MASTERPLAN

OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS SCHOOL

HENDRA

Prepared by Margaret Tomov in consultation with teaching staff and school board

January 2014
PREAMBLE
OLHC is a growing Catholic Primary school in the inner northern Brisbane suburb of Hendra. Significant strengths of the school are listed as it having a real sense of community, with dedicated staff, room for the children to play, leadership by the older students and the buddy system, and the presence of Outside School Hours Care and Vacation Care. It is also noted that student achievement levels compare favourably with other local schools, and that behavioural expectations and standards are high. The parent body is supportive, and engages well with the educational provision for students at the school.

The school is rapidly developing a reputation as a centre of ‘Excellence in Contemporary Education’. In time, this is expected to lead to increased enrolments. The transition of the school to a double stream school P-4 and single stream for 5 and 6, is seen as an important goal to ensure the school is able to function more efficiently and offer curricular and extra-curricular options comparable and required to compete with other schools in this area.

Our Goal: ‘Excellence in Contemporary Education’

- Well-maintained facilities set up for education for the future, not education of the past. They include sufficiently challenging play spaces and a resource centre that supports learning in all areas, as well as literacy.
- Learning spaces that have excellent access to technology, that support and promote collaboration between students and between students and teachers, that allow for whole group and small group work, and have inbuilt flexibility.
- Resources that are readily available for students and teachers – hands on materials, reading resources, equipment for Science and a collection of sources for history, and a reduction in reliance on paper processes.
- Teachers who work as part of a professional team, working together to develop new knowledge, share effective practice, learn new pedagogies and support each other.
- A deep curriculum, incorporating all curriculum areas, that engages students in their learning, and encourages them to be self-motivated, resourceful learners.
- A pedagogy that is inquiry based, leading students to develop deep understandings of concepts as they apply skills and information to create new information and present their learning. Appropriate feedback is given to students at various points in their learning, not just at the end, to enable them to know how they are going. Metacognition is developed, along with each child’s knowledge of him/herself as a learner, and the knowledge of what they are learning and why and how they will know they have succeeded. Collaboration and group problem solving tasks build the social and emotional competence of students as they connect and interact in a range of lifelike and real life inquiries.
- Development of the whole child – academic, social, emotional, physical and spiritual in our Catholic tradition.
- A supportive community that cares and gives, and is involved in many aspects of school life.
- Personalised learning, using modern pedagogies with ICT embedded in all key learning areas, which allows the teachers to cater for high achieving students, as well as those needing support.
- Inclusive education, where students with personal or social difficulties are encouraged to reach their fullest potential through effective academic and behavioural interventions and support.
- Effective use of technology, through equitable access to technology when and where it is required to enable students to learn anywhere, anytime, with whoever best helps them learn.

This master plan outlines strategic directions in key areas, which will be implemented over time.
ALIGNMENT WITH BRISBANE CATHOLIC EDUCATION’S 4 PRIORITIES:

This masterplan aligns with the four areas of strategic renewal for schools in the Brisbane Archdiocese:

MISSION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

LEARNING & TEACHING

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE & COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

STRATEGIC RESOURCING
1. MISSION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**Strategic Direction:** Develop within the whole community a shared understanding of and practical responses to Catholic Social Teaching.

**Strategic Direction:** Provide a cohesive and integrated approach for the spiritual development and professional learning of staff in religious education and theology.

**Strategic Direction:** Develop policies, programmes and practices that reflect the nature and purpose of Catholic schooling, within the broader evangelising mission of the Church.

**Strategic Direction:** Engage with a religious education curriculum that promotes knowledge, deep understanding and skills about the Catholic and broader Christian tradition.

2. LEARNING AND TEACHING

**VISION FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**
We believe, as Catholic Educators, that teaching and learning gives witness to the Gospel, by integrating faith, life and culture. We enable our students to be creative and confident, active and informed learners who seek to shape and enrich our world. We do this by providing our learners with opportunities to achieve success as they grow to be the best they can be. At OLHC teaching and learning is future focussed, flexibly structured and supported by current research, best practice and effective pedagogy.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM**
As each new key learning area is released, our teaching staff, under the guidance of the school’s Curriculum Support teacher will implement fully within two years. This will require effective professional development of staff, purchasing of resources and a deep familiarity with the intent of each key learning area. Teachers are encouraged to share with their colleagues their implementation stages and activities and are supported in planning by the CST and by BCE’s Education Officers for each key learning area.

