

Strategic Plan

2017 – 2019

"We teach in ways that each child can learn"



Our Lady of La Vang

Specialist educational facility for students with intellectual disability

Acknowledgements

This Strategic Plan sets out the way forward for our school over the next three years. It is the first time our school, and its community of staff and families/carers has developed and documented, what we need to do to deliver on our vision of all our students reaching their full potential.

Catholic Education SA have been instrumental in this process by developing the *Continuous Improvement Framework* to assist schools in planning, evaluating and improving. The Framework has formed the basis for thinking in our schools' first strategic plan.

Developing a strategic plan for an organisation for the first time is not always easy, and requires a lot of support, commitment and effort. I want to thank and acknowledge the work of the:

- school staff,
- school leadership team, and
- students' families/carers who have provided input to the plan.

I look forward to working with everyone in implementing the plan over the next three years to improve our school.

Stephanie Grant
Principal.

Our Lady of La Vang Special School *Strategic Plan 2017-19*

Adopted by Catholic Special Schools Incorporated Board

Chair: Ms Mary Carmody

Signature: .....

Date: 26/10/2016.....

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Mission

To provide specialist education for students with intellectual disability, based on contemporary research and Catholic values.

To teach in ways that each child can learn, in a safe, supportive and joyous learning environment.

Vision

All our students reach their full potential.

This vision reflects scripture – “I have come that you may have life and have it to the full” (John 10:10)

Values

Our Lady of La Vang is a values-based school. The Christian philosophy of our school is witnessed in action – in the living out of Gospel values through our relationships with students, families, carers and staff.

We believe the following things are critical for us in helping our students reach their full potential:

<i>Trust</i>	<i>Choice</i>	<i>Being</i>	<i>Dignity</i>
<i>Respect</i>	<i>Spirit</i>	<i>Fun</i>	<i>Freedom</i>
<i>Communication</i>	<i>Voice</i>	<i>Justice</i>	<i>Play</i>
	<i>Belonging</i>	<i>God</i>	

School Profile

Our Lady of La Vang is a non-graded, Catholic special school that provides a specialized educational environment and facility for students aged between 5 and 20 years. The school has the capacity for a FTE enrolment of 63 students. All students have an intellectual disability; many also have an autism spectrum disorder, or multiple disabilities and complex medical conditions.

Our Lady of la Vang is located in Flinders Park, in the central western suburbs of Adelaide. The school was purpose-built with design features based on student needs. It opened in 2013.

The school receives support and funding from the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) and CESA. Funding is indexed and adjusted annually, based on student enrolment numbers. This financial security has resulted in achieving the necessary staffing

levels for students to access a curriculum specifically designed to meet the needs of the cohort of students.

The school is organized around three clusters: Early Years (5-10 years old), Middle Years (10-15 years old), and Senior Cluster (15-20 years old). Each Cluster is responsible to a teacher who has been formally appointed to the position of Lead Learner (POR 1 Level).

In 2016 there were a total of 60 students enrolled at the school (see Table 1.)

Table 1 School enrolments (2016)

CLUSTER	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
3 Junior classes 5-10 years	12	4	16
3 Middle classes 10-15 years	15	4	19
3 Senior Middle classes 12-20 years	10	15	25
TOTAL	35	24	60

The student population is drawn from a wide catchment across metropolitan Adelaide, with a significant proportion from the southern suburbs. This reflects the schools previous location in an inner southern suburb.

School context – the challenges and opportunities ahead

Taking into account input from staff and school leadership the SWOT analysis set out in Table 2 identifies the key challenges and opportunities ahead.

