

# ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORT FOR 2014

## Namoi Valley Christian School

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Please feel free to contact the Principal, Peter Henderson in regard to this report.

### ***Introduction***

### ***Message from the Board***

### ***Teacher standards***

### ***Parent, student and teacher satisfaction***

### ***Curriculum***

### ***External testing results***

### ***Priorities for 2014***

### ***Priorities for 2015***

### ***Enrolment***

### ***Excerpt of Enrolment policy***

### ***Excerpt of Complaints, compliments and suggestions policy***

### ***Excerpt of Student welfare policy***

### ***Excerpt of Student discipline policy***

### ***Financial information***

## **INTRODUCTION**

Namoi Valley Christian School (NVCS) is set on the main street in Wee Waa, a small agriculturally based rural town in North Western NSW. The school has been operating for 31 years providing K-6 education, with high expectations for student competence, character and faith. The foundational principles of the school are Christian and these values are woven into all aspects of school outlook and activity. Parental participation is significant in classroom assistance and administration, as well as elected positions on the School Board. The quote below is taken from the schools mission statement and highlights its foundational principles.

*The purpose of NAMOI VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL is to support Christian parents by providing an educational setting in which teaching and learning of a high standard are founded on Bible-based beliefs, values and behaviors and where parents have ready access to the decision-making framework.*

The background of students is both indigenous and non-indigenous, 2-parent and single parent families. The staff of 2 classroom teachers and 1 learning support teacher makes up a dynamic young team, committed to the ethos of the school. A number of part-time paid and voluntary staff,

including 2 chaplains under the Australian School Chaplaincy Programme, complements the teaching staff.

NVCS is registered and accredited with the New South Wales Board of Studies. It is a member school of Christian Education National.

This annual report for 2014 provides parents, grandparents and the wider school community with information about various aspects of this school's distinctiveness, performance and development. The report is a legislative requirement under *The Education Amendment (Non-Government Schools Registration) Act 2005*.

The School Newsletters, Curriculum Statements, and Parent Information and Policy Handbook (available from the school) complement the information in this report. The report will be discussed at the Association Annual General Meeting on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

The school has procedures in place to ensure its participation in annual reporting to publicly disclose the educational and financial performance measures and policies of the school as identified by the Minister.

## **MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD**

The bible time and time again instructs us that teaching children is of vital importance. Moreover, teaching children in a theocentric world view that recognises Christ as saviour and our place in His creation is fundamental to the attaining of wisdom. Moses, over two chapters of Deuteronomy, commanded the Israelites to "hear the words of God and teach them to your children" (Dt 10-11); Psalm 34 and 78 extols the wisdom and blessing of the fear of the Lord and the psalmist calls his children to understand it; Proverbs 22:6, our school motto, commands this principle; and, the famous passage in Matthew 19 shows the radically different value that Jesus places on children and of their instruction.

This report seeks to highlight three areas where the Board has sought to guide the school in living out these principles.

### 1. Administration

2014 has seen Namoi Valley Christian School continue to provide distinctive Christ-focused education through Parent Controlled governance. Your Board has continued to meet monthly for formal meetings and on a number of other occasions when required. Over the year, when the Board meets, it reviews policies and procedures and makes sure they are up to date and implemented correctly. Further, when they meet, they hear reports from the Principal and Business Manager and they review items from expenses to pastoral care to care of staff and excursions. The Board and Principal rely, then, on the policies and procedures that have been put in place by the Association and overseeing bodies such as CEN and AIS.

### 2. Building and Infrastructure

No major works were completed in 2014, with the Board enjoying a time of consolidation of the works completed under the Building the Education Revolution programme in the preceding 5 years.

During 2014/15 some repainting of the main classroom and amenities buildings constructed in 2003/4 will be required.

#### 4. The Future, conclusion and thanks.

In addition to the mentioned changes, the Board commits itself to continual reviews of our school. Each year we review the school's Strategic Management Plan. We value the input from our members recommendations made at this meeting through to communications made through writing to the secretary addressed to the Board. Further, the Board will this year engage the services of external evaluators to assess teachers and principal in line with normal annual performance reviews. The Board will also continue to explore avenues to increase our exposure to the community and consolidate its position after an extensive building program.

Finally, please thank God for the unique gift of our school and its staff. There is no other school in Australia that has been blessed by God like our School. Also please thank the parents who come in to the school each week to help in classes and all the people that pray for the school. So, in conclusion, while there are always areas that we can grow as a school, please pray and give thanks to God for our school.