In the near future, the school will be fully implanting History and Geography, LOTE (Japanese), HPE and The Arts, as well as the new Religion Curriculum. Constant revision of our implementation of the formerly released curricula of English, Maths and Science will be undertaken.

**Strategic Direction:** Implement the Australian Curriculum within the context of the BCE Learning Framework as a means of realising equity and excellence.

**PEDAGOGICAL MODELS**
The newly released ‘Learning Framework’, from Brisbane Catholic Education guides our planning, and their pedagogical model is used at planning time.

The school is engaging with the ‘Visible Learning’ initiative of BCE, which assists teachers to study their pedagogy and make sure it is making a real difference to student achievement.

The pedagogy used at OLHC is inquiry based, leading students to develop deep understandings of concepts as they apply skills and information to create new information and present their learning. Appropriate feedback is given to students at various points in their learning, not just at the end to enable them to know how they are going. Metacognition is developed, along with each child’s knowledge of him/herself as a learner, and the knowledge of what they are learning and why and how they will know they have succeeded. Collaboration and group problem solving tasks build the social and emotional competence of students as they connect and
interact in a range of lifelike and real-life inquiries. Students engage with technology and each other to enhance learning outcomes, and the expectations of learning for some students are modified, to enable them to reach their potential.

**Strategic Direction:** Develop a school-wide set of pedagogical practices that are data-informed and evidence-based.

**SPECIALIST LESSONS**
Specialist lessons currently provided are Health and Physical Education and Music for all year levels, as well as Japanese for the senior school. It is intended to widen these to include areas of the Arts Curriculum.

**Strategic Direction:** Engage specialist teachers in Drama, Visual Art and Dance.

**ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**
Prior to, during and after learning, teachers collect learning data to enable them to effectively assess how students are learning.

**Assessment for learning**, whether using a standardised tool or a teacher devised instrument, collects entry data about a student’s prior knowledge of the content and concepts being introduced, and the skills they have already or they need to acquire to complete the unit of work. Based on this data, the teacher modifies work for some students.

**Formative assessment** takes place during the learning, where the teacher scaffolds the work in stages to allow students to work towards completion and deep understanding. Powerful feedback is given to students to let them know how they can improve on what they are doing to do better.

**Summative assessment**, at the end of a unit, informs the teacher about the level the student has achieved.

All three types of assessment are used by teachers when making judgements as to the level of achievement. Teachers work with several pieces of completed work, with their observations and work done by students during the unit, to compare against the Achievement Standards in the Australian Curriculum for each key learning area to place a student’s work at expected level, above or below, well above or well below.

The Australian curriculum is to be used for all students, and the amount of support they require to achieve expected level is to be offered. Teachers will note on report cards when the student has required considerable assistance to reach the expected level.

Teachers report formally to parents twice a year, at the end of each semester. A written report is compiled and sent to parents, supported by a portfolio of work which supports the teacher judgement about achievement levels. Opportunities to meet face to face occur each semester, and the teachers will invite all parents at a formally arranged time. As well, there are opportunities for informal meetings with the teachers by appointment when concerns are raised by either side.

**Strategic Direction:** Build our repertoire of assessment tools and techniques to provide access to student learning data for teachers.

**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES**
Current research supports highly the provision of a device for internet access to each student. Fast, reliable, effective, filtered WiFi is required and is available in our school. Models of shared devices in classes are not
optimal in terms of pedagogy, as they are limited to ‘group work’ time, or must be rostered for individual students to complete tasks. The actual access time for any one individual is limited with shared devices.

The school’s current position is 1-1 netbooks, provided by the school, for students in the senior grades, Yrs 5-7. Minimum numbers of older devices exist in classrooms in the middle school, and sets of 5 iPads exist for each class in Yrs 1-3. The computer lab, established in 2010, is still functional and provides whole class access on the same platform. This room is rostered around the classes across the week, and with devices that still function effectively is a valued facility for our school at this time.

In terms of funding IT provisions, it has become impossible for a school to provide devices to all students at no charge to parents. The government’s ‘Digital Education Revolution’ has now terminated, and all schools are looking at parent purchase or part purchase of the devices.

A successful 1-1 programme in our school would facilitate:

- Improved student learning outcomes through the use of technology that facilitates learning
- Students developing and maturing as digital citizens – embracing digital opportunities and responsibilities
- Normalising technology use between school and home
- Greater autonomy in the classroom
- Improved motivation and engagement
- Increased comfort and confidence using a familiar device students can use for learning immediately
- Opportunities to collaborate on projects with students from other schools

There are several models for provision of 1-1 devices, and schools are rapidly engaging with the models that most suit their special circumstances.

