



ST ANDREW'S
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life

St Andrew's Cathedral School Pillars

Head of School, Dr John Collier explores the motivations behind enriched education at SACS

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St Andrew's Cathedral School Pillars

If schools are to enable students to cope in a rapidly changing world, they must prepare them to think and to adjust. Eric Hoffer has said, 'In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with the world that no longer exists'. Our educational offerings at SACS must be relevant and forward looking as the twenty first century unfolds.

From knowledge to wisdom

A generation ago, some in the educational community were still behaving as if there was a finite body of knowledge which, if imparted successfully to students, could confirm those educators in their view that they had fulfilled their obligation. The exponential growth of information in recent decades, where the amount of such information available to humankind doubles every four years, makes such views impossible to sustain. Amidst the plethora of knowledge, and so much unmediated 'pseudo knowledge' on the internet, students need skills to navigate knowledge bases, and wisdom to discern what is worthwhile.

Educating Global Citizens

Similarly, St Andrew's judges that an education hidebound and restricted to the perspective of Sydney, or even Australia, will not be adequate to empower students to cope with a world that is globally connected; where international awareness is becoming more critical in commerce, and indeed, in every field of human endeavour. This in part explains our commitment to the teaching of foreign languages, for an insular, mono-language, monocultural approach will not be adequate for the 21st century.

Education with Discipline

High quality education is, of course, a great deal more than academic instruction. It must include the various disciplines: disciplines of the mind, of the peer group and its behaviour norms, of the presentation of young people. We have a role at St Andrew's to give our students compassion for others and a sense of service. This, of course, directly contradicts the truths of contemporary society, which shows considerable signs of decay. Twentieth century certainties that science, technology, and economic rationalism would of themselves create a better world have proven hollow. The legacy has been a nuclear arms race, pollution, global warming, defoliation, salination, erosion, a growing chasm between richer and poorer societies, so-called ethnic cleansing, wars and terrorism. The seeds of ancient Greek Epicurean philosophy that 'man is the measure of all things' compounded by Enlightenment rationalism in modern times, has led to a rampant individualism which manifests itself in a hyper-consumerist society. Even a casual reading of society indicates that materialism does not satisfy.

Our young people need to be imbued at school and at home with enduring and sustaining values that will be personally fulfilling and will provide the necessary glue to bind society together in a helpful way.

Education for Transformation

This vision throws into counterpoint the importance of our Christian Education programmes, including the service elements of our International Baccalaureate programmes and our other socially energising programmes such as our World Vision contributions. Jesus Christ said, I came that you may have life, and have it abundantly (John 10:10). Our belief is that abundant life is found through faith in Jesus as God's son, and a life of service as the Christian ethic of faith is manifested.

The School's stance is that our educational programme needs to be transformative if students are to glimpse and then embody a personal ethic that rises above the self-focussed acquisitiveness that seems to drive our society. We need to embody what the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 12:2: Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Education that Pursues the Best

At SACS we know a quality school that prepares students for life is about a lot more than books and bookish learning, granted the enormous importance of intellectual endeavour. Dr Jonathan Sachs has rightly said, 'Armies defend countries; schools defend civilisation.' Paul the Apostle, in his letter to the Philippians (4:8) gives us our charter for so much of what we do: Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – I think about such things.

Education so viewed is a pursuit of all that is best and worthwhile across a very broad domain of enterprise. At St Andrew's, this is reflected in Visual and Performing Arts which is certainly about, but not limited to aesthetics; in our pursuit of excellence in physical education and sport; in our outdoor education suite of offerings, including interstate and international Duke of Edinburgh expeditions; and in our vocational education pathways. It is also reflected in our appreciation of literature and language, in the logic and order of Mathematics, in the inquiring nature of Science and the Social Sciences, and in the creativity of technology.

Sustaining Values

St Andrew's endeavours to provide an inspirational package of educational experiences. This package is integrated, it develops high order knowledge and skills, it provides a connection to others and to the world at large, it sustains values, and it produces an ability to continue to learn. Also, it offers an integrating Christian faith which provides an interpretation of God's world and an ethic to contribute substantially as a global citizen.

One of the fundamental characteristics of St Andrew's Cathedral School is the strong sense of community obvious within the School. This is apparent in many areas: in the strong bonds between students themselves; in the strong relationships formed between staff and students, particularly in the senior years; and in the ongoing friendships of former students. The relational aspect of the School is highly valued by students.

SACS community: a network of nurture

Our sense of school community is greatly enhanced by very strong pastoral care structures with our school framework. In the Junior School, classes are small and in the care of a class teacher, who is supported by an Executive staff member, a Junior School Chaplain and a School Counsellor. In the high school, students meet with a staff tutor in small groups most days of the week. Tutors are supported by a Head of House in a vertical (Years 10-12) pastoral care structure or a Year Coordinator (Years 7-9), Middle School and Senior College Chaplains and three High School Counsellors.

It is apparent that one of the main aspects of our strong sport and performing arts cultures is the sense of community that exists in these endeavours. Friendship is truly a gift from God – it is an embodiment of Jesus' command to love one another and his axiom that Christian grace will be seen through the love exhibited for one another. Social commentators remind us of how important this is in our society, where schools can be strong centres of belonging and meaning. Indeed, students need to feel grounded in this way in order to thrive.

Schools like St Andrew's have a significant role to play in developing social capital as so much of life is becoming increasingly individualised in a way which can be fragmented and destructive of community. In a society where we are seeing more gated communities and a sense of home as castle, the bonds of community are found strongly in a school such as ours and in a manner which makes the years of childhood and adolescence some of the most connected stages of life.