In Christ

Russell Morrison  
Board Chair

## ***TEACHER STANDARDS and PROFESSIONAL LEARNING***

In 2014 NVCS had two full-time and staff members and one part-time staff member. No new teachers started at NVCS in 2014. The team of teachers were able to consolidate their professional relationship and continue teaching in light of the school's purpose. At the end of the 2014 teaching year we farewelled our K12 teacher, Margaret Hull, as well as our Support teacher, Bronwyn Downes. Teachers attended school on average 98.8% of the time.

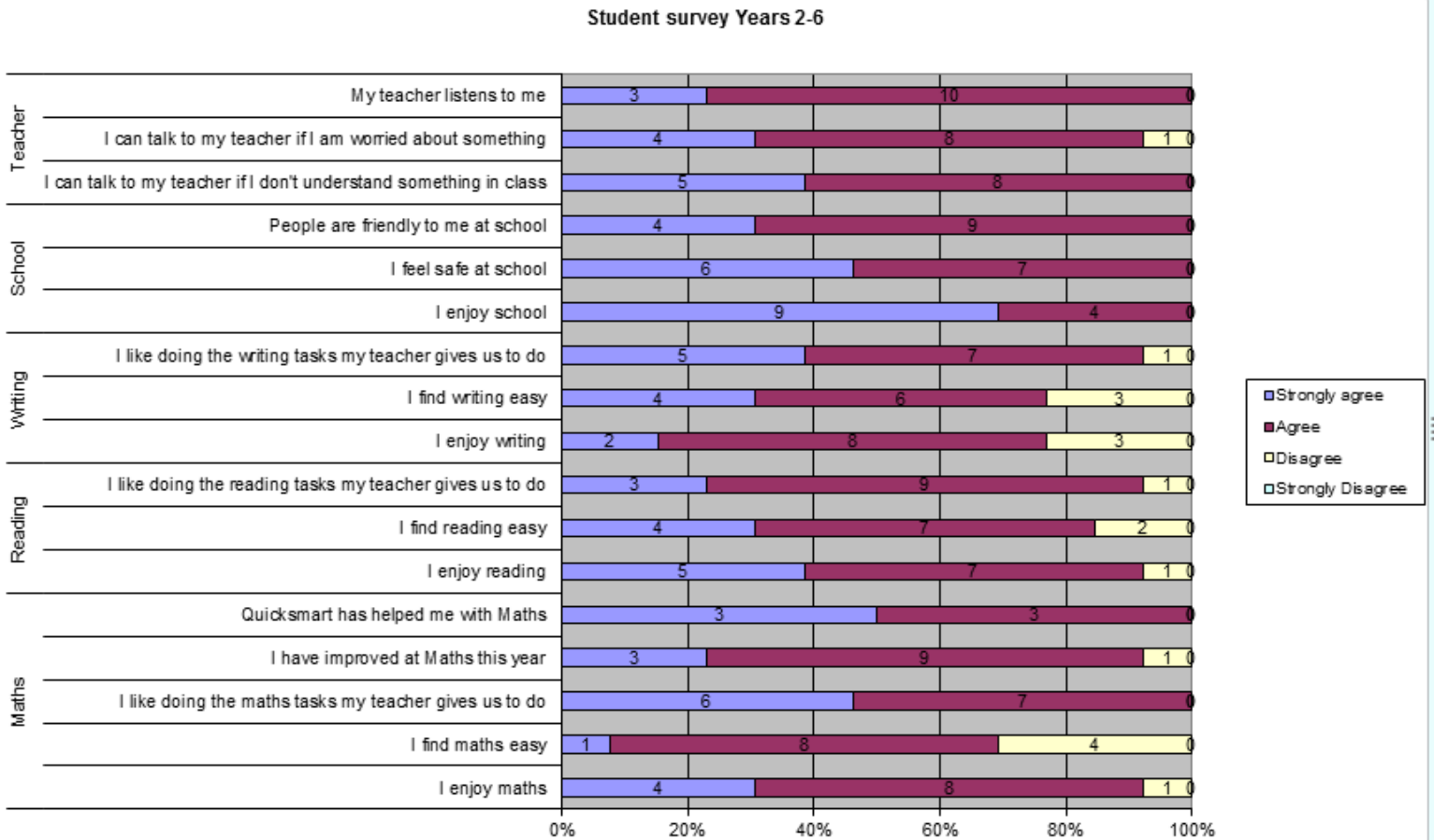
All teaching staff (including 6 casual teachers) have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution. All qualifications are Bachelor degrees.

