

THE DIOCESE OF GIPPSLAND AND ANGLICAN SCHOOLS



1. Anglican Schools in Australia

The Anglican Church has a long history of involvement in education. Across Australia, Anglican Schools provide us with a spectrum of schools, each with its own particular historical evolution. Some were founded by Bishops and are owned by dioceses; some are part of diocesan school commissions; some are focused on a particular parish, and most are essentially autonomous incorporated bodies, expressing their links with Anglican dioceses and/or parishes in which they are located through a range of differing structures. All can be distinguished from that group of schools commonly designated “Christian Schools”, which are usually autonomous parent-founded and parent run-schools with no necessary link to any particular church or church denomination.

2. Anglican Schools in Gippsland

The two Gippsland Anglican Schools demonstrate quite markedly the variety possible in Anglican Schools and their relationship with the Anglican Church. Gippsland Grammar was founded by the Bishop of Gippsland of the day at each point of its development up to its final establishment in Sale in the 1970s as a co-educational school. St. Paul’s Anglican Grammar School was established without official connection to the diocese. Some involved in this group were Anglicans and the school began its life in Anglican Church property in Warragul in the 1980s. Links were then forged with the diocese. Today, both are autonomous incorporated bodies that express their relationship with the Diocese of Gippsland through significantly different constitutional structures.

3. Understanding Anglicanism

The world-wide Anglican Church, is more properly called the Anglican Communion. It is a disparate group of churches found in over 160 countries around the globe, speaking a wide variety of languages and displaying a range of cultural expressions. They share in common the Christian faith, and hold most doctrines in common. They have a common church polity that is led by bishops and governed by synods of clergy and lay people. They all have some kind of historical link back to the Church of England.

3.1 Anglicans themselves have sought by a number of means to understand what is distinctive about their expression of the Christian faith. Firstly, Anglicans generally endorse the theological approach of Richard Hooker, a foundational 16th Century Anglican theologian whose theology involves a dialogue between Scripture, Tradition and Reason. The basis of faith is found in Scripture; the reading of Scripture is informed by the wisdom of Tradition, and Reason is the means by which, under God, we engage in the business of discerning truth as it is found in Scripture and expounded in Tradition. Today we add Experience as another important strand.

3.2 Secondly, Anglicans assent to the so-called “Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral”, which was devised in Chicago in 1886 and endorsed by the Lambeth Conference of international Anglican bishops in 1888. According to the Quadrilateral, the four distinctive marks of an

Anglican Church are Scripture, the Historical Church Creeds, Baptism and Communion, and Bishops. So, the Anglican Church is grounded in Scripture; receives the faith within the terms of the ancient creeds; has at the centre of its life the two sacraments of baptism and communion, and has bishops.

3.3 Thirdly, The Anglican Communion has endorsed the five so-called “Marks of Mission” established by the international Anglican Consultative Council. They are to proclaim the good news of the kingdom; to teach, baptise and nurture new believers; to respond to human need by loving service; to seek to transform unjust structures of society, and to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain and renew the life of the earth. Recently, there has been a move to add a sixth mark that relates to peace, conflict transformation and reconciliation.

3.4 Within the Australian Anglican Church, understanding of Anglicanism is effectively summed up in the so-called “Fundamental Declarations” of its 1962 Constitution, which effectively reiterate the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral.

3.5 In sum, the Anglican Church views its faith and practice as grounded in the truth of Scripture, and draws on the wisdom of the ages in a manner that is thoughtful and reasonable. It is community based and life affirming, valuing the wholeness of each human person. Centred on belief in Jesus Christ, Anglicanism is inclusive of significant diversity in expression and understanding of the Christian faith, and open to dialogue with those of other faiths and other understandings of life. It understands its mission as creating Christian community, by which opportunity is given for people to hear the Gospel; to respond to it in faith and participate actively in Christian community; to grow in understanding of the Christian faith and to demonstrate its impact on their lives through caring for those in need; working for justice and environmental sustainability, and being peacemakers.

4. Being an Anglican School

An Anglican School will demonstrate in its whole way of being and operation that it is Anglican. As an educational institution, it will be a learning community that in its life together is seen to be an expression of the Christian faith, with distinctly Anglican character and approach.

There are two aspects to the means by which the “Anglican-ness” of a school may be measured. One is through the inner life, or the ethos of the school, and the other through the outer life, or the activities to which the school commits itself. The first is about the way the school does what it does that identifies it as Anglican. The second is what the school does that distinguishes it as Anglican. While clearly the two are related, arguably the first is harder to measure than the second. Both will be informed by an understanding of the Anglican way of being Christian.

5. The Anglican Ethos of a School

An Anglican School will be characterised by an integrity that demonstrates in its whole life the values to which it aspires, highlighting the basis of those values in the Anglican way of being Christian.

5.1 An Anglican School will hold an educational vision concerned with the development of the whole person, spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, physically, socially and aesthetically. The opportunity for each person to achieve their full potential will be fostered. This approach will be evident in both the content and process of curriculum and co-curricular activities.

5.2 An Anglican School will affirm and value people as individuals capable of making worthwhile contributions to the community. Staff, students and their families, and members of the board and other school bodies will be encouraged to adopt a perspective which encompasses dignity and sufficiency for all persons and promotes respect for others, particularly those of different racial, ethnic, faith or cultural traditions, as well as those who are marginalised in society.

5.3 At every level of its operation, an Anglican School will adopt policies that affirm the value of each person; builds community; responds to human need; affirms the principles of justice and sustainability, and promotes peace.

