learning spaces. This allowed transparency into and between the spaces, interconnectivity of learning areas, and multiple use. This flexible layout and bold design encourages further collaboration between teachers and students and facilitates classroom discussion.

Upstairs is the Science Precinct incorporating Physics, Chemistry and Biology laboratories, Primary and Middle Years laboratory, central preparation area as well as the specifically designed room for the teaching of Psychology.





*Students and staff at Ivanhoe Grammar School Plenty Campus have started 2016 in a ground-breaking new facility which has been designed to cater for the needs of Senior Years students as they transition to tertiary education.*

Science staff are located in the middle of this precinct to allow for ease of access by students and collaboration between the teachers.

Each of the Science laboratories has been designed with their specific requirements in mind. The Physics laboratory has a long bench space that can easily facilitate motion and other experiments. The Biology room has a collaborative horseshoe shaped design which allows for flexibility of use for either practical teaching or theory. The Chemistry laboratory is adjacent to the classroom so students move easily between theory and practical lessons.

Downstairs are the multipurpose classrooms, all organised and interconnected to allow for a huge variety of teaching and learning and with the latest learning technologies seamlessly

integrated throughout. In addition to the new classrooms, there are breakout and private study areas which Senior students regularly make use of. The central courtyard or hub of the building allows for outdoor passive recreation for students and is also the venue for informal lunchtime concerts and events.

Property Manager, John Atherton said, "The building has been influenced by learning spaces developed at universities and is one of the most modern facilities provided for Years 10-12 anywhere."

There are many sustainable features, including double glazing throughout, timber fins for sun shading, substantial insulation and the rain water collected from the roof is stored in a large underground tank and then recycled. High quality acoustic glazed doors are used between learning spaces and the building is extremely energy efficient with energy usage monitored and remotely controlled.

This outstanding 21st Century building was built by Building Engineering Pty Ltd. The structural design was complex and comprised a steel framework which was fabricated via a computer generated 3D model. This allowed for accurate checking of steel sections prior to fabrication and allowed the fabricators to build the framework on site.

The building floors are reinforced concrete with deep concrete beams and steel columns to add rigidity to the floors and structure. The ground floor is founded on 136 steel screw piles which negated the need to dig out any of the ground where the building is located. This saved at least two months construction time as well as being much more cost efficient.

This vibrant building has already enhanced student learning and provides inspiration to the whole School. For more information, please visit [www.ivanhoe.com.au](http://www.ivanhoe.com.au)

Rae Byrom |  
Communications and Marketing Manager  
Ivanhoe Grammar School

#### THE ROUND | at a Glance

Senior Years Centre with specialist science laboratories –  
Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Primary/Middle Years science

10 multipurpose classrooms with breakout and private study  
areas and social hub

Central courtyard for passive student recreation and informal  
concerts and events

Interconnectivity of learning spaces with the latest learning  
technologies seamlessly integrated

Designed by award-winning architects McBride Charles Ryan

Built by Building Engineering Pty Ltd

Time of Construction 16 months

*Ivanhoe Grammar School Plenty Campus*

*Co-educational Prep to Year 12*

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# Why Should Governments Support Non-Government Schools?



In 2012, when then Prime Minister the Hon. Julia Gillard gave the opening address to the ISCA - AHISA National Education Forum she drew attention to the question of the relationship between citizenship and nation, saying:

*"I believe Government support for a child's education is one of the entitlements of citizenship. No matter how rich or poor your parents are or where you go to school, our nation should provide a basic degree of support to your education: because you are Australian, because you are part of the whole."*

This view was recently reinforced in comments made by the current Minister of Education and Training, Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham.

This sentiment is reflected in law under the Australian Education Act 2013, which ensures that all Australian children attending all not-for-profit schools are entitled to a base level of government support for their education.

But why should this be the case? Why should governments support non-government schools?

One of the most fundamental reasons that all Australian school children should be supported in their education is that all schooling provides a public benefit, all education is a public good.

Governments are necessarily concerned with education as a public good, in the sense that society, and the nation, reap the benefits of a quality education system. This is essentially the framework for most of the public discussion about funding for education. The extensive investment of public resources in education is driven by a human capital agenda which connects the knowledge and skills of the population with national productivity, economic growth, social wellbeing and mobility. Decades of economic evidence confirm the connection between a well-educated

population and national productivity and social cohesion, stability and engagement. Conversely, many economic and social problems, from crime rates to welfare dependence, are linked to low levels of skill and ability.

The public benefit derived from schooling cannot be seen as coming from any single school sector. All schools; government, Catholic and Independent; contribute by providing education to Australian students.

Non-government schools have contributed to the advancement of Australian society virtually since the establishment of European settlement. The benefits they bring are recognised and reinforced through government policies that provide funding support to non-government schools.

In the government school sector, the state or territory government that owns the schools contributes the majority of the funding, with the Commonwealth contributing a lesser proportion. Non-government schools are funded through a partnership between parents and governments, with parents contributing a substantial portion of funding and the Commonwealth being the major government contributor. In Independent schools parents provide an average of 58% of income.





## Our Schools

# *St Catherine's School Rowing Finds a Secure Future Home*



**S**t Catherine's School has a proud tradition and passion for rowing. The presence of the pale blue and gold marquee on the riverbank at the Head of School Girls every year is overflowing with parents and staff and supporters of the rowing program. Our Chairs of Council and Principals have always been present on the banks of the Barwon to cheer the girls on with Chair, Mrs Clare Cannon and Principal Michelle Carroll in evidence in March this year carrying on the strong tradition.

For many years St Catherine's did not have long term tenure in its rowing facilities. When I commenced at the School in early 2006 the lease had expired. The land owned by the local Council only provided short tenure for our landlord who in turn provided a sub-lease of two years with an option for a further two years,

requiring negotiations each two years to ensure our program had a home.

The site had constant issues with silting in the river and the currents were not conducive to easy launch of the boats. An opportunity presented itself in this early stage of my time at the School for a consortium of girls' schools to invest in a new shed on the river. The local Council sought expressions of interest for a new site, almost unheard of on the Yarra where no new site had been allowed for many years. Over the next number of years we developed plans with the consortium which included 3 other girls schools however as the project continued to be delayed again and again our consortium lost heart that it would ever come to fruition and the members sought alternative arrangements.

In 2012 an opportunity came up to put in an expression of interest for a long term lease in one of Melbourne's most prestigious rowing sheds at the sought after site near Princes Bridge close to the heart of the city. The Schools Project Manager, Rob McFee from Coffey Projects and Andrew Croxon, Architect, who had been working for us on the new site for the consortium, were engaged to develop an Expression of Interest and within 3 short weeks we had developed a comprehensive professional EOI to present to Mercantile Rowing Club.

Over the next few months, negotiations began with the Chair of Mercantile, Malcolm Batten and a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement for a 20-year lease was developed. It was such an exciting prospect for the School to have



future security in a world class Club which has produced Olympic and World Class rowers. Who could forget the Awesome Foursome! One of St Catherine's teachers, Gina Peele, was also an Olympic rower for Mercantile and her photo stands proud in the building.

During this time the School revised its coaching program and structure including the engagement of casual rowers with some excellent work of its HR Manager, Cassie Monaghan resulting in the engagement an outstanding Head Coach, David Fraumano, and a great coaching team who were thrilled to be working at the home of rowing in Melbourne for St Catherine's. Negotiations were completed with Mercantile and the sheds received a \$2M refurbishment to which St Catherine's contributed during 2013.

Our partners in the shed are Brighton Grammar and the Mercantile rowers. You can imagine the excitement of the girls when we moved into the sheds in October 2013.

With the Schools enthusiastic parent rowing body, the Heyington Club, and the Head Coach our fleet has been upgraded and plans for many years to come to refresh the fleet established. At this time a new first eight was in the wings for the upcoming rowing season. To my great surprise and delight our new Principal, Michelle Carroll advised me that the new first eight would be named after me in acknowledgment of my work for the rowing program at St Catherine's over many years. I was, and continue to be, truly honoured and humbled by this gesture.

The boat was christened outside Mercantile on a summer's evening and I made sure the champagne bottle broke! The 'Geraldine Ilott' had her inaugural race at the Head of School Girls at the Barwon River in early 2014. The School had not made an A grade final for more than 5 years and it was not expected to again that year but the girls rowed superbly and while we didn't win we did make the A grade final.