Professional development for the whole teaching staff included attending conferences, training in teaching Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander Students, Literacy and Writing, AIS courses and the CEN mid-year conference. There were school visits from AIS consultants and the Principal attended CEN Principals meetings. Training for all the above was from a range of providers such as AIS, CEN, NSW Department of Education and school based staff. All full time and part time staff participated in a substantial amount of professional training and development throughout the course of the year.

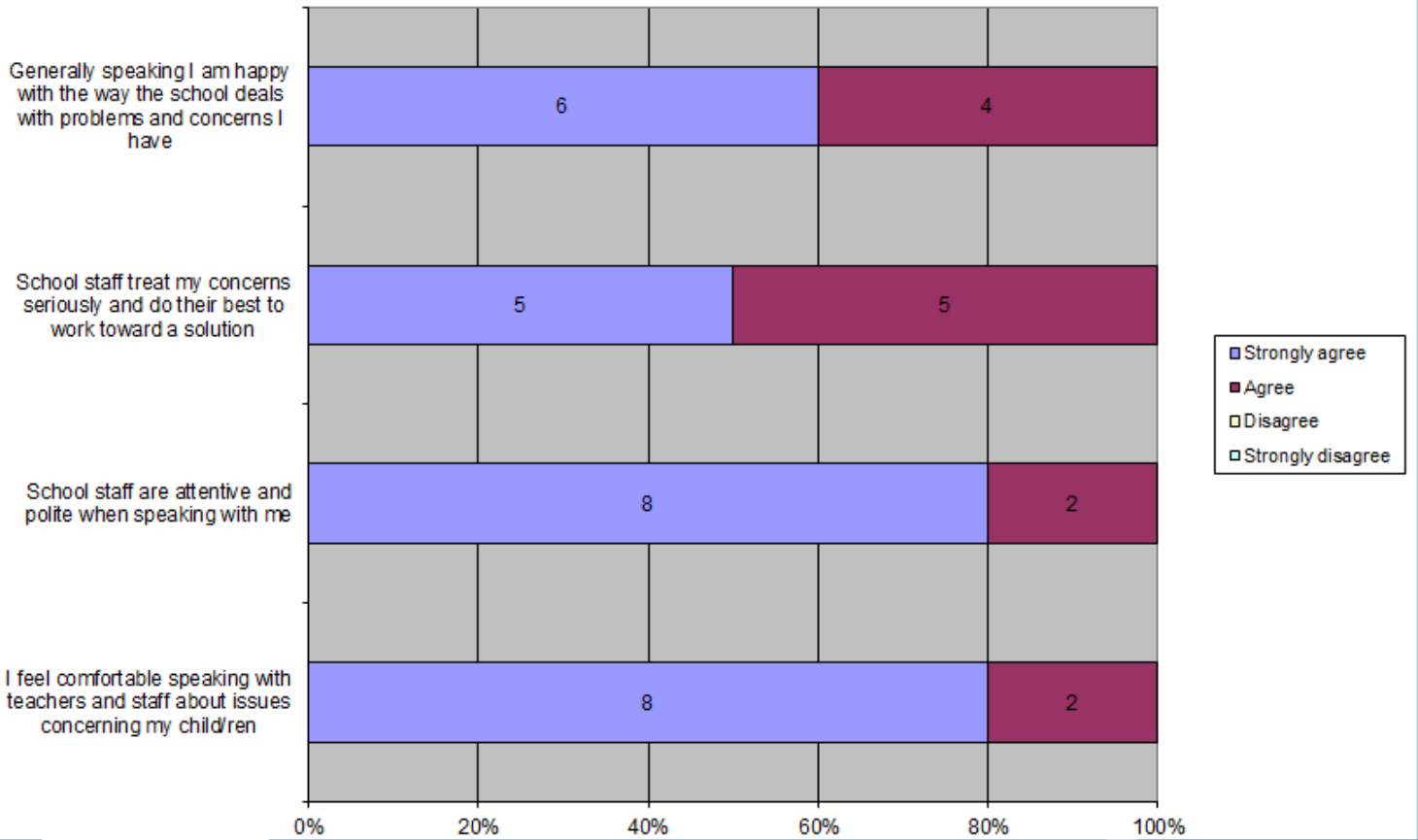
Namoi Valley Christian School acknowledges the funding provided under Smarter Schools National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality and facilitated by the Independent Schools Centre for excellence. This funding continued to allow us to support teachers in their professional work and build teacher capacity across the independent sector in NSW.

## Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

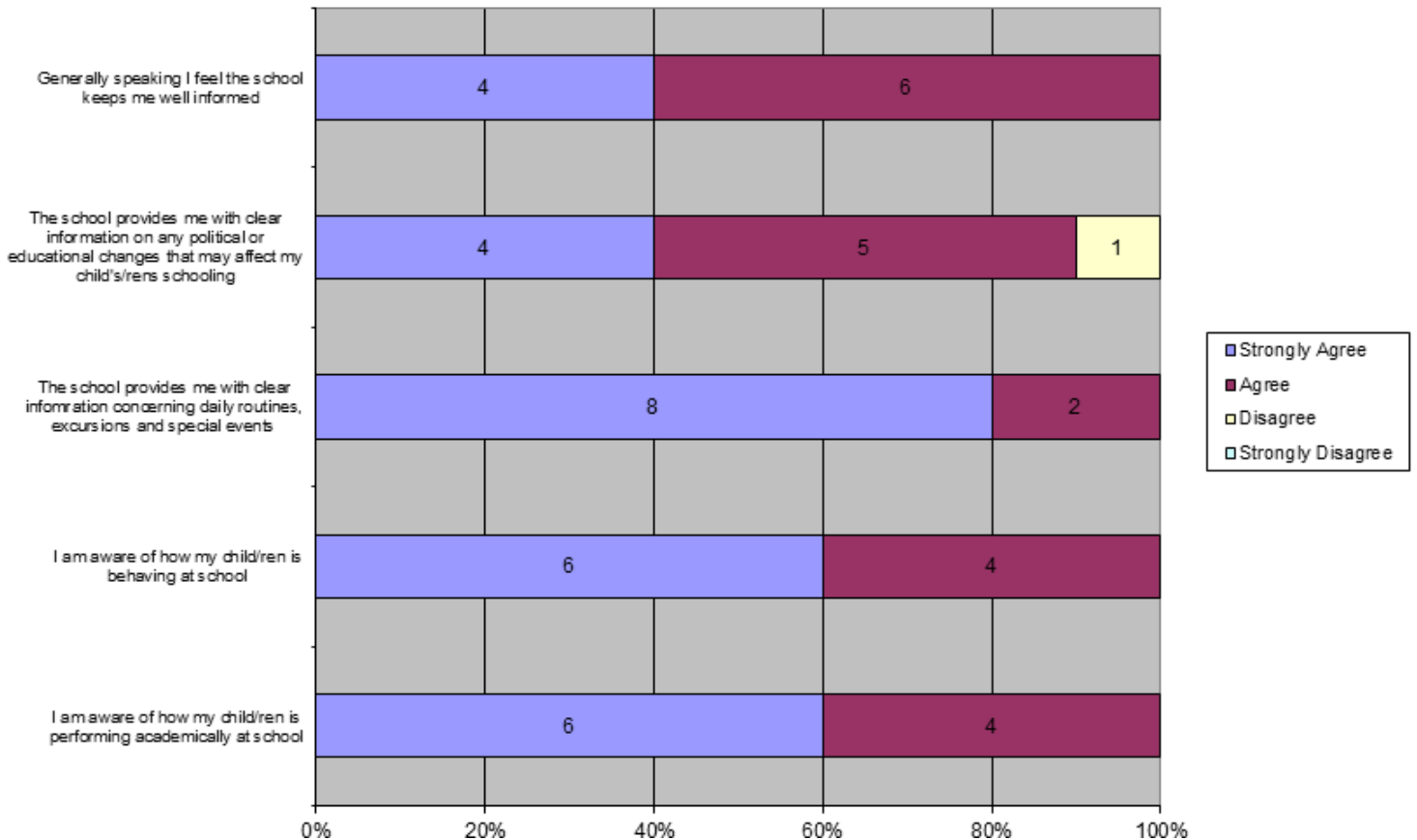
A survey taken at the end of 2014 showed high satisfaction from parents, teachers and students. The school is very encouraged by the feedback given. Graphs below show the results.