The preferred model for OLHC is that the school selects a device (iPad) for Years P-2, and a more complex device for Years 3-6. Parent bulk purchase of these devices for P-2 and 3-6 is the model that would work best for us.

Issues of equity, affordability and sustainability will need to be considered, as well as increased access to technician time to deal with the diversity and increased number of devices in the school. BCE’s Information Services support staff work with schools in the implementation of these programmes.

**Strategic Direction:** Develop the capacities of school leadership team and classroom teachers to utilise information, communication and learning technologies to improve learning and teaching. Become a 1-1 device school, where parents provide the device their child needs to learn and study effectively.

### 3. PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

**PARENT PARTNERSHIPS**

Parents are encouraged to participate in their children’s education by becoming involved in the formal meeting processes of the School Board and the P&F, assist in the resource centre or work on various committees like Active School Travel or Marketing, which arise. Class parents are a valuable resource in our school, and work to keep all informed about what is happening, as well as enlist support for the class teacher and other families.
Regular newsletters and access to the Parent Portal exist to keep communication between school and home strong.

As well as formal engagement, parents are offered opportunities to engage in their children’s education by developing a close working relationship with the teachers of their children. Messages between home and school, formal and informal meetings with the teachers, and participation in classroom activities and excursions enhance student achievement.

**Strategic Direction: Promote partnerships that provide for consultation and engagement with parents as the primary educators of their children in the mission of the Catholic school. Increase parent involvement in the classrooms and in the education of their children.**

**STAFFING**

While most current teachers in the school are long serving staff members, renewal is expected in the coming years with the retirement of some, and the appointment of graduates by BCE. Where it is possible for the school to conduct interviews and make appointments, the best possible candidates will be appointed. These will be highly skilled professionals with modern pedagogical styles who will enrich the staff team. School officers appointed will have the appropriate qualifications to be the best possible assistants to the teachers in the classrooms. Specialist staff appointed will have qualifications in their field.

A process of induction of new staff and mentoring during their first year will be in place to fully support new staff as they settle in to OLHC.

All staff will undergo an annual process of goal setting and formal appraisal to encourage reflection about their teaching and continued professional growth. Professional development will be arranged and offered each year in line with our strategic plan, current curriculum directions, and intentions to improve student learning outcomes through shared pedagogical approaches.

**Strategic direction: Strengthen processes of recruitment, induction and appraisal of staff.**

**4. STRATEGIC RESOURCING**

**FINANCE AND BUDGET**

The amount of disposable income for the school depends on the amount of income collected from school fees, as well as the amount of school budget funds that are directed annually to pay school paid staff (above the level already provided by BCE). The BCE staffing schedule allocates teachers to classes - one for 25 in early years, and one for 28 in upper grades. In a year when all classes are full, the staffing schedule can pay all staff except groundsman and cleaners, the appointment of whom are school-based decisions. If a school chooses to, or is forced to carry smaller classes, then the shortfall is made up from school funds received from school fees and levies.

**Strategic direction: Ensure all classes are full. This will mean taking 28 from Prep onwards, and will mean for some years that years 5 and 6 are one class.**

The budget is allocated each year towards ongoing running costs of the school, resourcing the curriculum, and funding initiatives that support the learning of groups of or individual students. It is important that at the commencement of each year adequate funds are allocated in the budget to cater for unexpected costs. Any
unspent monies should be directed as well to supporting the school's building programme as refurbishments and development of new facilities take place.

**Strategic direction: Ensure the budget functions effectively and is adequate for operational requirements.**

The school board has oversight of the budget, ensuring it is spent in areas that are in line with the school's strategic plan, and that expenditure across the year remains within the budget. The parish has an interest in the budget to promote confidence that the budget is an effective one and that the school is operating in a sustainable manner.

**ENROLMENTS AND MARKETING**

It is the intention of the current administration to ‘grow’ the school in steady increments to eventually reach a two stream sized school P-4 and single 5 and 6.

By only taking 28 in Prep in 2014, and subsequent years, the total enrolment of the school will stay relatively consistent around the 160 students level. There are considerable staffing enhancements once the school reaches 180 students, and it is intended to accept more students in each year level wherever possible to ‘grow’ the school.