At St Andrew's we accept the responsibility, not just to create our own sense of community, but to enact Jesus' command to reach out. It is, therefore, very impressive to see students in both the Junior School and the High School personally sponsoring students in the Third World who are in poverty. It is encouraging to see our students contributing to the community through aid agencies. Service learning complements academic learning and co-curricular experiences as part of the Christian Education package provided at St Andrew's.

Our School accepts our community is increasingly global, not just local, and that it therefore has an important role in preparing students for global citizenship. This includes extending students' horizons, developing intercultural understanding and making them aware of their responsibilities, as well as opportunities. Our International Baccalaureate programmes are part of our global education, representing as they do an international curriculum. A focus on language studies, including both linguistic and cultural aspects, is based on the premise that in order to enjoy community there must be the means of communication and cultural understanding.

Our sister schools in various parts of the world, are part of an attempt to service this vision.

Community, in all of its manifestations, is something to be enjoyed and celebrated.

The failure of the culture of the individual

Increasingly, social commentators are reflecting on the erosion of community, as society atomises into an aggregation of individuals, each able to assert their rights, with decreasing regard to the cohesion of society. The culture of the individual is perhaps inherent in our humanity (we are after all, individuals) and was evident even in ancient times when, according to Greek legend, Narcissus fell in love with his own reflection in the river.

In the last 250 years, the increasing narcissism of society has been evident, fuelled by law and regulation over the last 50 years, and often encouraged in the young by doting parents determined to see their child eclipse others. We are increasingly living in a society where individual rights trump all other considerations. Social commentator, Hugh Mackay, in a recent Sydney Morning Herald Opinion Piece titled, *The Marketing of Brand Me*, argued:

Some of us compensate for our apparent powerlessness by becoming obsessed with our personal appearance – witness the rash of breast implants, Botox injections and tattoos – or with our houses and gardens, our food, or the number of Facebook “friends” we’ve accumulated, all in the quest for recognition.

In the rush of awards, prizes and tawdry self-promotions, designed to pump up our self-esteems, an important idea is in danger of being overlooked. The evidence from research – and from common-sense – is that self-respect, not self-esteem, is the key to a satisfying and productive life and the keys to self-respect are humility and restraint, not self-promotion.

Self-respect is a very private concept, easily overlooked in the noisy contest to construct and promote an ‘image’. It’s a thing we earn by the way we handle disappointment, tedium and loss, as well as those fleeting moments of happiness. There is no short-cut, and no amount of self-promotion will get us there.

As a School, we appropriately celebrate the successes of individuals. Our mission is to equip individuals through education. However, we undertake this task within community, where individuals are nurtured through and by the support of their fellows. Community exists around Music, Drama, Debating, Chess, Sporting teams, class and other peer friendships, Duke of Edinburgh expeditions and other Outdoor Education experiences, or just being here and belonging.

Adolescent psychologists, most notably recently Dr Michael Carr-Gregg in his address to parents, argued that for young people to thrive, they need to be members of an authoritative community such as a good school, which not only nurtures them as individuals, but authoritatively provides direction, structure and sets boundaries. They crave, and in fact need, a sense of belonging. They need charismatic adults as parents and teachers who will pose restrictions on their individual assertions, in ways which keep them physically and psychologically safe and guide them towards a productive and fulfilling life.

There is a clear lack of such focus evident in the broader community, where one sees so many adolescents who appear rootless, aimless and trapped in the tyranny and boredom of self.

It is reported that recently a long term President of Harvard University in the United States, when asked what phrase typified the modern Harvard student, replied, ‘emptiness’. This is a terrible indictment of modern, or, if you like, post-modern American culture and, by inference, given the globalisation of American culture, of the Western world.

One of the important lessons for young people to learn is that while they matter very much and are extremely important, the universe does not in fact rotate around them! There is a case for a certain existential humility. As the Apostle Paul wrote,

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus who...did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing. Taking the very nature of a servant...he humbled himself. (Philippians 2:5-9)

If Jesus himself could do that, we can expect that of our young people.

There is, or should be, a creative tension between the rights and needs of the individual and the rights and needs of the society of which that individual is a member. SACS tries to maintain that balance, while providing a strong community which is a necessary precondition of human flourishing.

Pastoral care

Pastoral care: an essential for an excellent school

In decades gone by, schools were about little more than teaching the curriculum. There was a 'sink or swim' attitude regarding students. There were few resources to assist individuals. I recall when I was a student, sport was tokenistic. There seemed to be a conspiracy between teachers and students, to lose the ball as early in the afternoon as possible, so that everyone could go home. Other co-curricular activities were almost non-existent.

Recent decades have seen a flowering of genuine pastoral care in quality schools. Here at SACS, academics and pastoral care are different faces of the same coin: it is necessary to invest heavily in both to produce a fully rounded individual. Moreover, quality pastoral care which really supports individuals makes outstanding academic performance more likely.

Here at SACS, we invest heavily in pastoral care. We have three School Counsellors (all registered psychologists), an unusually high level of resource for schools. They assist with a considerable range of issues: social and emotional matters, peer group and friendship issues, stress relief, study and time management skills, and, where necessary, the harder end of the psychological spectrum. In the Junior School, primary responsibility for the pastoral care of students is invested in the class teacher, assisted by a School Counsellor, the Chaplain, Executive staff and the Head of Junior School. In Years 7 – 9, Year Coordinators supervise their flock of students. In Years 10-12, Heads of Houses are responsible for vertical groups of approximately 70 students.