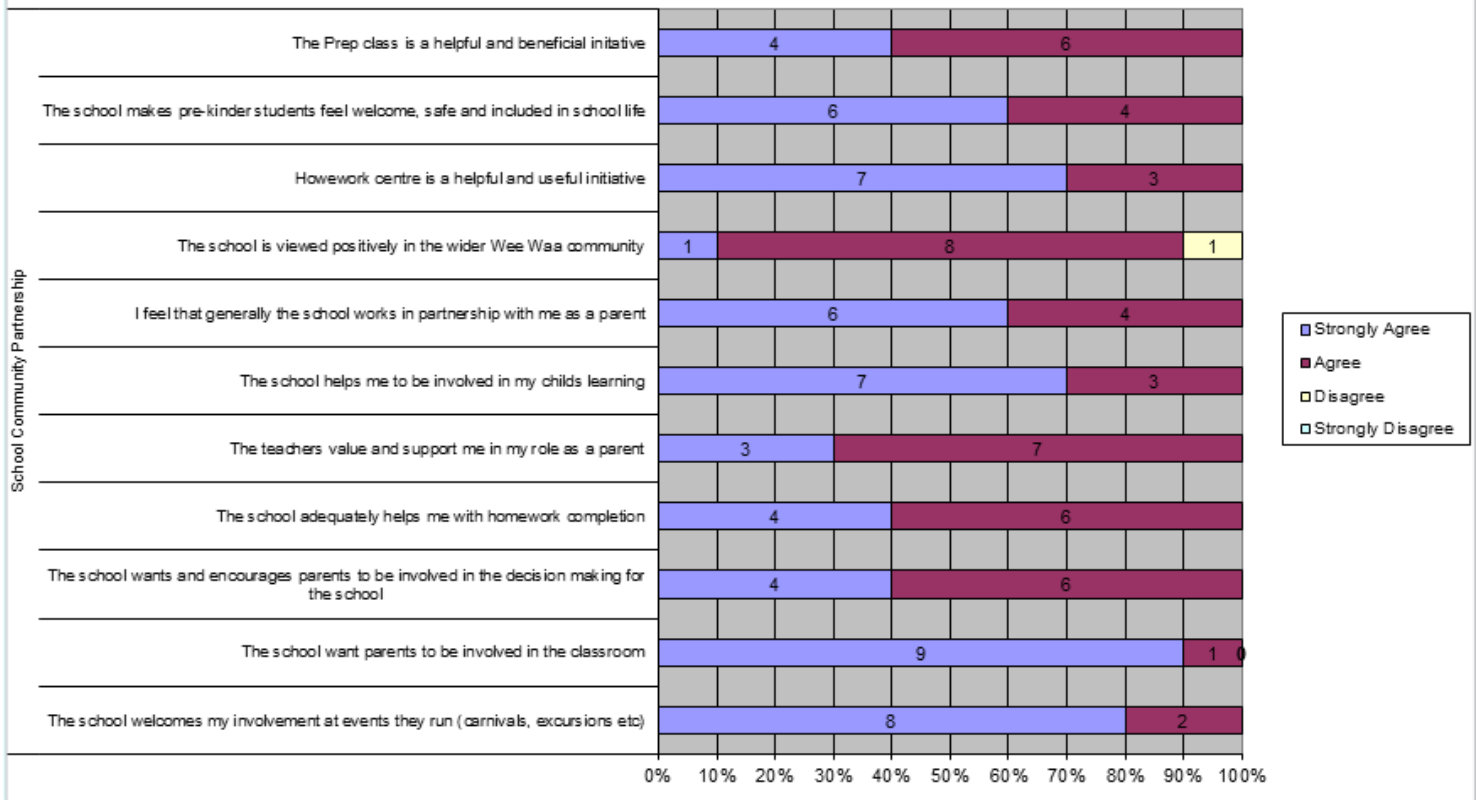
### Communication between Home and School



### Communication between School and Home



## School Community Partnership



## CURRICULUM

The curriculum the school uses is developed to show God’s creation as a rich and exciting whole, and establishes God and His word at the centre of education. Thus, nature is studied as God’s creation, history is studied as the work of God’s provision in the past and Mathematics as a natural part of God’s order in creation. Teachers can work in teams and individually to develop lessons and courses of study, and each year builds on the previous one to form a solid base for each student’s future, whilst meeting the educational requirement of the Board of Studies

Teachers are kept abreast of educational activities and issues by attending in-service programs and reading many professional papers made available through the Association of Independent Schools, and Christian Education National and others.

NVCS uses the NSW Board of Studies curriculum. Throughout 2014, the staff spent time preparing for the implementation of the new Mathematics and Science Syllabus documents.

## EXTERNAL TESTING RESULTS

The improvement of our students from one basic skills test to the next continues to be encouraging. In response to our Christian ethos, NVCS is a welcoming, rather than a selective school. With this in mind, we value the continued progress all our students make.

However, we expect our students to display more than just knowledge or skills. We aim to prepare our students for life beyond school and, with this in mind, we expect that in every situation our students will model the love of Christ. Our foundation is Christ and this permeates all of our

teaching and learning. Basic skills results only form part of the picture of what happens at school and part of the development of our students. We want more than just individual excellence in basic skills, we expect our students to live their learning.

### **Year 3 NAPLAN – Two students sat for the tests.**

100% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Reading with 100% scoring at proficiency.

100% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Writing with 50% scoring at proficiency.

100% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Spelling with 50% scoring at proficiency.

100% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Grammar and Punctuation with 50% scoring at proficiency.

100% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Numeracy with 100% scoring at proficiency.

### **Year 5 NAPLAN - two students sat for the tests.**

100% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Reading.

100% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Writing.

100% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Spelling

50% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Grammar and Punctuation with 50% scoring at proficiency

100% of students scored at or above National Minimum Standard in Overall Numeracy.

## ***PRIORITIES***

The priorities for 2014 were:

1. Implementation of the new National Curriculum for English.
2. Strengthen links with similar schools and fellow CEN schools.
3. Ensure all Teachers and Board Members have a clear understanding of the discipline policy.
4. Prepare for the implementation of the National Curriculum for Mathematics and Science.

The priorities for 2015 are:

1. Implementation of the new National Curriculum for Mathematics and Science.
2. Consolidate links for fellow CEN schools and utilise the broader CEN knowledge base.
3. Seek to bring Narrabri families into the NVCS school family.
4. Prepare for the implementation of the National Curriculum for History.

## ***ENROLMENT***

Enrolment in 2013 varied from 18 to 25 students. At census there were 20.4 FTE students. NVCS had 2 classes with a K-2 class with 7.4 FTE students and a Year 3-6 class with 13 students.

Overall attendance rates improved from 2013. We still have a concern over the attendance rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. In 2014 students attended school 91.5% of the time



(compared to 90.5% in 2013). For non-indigenous students attendance was 92.2%, while Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students attended 85.8% of the time.

NVCS serves Christian families and other interested families from places such as Wee Waa, Merah North, Yarrie Lake, Pilliga and Gwabegar.

## **Excerpt of Key Policy - Enrolment**

### **BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE & RATIONALE**

*Namoi Valley Christian School has been set up to serve Christian parents who desire their children to be educated in a manner which is consistent with their home teaching. However, if vacancies exist after these parents are served, enrolment applications will be considered from other interested members of the community. All parents must be prepared to commit to Christian Parent Controlled Education and the Biblical ethos of the school. Namoi Valley Christian School is inter-denominational and strives to regard each enrolment on its individual merit with no regard to race or culture. All Enrolment Applications for children will be considered in view of the best interests of the child and the whole school.*

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

*The new condition governing recurrent grants asks for a statement of enrolment policy. The school suggests the following.*

*Where there are places available enrolment is open unless:*

- a) Parents or child refuse to support the educational or discipline policy of the school.*
- b) The child has medical or educational problems beyond the capacity of the school or that section of the school to compensate.*

*Where the number of applicants exceeds the places available, selection is determined by considering a number of factors.*

#### *High priority*

- children of Association members*
- siblings of children currently enrolled at NVCS*
- children transferred from other Christian schools*

#### *Medium priority*

- children of non Association member Christian families*
- compassionate grounds*
- indication of parental support of the principles and basis of the school*

#### *Low priority*

- balance of abilities or sexes in the particular class*

*Within each category, factors are not listed in order of priority. The selection of the pupil to be enrolled depends on a balance of all of these factors. Where a child has an especially high claim on a place he/she may be admitted as a supernumerary over the normal class maximum.*

## **Excerpt of Key Policy - Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions**

*As a Christian School, we strongly believe that in any complaint or dispute resolution strategy the following biblical principles will be recognized and form the basis of the reconciliation process.*

- a) Christians should be reconciled to one another when disputes of any nature arise between them. (Read Matthew 5:23-24; 6:9-15; 18:15-22)*
- b) Christians should resolve their disputes in the context of Christian community.*

*(Read Matthew 18:15-22; 1 Corinthians 12:25-27; Ephesians 4:15-16; Philippians 2:1-5)*

- c) *Christians are firmly directed against the resolution of disputes between themselves by recourse to secular courts. (Read Luke 12:57-59; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8)*
- d) *Christians are to resolve disputes without consideration or calculation of revenge. (Read Romans 13:8)*

*There may be times when some aspect of school life does not appear satisfactory. As explained at the time of enrolment, the school endeavours to keep good communication open between parents and teaching staff. This is a high priority for the effective running of the school and the best outcome for each child. The following guide will assist you in channeling a complaint to the appropriate person.*

<i>Problem with child's learning or behaviour</i>	<i>Consult Class Teacher</i>
<i>Problem between your child and another</i>	<i>Consult Class Teacher &amp; Principal</i>
<i>Problem between child &amp; class teacher</i>	<i>Consult Class Teacher &amp; Principal</i>
<i>Problem between parent and class teacher</i>	<i>Consult Principal</i>
<i>Problem between parent and principal</i>	<i>Consult School Board, preferably in writing</i>
<i>Problem with matter of school policy</i>	<i>Consult Principal</i>
<i>Problem with matter of school policy unresolved</i>	<i>Consult School Board, preferably in writing</i>