Geraldine Ilott |  
Former Director of Business  
St Catherine's School





*alliance*  
YOUR FOOD PARTNER



## *Working together with The Clontarf Foundation*

In 2015, Spotless Chairman Margaret Jackson officially launched Spotless' Indigenous Engagement partnership with The Clontarf Foundation, to help Indigenous students strive and achieve the best in life. A not-for-profit organisation, the Clontarf Foundation caters for male students from Years 7 to 12, and places great emphasis on educational and behavioural outcomes, employment prospects, leadership qualities, healthy lifestyle programs, environmental rehabilitation initiatives, and visits with corporate partners to learn about career prospects.

The Foundation focuses on improving the education, discipline, life skills, self-esteem and employment prospects of young Aboriginal men and by doing so, equips them to participate meaningfully in society.

At a local level, Spotless engages with three of the Foundation's Clontarf, Karratha and Gilmore Academies, interacting with students in breakfasts, training programs, award nights and regional carnivals, workplace visits, guest speakers and activities aimed at developing employment pathways.

To celebrate our partnership with Clontarf Foundation, two students from the Gilmore Clontarf Academy contributed artwork for Spotless' Reconciliation Action Plan to provide a visual perspective.

The students were inspired to create artwork that evoke feelings of belonging to the land and understanding of culture through colours, shapes, symbols and stories.

As a partner to the Foundation, Spotless has an invitation to attend and assist in the coordination of and participation in local community events run by the Foundation. As well as this, Spotless attends annual employment forums for Clontarf Year 12 students.

Developing relationships of trust and respect with Indigenous communities across Australia, Spotless actively holds presentations and visits for students from Clontarf, to provide them with the opportunity to see the corporate world firsthand and to learn about the career options available within our organisation.

Spotless believes it is a major step to engage with Indigenous communities, to help those in less fortunate circumstances and is extremely proud to be a part of a program that can make a direct impact for Indigenous youth.

### **Building cultural awareness**

Recognising the importance of 'closing the gap' between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, Spotless works towards ensuring mutually beneficial outcomes for Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander communities to establish and nurture community.

Committed to fostering a business environment inclusive of Indigenous culture, heritage, communities and people, the company strongly supports the process of reconciliation and the strengthening of relationships.

With cultural training established, Spotless aims to raise awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage, acknowledging important cultural celebrations, plus reviewing workplace practices to increase the number of Indigenous Australians employed across the business.

Throughout 2015, Spotless participated in NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week, hosting several events across the business in recognition of both observances and looks towards many more in 2016.

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BUS AND COACH

# 5 Top Tips: *how to comply with your mandatory reporting obligations when it comes to child protection*

The ongoing Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse continues to grip the nation's attention, with more and more schools required to come forward and provide evidence. However not all schools are up to speed on their mandatory reporting obligations (of which some were recently introduced). In this article, Catherine Brooks, Principal of Moores and an Accredited Specialist in Workplace Relations takes a closer look at what your obligations are, and some tips for how your school can comply.

### WHAT ARE MY MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS?

In the past, crimes of child sexual abuse were often concealed and organisations prioritised their reputation and finances over child safety. However, fostering a culture of "openness and transparency" is now heralded as an essential component of any organisation's child protection strategy. Because of this, there are now broader legislative requirements placed on individuals to report incidences of child abuse to appropriate authorities.

You may now be asking, what does that mean for my school? Each state and territory in Australia has different reporting obligations and these differences are quite significant. An example the differences include:

- who the reporting obligations apply to;
- in what circumstances the reporter must make a report; and
- who the report must be made to.

To help you navigate these difficulties, please refer to our table that sets out the key features of each state and territory's mandatory reporting obligations.

### TIPS AND TRICKS TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE

To assist your school in complying with the mandatory reporting obligations, follow our top five tips.

## 1. *Create the right culture from the top down*

Creating the right type of culture (i.e. one where children are protected and people are encouraged to report concerns) will not be possible unless the school council or board is committed to ensuring a child-safe organisation.

As a first step, we stress that it is essential that all senior people at your school are on top of all applicable laws, including their mandatory reporting obligations. We recommend that both the board and your executive team receive training in this regard.

## 2. *Draft and implement a child protection procedure*

It is best practice for all Australian schools to develop procedures for responding to any report of suspected or actual child abuse. These procedures should comply with the mandatory reporting obligations operating in your state or territory, and should also include provisions regarding voluntary reporting.

If your school operates in multiple states, consider including a table similar to the one we have prepared for ease of reference.

## 3. *Provide training on your procedure*

As the Victorian Inquiry's Betrayal of Trust report highlighted, merely having policies in place does not guarantee child safety. Organisations must ensure all relevant people (volunteers, contractors

and staff) have the knowledge, skills and capability required to create, implement and follow appropriate systems and processes.

It's generally not enough to communicate the existence of policies and procedures; training is required as well. You might have the capacity to deliver this training internally. If not, Moores can provide child-safe training in a manner and style that best suits the operational needs of your organisation.

## 4. *Ensure that everyone is aware that reporters are protected*

Every state and territory has enacted legislation which protects individuals who make reports about suspected child abuse in good faith. 'Good faith' means the reporter has a valid and reasonable concern and is acting without malice or retaliation towards the alleged offender.

These protections ensure that the report:

- cannot result in the reporter being seen as unprofessional or having breached professional ethics; and
- does not make the reporter liable for any disciplinary or legal action (including in cases that are not proven).

As a child-safe organisation you should ensure that everyone is made aware of their rights and obligations to report any concerns that they have of inappropriate behaviour towards children, and that they will not suffer any professional or legal consequences so long as they report in good faith.



## 5. **Download the free Child Protection Toolkit and policy and procedure**

Moore's has launched a new Child Protection Toolkit to assist organisations better understand their obligations, to prevent abuse and to provide a safe place for children within your community.

Your school should also implement a Child Protection policy and procedure and make those documents publicly available via your website. The toolkit includes a sample policy and procedure for guidance. We at Moore's can provide you with assistance to tailor these documents appropriate to your school and give you legal sign-off.

To download these free resources, go to: <http://www.moore's.com.au/blog/?p=820>. We strongly recommend all organisations read the toolkit to ensure that you are acting in compliance with the law.

### MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS AROUND AUSTRALIA

STATE	LEGISLATION	MANDATED REPORTERS	WHEN MUST A REPORT BE MADE?	WHO IS A CHILD?
ACT	Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)	Particular professionals	A mandated reporter must make a report if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the person believes on reasonable grounds that a child or young person has experienced, or is experiencing, sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury; and</li> <li>that belief is formed in the course of the person's work.</li> </ul> NB: exceptions may apply.	A person under 12 years old.
NSW	Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)	Particular professionals	A mandated reporter must make a report if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is "at risk of significant harm"; and</li> <li>those grounds arise during the course of or from the person's work.</li> </ul> NB: exceptions may apply.	A person under 16 years old.
	Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)	Any person	A mandated reporter must make a report if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the person knows or believes that an offence has been committed (i.e. child abuse); and</li> <li>their information might be of assistance to police in apprehending, prosecuting or convicting the offender.</li> </ul> NB: exceptions may apply.	A person under 18 years old.
	Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW)	The head of a designated government or non-government agency	A mandated reporter must make a report to the Ombudsman if they become aware of an allegation against an employee of the agency, including allegations of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child - including a child pornography offence;</li> <li>any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child; and/or</li> <li>any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child - even if the child consented to the behaviour.</li> </ul>	A person under 18 years old.

MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS AROUND AUSTRALIA

STATE	LEGISLATION	MANDATED REPORTERS	WHEN MUST A REPORT BE MADE?	WHO IS A CHILD?
NT	Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)	Any person	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if the person believes on reasonable grounds that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a child under 18 years old has suffered or is likely to suffer harm or exploitation; or</li> <li>• a child under 14 years old has been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence; or</li> <li>• a child under 18 years old had been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence occurring in the context of a special care relationship.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply</p>	A person under 18 years old.
		Registered health professionals	<p>A registered health practitioner is under additional reporting obligations and must make a report if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they believe on reasonable grounds that a child aged 14 or 15 years old has been or is likely to be a victim of a sexual offence; and</li> <li>• the age difference between the child and the sexual offender is greater than two years.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 18 years old.
	Domestic and Family Violence Act (NT)	Any person	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if the person believes on reasonable grounds that the life or safety of a person (i.e. a child) is under serious or imminent threat because domestic violence has been, is being or is about to be committed.</p> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 18 years old.
QLD	Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD)	Particular professionals	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they form a reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse; and</li> <li>• the child may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 18 years old.
	Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld)	Staff members at a school	<p>A mandated report must make a report if they reasonably suspect, in the course of their employment at the school, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a student under 18 years old attending the school has been or is likely to be sexually abused by another person;</li> <li>• a pre-preparatory age child registered in a pre-preparatory learning program at the school or a distance education pre-preparatory learning program at the school; or</li> <li>• a person with a disability who is being provided with special education at the school and is not enrolled in the preparatory year at the school.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 18 years old.
SA	Children’s Protection Act 1993 (SA)	Particular professionals	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been or is being abused or neglected; and</li> <li>• the suspicion is formed in the course of the person’s work (whether paid or voluntary) or carrying out of their official duties.</li> </ul> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 12 years old.
TAS	Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (TAS)	Particular professionals	<p>A mandated reporter must make a report if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they believe, or suspect on reasonable grounds, or know that a child has been or is being abused or neglected; or</li> <li>• there is a reasonable likelihood of a child being killed or abused or neglected by a person with whom the child resides.</li> </ul> <p>This also applies to unborn children.</p> <p>NB: exceptions may apply.</p>	A person under 16 years old.



STATE	LEGISLATION	MANDATED REPORTERS	WHEN MUST A REPORT BE MADE?	WHO IS A CHILD?
VIC	Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)	Any person 18 years or older	A mandated reporter must make a report if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•they form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child by another person of or over the age of 18 years.</li> </ul> NB: exceptions may apply.	A person under 16 years old.
	Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)	Particular professionals	A mandated reporter must make a report if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse;</li> <li>•the parents cannot or will not protect the child; and</li> <li>•the belief is formed in the course of practising his/her position of employment.</li> </ul> NB: exceptions may apply.	A person under 17 years old.
WA	Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)	Particular professionals	A mandated reporter must make a report if, in the course of their work, they believe on reasonable grounds that a child has been the subject of sexual abuse or is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse. NB: exceptions may apply.	A person under 18 years old.
CTH	Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)	Particular professionals	A mandated reporter must make a report if, in the course of performing their duties, functions or powers, they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•a child has been abused; or</li> <li>•a child is at risk of being abused</li> </ul>	

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## Our Schools

# Reaching for the Stars

## Sacred Heart College Observatory



**S**acred Heart College is located across from the beach in Sorrento Western Australia. Just over 18 months ago, our Head of Science, Ray Priskich 'had a dream' to establish a fully-operational observatory on campus; a facility that would make the most of the clear southern skies here on the coast. This project has now become a long-term strategic investment for the College embracing curriculum, community, innovation, reputation, branding and other benefits. By engaging with Ray's vision, the students of Sacred Heart College will literally be 'reaching for the stars'.

### THE OBSERVATORY PROPOSAL: ASTRONOMY IN AUSTRALIAN SCHOOLS

Astronomy education is a recognised part of the Australian Curriculum organised within the Earth and Space Sciences sub-strand of the Science Understanding strand.

The stated aims of the Australian Curriculum: Science are to ensure students develop:

- an interest in science as a means of expanding their curiosity and willingness to explore, ask questions about and speculate on the changing world in which they live

- an understanding of the vision that science provides of the nature of living things, of the Earth and its place in the cosmos, and of the physical and chemical processes that explain the behaviour of all material things
- an understanding of the nature of scientific inquiry and the ability to use a range of scientific inquiry methods, including questioning; planning methods and conducting experiments and investigations based on ethical principles; collecting and analysing data; evaluating results; and drawing critical, evidence-based conclusions.

An engaging, investigative approach to astronomy studies fits comfortably with the aims of our national curriculum for Science. **Science students learn best by designing, conducting and analysing their own investigations.** The experience is enhanced through the use of digital equipment often in the context of contemporary or popular issues.

In addition to the requirements of the Australian Curriculum, Sacred Heart College offers an astronomy club and a Year 9 Semester-long astronomy elective. The curriculum is supported in part by two telescopes – a 10 inch diameter alt-azm mounted Dobsonian (Newtonian type) and a Celestron 9.25 inch German

equatorial mounted Cassegrain. Both have been used by members of the Astronomy Club and students studying the Year 9 elective for visual and digital photographic use.

These two instruments provide students with a solid introduction to basic astronomy observing and image collection, but have limitations because they need to be moved to an observing site and dismantled and stored after use.

### BRINGING THE VISION TO REALITY

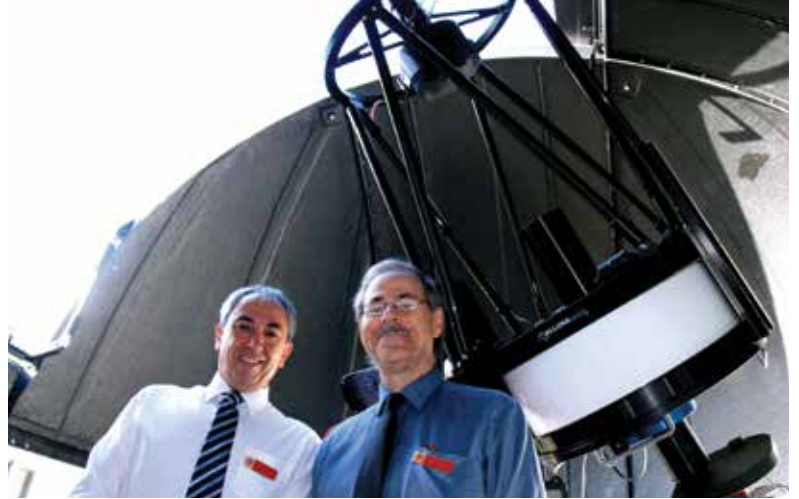
To overcome the shortcomings above, and to establish a context in which keen students can undertake more advanced astronomical investigations, a business plan was written, costed and presented to the College Board. The College decided last year to invest in a campus-located, remotely capable, research-grade telescope facility.

A Project Management team was established which pulled together the key skills to deliver success;

- Business Manager (finance and project governance)
- Head of Science (technical and curriculum)
- Property Manager (structural and building)
- Head of ICT (technical configurations)

The Sacred Heart College observatory will open this month to coincide with the College's 50th anniversary. There is a long tradition in the science community of naming telescopes, and the Sacred Heart College telescope will be no exception. We are honoured to be naming our telescope the Valda Woulfe after a special Sister who taught at the College.

*Sister Valda Woulfe (1932-2014) was an engaging teacher, challenging students to do their best. Science was her great passion, which she taught at Sacred Heart Highgate, Sacred Heart College, Sorrento and Sacred Heart College, Oakleigh. She introduced photography at Sacred Heart and was interested in electric cars, well before her time. Valda was the President of the Science Teachers' Association of Victoria for many years. She encouraged scientific experiments and her students won many awards.*



We also retained a consultant with detailed knowledge and experience in the establishment of observatories.

The Project Team visited a few sites and over the project course met formally on 18 occasions. It was a complex project with equipment sourced from all over the world. A dome had to be transported across the Nullarbor from Qld, the mount came in from the United States and the telescope came all the way from Germany. The Head of Science, Ray Priskich said that there were many challenging moments with **“the most nerve-wracking being the lowering of the telescope so that it faced dead-south and bolting it to the mount.”**

Members of the team worked diligently throughout the project and earlier this month were able to reflect on their work with the commissioning of the 20 inch Ritchey Chretien Alluna telescope residing within a 5.0 m dome. The telescope is programmable, has connectivity to student computers and remote access. It is one of the largest school-based observatories in the southern hemisphere.

#### THE BENEFITS OF AN OBSERVATORY

Last April, the WA Premier Colin Barnett launched the State's Science Statement.

He emphasised the importance of science in creating a new generation of jobs. One of the five key areas identified was astronomical science.