Table 2. SWOT analysis of school

	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
INTERNAL	<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent purpose built school facilities • Caring, skilled staff • Allied health and parent liaison staff • Well-funded which allows for high staff: student ratio • Unique, advanced teaching philosophy and practice • Accept students with high needs, whose needs are not met by other schools • Team approach to individualized student needs • professional development program 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate communication with families • Inadequate education of families on teaching philosophy and practice • Inconsistency across staff in ability to articulate teaching philosophy • Some students may have inadequate individualized education plans • Difficulty in balancing individual versus group needs of students • Highly dependent on Commonwealth Government for funding • May not be providing services desired by some families (eg. Camps, Variety parties) • Limited marketing • Limited peer-reviewed evidence base for the school's teaching philosophy and practice
EXTERNAL	<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolments from western and northern suburbs markets • New school services (e.g. psychologist, access to a psychiatrist) • New school businesses (e.g. OSHC, Vac Care) • Education and training centre (selling IP Intellectual Property) • Collaboration with academia to increase evidence base • Collaborate with a service provider to develop "TAFE-level" programs for young adults • Develop a developmental reporting tool for use in school 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from new schools • Lack of Commonwealth government commitment to needs-based funding • Downturn in enrolments in Catholic schools due to multiple issues e.g., affordability, Royal Commission • Parent perceptions about the school's teaching philosophy and practice • Mismatch of parent/school expectations and information • NDIS funding for allied health services • NDIS funding for day options programs • School does not respond to changing social and economic environment

School Process – how we operate

The leadership structure is made up of the Principal, and an Assistant Principal: Operations. Staffing is made up of professional educators, a Speech Pathologist, Occupational Therapist and Education Support Officers.

A range of plans to support student learning and wellbeing are incorporated in to the school's practice. These include Individualised Education Plans (IEP), Positive Programming, Moving and Handling, Personal Care, Contenance Care and Oral Eating and Drinking Plans. The Speech Pathologist and Occupational therapist develop the specialised Oral Eating and Drinking Care plans and Movement and Handling Plans. These are reviewed annually and updated with collaboration between home and school.

Being, Belonging and Becoming, the Commonwealth Government's Early Years Framework is used to construct curriculum and to provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences. To support this professional staff have engaged in ongoing professional learning about play based approaches to teaching and learning, child development, attachment theory, positive programming and interactive approaches such as Intensive Interaction.

The school day is organised around the needs of the students and so there is no set time structure for recess and lunch. School staff organise their breaks to maximise student engagement and safety.

School Perception – how our school community sees us

How our school community perceives us is critical to the school's success. Educating any child is a team effort involving family/carers and the school. This is especially so for our students. To help our students reach their full potential, school and family need to work as a team.

The following information is drawn from the 2014 and 2015 parent satisfaction surveys. In general our families/carers have a positive view of the school but do have some concerns. Overall families/carers believe the school has excellent facilities and resources; provides a safe and nurturing environment and that staff respect and care for all students.

Families/carers' biggest concern is inadequate communication. This is broadly in two ways – the lack of regular information about their children; what they are doing and learning. Secondly many parents/carers do not understand the learning and teaching approach of our school.

Both issues provide challenges which the school will address.

Student Achievement – outcomes of our programs

All the programs at our school set out to develop our students so that they all can reach their full potential. The complex learning needs of our students mean that defining realistic short, medium and long-term goals for their learning is not straightforward. Our students' learning team – their families/carers and the school – need to work together to define realistic high expectations on an individual basis.

All of our students will have their own level of achievement of some fundamental abilities including:

- The capacity to form relationships
- Involvement in the community
- Independent living skills
- Be able to communicate their needs

Strategic Directions 2017- 19

Analysis of all our planning information (including staff and parent input, SWOT analysis, and environmental scan) has identified the following five key strategic issues for Our Lady of la Vang for the next three years:

- Catholic identify
- Communication and engagement
- Marketing
- Evidence-based practice and management
- Services and business

The school will pursue the strategic directions as set out in the tables below over the three years 2017 – 2019. Detailed implementation will be set out in each of the three years annual improvement plan. The annual improvement plan will be reviewed yearly to inform the following years plan. This review will inform the annual school performance report.

Strategic Direction: Catholic identity

Goal A stronger Catholic identity that is visible and active in the school community.