5.4 Accordingly, Anglican Schools will aspire to

5.4.1 Give opportunity for all students to hear and respond to the Gospel and its call to mission;

5.4.2 Offer programs of religious education/studies as part of the schools core curriculum;

5.4.3 Seek to live out values that are compatible with Gospel values

6. The Commitments an Anglican School Makes

6.1 An Anglican School will engage an ordained Anglican Chaplain or authorised equivalent with adequate time and appropriate resources for the proper performance of liturgical and pastoral functions to the school community, assembly presentations, referrals to and from parishes and the range of specifically Christian education activities and programs offered by the school. The Appointment of the Chaplain is made by the school in consultation with the Bishop of the Diocese. The Chaplain is under the authority of the Principal of the school for all educational and employment matters within the school. The licence for the Chaplain will be issued by the Bishop. The Chaplain is under the care of the Bishop for wider pastoral and spiritual guidance and in relation to professional standards and professional development for clergy and church workers.

6.2 An Anglican School will provide regular opportunities for students to examine the Christian faith at a personal level by such means as meeting with and hearing people of Christian outlook and commitment.

6.3 It will provide regular acts of Christian worship, mindful of the needs of those who profess other faiths or no particular faith, especially when that worship may be a compulsory activity of the school community.

6.4 It will provide activities for the support and encouragement of students, staff and families professing the Christian faith within the school.

6.5 It will encourage active partnerships with parishes and Anglican agencies, and in particular the parishes in which the school campuses are located. Liaison between Chaplains and Parish Ministers may be in regard to shared worship, confirmation, and the pastoral care of students and their families as well as the encouragement of participation of students in the life of both the parish and the school.

6.6 An Anglican School will be an inclusive community, providing to the best of its ability, access to all through scholarships and other means, with particular attention to those who otherwise would not be able to benefit from the educational opportunities the school offers.

6.7 An Anglican School will be free to develop and implement its curriculum in religious education and ensure it is given reasonable priority within the total curriculum. It will include systematic attention to Christianity and the Anglican tradition in particular. This entails

6.7.1 the provision of religious education and/or studies as part of the core curriculum at least up to Year 10 level;

6.7.2 encouragement for the provision of religious studies at Years 11 and 12, and

6.7.3 the provision of professionally trained religious education teachers and teacher resources on a similar basis to those required for other subjects in the school.

6.8 The basic aims of religious education will be

6.8.1 to introduce and familiarise students with the essence of the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures;

6.8.2 to be inclusive in encompassing an understanding of world religions within the curricular program;

6.8.3 to enable students to engage in discussions of Australian culture and its critique in the light of Christian values;

6.8.4 to discuss the philosophy of religion;

6.8.5 to discuss Bible stories;

6.8.6 to discuss ethical issues within a religious framework with particular emphasis on the Christian framework for ethics, and

6.8.7 to provide students with the opportunity to participate in worship, prayer, meditation and other Christian religious practice.

6.9 An Anglican School will provide an appropriate place for worship for the school community. Any space set aside and used specifically for Anglican worship will be approved by the Bishop of the Diocese.

6.10 An Anglican School will appoint a Principal who has a demonstrated capacity to maintain and develop the Anglican ethos of the school, determined in consultation with the Bishop of the Diocese.

6.11 An Anglican School will make provision through its constitution for official diocesan representation on the school board and encourage active members of the Anglican Church to seek office on the board of the school.

7. The Commitments the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland Makes

7.1 The Diocese will promote and encourage across the diocese the vocation of Chaplain within school ministry, and provide discernment and training opportunities for school chaplains.

7.2 In partnership with the School, the Diocese will actively seek out people suitable for school chaplaincy when vacancies arise in chaplaincy positions in Anglican schools within its jurisdiction.

7.3 The Bishop will license the Chaplain and provide pastoral and spiritual guidance to the Chaplain. The Bishop is responsible for the Chaplain in regard to matters of professional standards and professional development as they relate to all clergy and church workers of the Diocese.

7.4 The Diocese will encourage active partnerships with parishes and Anglican agencies, and in particular the parishes in which the school campuses are located, ensuring Parish Ministers liaise with Principals and Chaplains in regard to shared worship, confirmation, and the pastoral care of students and their families as well as the encouragement of participation of students in the life of both the parish and the school.

7.5 The Diocese will cooperate, when consulted by the school, in the development of curriculum for religious education, and assist in the sourcing of appropriate resource materials for use in religious education in schools.

7.6 The Diocese will cooperate in the provision of an appropriate place for worship for the school community and its licensing by the Bishop.

7.7 The Diocese will participate actively in the life of the school through regular visitation by the Bishop and others diocesan personnel invited to school occasions; through the provision of members of for diocesan positions on school boards, and through the encouragement of active Anglicans whose families are involved in the life of the school to participate actively in the life of the school at every level possible.

7.8 The Diocese will promote the Anglican schools, commending their contribution to the community as part of the mission of the Anglican Church.

7.9 The Diocese will exercise due diligence in showing concern for the reputation of the Anglican Schools within its jurisdiction and cooperating with the schools on ensuring the reputation of the schools as providers of high quality, caring, holistic education is maintained within the community.

7.10 In partnership with the Anglican Schools, the Diocese will from time to time organise and participate in consultations on matters concerning the provision of education within an Anglican context.

7.11 The Diocese will encourage Anglican Schools within its jurisdiction to cooperate with each other in the provision of education by Anglican Schools to the communities of Gippsland.

8. Acknowledgements

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