## **Excerpt of Key Policy - Student welfare**

### **we will**

1. Promote learning
2. Encourage everyone
3. Act wisely
4. Care for one another
5. Enjoy God's grace

### **1. Promote learning**

*Including such things as...*

1. Fully participate in the life of the school
2. Happily accept my own learning ability and the learning abilities of others
3. Complete all learning activities, assignments, projects and tasks to the best of my ability
4. Talk during lessons in ways that assist my learning and the learning of others
5. Accept personal accountability for my own learning and behaviour
6. Support teamwork
7. Keep bookwork neat and organised
8. Meet assignment deadlines
9. Ask good questions
10. Act on advice
11. Own up if I'm having difficulty
12. Use the Internet in ways that are helpful
13. Feel free to be myself
14. Not expect to be allowed to go to the toilet or get a drink during lessons (children in Infants excepted)
15. Realise that persistent, defiant patterns of little disruptions to learning can have big consequences
16. Accept that I won't attend excursions or camps if my attitude to learning has been poor
17. Make compliments, complaints and suggestions to teachers as needed
18. Complete all homework without giving mum and dad too much grief
19. Only stay at home if I'm really crook or have an important appointment
20. Accept that there is reward in successful learning and that I feel good about myself when I do the right thing

*If I don't promote learning, my penalty will be missed opportunities and the possible loss of privileges such as trustworthiness and freedom.*

## **2. Encourage everyone**

*Including such things as...*

1. Highlight the strengths of others and diminish their weaknesses
2. Tell jokes that are kind and wholesome
3. Win without boasting and lose without excuse
4. Respect and care for all property belonging to the school and others
5. Value colleagues and opponents from other schools
6. Say, "Please, excuse me, thank you, you're welcome and I beg your pardon"
7. Only touch other people if it is wanted, wise and worthwhile
8. Be positive; look for solutions, not problems; be committed to fixing things, rather than looking to blame someone
9. Disagree with others without being disagreeable
10. Play and chat with people who are different to me
11. Be bold, brave and impartial when saying, "Good on you"

*If I don't encourage everyone, I realise that I will have to restore my relationship with the person by serving them somehow and that I will probably lose the privileges of trustworthiness and freedom until I change my ways.*

## **3. Act wisely**

*Including such things as...*

1. Ensure the safety and well-being of students, parents and visitors
2. Be punctual to all lessons, events and activities
3. Be a wise bystander who knows when to do and when not to do
4. Reporting dangerous, unwise or serious breaches of this Code of Conduct to a teacher
5. Be truthful
6. Not have any romantic or inappropriate relationship during school hours
7. Neither be in possession of, or use any, or be under the influence of, or encourage the use of alcohol, illicit drugs or tobacco at school or on a school related event (e.g. excursion or camp or celebration).
8. Wear the school uniform
9. Stay under cover if I haven't got a hat during breaks
10. Enter classrooms sensibly
11. Give attention to teachers without them having to ask for attention
12. Never bring any sort of weapon to school (real or toy)
13. Only play tackle footy or wrestle when a teacher is supervising
14. Stay within boundaries
15. Travel on school buses with not much noise, no mess and no movement
16. Leave MP3 players and the like at home
17. Have mobile phones turned off and kept in bags or pencil cases from arrival to after school
18. Play or chat outside during breaks, not in toilets
19. Stay on the verandah if I arrive at school before 8:30am
20. Walk, not run, on verandahs
21. Leave chewing gum at home
22. Go to the Evacuation Area in a Fire Emergency which I will know because of the bell ringing constantly
23. Stay in the Classroom if I hear the sports whistle blowing constantly
24. Sit and chat with friends when waiting for buses or cars

*If I don't act wisely, I realise that my foolishness is the worst punishment and that I will have to make amends and possibly lose privileges.*

#### **4. Care for one another**

*Including such things as...*

1. Forgive one another
2. Maintain privacy and confidentiality
3. Be courteous and sensitive to the needs and differences of others.
4. Totally avoid such things as belittling, teasing, hostility, blaming or excluding others
5. Never harassing someone
6. Never bullying anyone physically, verbally, emotionally or socially
7. Make new students and visitors feel welcomed
8. Tell the truth
9. Use people's names
10. Look after younger students
11. Treat others as I would like to be treated
12. Place bags on bag racks
13. Say "G'day" politely to the bus driver.
14. Promptly appeal decisions that you think are unfair. Do this with respect and openness
15. Understand that mum and dad need to know how I am going at school
16. Care for casual teachers because they have one of the hardest jobs in the whole world
17. Return permission notes by the due date
18. Leave other people's bags alone
19. Listening to and looking at someone who is talking with me
20. Put all rubbish in bins
21. Willingly pick up rubbish that doesn't belong to me
22. Look after books and sports equipment
23. Act politely towards all adults in the school
24. Sometimes ask teachers how they are going or what they did on the weekend before they ask me