Long-term outcomes:

1. **Visibility** – Catholic traditions are visible within the school
2. **Activity** – Catholic traditions are practiced in the school

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain
Develop contemporary prayer and liturgy for staff and students	Explore with staff the questions of: what is prayer? Why do people pray? How is prayer practiced in the Catholic and other traditions? Create regular opportunities for reflection prayer and liturgy services that staff, students and parents/carers actively participate in	Activity	A range of prayer/liturgy experiences evident within the school Staff able to link the everyday experiences of students to a relationship with God Students and staff participate in simple prayer and liturgy experiences	1. Catholic Identity
Provide opportunities for professional learning for staff on theology and scripture	Provide staff with regular opportunities to build their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic tradition	Activity Visibility	Increased use of Scripture references in class, staff prayer and school correspondence.	1. Catholic Identity

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain
Provide families with opportunities to engage with Catholic traditions	Organise events where the school community can pray together to promote the Catholic identity of the school, to honour the Catholic tradition, and to respect the faiths and religious backgrounds of all students.	Visibility	<p>Families participate in community celebrations</p> <p>Students and families experiencing greater engagement with prayer/liturgical life.</p> <p>Parents/carers and wider community have relevant information regarding celebrations and traditions.</p> <p>For those students whose families seek their participation in celebrating the sacraments – support from the school and class teachers in preparing their child.</p>	<p>1. Catholic Identity,</p> <p>8. Strong home, school, community engagement</p>

Strategic Direction: Communication and engagement

Goal School and families/carers in an informed and engaged partnership

Long-term outcomes:

1. Effective communication with families/carers
2. Shared parent/carer-school responsibility for student learning and well – being
3. Shared parent/carer-school understanding of pedagogy and practice

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain
Increase opportunities for families/carers to engage with the school	Seek the views of families/carers regarding how they want to engage with the school	Communication Responsibility	Information from families /carers about ways they want to engage with the school and provide information re their child (e.g. NDIS activities, recreation) Documentation of range of ways families/carers are engaging with the school Examples of reciprocal engagement with families/carers	4. High expectations of all 8. Strong home, school, community engagement

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain
	Develop a communications plan that addresses whole-of-school needs (eg incident reports,) and individual family needs (including relevant communications methods)	Communication	Positive families/carers satisfaction surveys Positive staff feedback	4. High expectations of all 8. Strong home, school, community engagement
Provide opportunities to share with families/carers contemporary knowledge of child development and education	Work with families/carers to understand their knowledge needs (about child development and contemporary education) and develop a plan to address the needs. Implement the plan	Understanding Responsibility	Families/carers understand and can articulate their child's learning Examples of families/carer school learning focussed interactions (e.g. IEP meetings, regular communication systems and review of student progress)	4. High expectations of all 8. Strong home, school, community engagement
		Understanding Responsibility		

Strategic Direction:

Marketing

Goal

Our Lady of La Vang will be the special school of choice for families/carers in the western suburbs

Long-term outcomes:

1. **Awareness** – Families/carers with children with disabilities will know of Our Lady of la Vang
2. **Informed choice** – Aware families/carers will be well informed about, and chose Our Lady of la Vang

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain
Improve our understanding of our market	Competitor analysis & prepare marketing plan	Awareness	Marketing plan	6. Effective use of data 8 Strong home, school, community engagement
Promote awareness of school	Build relationship with “catchment” facilities and disability service providers Implement marketing plan	Awareness Informed choice	Shared information and reciprocal relationships All families/carers in western suburbs with children with disabilities know of the school Local community and business are aware of school	3. Strong Leadership 6. Effective use of data 8. Strong home, school, community engagement

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain
Promote prospective families/carers' understanding of Our Lady of la Vang philosophy and practice	Enhance /refine first contact process and information	Awareness Informed choice	Enrolment enquires exceed capacity	8 Strong home, school, community engagement

Strategic Direction: Evidence-based practice

Goal Effectively use data and information to support high quality teaching and learning; staff development and leadership