Within both Middle School and Senior College structures, Tutors connect most days with small tutorial groups, to ensure that no young person is lost in the system. Except where staff change occurs, it would normally be anticipated that the same tutor takes a group of students through Years 7 – 9, and a different Tutor takes the student through to Years 10 -12, thereby maximising the likelihood of a staff member who knows the students really well, and takes an interest in their academic and social progress. There is of course a Girls' Coordinator to deal with specific issues presented by girls, and High School Heads of Division (Middle School, Senior College and Deputy Head of Senior College). Some academic positions are also very much pastoral care positions, for instance, our Enrichment and Learning positions and our Academic Coordinators for each Year Group. Moreover, all teachers maintain a brief of pastoral care of their students.

When I commenced at the school, I interviewed approximately 25 students from each House, comprising around 200 in total. When asked what was best about the school, every group spoke of the lovely inclusive culture, where difference and diversity are acceptable and recognised, and about the quality of relationships they enjoy with students and teachers. Many parents choose St Andrew's Cathedral School mostly because of its strength in pastoral programmes.

Why does pastoral care matter so much? Over recent generations we have seen the fragmentation of Western society. No longer do young people grow up at the elbow of their parents, working in the cottage or in the cottage industry or the local trade alongside their fathers. The social commentator Professor Jared Diamond has coined the acronym 'WEIRD' for our society: Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich and Democratic. Somehow amidst these developments our society is atomised, leaving many of its members floundering. Academic psychologists who presented at the independent schools National Pastoral Care Conference in 2010 delivered a stunning message: 25% of Australian youth are clinically depressed; American research indicates that 31% of American College students are so depressed as to be dysfunctional. This is a veritable tsunami in our society, and St Andrew's, along with all other schools, sees the signs in some students only too well. While we cannot accept total responsibility for the wellbeing of our young, we do attempt to assist parents by making a positive contribution.

Pastoral Care is an aspect of our Christian ethos. Part of Jesus' persona and role was to be the good shepherd. [Jesus said] I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me – and I lay down my life for the sheep. (John 10:14-15) In an unfenced agricultural society, the image of the shepherd looking after its sheep, as a metaphor for Christian care, was a very powerful one. In our society and our school, the need for pastoral care remains very strong.

Academic

Academic results

All parents were emailed in December and January about the wonderful HSC and International Baccalaureate Diploma results gained by Year 12, 2012. They represented a further improvement on 2011, which was a further improvement on 2010. It was lovely to be able to host morning teas for a number of students from both groups and see the excitement (and relief) amongst students. How 18 year olds can eat (particularly when anxieties have been removed)!

Our Dux, Kate Sligo, with an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) of 99.85, gained 44 out of 45 in the International Baccalaureate Diploma, which is the second highest mark attainable in the credential and therefore, by definition, means Kate has the second highest result in the world amongst the 131 countries which sit students for the IB! (naturally, there were a number of ties of students who obtained 45). It is significant that the two second highest place getters, Tim Bemand and Matt Gardiner, with 99.65 each, were also IB students (43 out of 45). The top three students therefore in the school, were amongst the 10 who did the International Baccalaureate. 4th place was gained by Oliver Gilson, our top HSC student of our 190 who sat the HSC, with an ATAR of 99.1. On this evidence, the IB should seriously be considered by many of our students. This in no way diminishes the HSC, nor the capacity of our students to do well (many of them have done extremely well, with further clusters of ATARs around 98, 97, 96 and 95 etc). It does however reveal that the IB can deliver fabulous outcomes, particularly at the top of the range. Kate Sligo,

our Dux, on the very day that the results were revealed, and on the basis of her splendid achievement, has been admitted to Cambridge University for her first choice of International Studies, focussing on the Middle East. This is surely an area that needs fine minds to exercise their best thoughts on creative solutions.

Twenty-first Century learning

Equipping students for a lifetime of learning

In 2008, Bill Gates predicted that in five years more Internet searches will be done through speech than through typing. At the time the idea of searching online without a keyboard seemed unthinkable. Five years on, we have become accustomed to speaking to a mobile device. This week Google revealed that soon voice search would go one step further with the introduction of conversational search.

We live in a rapidly changing world. Increasingly, innovation cycles are being compressed and product life cycles are being curtailed. As consumers of products we can often feel that what we depend on today becomes obsolete tomorrow. Many young workers feel the same is true for much of what they learned during their school and university years. There is a constant need to keep learning beyond one's years of formal education as so much of what they learn can rapidly become redundant in this quickly changing world.

St Andrew's Cathedral School is committed to equipping students to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

The Three Xs

Almost two hundred years after the phrase the three Rs was coined, apparently by Sir William Curtis around 1825, Dr Idit Harel Caperton coined the phrase "the three Xs". Caperton proposed that the most important skills we can foster in our students are their ability to eXplore, eXchange and eXpress.

When the Three Xs are nurtured and developed students will leave our schools equipped for a lifetime of learning. Yet sadly, as Robert Carneiro notes, while 'children come fully equipped with an unassailable drive to explore and experiment rather than conservatively to avoid mistakes ... our primary institutions of education have been designed to teach and to control'. Not wanting this to be true at St Andrew's Cathedral School, significant thought is being given as to how to foster each of the three Xs.

eXplore

If you have never tried putting 'French military victories' into Google, you really should. Type it in and click on 'I'm feeling lucky'. You will find a query appears, 'Did you mean French military defeats'. From there you are taken to a site detailing every military loss France has ever experienced. Perhaps more seriously, when students set off to research the Holocaust they are likely to come across sites such as Zundelsite where they will read, 'The Holocaust is useful postwar propaganda ... [and] there is no proof that the Holocaust, as depicted by the Holocaust Promotion Lobby and the

highly politicized Hollywood industry, actually occurred'. Our students, more than ever, need to be able to explore large volumes of information critically, and, in this case, to be able to recognise that they have accessed a holocaust denier site.