Our observatory's many benefits will include

- enabling college students to undertake astronomical research projects
- engaging the local community in observing nights for special astronomical events or curriculum support
- becoming a recognised centre for excellence in astronomical studies at a secondary education level
- linking school students across the world
- providing collegial assistance for Catholic School science teachers via an astronomy PD support network.

The students will be able to engage in astronomical studies of professional significance to the worldwide astronomical community. These could include:

- conducting supernova searches especially for faint galaxies located in the southern hemisphere
- conducting variable star investigations, as there is a lack of observations for southern hemisphere stars

- studies of faint unknown near-earth asteroids
- tracking newly-discovered comets
- searching for nearby exo-planets (planets orbiting stars)

Sadler et al (2001) noted that the most important educational aspect of a remote telescope facility was the students' 'ownership' of their images; the self-described satisfaction that students could themselves control what they did with the telescope.

The whole Sacred Heart College community is excited about our special observatory, which will serve as a centrepiece for generations of students, who wish to be engaged with and in awe of the beauty, vastness and strangeness of our physical universe.

Steve Martin | Business Manager  
Ray Priskich | Head of Science  
Sacred Heart College





Our Schools

# *Building robotics into the curriculum and engaging students in STEM*



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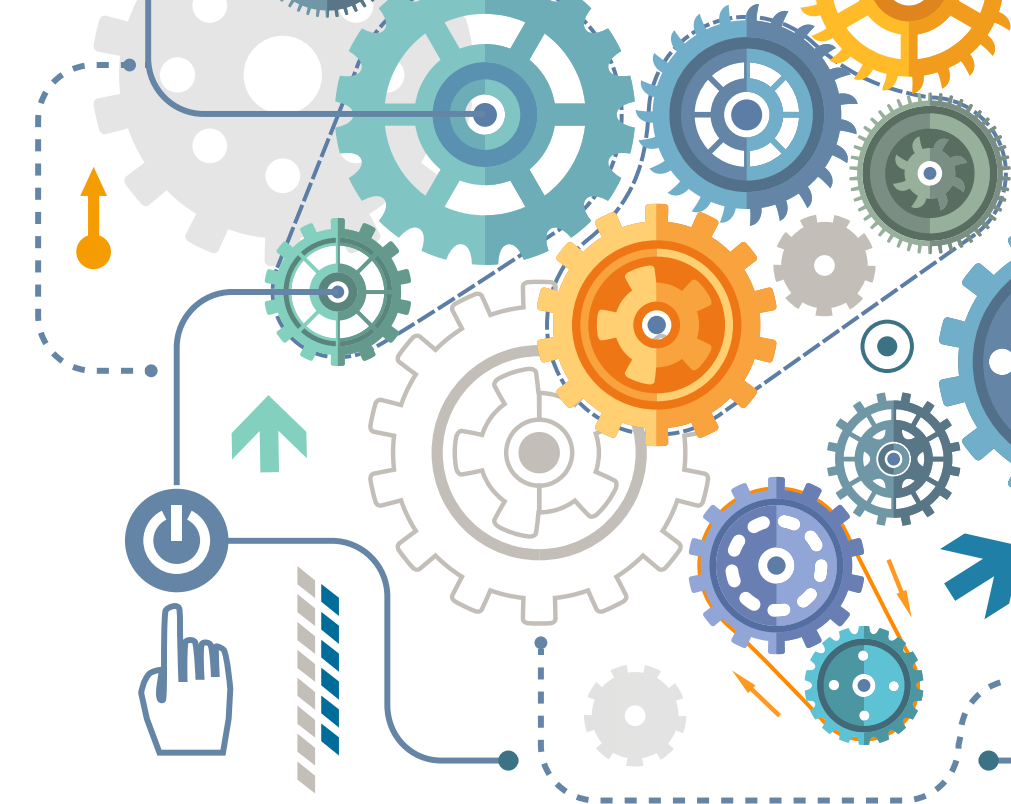


Grace Lutheran College is fast gaining a national, if not international reputation as a school of excellence in robotics and robotics in the curriculum. Whilst Grace College's STEM initiatives often focus around robotics, the overall objective is not to develop groups of students who make clever robots. Rather it is to create clever students, who are able to engage in science, technology, engineering and mathematics on various levels, complete with an appropriate set of values and ethics.

STEM which can be defined into four main categories science, technology, engineering and mathematics has seen falling numbers of student engagement over the past two decades. Peter Kellett, Director of Information Services at Grace Lutheran College and an Australian FIRST® Regional Partner has spent the last five years trying to address this issue in the North Brisbane and Sunshine Coast regions.

FIRST originated in the United States and has since grown to over 40 countries worldwide. FIRST is an acronym of: *For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology* and aims "to transform our culture by creating a world where science and technology are celebrated and where young people dream of becoming science and technology leaders". FIRST Australia is based out of Macquarie University which is also its most significant supporter. Director of FIRST Australia, Luan Heimlich, has been delighted with the work of Grace Lutheran College in the development of FIRST programs in the North Brisbane/Sunshine Coast regions: "It has been great to see such amazing growth and enthusiasm from students that attend FIRST events at Grace".

Students at Grace learn how to program LEGO® NXT Robots and participate in the Green City Challenge, followed by the more advanced EV3 robots with involvement in the Space Rescue Challenge. Students then progress to FIRST LEGO League (FLL), which is also open to students via the Robotics Club.



This competition uses Lego bricks, robot control systems and software to manipulate mission models on a game board. There is also an oral presentation and teamwork component to this competition. Following FLL is FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC). FTC is a more advanced version of a robot game where students use more customisable metal robots that have android based control systems. Grace College hosts FLL tournaments for North Brisbane & the Sunshine Coast and is the Queensland home base and host of FTC.

The highest level of school-based robotics is FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC). In FRC students are given very little scaffolding and they are required to produce a completely custom machine that performs tasks based on the season's theme. In 2015 Grace College attended a FRC competition at Barker College in Sydney where it won a Gracious Professionalism trophy. Gracious Professionalism is a FIRST Core Value and the most desirable quality to be found in FIRST competitors. Grace will compete at the Asia Pacific FRC Competition at Sydney's Olympic Park in March 2016 and be the only team from South East Queensland at the event which has teams from over 12 different countries.

In 2016, Grace will host over 70 teams on campus at various robotics events throughout Term 4. All students who successfully complete a series of FIRST programs, of which there are 4 levels, are guaranteed acceptance to a degree in engineering at Macquarie University.

Peter Kellett has been invited to attend a symposium in Nanjing China where he will be a guest of the Chinese Government which is interested in how Grace College approaches robotics in the curriculum, as well a presence at the FIRST World Championships in the United States annually from 2016. Ray McKinnon, Business Manager of Grace Lutheran College is a keen supporter of the robotics program. Ray understands that whilst there is a cost to the College, reputational benefits and educational outcomes make it a very wise investment in both the College and the careers of its graduates.

With the opening of a state-of-the-art Robotics Teaching Centre at Grace College in 2015, the future looks bright for STEM robotics and future leaders in science, technology, engineering and mathematics in the Sunshine State.

Ray McKinnon | Business Manager  
Grace Lutheran College



# Teaching with Technology.



Solutions for Education.



## Research shows that schools utilising technology can revolutionise teaching and student learning.

Today's students are immersed in technology. In order to engage students in their learning, it is crucial to integrate the latest educational technological tools into teaching. These tools support learning and are very useful in managing other important classroom tasks.

One popular tool is called **Large Format Touchscreen (LFT)**, also known as **Interactive Whiteboard (IWB)**. IWBs have been widely adopted at the primary school level across Australia and is now entering the secondary and tertiary level classrooms.