Long-term outcomes:

1. **Demonstrable student learning**– School can demonstrate the educational value of its pedagogy
2. **Highly skilled staff** - School has a learning culture focussed on skilled staff performance

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain
Increase the evidence base for our Teaching & Learning practice	Develop evidence base of current research into contemporary educational practices –special education, Early Years Learning Framework	Demonstrable student learning	Data illustrating effectiveness of teaching and learning practices is collected, analysed and interpreted to set future learning goals Staff taking responsibility to seek out and share professional reading to support them in their work & keep them informed of good pedagogical practices	6. Effective use of data

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain
	Research partnership with Flinders University	Demonstrable student learning	Signed Memorandum of Understanding	6. Effective use of data
Enhance/Refine an Our Lady of la Vang- appropriate student outcomes reporting framework	Review current data collection and analysis including effectiveness of documentation of learning e.g. learning stories, IEP, skills development	Demonstrable student learning	Review report	5.High quality teaching and learning
	Prepare outcomes reporting framework	Demonstrable student learning	Framework prepared and trialled	5.High quality teaching and learning
Maintain and enhance staff professional development framework	Professional development process reviewed to ensure process is focussed on developing and retaining highly skilled staff. Staff meetings and professional learning focus on evidence based practice and inquiry to improve student learning outcomes	Highly skilled staff Demonstrable student learning	Evidence of professional learning linked to AITSL Teacher Standards and performance growth Retention of high quality staff All staff can consistently explain what and why and how we do what we do	5.High quality teaching and learning

Strategic Direction: Services and business

Goal Services and businesses that align with, and support the school vision, mission and values

Long-term outcomes:

1. **Influence practice** - school influences policy and practice in the wider Catholic and disability sectors
2. **Effective management** – School uses data and business systems to effectively and efficiently manage all resources

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain
Share schools expertise in Teaching and Learning	Document our knowledge and expertise i.e intellectual property	Influence	Comprehensive and coherent package of IP All staff can consistently explain what and why and how we do what we do	5.High quality teaching and learning 9. Effective administration & resourcing
	Share our expertise with other schools and disability services			
	Explore education and training service (selling Intellectual Property)			
Respond to NDIS impact	Explore opportunities for school involvement in broader post-school pathways	Effective management	Report to Board Report to Board	
	Understand impacts and opportunities from NDIS Develop response plan to high priority issues			

Strategies	Actions	Long-term outcomes supported	Success indicator	Catholic Education SA Continuous Improvement Framework domain										
<p>Improve the integration of school administrative systems</p>	<p>Review administrative systems (including finance, human resources, payroll)</p>	<p>Effective management</p>	<p>More efficient and effective administration</p>	<p>9. Effective administration & resourcing</p>										
	<p>Implement high priority recommendations of the review</p>				<p>Maintain and expand services to families/carers where feasible</p>	<p>Seek the views of parent/carers/families regarding services the school provides</p>	<p>Influence</p>	<p>Family/carer priorities identified</p>	<p>7. Orderly & safe learning environments</p>	<p>Explore feasibility of expanding services including physiotherapy, psychology, Out of School Hours (OSHC) and Vacation Care</p>	<p>Effective management</p>	<p>Feasibility assessed for priority services</p>	<p>9. Effective administration & resourcing</p>	
<p>Maintain and expand services to families/carers where feasible</p>	<p>Seek the views of parent/carers/families regarding services the school provides</p>	<p>Influence</p>	<p>Family/carer priorities identified</p>	<p>7. Orderly & safe learning environments</p>										
	<p>Explore feasibility of expanding services including physiotherapy, psychology, Out of School Hours (OSHC) and Vacation Care</p>				<p>Effective management</p>	<p>Feasibility assessed for priority services</p>	<p>9. Effective administration & resourcing</p>							
	<p>Investigate with a service provider to develop "TAFE-level" programs for young adults</p>	<p>Influence</p>	<p>Report for Board</p>											