When our students are not taught to explore large volumes of information critically we know what happens. They submit work that is little more than a copy and paste. It may be tempting at this point to curse the worldwide web or preface the distribution of work with warnings not to use Wikipedia. Such tactics, more often than not, are not convincing to students who continue to search the same way they had before.

Rather than teaching students solely to watch out for Wikipedia, we ought to be teaching students how to log in to Wikipedia and add pages to their 'watchlist'. When students do this as they commence studying a topic they can then easily follow the changes that are made to the page. Observing the authoring of articles in action, students gain an understanding of the complexities of the topic and the nature of the authoring. As a result they are less likely to uncritically engage with Wikipedia pages in the future.

St Andrew's Cathedral School is committed to ensuring students are able to effectively access online information and evaluate its relevance. For this reason they are currently working on a K-12 Digital Literacy Scope and Sequence so that the teaching of this skill is not left to chance. The introduction of iPads in Years 7-10 has meant that students are now able to conduct more research in class. This makes it possible for search skills to be explicitly taught and for students to then be guided as they practice effectively exploring large volumes of information critically. In many classrooms there are now posters that give students tips on how to improve their online searching. You may like to download these posters (search: "Google Search Posters") so that these same tips can be reinforced at home.

eXchange

Our students need to be equipped to exchange ideas with students and experts locally and internationally. We live in an increasingly connected world and many of our students have their eyes set on working for companies that have offices spread across many continents. They will work in global teams that will primarily work together online. Schools ought to be preparing students for this world and it is now possible for this to happen.

Students can learn not only from what experts have written in a book or have said when interviewed for a documentary, they are now able to go one step further.

Having read the book or viewed the documentary, it is now quite possible for students to easily connect with that person, wherever they are in the world, and ask questions of them directly. Going this extra step, regardless of whether the connection is made through email, Skype or Twitter, helps students develop their critical thinking skills and is incredibly engaging.

I witnessed this for the first time about five years ago during a Skype call with a group of students who were speaking to Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington, at Monash University. Students had read an article by her and, as part of their homework, had written down some questions they would ask Professor Hughes-Warrington in response if they ever had the opportunity to meet her. The

students were unaware that the next lesson, they would have the chance to ask her those questions on Skype. The students asked wonderfully probing questions of Professor Hughes-Warrington who asked even more challenging questions of the students in reply. It was a wonderfully enriching experience for the students who were made to think deeply about the topic we were studying. The opportunity to interact with an expert inspired the students and highlighted that place and position was no barrier to whether students could connect and learn from that person in class.

Since then students at St Andrew's Cathedral School have connected with numerous people from institutions around the world. Among the most memorable was a Skype call made with the Ground Zero Museum in New York City on the 10 year anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Gary Marlon Suson, who founded the Ground Zero Museum and was the official photographer for the Ground Zero Recovery, generously agreed to take two classes, one History and one Visual Arts, on their own personal tour of the museum using Skype on his iPad. Learning directly from someone who spent six months photographing the recovery and who curated the museum was an incredible learning experience for the students.

The possibilities for connecting with experts around the globe are endless. There are scientists, actors, film directors, athletes, curators, authors and business people throughout the world who are only too happy to play a part in the learning of students if asked to do so. At St Andrew's Cathedral School we are looking to increasingly capitalise on these opportunities.

Instantaneous and inexpensive global communication has also made it possible for students to learn and work together in global teams. The world is facing a large number of global problems and when students get the opportunity to experience what can be achieved by global networks, even networks of youth, they find it to be incredibly motivating. Over the last few years SACS students have worked together with students in Europe and the US to investigate modern slavery, co-create awareness raising films and take action together to try and help bring about an end to slavery.

Involvement in online collaborative projects allows students to experience some of the inherent advantages and also challenges of working as part of a global team. Students get a more accurate picture of slavery in a particular region from the students living in that area than they would be able to otherwise receive. Students also experience what can be achieved when students in different time zones work together on projects around the clock. At the same time, students experience how difficult it can be to build trust and a team identity with people who have never been together face to face.

eXpress

We need to nurture our students' ability to express creative ideas creatively. Both the nature of the ideas our students have, and the way these ideas are communicated, need to be marked by creativity. Not only is creativity vital to economic productivity and personal employability, the world needs a new generation of people with the creative capacity to find solutions to some of the complex global problems we are facing.

To suggest that all teachers have a responsibility to develop a student's creative capacity may initially seem somewhat out of place. In the minds of many, creativity remains a gift that only a few individual students possess and its development remains the responsibility of the Music, Art or

Drama teachers. Creativity is certainly developed in these subjects. However, as Minhaly Csikszentmihalyi notes, we can no longer think of creativity as ‘a luxury for the few ... [as] by now it is a necessity for all’. We need to think about all students as having a creative capacity that is developed across the entire curriculum.

For students to grow in their ability to express creative ideas, teachers need to delight as much in good questions as we do in good answers. Learning tasks will present students with possibilities rather than prescription. A climate of enquiry risk taking will be modelled by teachers and students will be encouraged to seek new ways of viewing the topics they are exploring.

Students at St Andrew’s Cathedral School also have available to them tools that allow them to communicate their ideas creatively. Students have access to 600 computers on which there is a large suite of creative software. They also make use of a large range of online tools such as Prezi and Google Sketch Up. Students in Years 7-10 have their own iPad on which there are a vast number of apps that allow students to express creativity.

These are just some of the ever expanding set of tools available to St Andrew’s Cathedral School’s students, in whom we seek to grow the ability to express creative ideas creatively.

Equipped for a Lifetime of Learning

Eric Hoffer once observed that, ‘in times of change learners inherit the earth; while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.’ Growing students in their ability to explore, express and exchange will ensure they are equipped for a life time of learning in a rapidly changing world.