Research has clearly shown that teachers adopt IWB technology mostly because of its usefulness in teaching in an easy, interesting and better way. The research findings highlighted the following advantages:

- Teachers can easily cater for a variety of learning styles using IWBs because they provide the option to deliver multimodal presentations very effectively.
- The ability to write/annotate on the screen; record and print the lessons; instantaneous access to internet and various interactive resources help teachers to teach in an easy and interesting way.
- This technology helps teachers to develop the structure for their lesson plans and incorporate resources in their lessons more easily. There is also an option to use a pre-prepared lesson teachers can review at a later date.
- Another unique feature of IWB is that it encourages interactivity i.e. dialog among students, between students and teachers and, also the physical interaction with the IWB itself. These kinds of interactions motivate students to participate in discussions and problem solving and are considered very important for constructive and collaborative learning.
- Using IWBs means teachers can maintain eye contact with their class as they are not restricted to sitting behind a computer. Further, if a tablet is connected with a IWB, teachers can walk around while his/her work is displayed on the large front screen. This helps in maintaining the lesson pace and in managing the class more effectively.
- It has also been found that the use of IWB technology leads to improvement in learning approach as students become more motivated, interested and engaged in learning. More specifically, it has been noted that lower ability students or those with learning difficulties develop a positive approach towards learning when taught using interactive touchscreens.
- There is also some evidence of a link between the use of IWBs and better learning outcomes in the form of improved understanding of difficult concepts, abstract learning and the construction of new knowledge by the students.

It is not uncommon for teachers to feel overburdened and frustrated due to various demands of classroom teaching. This is where IWBs and other educational technologies assist teachers to teach and manage classrooms in an easy and effective way.

**If integrated properly, these technological tools have the potential to revolutionise teaching by establishing a learning environment that supports and facilitates today's students.**

Written by Dr Amrit Pal Kaur - PhD - University of Adelaide, based on a research study across 12 South Australian secondary schools.



# Does the Investment Space Make a Difference?

## Measuring the return on investment on teaching and learning

*A resurgence in the interest in the potential of innovative learning environments has spurred considerable investment in building programs in all sectors of education. Daniel Petre wrote in a recent Huffington Post Australia article of the building 'arms race between schools.' The piece focused on the use of public money to fuel the 'building binge' in some private schools. Petre was critical of the construction of extravagant architectural spaces, which appeared to favour 'aesthetics' at the expense of their primary function as a place for learning. The recent work from Barrett, Zhang, Moffat, and Kobbacy (2013) did find that the physical conditions of a learning environment do have a considerable impact, in their case greater than the classroom teacher, on student learning outcomes on standardised assessment instruments. However, a key take away from Petre's article centers on the tangible return in learning from this financial investment.*

For many schools, the cost of building programs can weigh heavily on their financial operation. In some circles, an educational space is thought to have a lifespan of anywhere between 20 to 40 years. For many teachers, their participation in a significant building program can be a once-in-a-career activity. It would make sense then for a school, and its community, to expect a certain degree of return on this considerable investment. One would expect there to be some measurable and/or tangible impact besides providing images for a glossy prospectus or the school website. From my perspective as a researcher in the field of school learning environments, there has been much more emphasis on the architectural design of these spaces, with little attention directed to measuring exactly what happens when teachers and students occupy these new spaces. There is limited literature or information on school websites, providing evidence to correlate the financial investment in innovative school spaces with their impact on teacher practice and student learning outcomes.

Over the past five years, the Anglican Church Grammar School (Churchie) in partnership with the University of Melbourne's Learning Environments Applied Research Network (LEARN) have focused on addressing this lack of understanding through the New Generation Learning Spaces (NGLS) project. Through a series of modest spatial interventions, involving the cost-effective retrofit of existing classroom spaces, this partnership has devised an approach and tools that have measured the empirical impact of different learning spaces on teaching and learning.



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## Our Schools

# Measuring the return on investment on teaching and learning



Across several iterations, the partnership determined that, on average, different classroom layouts account for 7 per cent of the variation in academic outcomes. Also, on average, when students transition from a conventional classroom to an innovative learning environment, their academic achievement increases by 15 per cent.

Throughout the stages of the NGLS project, it became apparent that there was a previously overlooked 'variable' that impacted the different learning environments. The evidence suggested that the 'environmental competency' of the classroom teacher was a key enabler in the pedagogical performance of any learning environment. The concept of environmental competency was first coined by Lackney (2008) and focused on the ability of a teacher to integrate the physical learning environment with their teaching practices for pedagogical gain. As a consequence, the partnership pioneered an innovative metric to providing real-time feedback to teachers as they encountered different types of learning environments to aid in the development of their environmental competency.

The 'Linking Pedagogy, Technology, and Space' (LPTS) metric provided instantaneous and visual feedback to teachers on the main aspects of their practice and the subsequent impact on the activity and behaviour of their students. The validity of this and the other methods and tools developed by the NGLS project, have been strengthened by their replication in other schools through the current Australian Research Council Linkage Project 'Evaluating 21st Century Learning Environments' (E21LE).

The most recent stage of the NGLS project focused on tracking a group of 11 teachers as they made the significant transition from conventional studios and workshops into the School's Hayward Midson Creative Precinct. The Precinct brought together the School's Creative Arts (Drama, Film, Television and New Media, and Visual Art) and Design and Technology (Engineering, Design and Technology, and Technology Studies). Considerable stakeholder consultation informed an architectural brief. The School's architect, Brand + Slater Architects Brisbane, was charged with bringing these theoretically similar subject disciplines into a single space. The aim of the resulting responsive 'open-studio' design was to allow teachers and students to occupy and transit between and through traditional teaching spaces, specialist technology-enabled workshop areas, and highly flexible inside and outside communal spaces. This dynamic cycle of occupation and transition was thought to better support students' transition through the intuitive, creative process of conceptualization, design, creation, appraisal, and refinement of their work. The design acknowledged the fact that technology-mediated, creative learning could occur in a variety of settings, with a range of people (both teachers and peers), and through a variety of modalities.

Over a two-year period, the LPTS metric provided real-time feedback from more than 120 observations to the participating teachers. The visual representations from this provided the base from which teachers could better understand the specific nuances of their practice. Through this improved understanding of their current practice,

it gave the opportunity to then identify and trial new approaches to maximise the spatial and technological benefits of the Precinct. Subsequent use of the metric provided the tangible evidence to determine the impact of the Precinct on student learning experiences. This bottom-up and responsive approach to teacher professional development helped avoid the potential roadblocks identified in the literature, and at the same time, assisted in the development of the environmental competency of the participating teachers.

Importantly, the analysis of the empirical evidence from the LPTS metric has provided the School with a quantitative measure of the return on its investment. It has been shown that the Precinct, through the work of the teachers, has surpassed the initial assumptions of its educational brief. At the same time, it has provided a stream of evidence back to the architects. The analysis has provided insight into the pedagogical impact of key aspects of the design and fit out, which will aid in future building projects at Churchie.

The evidence of this dynamic research partnership has been described in the recent publication 'Does the Space Make a Difference?' The publication presents an empirical retrospective of the impact of the physical learning environment on teaching and learning evaluated by the NGLS project

*Terry Byers is the Director of Innovation in Learning at Churchie and is in the final stages of completing a Doctorate through University of Melbourne. Details of this project also were featured in the Jan/Feb edition of Architecture Australia.*

### Reference List

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# Update on Director's Duties in the Not-for-Profit Sector



ALISON CHOY FLANNIGAN | Partner, Holman Webb Lawyers

Directors and officers of Australian companies which are incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) (Corporations Act) and which are also charities registered under the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth) (ACNC Act) owe a number of responsibilities and duties. This article is a very brief summary of their duties.

### WHAT DUTIES APPLY?

Directors' duties under Governance Standard 5 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Regulation 2015 (Commonwealth) (ACNC Regulation) passed under the ACNC Act currently apply to directors of not-for-profit charities which are registered with the ACNC which are not Commonwealth companies or subsidiaries of Commonwealth authorities.

Part 1.6 of the Corporations Act states that certain sections of the Corporations Act do not apply to those charities, including sections 180 to 183 (directors' duties) and section 185, to the extent that it relates to 180 to 183.

Note that some provisions of the Corporations Act still apply to charities, including some criminal offences.

Please note:

- Many of the duties of directors in the Corporations Act are similar to duties in the Governance Standard 5;
- The Commonwealth Government has announced that it will abolish the ACNC, the repealing legislation has not yet been passed ; and
- Directors owe similar obligations in equity and common law.

Therefore, taking this all into consideration, we recommend that it would be prudent for directors and officers of charities to be mindful of directors' duties both under the Corporations Act and Governance Standard 5.