The path towards becoming a two-stream school is generally through composite classes over several years. School administration and teachers have flexible options regarding educational provision for 1.5 classes of each year level, and it always needs to be kept in mind that growth is important in the long term and that significant enrolment increases provide more specialist staff offerings as well as extra-curricular offerings and better resourcing.

*Fig 1. Current Enrolment predictions as at Jan 2014, limiting enrolments to 28 in each class in future years.*

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<th>PREP</th>
<th>YEAR 1</th>
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*Fig 2. Estimated enrolment figures, taking 1.5 classes (40 students) at each year level and then 56 from 2017.*

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Demographic studies of the Hendra/Hamilton/Pinkerba suburbs by BCE have indicated considerable future growth which will impact on our school. The gaining of new enrolments over the current level will require marketing expertise. A committee will be formed made up of BCE marketing experts, the Principal and APRE, a parish council representative and parents with expertise in this field to look at how to best position the school in the local community. Adequate signage is to be purchased.

**Strategic Direction: Grow the school to two streams.**

**FACILITIES – MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT**

While the school facilities appear in good condition at the commencement of 2014, it is noted that some areas require refurbishment. The administration area, Mary MacKillop building with resource centre and computer lab are all in good condition. The classrooms above the hall, learning support area, the toilets, and the tuckshop all require some updating. It is proposed to apply for government block grants to assist the school to upgrade these in the very near future.

With continued growth in enrolments will come increased enrolment pressures. We will apply for grants for new facilities which will contain contemporary learning spaces. These facilities will also enhance the attractiveness of our school as well as the learning of our students.

A seven year maintenance plan has just concluded. This plan involved a complete school repaint in the first year with touch ups and ongoing washing down yearly. Payments were spread across the seven years. Within the next couple of years the school will need to plan for these outgoings again.

**Strategic Direction: Use contemporary learning approaches to inform the planning, design and use of facilities. Access grants to refurbish and renew the school facilities.**

**EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

At the commencement of 2014, students at the school can choose from a range of extra-curricular activities:

- Tennis lessons – before and after school
- Instrumental music – in and out of school time for piano, drums, guitar and stringed instruments
- Chess – one afternoon a week after school
- Performance Arts – singing and dancing one afternoon a week after school
- French – before school

It is noted that the availability of such extra-curricular offerings increases interest in our school by prospective parents.
SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

The school is developing a reputation for its commitment to sustainability with our school garden, solar panels on the admin roof, bore water, and processes like effective rubbish disposal. Awards were won for these in 2013. Sustainability is one of the over-arching priorities of the Australian Curriculum and it is hoped to further our work in these areas, in particular to work towards using school garden produce in lessons on healthy eating, using our tuckshop kitchen.

Strategic Direction: School garden produce used in HPE-related cooking classes and school tuckshop lunches.

Strategic Direction: Embed sustainable environmental practices into the organisational structure and processes of the school.

Other broad goals that appear in the school’s strategic renewal plan are as follows:

Strategic Direction: Provide targeted strategies that ensure the identification, monitoring and improved education outcomes for specific diverse student populations.

Strategic Direction: Provide comprehensive whole-school approaches to pastoral care, protection of students, student behaviour support and social and emotional wellbeing.

BG 3.1 Ensure a safe, healthy and productive school environment for students, staff and community.

BG 3.2 Forge productive links with professional bodies and institutions, the broader community and government agencies.

BG 3.3 Engage with effective professional learning communities both within schools and across the wider BCEO community.

BG 3.4 Provide opportunities for leadership development and succession planning informed by the mission and purpose of Catholic Education.

BG 3.5 Provide a comprehensive approach to staff well-being and development including professional learning, professional standards, performance management and pastoral care.

BG 3.7 Strengthen structures, processes and collaboration with clergy and parish bodies to further the shared mission of parish and school.

BG 4.3 Implement information and learning management systems that enhance student and staff engagement with learning, teaching and school operations.

BG 4.4 Allocate expenditure on resources and professional learning of staff through a budget informed by the strategic renewal plan and based on the principles of stewardship.
1 MISSION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

BG 1.1 Develop within the whole community a shared understanding of and practical responses to Catholic Social Teaching.

- Build a relationship with our local St V de P group to involve students in outreach and response to Catholic social teaching at a local level.

BG 1.2 Provide a cohesive and integrated approach for the spiritual development and professional learning of staff in religious education and theology.

- Provide staff PD in the Old Testament so that they can apply this in their implementation of the new RE curriculum.
- Provide a staff spirituality day led by Fr Michael McCarthy based on Evangelii Gaudium.