‘...there is a time for everything...a time to plant and a time to uproot...a time to keep and a time to throw away.’ (Ecclesiastes 3:1-6)

Coeducation

Boys and girls

A number of astute commentators have suggested that this is the hardest time in human history to be a teenage girl, and the hardest time for parents to be raising girls to competent, whole adulthood. There are a number of reasons for this judgement: the early sexualisation of girls in our culture; girls are captive through women’s magazines, and the power of advertising, to corporate interests which place them under enormous pressure to pursue fashion brands. Many girls absorb the cultural stereotype that their worth consists entirely of how they look, and to be acceptable they need to look sexually alluring. This translates into how they dress. The media fuelled obsession with body image has spawned a wave of eating disorders and other forms of mental illness, including widespread depression. Girls are presented with images to emulate from celebrity culture. Gossip magazines present these celebrities as those who are most worthy of our attention, even though often their personal lives are in disorder and their worlds seem to be transient and entirely superficial. Part of the pressure on girls is to embrace promiscuous sexual experience at an early age and to accept the mantra that a good time cannot be had without some form of substance abuse. Increasingly girls are distracted by the 24/7 electronic environment; they

are at risk of being consumed by the online world, where lurk cyber bullies, sometimes in the guise of their 'friends', and older predators masquerading as someone else.

Part of the media culture to which they are submitted centres around the theme of inclusion/exclusion (as seen in many ubiquitous TV reality shows) which encourages the special kind of exclusion from peer groups that troubles girls in their early teenage years.

Steve Biddulph, the well-known commentator on bringing up boys, in his new book *Raising Girls*, argues that the feminist gains of the 20th Century, achieved through the confident assertion that girls can do anything, have, within celebrity culture, morphed into the reductionist position that girls essentially have three choices: super model, pop singer or movie star.

While boys may feel less pressure than girls, the mental world of boys is in some respects, little better. Their role models, as presented by the media, are dominated by footballers behaving poorly, sports stars treating women badly, and the constant message from sporting heroes that manhood is about almost unlimited aggression.

They feel aroused by the voluptuous dress of many girls (and in current society it is common for girls, not boys, to be the sexual aggressors), but are fiercely sanctioned and embargoed should they react to the aggravation of their hormones. This situation is exacerbated by the ubiquity of pornography, which encourages the notion of women as sex objects, as well as an unreal view of females. Research suggests that by the age of 16, 100% of Australian males have accessed pornography. Online pornography would appear to be one of the biggest financial operations across the world, and mostly targeted at boys and young men.

How then should parents and schools respond to this rather depressing terrain? The response of the parents of many girls is to attempt to cloister them: to take refuge in an all girls' school and hide them away from interaction with boys. While some parents of boys also respond in this way, it is parents of girls who feel most vulnerable. A truism is that boys' parents often want coeducation, and girls' parents want single sex schooling (mutually exclusive aims)!

Parents who think they can, in this society, effectively cordon off the genders from one another are sadly naïve.

Experience tells me that attempts to cloister away young people actually worsen the situation. The other gender takes on the status of 'forbidden fruit'; without the opportunity to form ordinary, stable and positive relationships with the other gender, young people can form a jaundiced view of what the other gender is, and can become more, rather than less, obsessed. The other gender takes on the status of mystery and mystique. Without this base of normal, even mundane interaction day by day at school, when otherwise segregated genders meet, commonly in the party scene, they can go wild. Here, with minimal adult supervision, often with alcohol available, the 'forbidden fruit' are suddenly within their reach.

In coeducational schools such as St Andrew's, we believe deeply in educating boys and girls, as life itself is coeducational. It is good and wholesome for girls and boys to grow up together, learning respectful engagement with the other gender, and enjoying the platonic friendships that can be available in groups consisting of boys and girls. This is well done in a school setting where the environment is structured, controlled and disciplined. Boys and girls together can bring a richness to the experience of learning, a richness depleted when one gender, with its specific style

and insight, is absent. While political correctness might insist that boys and girls, apart from anatomical differences, are the same, parents and teachers know better.

Academic research emanating from South Australia and Western Australia suggests that, whether a school is single sex or coeducation, in itself makes no difference to academic outcomes.

The research suggests that the reason some single sex schools do so well academically is not to do with their gender inclusion and exclusion, but due to the relative high academic starting point of the students; that is to say, single sex schools tend to serve very affluent communities where the academic ability and cultural affluence, as well as the available financial resources, means that the students' starting point at school is very high. High end of school outcomes do not necessarily indicate a substantial value add from a high starting position.

One of the great advantages in my experience is that the presence of boys and girls tempers the excesses of the other. Girls are likely to be less 'catty' in the presence of boys, because boys don't like it, and don't think well of them. Boys are less likely to be rampantly aggressive in the company of boys, because girls are often repelled by out of control aggression. In fact, a lot of the drift into St Andrew's Cathedral School in Senior College is from girls who wish to escape the, as they see it, 'catty' environment of an all girls' school, and boys, who wish to escape the 'macho' environment of a school that simply doesn't suit them.

At St Andrew's our inclusiveness and cultural diversity means that all kinds of students can find a home.

What should one then do as a parent? Parents, in my view, need to model what it is to be a competent loving man or woman. They need to model what things actually matter, and these presumably will not be the lives of celebrities, body image, pornography and substance abuse. They need to critique the media they watch as a family, and engage in a narrative with their children of what it means to be an emotionally whole and effective man or woman.

They need to be very aware of what their sons or daughters are accessing on line, and undertake protective protocols, for instance, no technology in the bedroom after bed time. Research suggests that in Australia we have a generation of sleep deprived young people who are responding to mobile phone messages and social media contacts 24/7.