### WHO IS A "RESPONSIBLE ENTITY"?

The ACNC Act refers to "responsible entity" of a "registered entity". A "responsible entity" of a not-for-profit entity which is registered under the ACNC Act includes a director of that company, a person who performs the duties of director, and a member of the committee of management of the unincorporated association, regardless of the name of the position or whether or not he or she is validly appointed or duly authorized to act. If the registered entity is a trust, the responsible entity is a director of the corporate trustee.

### GOVERNANCE STANDARD 5

Governance Standard 5 requires a "registered entity" to take reasonable steps to ensure that its "responsible entities" (including directors) are subject to, and comply with, the following duties:

- (a) to exercise the director's powers and discharge the director's duties with the degree of care and diligence that a reasonable individual would exercise if they were a director of the company;
- (b) to act in good faith in the company's best interests, and to further the purposes of the registered entity;
- (c) not to misuse the director's position;
- (d) not to misuse information obtained in the performance of the director's duties as a director of the company;
- (e) to disclose perceived or actual material conflicts of interest of the director. A perceived or actual material conflict of interest that must be disclosed includes a related party aid.
- (f) to ensure that the company's financial affairs are managed in a responsible manner; and
- (g) not to allow the company to operate while insolvent

### PROTECTIONS UNDER GOVERNANCE STANDARD 5

There are four areas of protection under the Governance Standard.

(Continued P 32)





## Governance

# *Update on Director's Duties in the Not-for-Profit Sector*

### PROTECTION 1

1) A responsible entity meets this protection if the responsible entity, in the exercise of the responsible entity's duties, relies on information, including professional or expert advice, in good faith, and after the responsible entity has made an independent assessment of the information, if that information has been given by:

- (a) an employee of the registered entity that the responsible entity believes on reasonable grounds to be reliable and competent in relation to the matters concerned; or
- (b) a professional adviser or expert in relation to matters that the responsible entity believes on reasonable grounds to be within the individual's professional or expert competence; or
- (c) another responsible entity in relation to matters within their authority or area of responsibility; or
- (d) an authorised committee of responsible entities that does not include the responsible entity.

(2) In determining whether the responsible entity has made an independent assessment of the information or advice, regard must be had to the responsible entity's knowledge of the registered entity and the complexity of the structure and operations of the registered entity.

### PROTECTION 2

Directors' duties under Governance A responsible entity meets this protection if the responsible entity makes a decision in relation to the registered entity, and the responsible entity meets all of the following:

- (a) the responsible entity makes the decision in good faith for a proper purpose;
- (b) the responsible entity does not have a material personal interest in the subject matter of the decision;
- (c) the responsible entity informs itself about the subject matter of the decision, to the extent the entity reasonably believes to be appropriate;
- (d) the responsible entity rationally believes that the decision is in the best interests of the registered entity

### PROTECTION 3

A responsible entity meets this protection if:

- (a) at the time when the debt was incurred, the responsible entity had reasonable grounds to expect, and did expect, that the registered entity was solvent at that time and would remain solvent even if it incurred that debt and any other debts that it incurred at that time; or
- (b) the responsible entity took all reasonable steps to prevent the registered entity from incurring the debt.

### PROTECTION 4

This section is satisfied if, because of illness or for some other good reason, a responsible entity could not take part in the management of the registered entity at the relevant time.

Further information is available at: [http://www.acnc.gov.au/ACNC/Manage/Governance/ACNC/Edu/GovStds\\_overview.aspx?hkey=456b1d22-8869-4ad0-a0cd-48607244216e](http://www.acnc.gov.au/ACNC/Manage/Governance/ACNC/Edu/GovStds_overview.aspx?hkey=456b1d22-8869-4ad0-a0cd-48607244216e)

Holman Webb has a specialist education practice, including a number of lawyers with extensive experience in advising universities, schools and other educational institutions.

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.





Our Schools

# *Building a Brand New Campus*

*Bunbury Catholic College Mercy Campus,  
Australind Western Australia*



*Being invited to design a brand new school is an incredible privilege, and comes with an enormous responsibility to get the foundations right. The design of Bunbury Catholic College's Mercy Campus was one of those "blank slate" moments that most likely only happen once in an architect's lifetime.*

*When we first accepted the commission, the location for the project was a farm. There was no road and the land consisted of a series of paddocks and coastal scrub; the development that was happening in the area was literally changing it from farmland to suburb. Importantly, this presented us with an opportunity to tackle the school's ideas and aspirations in relation to community, history, and connection to place.*

Emma Williamson |  
Practice Director from CODA Studio



# Building a Brand New Campus

**W**e felt very strongly that the first three buildings of the campus should form a civic heart for the school and also play a significant role within this brand new suburb. To achieve this we began a process of designing for every scale, starting with the individual student, to a small friendship group, a class, a year group, the whole school and finally from the point of view of the broader community.

With stage one of the school now complete, two major contrasting features are now clearly visible. The first is the formal placement of the two key buildings: the Learning Commons and Young Adult Learners building. These sit opposite one another in what we call the “Town Square”, their design almost mirroring one another. The second is the informality of the interior spaces, which combine scale, colour and textured materials to address much more the scale of the individual student.

Once the brief was established, the first task was to create a campus masterplan from which all stages of the building program could evolve. It made sense to start at the physical and metaphoric heart of the school, creating a strong campus identity, but also a centre from which all subsequent stages could radiate. This also had the practical benefit of minimising the impact of construction on campus life in subsequent years.

In many established Australian towns and cities civic buildings are built from brick, and we felt this material should be our starting point. As well as creating a cultural link, brick requires very little maintenance, provides texture to the buildings and reflects the surrounding coastal bushland in colour.

We wanted to incorporate the use of materials, both internally and externally,

that embraced the ageing process and could help to create a history for the school as generations of learners move through.

Inside the buildings, we felt that there were big opportunities to create informal spaces for connection. We explored combinations of texture, natural materials and light to create tactile spaces that are comfortable to occupy. The bottleneck created by hallways and lockers has been avoided with these transitional spaces deliberately left open and informal, providing places for students to connect between classes.

Bold colour has been used to differentiate buildings and to respond to the bright West Australian light. Small spaces have been carved out of the brickwork and brightly coloured nooks create unexpected places for small groups to gather. We used plywood, face brickwork and coloured concrete to add warmth and to counteract the traditionally institutional environment of a classroom.

It was important to the school that the buildings responded to their values, both in their desire to offer a nurturing environment and in the way they wanted to teach. The result is a carefully considered hybrid between traditional classrooms and a desire for future flexibility.

Throughout the school, traditional classrooms are able to be adapted through the use of operable walls, accommodating multi-class learning groups. We also incorporated a number of highly flexible spaces, including “The Terrace” in the YALS building, a space that is suitable for large gatherings, presentations and even lunchtime performances.

The new buildings were delivered at \$2,450/m<sup>2</sup> which represents excellent value for buildings of this type and quality.

This is particularly impressive given that the stage one buildings included highly serviced facilities such as a TAFE standard kitchen, woodwork and metalwork facilities, a CAD design lab, canteen and science labs.

The buildings have been constructed using a concrete frame supporting a simple steel roof with infilled brick veneer walls. This process enabled very quick construction of floors and concrete columns to achieve roof cover independent of external brick walls being completed.

The building structure is very simple and does not have any elements (such as cross bracing) within walls which future proofs the campus and allows for easy modifications over time. Stud walls were used throughout and were erected and lined with sarking to permit installation of building services and ceilings to proceed whilst brickwork continued to be laid to the perimeter of the building. This construction system saved several months of construction time and correspondingly delivered excellent value for our clients.

Although much of the early thinking was strongly linked to the school and its location amongst an entirely new suburb, there have been many lessons that we’ve taken from this project and applied to others. By taking a holistic, community-focused view we have recognised the significant impact this built environment has on the children it holds as well as the role it plays in speaking to the community about the values of the school. The buildings of BCC Mercy look outward as much as they do inward, and create a beautiful and considered backdrop to the life that takes place there.

*The BCC Mercy project was undertaken as a joint venture between CODA Studio and Broderick Architects*





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# Whistleblowing is a key component to creating a 'speakup' culture



Employees have the right to speak up against unethical practices and wrongdoing in their workplace. From fraud, corruption or theft to harassment, bullying and cybercrimes – schools should endorse a speak up culture by providing multiple internal and external reporting avenues.

