



# A MODEL FOR CHRISTIAN PARENT-CONTROLLED EDUCATION

## PHILOSOPHY

A Christian Parent-Controlled School is based on the concept that the education of children is primarily a parental responsibility and not simply the responsibility of the State (Deut 6:4-7).

The schools operated by Illawarra Christian Education are an extension of the Christian home, where home and school work in partnership in the education of the child.

## AIMS

Our aim is to train the whole person, for the purpose of fulfilling his or her God-given destiny, to know and love God, and to serve him in the context of family, church and society. We aim to achieve this by:

- providing a Christ-centred, Bible-based education
- teaching children to think Christianly
- assisting children to make the best possible use of their God-given gifts and abilities
- actively involving parents in the education of their children, by their participation in the day-to-day activities of the school and in its general operation
- maintaining consistency in training and teaching between home and school, while preparing children to be Christ's disciples in the world.

## BIBLICAL BASIS FOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOLING

The way we seek to organise our schools is not prescribed by Scripture, but is our response to Scripture.

1. All things are to be done for the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31), in complete dedication and service to God (Deut 6:4-5).
2. Education should be Christ-centred
  - i. Knowledge apart from God is false knowledge (Rom 1:28)
  - ii. Potential for the renewal of the mind is part of the gospel of grace (Rom 12:2)
  - iii. True knowledge begins and ends with Christ (2 Cor 10:5; Col 1:16; Eph 1:10). "For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory for ever! Amen." (Rom 11:36)
3. Education is a parental responsibility—not a state or teacher responsibility. The Bible lays down distinct areas of responsibility to various institutions:
  - i. The church is to preach and teach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments, for the edification of believers (Eph 4:11-12). It is also to evangelise (Matt 28:19).
  - ii. The State has been given authority by God to govern and, in particular, to maintain law and order in a fallen world (Rom 13:1-7).

- iii. Parents are responsible for the education of their children. Parents are to be diligent in teaching their children (Deut 6:6-9; Prov 22:6; Eph 6:4) and to assume authority over their children (Exod 20:12). Children are to heed their parents (Prov 1:8).
- iv. The teacher functions as an extension of the parents' authority. The Bible gives no mandate to the teacher in his/her own right. However, in the Parent-Control model, parents and teachers function in partnership for the godly education and upbringing of each child.

## **OPERATING WITHIN A CHRISTIAN PARENT-CONTROLLED STRUCTURE**

Our structure is based on:

- Our belief that parents as individuals will be required to answer before God with regard to the training of their children.
- Sharing this responsibility with the teaching staff as delegated authority through the Association.
- Enabling parents and teachers to work in partnership to provide for the spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual and physical wellbeing of the child.
- Enabling parents (through membership of the Association) to directly influence their children's education.
- Seeking to protect the rights of parents in discharging their individual responsibilities and, at the same time, clearly laying down the basis for maintaining the relationships that bind us together.

## **ROLES WITHIN THE STRUCTURE**

### **1. The Association**

The Association is a group of like-minded Christian people who have joined together to ensure that their goals of providing Christian education are met.

The Association is an incorporated body and bound by relevant State and federal laws, and is also bound by any internal rules it imposes upon itself. The Constitution, particularly the Educational Creed, provides the framework for the operation of the Association and its members.

The Association members may:

- nominate and elect the Board
- take recommendations to the Board
- seek explanations of Board directions
- direct the Board—decisions are arrived at by a majority vote of financial members
- be elected as Board members
- participate on a task force or sub-committee.

### **2. Individual members/parents**

All Christian parents are encouraged to join the Association. You do not have to have children at the School to be an Association member.

All individual members/parents:

- can and should communicate with the teaching staff and/or the Principal on a wide range of matters
- are encouraged to value and use the professional expertise of staff members
- do not have individual authority to effect change but may bring matters of concern to the attention of the Board and/or Association
- should adhere to the Creed and Constitution
- are encouraged to be actively involved in the life of the School—participating

in school functions, attending working bees, assisting teachers etc.

- can and should bring matters of interest and concern firstly to the Principal and then to the attention of Board members
- should positively embrace Association and Board decisions
- are required to uphold the authority of the teacher and encouraged to actively develop a supportive relationship between parent and teacher
- must make prompt payment of all school fees a priority and notify the School at the earliest opportunity if difficulties are encountered in meeting fee responsibilities.

### 3. **Members of the Board**

The Board represents the Association and is charged with the responsibility of managing its affairs.

The Board is responsible for:

- the election of the Board Chairperson
- the practical outworking of Christian parent control in the school
- the oversight of curriculum and courses of study
- the financial and overall day-to-day management of the Association
- the financial and overall governance of the schools
- the development and approval of policy
- the establishment of subcommittees to share the task of governance
- the approval of enrolment of students in the school
- membership of the Association.

### 4. **The Principal**

The Principal is an employee of the Association and is appointed by the Board. The Principal is an authority in education and as such is an advisor to the Board.

It is the Principal's responsibility to implement the Strategic Plan. To achieve this, the Principal is responsible for the employment of all staff and the oversight of all operational issues.

## **MATTERS OF DISPUTE**

The Constitution and the Creed leave no room for broken fellowship between members. All matters of dispute within the School community should be addressed promptly. In specific issues that are not able to be readily resolved, the procedure outlined in the Resolution of Issues Policy should be followed carefully.

## **SUMMARY**

Partnership based on trust and communication is the principle which defines relationships within our schools. Each sector of the School community needs to trust the other, and to communicate concerns and encouragement as they share, in partnership, the God-given task of bringing up children in the fear and nurture of our Lord.

At Illawarra Christian Education we humbly recognise God's continual and plentiful provision. We praise him for the many blessings we have received and give thanks for the faithful people who have contributed to the working out of the vision for Christian education in the Illawarra.