The school will support these initiatives. As our proactive pastoral programmes cycle through the various years, these programmes are in the hands of Year Coordinators, Heads of House, Tutors, Heads of Divisions (Head of Middle School and Senior College), Girls' Coordinator and School Counsellors. They are supplemented by very significant external expertise: in the last 12 months, students (and in most cases parents) have been addressed by people in Australia who are the very best in their fields – Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, Adolescent Psychologist; Andrew Fuller, Specialist on Adolescents; Susan McLean, Expert on Cyber Bullying and Paul Dillon from the Drug and Alcohol Foundation.

One of the key issues that can present for boys and girls is the absence of a parent of one gender because of family break up. Often it is the mother alone who is raising the children. For daughters, access to their father or other men who are safe, is an important part of learning what a good adult male is. There is some evidence that where this contact is absent, girls will seek inappropriate male affection in inappropriate ways. It is therefore in the interests of the daughter

for the mother, despite her rupture of relationship with the father, to give the daughter access to her father, provided he is sound and will deal with her well. Coeducational schools can assist with this male modelling for girls, as coeducational schools are more likely than girls' schools to have a considerable number of male staff. For boys, the absence of the father (through family separation or physical or emotional unavailability due to the pressures of work) is equally serious. Boys need mentoring from good male models. If the father is unavailable, or inaccessible, the role of teachers and trusted sports coaches and relatives becomes more critical.

Considering the social pressures on young people in current Western society, good comprehensive parenting which sets boundaries and encourages and models the best for young people is absolutely critical. This is what the writer to Proverbs meant when he said, Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6

Schools have an important role in supporting parents in this vital mission to their children. For reasons stated above, it is easier to embrace this role in a coeducational setting. In terms of our pastoral programmes, this is a role that St Andrew's Cathedral School embraces gladly as part of its core business with our young people.

City school

A city school: opportunities and obligations

St Andrew's Cathedral School is the quintessential city school of Australia. It is the only school in our nation right at the centre of its CBD, directly above its main rail link (the most patronised rail link in Australia) and adjacent to the city's main bus routes, in our case in George Street, Bathurst Street and Druitt Street. It is the only school in the same Square as its city's Town Hall and Cathedral. It interfaces dynamically with the city, not least as our students are all peak hour commuters with the rest of the CBD's travellers, and at bell time our students, particularly our seniors, pour out onto the streets en masse amidst business people, shoppers and tourists.

Our city-centric location presents us with extensive opportunities. The Business Council of Australia has long argued that school curricula should maximise elements of real world learning. SACS is in a unique position to fulfil this aim: museums, galleries, concert halls, drama theatres, the financial and business precinct and urban and coastal geography of our city are metaphorically at our finger tips, an easy commute from SACS. Due to our close proximity, we can and do weave real-life learning into our curriculum, by sending our students on excursions, which can often complete their task and return within the relevant subject lesson.

Other schools lack such opportunities, as the travel time to embrace them is too costly to the rest of their curriculum.

Educationalists often speak of the hidden curriculum, that is, what learning occurs outside the formal instruction of the school. We would hope and expect that our presence in the city encourages in our students a familiarity, a comfort and a rapport with the working environment of the city, such that as they move in a few short years from school to the commercial world, the transition will be comfortable, easy and successful. Indeed, many parents have indicated a major reason for their choice of St Andrew's Cathedral School is to promote this very comfort with the city, in the belief that the city is their children's future.

Sydney is a vibrant, pulsating community, enriched by the cultural breadth that is an aspect of its size, and by its magnificent natural and built environment. We are fortunate indeed to have woven into the fabric of our school our co-existence with the Cathedral, some 25metres from our front door. Not only is the Cathedral arguably the most magnificent school assembly hall in Australia, but it is also one of the iconic colonial buildings of our heritage. We benefit immensely from its theological, cultural, musical (including our wonderful Choristers) and aesthetic contribution to our existence as a school. Moreover, we relate increasingly to the City of Sydney as local government, with the Town Hall and city offices immediately adjacent to St Andrew's House. Here the city employs many professionals in careers of great interest and relevance to our students, for both their current studies and subsequent career path aspirations. The commercial hub of the city employs many of our parents, as well as friends of our school, in professional careers where they may helpfully mentor many of our students.

In addition to the many advantages our city location offers, we also need to embrace the obligations inherent in where and what we are. What might we do to enrich the city in return for the blessings it confers upon us as a school community? Do we have a responsibility to the poor, the homeless, the down-and-out and the hurting in our environs? As a Christian school, our belief is that we do have such a responsibility. We attempt to discharge this sense of duty through our Christian service programmes, as an aspect of Christian social justice. For this reason, we currently support 27 charities, some of which are quite locally based.

These charities are specific to particular houses; each of our 8 houses characteristically embraces two annual charities, such as Beyond Blue, Cancer Council with Daffodil Day and Pink Ribbon Day, Bandaged Bear Day, Can Teen, Cystic Fibrosis, Diabetes, Jeans for Genes Day, Legacy, Multiple Sclerosis, Red Cross, Starlight Foundation, The Samaritans Purse and World Vision. Many of these programmes support other young people who are suffering from cancer, or who are otherwise very unwell. Two Houses work with the homeless in Darlinghurst and Surry Hills, attempting to provide companionship and meals. Naturally, these activities are very well supervised, and the more difficult aspects are preserved for our senior students. Some of our service programmes radiate out from the city to suburbs, rural areas, and even internationally.

These city specific service programmes have a strong Biblical mandate, which requires Christian principles to be realised in action.

Seek the peace and prosperity of the city...praise the Lord for it because if it prospers, you will prosper. (Jeremiah 29:7)

The last phrase of the verse indicates the dynamic interplay between service and outcomes; as our students serve the city, they will grow and develop as people, and be enriched by their service.