Whistleblowing has traditionally had a 'brand image' problem within some Australian sectors. However, the climate is changing and more organisations outside of the Government and Public sectors are choosing to set up an external Whistleblowing Program to mitigate their commercial and reputational risk.

It seems like a near weekly occurrence the media reports inappropriate/illegal behaviour, misconduct or fraud at an organisation. In the weeks, months or even years following we watch as the consequences of these allegations play out in the public eye.

A robust Whistleblowing Program is an important part of managing a school's Student Duty of Care, Workplace Health

and Safety and School Governance requirements.

Whistleblowing should not be seen by schools as threatening or complex, but as a process which supports a healthy speak up culture, encourages compliance amongst staff and also works to protect students, school executives and governors.

Fraud can have detrimental financial impacts on education organisations. This is evidenced in recent cases of large-scale fraud committed against universities and schools. In 2011 a cashier was jailed for nine years for stealing more than \$27 million from Adelaide University. In that case, the cashier was described as using the University as his own 'personal bank account' and in response to his fraudulent actions the University committed to introducing tighter financial controls.

In 2013 a Christian college bookkeeper was sentenced to 19 months jail for stealing more than \$250,000 from the college. In sentencing the bookkeeper, the magistrate noted the 'substantial and ongoing breach of trust' that had occurred as a result of the theft.

### Can schools prevent the loss of such large amounts of money and reputational damage?

The Association of Certified Fraud Examiners' (ACFE) 2014 Global Fraud Study found a typical organisation loses 5% of its revenue to fraud each year. Further to this, the study found 42% of frauds were detected by employee tips. Despite this being the most common and effective means by which frauds were detected across all controls, only 54% of organisations had an external hotline in place. In contrast, 81% of organisations had external audits of their financial statements yet only 3% of frauds were detected by external audits.

Although it's impossible to totally control human behaviour, empirical data shows that having good risk management programs and a best practice whistleblower program in place increases the likelihood that irregular behaviour by employees will be detected earlier. This ensures the organisation is well prepared, sets the 'tone at the top' and cultivates a 'speak up' culture – all crucial elements to the success of a long term risk management strategy.

*Whistleblowing should not be seen by schools as threatening or complex, but as a process which supports a healthy speak up culture, encourages compliance amongst staff and also works to protect students, school executives and governors.*

Fraud and corruption are not the only conduct types that should be included under a whistleblower policy; bullying, harassment and other inappropriate behaviour and a range of other conduct types should also be included and able to be reported by employees. Importantly, if a teacher knows that a colleague is abusing a child under his or her care an external whistleblower procedure (in addition to following other legal processes) can also provide an anonymous, confidential process for initial reporting of the behaviour without the fear of vilification. A relevant point to help satisfy the new Victorian Child Safe Standards (specifically Standard 5).

Stakeholders should be encouraged to follow a 'when in doubt, speak up' approach to misconduct of all types to ensure they can act as the eyes and ears of the school.

#### **So, how can schools better help their employees to report inappropriate behaviour?**

In developing a best practice program, schools should remove actual or perceived reporting barriers. To do this, both internal and independent external reporting procedures should be made available to nominated stakeholders. The introduction of an independent external pathway accommodates individuals who do not feel comfortable reporting internally or who seek to remain anonymous. This pathway should facilitate 360 degree reporting within a school to help the Board or Principal receive sensitive disclosures. These mechanisms, supported by a robust policy, create a safe and secure environment that encourages staff to make disclosures.

Key features of a whistleblowing program may include:

- clear objectives of the purpose of the program;
- guidance on what conduct is 'reportable conduct'
- allocation of resources to implement and affect the program (e.g. appointing a Whistleblower Protection Officer and establishing an anonymous, independent/external reporting line such as that offered by Your Call).
- considerable Board oversight to ensure proper procedures are in place to manage any reports against the nominated Whistleblower Protection Officer or Principal.

Ultimately, schools should adopt a form of whistleblower program or policy that is appropriate to its culture and particular circumstances. The most effective way to ensure that a whistleblower program operates successfully is by ensuring that the 'tone is set at the top'. That is, by having the school Board, Principal and senior staff support it. Examples of actions which you can take to encourage whistleblowing at your school once you have a whistleblower program include:

- having a clear training program segmented and tailored to different levels in the organisation;
- ensuring that senior management encourage an upward reporting environment; and
- remaining action orientated. e.g. dealing with good and bad reports, show that you're listening and that you 'walk your talk'.

It's also crucial that barriers and fears of reporting are removed and, for example,

guarding against any victimisation, recrimination or loss of employment. A good Whistleblower Program will make this protection clear to staff.

Interested to set up a Whistleblowing Program, yet don't know where to start? Your Call provides a useful and free best practice Checklist to help organisations implement a program. Visit <https://www.whistleblowing.com.au/program-check-list-download/>

Nathan Luker | General Manager  
Your Call

#### **What is an independent reporting pathway?**

A best practice Whistleblowing Program or Fraud and Corruption Program provides an external reporting pathway to stakeholders. As a minimum, pathways should include online reporting and a telephone hotline. If appropriate, email and mail facilities can also be provided. All pathways should allow the receipt of anonymous disclosures.

An external reporting pathway facilitates independent and valuable expert commentary on the disclosures. The external provider should act as an intermediary between the organisation and whistleblower. This ensures objective oversight is applied from the start of a disclosure and helps the whistleblower to retain anonymity, report retaliation/victimisation and ultimately reach a resolution.

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# Special gift from Hobart to Laos



*Together with TEAR Australia, St Michael's Collegiate School students funded skill development workshops and community programs oriented around helping people help themselves through self-employment and entrepreneurship.*

St Michael's Collegiate School in Hobart is well known for excellence in girls' education. Even with its academic and extra-curricular success, it is the warm spirit of community and gratitude that the school is most proud of. Each year, the young women entering Year 12 are encouraged to connect with a charity of their choosing. In 2015 the Collegiate girls were drawn to TEAR Australia, citing TEAR's global capacity and tangible impact from the 'Useful Gifts' program as truly inspiring.

Susie Westbury, Deputy Head Prefect for 2015 explained "We felt that our efforts would be best directed beyond Australia's shores, towards those in the most challenging of circumstances. TEAR Australia showed us a group of young people living in the Champassak Province of Southern Laos as a potential charity direction."

In this area, young people have limited education and employment opportunities, and women often travel across the border into Thailand with dreams of employment and a better life. Instead, many are dragged into the sex industry and drug trafficking. The entire 2015 Year 12 group was passionate about ending this injustice.

TEAR Australia is a movement of Christians in Australia who respond to the

needs of poor communities around the world. The vision of TEAR Australia is very similar to Sr Dorethea's (one of the founding sisters of St Michael's Collegiate School) vision for Collegiate girls to recognise God in their lives in a global context.

The entire year group designed a fundraising schedule. Their first fundraising efforts were known as 'Courtyard Fundraisers', named for their central location within the school grounds. These often celebrated special holidays such as Valentine's Day, Easter, and St Patrick's Day – all occasions many of us take for granted. The girls arranged themed food stalls, face painting, music, dancing, and games. As the year progressed, major fundraisers included a Mother's Day Breakfast and a Charity Fashion Parade. Students arranged an auction of luxury goods donated by over 70 local businesses, as well as guest speakers, live entertainment and food and drink in order to raise enough funds to make a tangible difference to their counterparts in Laos. Together with TEAR Australia, Collegiate students funded skill development workshops and community programs oriented around helping people help themselves through self-employment and entrepreneurship.

The key to their success was undoubtedly community; by working as a

team the fundraising efforts were fun and enjoyable, strengthened bonds, and gave the Year 12's final year greater purpose. Through their efforts they were able to involve the entire school community, and rouse the enthusiasm of the student body, parents, friends and staff of the school, and even the broader Hobart community.

"Our aim was to create awareness of the charity and our partnership, while also raising the funds to purchase useful gifts such as sewing kits, and community packages. I attribute the level of involvement to the dedication that the year 12 cohort had to consistently provide engaging events that could fundraise and also add so much to the community spirit," commented Jordan Eastway, Head Girl for 2015.