*If I don't care for another person, I realise that I will have to restore my relationship with the person by serving them somehow and that I will probably lose the privileges of trustworthiness and freedom.*

#### **5. Enjoy God's grace**

*Including such things as...*

1. Appreciate that Jesus' life, death and resurrection are the basis of our school
2. Honour the Bible as God's Word, the story of God's sovereign grace with Jesus as its fulfilment and climax
3. Support opportunities for prayer, Bible study and the celebration of faith
4. Care for all wildlife, plants and buildings
5. Explore my own faith
6. Understand that everyone moves from beliefs to actions
7. Realise that no blunder, mistake or selfish act can change God's love for His people
8. Smell the roses ...or the cut grass
9. Live by learning faithfully
10. Be adventurous
11. Realise that there is good and evil in my world
12. Understand that God is too big for us to understand fully

*If I don't enjoy God's grace, God's grace will not be enjoyed!*

### ***Excerpt of Key Policy - Student Discipline***

#### **General Principles**

1. Discipline should be appropriate given the age and maturity of the child.
2. Discipline should remain in the context of home and school working together

3. Discipline should always consider the individual and the particular situation.
4. Discipline should be appropriate to the incident and be accompanied by discussion with parents.
5. Discipline should be based on principles of Procedural Fairness, including the 'hearing rule' and the 'right to an unbiased decision'.

## Policy Statements

1. It is the responsibility of the school to determine incidents which may require disciplinary action. This falls into two categories:

Behaviour requiring detention:

- Deliberate hurt (verbal or physical) to teacher or fellow student,
- Deliberate disobedience following fair warning

Behaviour requiring discipline:

- Offence against fellow student or teacher
- Breaking of class or school rule known by student

2. The Principal is responsible for the oversight of disciplinary measures used within the school.

3. Each teacher is responsible for discipline in their classroom and when supervising students in the wider activities of the school.

4. The school will endeavour to develop proactive initiatives when dealing with student behaviour (both positive and negative). Positive reinforcement strategies accompanied by vigilant observation of student movement will enable staff to minimise problems and maximise a healthy learning environment.

5. When travelling on public transport students are to conduct themselves as representatives of the school and as such should conduct themselves appropriately. See Student Travel Policy.

6. A wide range of disciplinary measures will be used within the school as appropriate for the student concerned and the particular circumstances. These may include encouragement, counsel, correction, reprimand, deprivation of privileges, detention, isolation, family conference, suspension, expulsion and exclusion.

7. Those involved in a disciplinary action, are responsible for determining the actual facts of the matter, rather than relying upon hear-say and speculation. Clear and accurate communication is encouraged to prevent misunderstanding.

8. Incidents resulting in a disciplinary action should be reported to the parents of the students directly involved as soon as practical.

9. It is the responsibility of the adult to see that an apology is taken and amends made. The nature of the offence will determine the form and timing of the reparation.

10. In accordance with the requirements of the Education Reform Amendment (School Discipline) Act 1995, corporal discipline is not permitted at Namoi Valley Christian School, although the Bible is quite clear on this topic (Proverbs 20:30, 23:13-14).

11. In accordance with the requirements of the NSW Registered and Accredited Individual non-Government Schools Manual (December 2006) the school does not seek to explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

12. All students must be dealt with in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness. In all areas of discipline students and parents shall have appropriate access to those implementing the discipline procedure. To ensure that:

- a student's concerns are heard
- the student is aware of the process by which the matter will be considered,
- the student is aware of the process by which they may appeal.

13. Parents have the right to appeal any decision made by the Principal if they believe they have new information or considerations which were not provided or were not available at a previous point in the disciplinary process. This appeal should be made to the School Board in writing.

As a caring and loving Christian Community it is important to understand that at all stages in the disciplinary process, every opportunity will be provided for the child to experience reconciliation and forgiveness. Whenever a child genuinely demonstrates his/her commitment to abide by the school's code of conduct, reinstatement will always be offered as an expression of the school's hope and desire for a new beginning.

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION 1/1/2014 – 31/12/2014**