Despite our Australian Bush Legend, Australia is the most urbanised country in the world. Our future as a nation is mostly in cities: Sydney, elsewhere in Australia, or overseas, as our citizens are increasingly mobile workers of multinationals. From our city experience, we want our students to learn civic engagement and citizenship, and to be alert to the opportunities and pitfalls, initially of our own city, and ultimately of all urban living.

Christian education

Christian education at st andrew's cathedral school: what does it mean, and is it relevant?

A couple of years ago I was asked why we need to have religion at St Andrew's Cathedral School. The question may proceed from the notion that religion is outmoded, irrelevant clutter. To many, religion is mostly about being good, and as one can be good without religion, it seems to them to have no place. Others see religion as a collection of boring liturgies and rituals, which may have been meaningful in the 18th Century, but have little to say to the 21st. Others, perhaps influenced by the New Atheism of Dawkins, Dennett, Hitchens, Harris, Onfray and Grayling, have accepted the proposition that religion is toxic; after all, it starts wars, doesn't it? (My answer as an historian, is no, it doesn't, or not very much – the causes are mostly political, economic and social, although these can be masked because factors can coalesce around the veneer of religious tribal loyalty, but perhaps this is an aside!)

Some argue that within a pluralistic society, to advance the notion that any belief system is true, is offensive. This relativistic position is not one by which any of us can actually live.

Still others maintain that religion is essentially a private matter, which has no place intruding into the public square. Some take the ostensibly noble position that children should decide these things for themselves, forgetting that without information and perspective, children are simply left with the default secular humanism which is the mainstream, often unexamined, cultural norm of our society.

In fact, secular humanism presents itself as neutral, where it is anything but, posited on a host of assumptions, which are often unexamined by we moderns.

In making a defence of the importance of Christian Education to the young, it is first necessary to make some disclaimers. St Andrew's Cathedral School is not a fundamentalist Christian school. Rather, we are an open and inclusive school that welcomes students and families of all Christian denominations, of other faiths, and of no religion. As educators, we accept and respect that ideas are contestable, and that different people will form different views. We are not a school that seeks to indoctrinate, but rather to engage students in deep questions about meaning.

A few may still argue that the role of schools should be restricted to teaching the '3 R's'. This view is outmoded. Increasingly, schools are village centres, a marketplace for discussion of ideas in shaping the young. Our mission is more than producing disconnected intellectual achievement, vital though that be. Rather, we seek to invest holistically in young people's lives.

St Andrew's is a school which has a deep respect for scholarship. For this reason, our presentation of Christian faith seeks to be robust and well informed by Biblical scholarship. Our use of the Bible relies on an understanding that it comprises various genres: our approach to historical works will differ from our application to poetry, metaphor, allegory and symbol; we will not force the latter categories through the grid of literalism. Hence, we seek understanding, meaning and valid, considered application.

What of other religions? As an open, not closed, Christian school, our curriculum at various points explores other faiths, and other philosophies. In doing so, we seek to present them in their fulness, not in caricature.

We want students to think deeply and to critique ideas. Some will adopt a Christian position, while others will not. That in the end is their choice. We do want their experience of Christian thinking to be authentic, in the sense that the ideas presented are well thought through, and allow students the opportunity to examine conflicting ideas, and to respectfully put contrary arguments in an appropriate manner.

Central to our ethos are our Christian values. These are best expressed in the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22). Who indeed does not want these values upheld? An important aspect, then, of Christian Education is character education. However, contrary to the expectations of some, we do not sever Christian values from Christian beliefs, believing that the values without the beliefs will not thrive for long. My view is that history supports this contention.

Christian Education is therefore about rather more than simply being 'nice'. At its best, it encourages the development of a world view which seeks to think coherently about the whole cosmos. It encourages students to think for themselves, as the Apostle Paul urges so strongly in Romans 12:2, Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Applying this to the world of the teenager is an encouragement to think outside the strictures of peer group conformity.

It also has a high view of learning and the exalted place of the study of the whole universe, broken down into the academic disciplines, in a sweeping conception of what it is to be human. This is expressed beautifully by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians; ...Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. (Philippians 4:8) This is a veritable charter for quality education, flowing from a Christian epistemology and a Christian aesthetic.

Part of our quest to make Christian Education authentic is to ensure it is grounded, that is, it is expressed in more than words; in fact accompanied by actions. For this reason, we seek to equip and encourage our students to serve, knowing there is a great lineage of those who have served as an expression of Christian faith, right through from the Salvation Army, Wilberforce and the Slavery Emancipation movement, Elizabeth Fry and Lord Shaftesbury in prison reform, Florence Nightingale and the provision of proper medical care to soldiers and, on our own shores, Caroline Chisholm and the shepherding of convict women. While those of us who know our history will be aware of such 19th and 20th Century antecedents, and of the Christian social work of Anglicare, World Vision and the Salvation Army, many will not be aware that the largest providers of social welfare in our society are still the Christian churches.

Another major reason for undertaking Christian Education is to assist our students to understand the culture from which they have emerged. Although Western society is now very secular, this is a development which has only been predominant since the second half of the 20th Century. Prior to that, Western civilisation for 2,000 years has been shaped by Christian concepts. It is not possible to understand a vast range of literature, history, philosophy, and scientific endeavour without

understanding Christian doctrine and its impact on civilisation. Any failure to acknowledge this impact is akin to developing cultural amnesia.