Principal of St Michael's Collegiate School and leading educator for girls, Mrs Judith Tudball, shared her thoughts on the value of community leadership in the next generation of young women, "The Year 12's of 2015 were highly organised, collaborative young women who modelled servant leadership and who possessed a 'can do' approach to challenges. That our student leaders of 2015 found their voice and were committed to raising funds for TEAR Australia and responding to the needs of those less fortunate around the world is commendable."



## Our Schools

### *Special gift from Hobart to Laos*



ST MICHAEL'S COLLEGIATE SCHOOL 2015 YEAR 12 PREFECTS

Earlier last year Mrs Tudball attended the first Global Forum on Girls' Education in New York City, hosted by the US National Coalition of Girls' Schools, where she said there was a strong focus on the wellbeing of students within both our local our global communities. Mrs Tudball, who sits on the National Executive of the Alliance of Girls' Schools Australasia, represented Tasmania at the forum and was impressed by the insight shared. One of the key messages from New York was 'if we behave as if everything we do matters, we will be amazed at the small things that make a difference.' The fundraising achievements of the 2015 Year 12 students supports this; as each fundraising event and initiative by the girls amounted to a strong level of community engagement that had a real global impact.

Mrs Tudball also commented, "I am delighted that Collegiate girls embrace diversity and challenge, celebrate success, and are globally aware citizens who act with empathy and understanding. Qualities that will place them in good stead to create a bright future."

In total, the 2015 Year 12 group raised over \$24,500 for TEAR Australia; this is the largest donation the organisation has received from a school.

"TEAR Australia is incredibly thankful for the ongoing support of St Michaels Collegiate. The money raised in 2015 was the largest by any school group and demonstrates a genuine willingness and dedication to respond to global injustice, poverty and inequality. The finance generated will be used where it's most needed across a range of our

partners, contributing to our work of transformation, empowerment, advocacy and relief – Tim Johnson, TEAR Australia's Victoria/Tasmania Church Engagement Coordinator.

St Michael's Collegiate School values community outreach, loyalty and leadership; Collegiate Community Scholarships for 2017 are now open, please visit <https://collegiate.tas.edu.au/our-enrolments/scholarships/>.





# Why a Master Plan?

*Andrew Graham, CEO of EPM Projects Pty Ltd, outlines the benefits of a master plan, matters to consider when developing a master plan and how to procure a master plan.*

### WHY A MASTER PLAN?

It is estimated that there are 2,744 non-government schools in Australia providing primary and secondary education to approximately 1.4 million students reflecting annualised growth of 2.0% over the five years to 2015-16. Demand for non-government schools is accelerating with factors such as the quality of facilities to support core and co-curricular activities strongly influencing the decision about school selection.

Many if not most of these schools have their own strategic plans encompassing how they might best respond to increased demand. These plans as a minimum deal with the financial, human, and capital resources required.

But, what space is given in these plans to the planning and execution of the school's property development requirements? Or to the construction or modification of the physical infrastructure required to meet the growth in enrolments or to adapt to changing pedagogies?

This is an important question. Property development and the construction of new buildings is an increasingly complex, expensive and lengthy process. It is clearly important that reliably informed decisions about how and when to develop land are made well in advance of the time when the new facilities are required to meet strategic and operational plans. This is where a master plan can be helpful.

### WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

The purpose and benefits of a master plan is often misunderstood. Consequently, significant time, effort and cost can be invested in developing a master plan with little benefit. One of the most common failings of a master plan is that it is not informed by the existing known (and unknown) constraints to development. These are usually physical, environmental, regulatory, and operational. An uninformed master plan will be unreliable and will potentially represent significant risk to the school and its ambitions.

So what is a master plan? Simply put a master plan is a tool that guides the way in which land is developed and used over time to achieve a vision. It isn't a detailed design. A master plan demonstrates the way in which the built and natural environment can be synthesised through sustainable initiatives. It responds positively to constraints of all kinds, maximises opportunities, and is flexible enough to accommodate changes in strategy.

The physical environment will unquestionably influence the extent to which a school realises its vision and its strategic plan. A master plan can be helpful in many ways including:

1. Confirming the future size of the school in terms of student enrolments;
2. Identifying the required physical resources (land and buildings);
3. Further engaging the school community in the vision and strategic plan;
4. Enabling projects and property acquisition to be prioritised and funded;

5. Enabling capital works budgets to correspond with and reflect proposed development;
6. Leveraging opportunities for project fund raising;
7. Setting and managing expectations about the timing of new facilities;
8. Enabling a statutory planning approvals strategy.

While a master plan is not the design of a building, it is best communicated through a narrative supplemented by diagrams and images.

### WHAT INFORMATION IS REQUIRED FOR A MASTER PLAN?

A reliable master plan that achieves the purpose for which it is created will critically depend on the following information:

#### 1. Needs & Aspirations

A master plan must be informed by a comprehensive statement about the needs and aspirations of the school for its physical environment. This is procured through consultation with key stakeholders after which it is endorsed by the school board and its executive.

It should be noted that stakeholder consultation doesn't have to mean "stakeholder consensus". While someone might not expect to be consulted, consulting when there isn't a genuine intention to consider feedback will be unproductive.

(continued P 42)





## Why a Master Plan?

It is therefore important to decide at the outset what it is that the school will consult about – some decisions are the board’s alone. A decision can then be made about the stakeholders who should be consulted. It is also important to clearly communicate that feedback will be “considered” however the school board and executive will decide how to proceed.

### 2. Development Constraints

Relevant current information about the constraints and opportunities to development of land must also inform a master plan.

Information about the constraints to development can be grouped into five categories, as follows:

A) **Physical** – includes limitations and constraints of existing structures, the size and configuration of land and the location and capacity of existing services infrastructure.

B) **Operational** – includes the constraints arising out of the day-to-day operations of the school.

C) **Legislative** – includes constraints (and opportunities) from environmental planning legislation and instruments. This information should establish the prevailing development controls and standards, the various statutory approval pathways and the pros and cons of each pathway to enable an informed decision.

D) **Environmental** – includes constraints from things such as heritage items, heritage conservation areas, bush fire prone land, ecological features, overland flood paths, and neighbouring property impacts e.g. noise, privacy, solar access etc.

E) **Land Tenure** – includes constraints from restrictions on title e.g. covenants, easements and rights-of-way as well as underground services that are controlled by water and energy supply authorities and local councils.

Figure 1 contains a diagrammatic representation of the way in which a master plan is shaped and constrained:



FIGURE 1 - MASTER PLAN CONSTRAINTS

HOW SHOULD A MASTER PLAN BE PROCURED? ?

At EPM, we recommend a three phase process, as follows:

Phase 1 – Consultation & Constraints Mapping

Phase 2 – Master Plan Brief

Phase 3 – Master Plan Development

This process is shown in Figure 2:



FIGURE 2 - MASTER PLAN PROCESS

The timing and cost of each phase will depend on many variables including (as an example) the extent to which a school holds relevant current information about the land to be included in the master plan, the extent to which further investigations are required and the nature of those investigations. It is important however not to take shortcuts in an attempt to save money and time e.g. relying on information that isn’t current will give rise to significant risk and cost down the track.

Consideration should be given to a stakeholder consultation process that is externally facilitated as this should assist a highly innovative, ideas driven objective master plan. Similarly, appointing an expert to scope and manage the process to identify, investigate and document the development constraints should greatly increase the reliability of the master plan. The master plan brief is a key document that should thoroughly and comprehensively consolidate all the information before preparing the master plan.

A properly informed and carefully prepared master plan is an invaluable tool in the management of what is arguably the single largest investment by any school, property and buildings.



# Aon's 2016 Independent Schools' Risk Report

## Some key findings:



**310**  
schools participated



### Top **5** Risk Concerns

1. Student safety
2. Brand and reputation
3. Access to funding
4. Increasing competition
5. School governance



**58%** of schools do not actively plan for the succession of their Principal



### Property damage

is the leading cause of claims for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year running



**2/3** of schools feel they need to do more to mitigate future risks



**13%** of schools have tested their business continuity plan in the last 12 months



Full report available soon on Connect.  
Become a member now at [connect-aon.com.au](http://connect-aon.com.au)





# ASBA 2017

## CHARTING THE COURSE

25-27 September 2017

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