BG 1.4 Develop policies, programmes and practices that reflect the nature and purpose of Catholic schooling, within the broader evangelising mission of the Church.

- Introduce family prayer bags for each child to take home and share with their family weekly.

BG 1.5 Engage with a religious education curriculum that promotes knowledge, deep understanding and skills about the Catholic and broader Christian tradition.

- The school implementation team will continue to work with teachers to fully implement the new Religious Education curriculum.
- Develop and document a Religious Education programme based on the Religious Education curriculum.
2 LEARNING & TEACHING

BG 2.1 Develop the capacities of school leadership team and classroom teachers to utilise information, communication and learning technologies to improve learning and teaching.

- Continue to promote the use of LMS and LIFE and Web 2.0 tools in teaching and learning.

BG 2.2 Provide targeted strategies that ensure the identification, monitoring and improved education outcomes for specific diverse student populations.

- Provide opportunities for teachers to attend PD in the area of Oral Language, Reading and Writing and its link to spelling.
- Provide targeted PD for teachers in the area of education of gifted and talented students and document our school processes for identifying these students and supporting them in each classroom.

BG 2.3 Provide comprehensive whole-school approaches to pastoral care, protection of students, student behaviour support and social and emotional wellbeing.

- Implement our newly developed Digital Citizenship Programme on a whole school basis.
- Launch our School-wide positive behaviour support programme.

BG 2.4 Implement the Australian Curriculum within the context of the BCE Learning Framework as a means of realising equity and excellence.

- Provide PD and purchase resources in the areas of Geography and History to assist teachers to implement the Australian Curriculum in these areas.

BG 2.5 Develop a school-wide set of pedagogical practices that are data-informed and evidence-based.

- Revisit First Steps Reading to create consistency in our approach to the teaching reading.
- Engage in the Visible learning project to teachers to gather data and evidence of to improve our consistency of pedagogical
- Write an assessment policy that identifies a for student data collection, resources and appropriate storage procedures.
- Review our school’s approach to the teaching spelling, to ensure consistent pedagogy.
3 PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE & COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

BG 3.1 Ensure a safe, healthy and productive school environment for students, staff and community.

- Engage with BCC Active School Travel Programme via Walking Wheeling Wednesdays, Road Safety and Bike and Scooter Safety education session.

BG 3.2 Forge productive links with professional bodies and institutions, the broader community and government agencies.

BG 3.3 Engage with effective professional learning communities both within schools and across the wider BCEO community.

- Participate in BCE offerings like Visible Learning, and utilise fully personnel in supporting staff with curriculum.

BG 3.4 Provide opportunities for leadership development and succession planning informed by the mission and purpose of Catholic Education.

- Widen our leadership team to include the role of a CST.
- Involve staff as part of SIT team, Visible Learning Team, LIFE team etc to enable them to take on leadership positions within our staff.

BG 3.5 Provide a comprehensive approach to staff well-being and development including professional learning, professional standards, performance management and pastoral care.

- Teachers engage with the new Professional standards setting and reviewing goals.
- Provide effective induction and mentoring practices for staff.
- Provide professional support for goal setting and review for staff.

BG 3.6 Promote partnerships that provide for consultation and engagement with parents as the primary educators of their children in the mission of the Catholic school.

- Introduce the Parent Portal as the first point of reference for parents in what is happening at the school.

BG 3.7 Strengthen structures, processes and collaboration with clergy and parish bodies to further the shared mission of parish and school.
4 Strategic Resourcing

BG 4.1 Use contemporary learning approaches to inform the planning, design and use of facilities.

- Apply for a block grant to refurbish current learning spaces to provide more contemporary facilities.

BG 4.2 Embed sustainable environmental practices into the organisational structure and processes of the school.

- Work towards litter reduction and introduce recycling of paper waste.

BG 4.3 Implement information and learning management systems that enhance student and staff engagement with learning, teaching and school operations.

- Provide opportunities for teachers to further their skills in using LIFE LMS and student and parent portals.
- Become, in stages over the next couple of years, a 1-1 device school, where parents provide the device their child needs to learn and study effectively.

BG 4.4 Allocate expenditure on resources and professional learning of staff through a budget informed by the strategic renewal plan and based on the principles of stewardship.

- Allocate funds for purchase of resources and provide professional development to support the implementation of History and Geography.

BG 4.5 Plan for growth, by taking increased enrolments in Prep and by ensuring that all classes are full.