Many of our students bring to school considerable negative feeling or even prejudice against Christian faith. When unpacked, their views are often reactions against the failings of organised religion, atrocities committed in the past in the name of God (Medieval Crusades feature largely) or a response against what is often a stunted understanding of Christian teaching. Rarely is their reaction against properly understood Christian teaching or against the life, work and teaching of Jesus; more commonly, it may be against the failings of individual Christians or institutional Christianity. What we hope they will do in their journey through the school is to examine these assumptions. If we expect that of them, those of us who are entrusted with teaching them, whether teachers or parents, can hardly do less.

Gawura

Indigenous education at st andrew's cathedral school – what are we doing and why?

Parents new, or reasonably new to the school, may have little knowledge of the short history of our Indigenous school, Gawura, and its intended flow-on effect into our High School. Gawura was commenced 6 years ago as a Christian social justice initiative of St Andrew's Cathedral School. Over the last decade, not only educators, but Australian society in general, have become more aware of the scandalous gap between educational outcomes attained by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as compared with those attained by the rest of the school aged community. With this awareness came a growing perception that something had to be done if we were to have integrity as a nation. While St Andrew's Cathedral School can't address the totality of Indigenous disadvantage, we can operate on our small patch and make a contribution. Indeed, there is a Biblical mandate to do so.

Providing justice for the dispossessed, acting with mercy in the face of disadvantage, is an important Christian principle. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream! (Amos 5:24) This initiative meshed very well with then Prime Minister Rudd's Reconciliation agenda, as he sought an effective reconciliation between Indigenous Australians and the majority white Anglo-Saxon population, particularly in terms of previous colonial dispossession of Indigenous people.

Accordingly, after quite some politics(!) and difficulty of obtaining a satisfactory site, Gawura was established in our then Rooftop classroom as a Kindergarten to Year 6 component of St Andrew's Cathedral School.

Gawura focussed intensively on Literacy and Numeracy, knowing these are the foundational tools of learning, and with a very small teacher/pupil ratio, in order to maximise the student outcomes. The aim was to equip Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students such that they would be able to enter our regular High School with sufficient educational skill to flourish over the next 6 years. While core curriculum was therefore specialised and separate for Indigenous students, lessons in other subjects such as Music have been, and still are, integrated with the rest of the Junior School classes.

In addition to teaching fundamental skills of literacy and numeracy, Gawura has taught its students about Aboriginal culture. It has also taught Wiradjuri, a major Aboriginal language. We have felt it important that our students be proud of their Indigenous heritage, and self-confidently Indigenous. For these reasons, it has been important that we have an Aboriginal component to our Gawura teaching staff.

The key issue of course was always how to fund this vision. This ministry of the school has been almost entirely to our urban Aboriginal community, that is, the children of Aboriginal families who live in the inner city. Few of these are affluent; few would be able to afford our fees. The school has therefore been on an annual drive to lay the vision before corporate donors, Foundations and Trusts. Happily, many, from individuals to companies, have caught the vision and continue to fund full scholarships for up to 45 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Kindergarten to Year 12 (that is, an average of 3-4 in each Year group). For this reason, the Indigenous programme does not much impact on the revenue raised from fee paying parents. In 2012, nearly \$700,000 was raised, enough to sustain the programme for the year. That which has not come from donations and sponsorships has been raised by our School Foundation, under the leadership of Mr Peter Warne, parent of a 2009 Year 12 SACS graduate. The Foundation, where Directors are mostly present or past SACS parents such as former P&F President Mrs Lyn Jarvis, has a small investment portfolio, some of the dividends of which help fund Gawura. Nonetheless, each annual funding operation is a stretch.

We receive limited government support for our Indigenous education programme, partly through the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander loading to government funding for students, and also through our access to special funding programmes for which we are able to apply. However, the government resources available for a day school are much less than those available to boarding schools which provide places for Indigenous students from remote areas of Australia.

In order to satisfactorily acquit funds generously provided to the school, we need to be very data focussed in terms of what is actually being achieved by our programmes and by our individual indigenous students. Data derived from NAPLAN, the School Certificate (while it existed) and the Higher School Certificate is therefore important in demonstrating student progress.

We are delighted, for instance, that in 2012, our Gawura Year 5 students' NAPLAN average result was higher not just than the national Indigenous average, but surpassed the national average for all ethnicities! This is the result of excellent teaching by Mr David North, Head of Gawura, and his staff. We are delighted that already three Aboriginal students have graduated from Year 12 and proceeded to University: one to Law, one to Fine Arts (Honours) and one to Events Management. Our Indigenous program has certainly made a difference in these young peoples' lives!

The wonderful work of a number of our staff in managing a successful Indigenous programme should be acknowledged: Mr North, Mrs Keely and Mrs Hamilton, Mrs Peel and Ms Rutter in the classroom setting of Gawura, and Mr Bulger and Mrs Culas in our High School programmes, and the splendid fundraising efforts of Ms Crook and Mrs Fraser (who will continue to be involved with Gawura following her retirement).

Apart from a clear benefit to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students themselves, there is a benefit from the programme for all our other students. Prior to coming to the school, many of them have never met an Aboriginal person. There is something worthwhile and wholesome about friendships made across ethnic lines: many of these friendships prove to be long term. There is also the benefit of our Indigenous students able to teach and demonstrate aspects of Indigenous culture to non-Indigenous students. It is also significant that in our 'regular' school, three of our teaching staff are Indigenous. What has been achieved is a reversal of the historical norm, where, in our situation, Aboriginal staff have authority as teachers over white students. This is by no means tokenistic; it works well because of the quality of the teachers.

What has been noticeable in recent years is the general support of parents, not just Indigenous parents, for our programme. They appear to accept it in the terms in which the school understands it: as an important social justice initiative, which is an aspect of our Christian Ethos.

In essence, we are running our Indigenous programmes because we believe it is the right thing to do.