

# **Greenacre Baptist Christian Community School Educational and Financial Reporting For 2007**

## **Principal's Report**

Greenacre Baptist Christian Community School (GBCCS) at the northern end of the Sydney suburb of Greenacre, close to the geographical heart of the city. The school is a single stream primary school drawing in enrolments from the suburb and surrounding areas up to around ten kilometres in radius. At the August census, the school had 188 children although this number grew later in the year to peak at 192 students in December.

GBCCS employed nineteen full-time or part-time staff at different times during the year. Apart from the seven class teachers, the school's staff included three teacher aides, a librarian, two Support teachers, an ESL teacher and three RFF teachers, one of whom was the school principal. The school employed one full-time and one part-time office worker and a part-time groundsman.

The school is a member of Christian Schools Australia (CSA) and previously its predecessor, Christian Community Schools (CCS). CSA, with its membership of over 150 schools, has allowed the school to grow with professional support through the head office at Macquarie Park and by networking with other local Christian Schools.

As with many other CCS schools, our motto has been "Grow up into Christ". We continue to uphold this motto and believe that in 2007, we have allowed children to be nurtured in an environment that supports the position of parents and their churches. We are determined not to proceed down a path of elitism but to continue to strive for excellence via godliness. The school aims to assist the parents and the church raise children that demonstrate biblical thinking and attitudes in all areas of life.

As 2007 was my first year of being principal at Greenacre, it has been a pleasure to be part of such a connected school community, striving for the same goals. I look forward to seeing our precious children "grow up in Christ" over the coming years.

Ken McCarron  
May 2008

## **Board Chairman's Report**

It never ceases to amaze me the way God brings things to be.

2007 was never going to be an easy year for us as our much loved principal of twenty years (Ross Crothers) had left us. Changes required by the government in regards to programming and reporting, etc were also upon us. So as we mourned our loss, we faced the prospect of change (never an appealing thought), but as we should have expected, God provided us with a wonderful new leader who has gently guided us through the beginnings of the processes of change.

Ken McCarron has come with a lot of experience in Christian Schooling and an obvious God-given talent to lead.

God continues to show His graciousness to us and we praise Him for the way He has provided for our future.

Debby Reiher  
Chairman of the Board  
Greenacre Baptist Christian Community School

## Student performance in Statewide Tests and examinations

During 2007, the school participated in the LANNA Literacy and Numeracy assessments which have been traditionally held in August each year.

### Year 3

Students who received higher than the 2007 National Benchmark:

Numeracy	88%
Reading	100%
Writing	100%

There is no National Benchmark for Spelling. However, 64% of students performed higher than the National Average.

Comparisons 2005-2007

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Numeracy</b>	96%	96%	88%
<b>Reading</b>	100%	100%	100%
<b>Writing</b>	100%	100%	100%

### Year 5

Students who received higher than the 2007 National Benchmark:

Numeracy	96%
Reading	100%
Writing	100%

There is no National benchmark for Spelling. However, 68% of students performed higher than the National Average.

Comparisons 2005-2007

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>Numeracy</b>	93%	93%	96%
<b>Reading</b>	90%	100%	100%
<b>Writing</b>	100%	100%	100%

In the context of a largely multi-cultural school, these results reflect the school's strong performance in English. As many children come to Greenacre in Kindergarten with little or no English, we believe that these results reflect a tremendous improvement by the time of the Year 3 Basic Skills testing. Overall, our English results were above the state average.

The results in Mathematics, whilst sound, are still short of our expectations. In this regard, teachers have undertaken a re-shaping of the curriculum which we would expect to bear fruit in the coming years. We have increased the amount of time for the teaching of Mathematics and have made giant strides in bringing technology into the classroom for this subject. The low results for Year 3 reflect the large number of children with learning needs in that class, a situation that will also be evident in the following cohort. These children receive a large amount of help through our Support and ESL programs.

## Teacher standards and Professional Development

Each of our teachers has teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or New Zealand.

Teachers possessing Teaching Qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or New Zealand.	12
Qualifications as a graduate from a higher educational institution within Australia or New Zealand but lacks formal teaching qualifications.	0
Do not have qualifications listed in the above areas but have relevant successful teaching experience.	0

Staff development consisted of four days in January 2007 which included orientation with the new principal, OH & S and Child Protection sessions. One day was spent updating the first aid qualifications of most of the staff. The teachers had two further days of in-service in July. Staff members also participated in training conducted by other providers. Staff development outside the school averaged two days per staff member. Significantly more time was spent by teachers in-servicing themselves outside school hours with external providers. A total of \$6159 was spent by the school on professional development for staff in 2007.

## Teacher Attendance

In 2007, the average absence rate for teaching staff was 7.1 days, the maximum being 16, out of a school year of approximately 190 days. All teaching staff from the previous year continued into 2007 except for the previous principal who completed a twenty year stint at the school at the conclusion of 2006.

## Enrolment Policies and Profiles

Our criteria for enrolment:

1. Children of families who have been attending Greenacre Baptist Church for at least twelve months.
2. Children who already have an older sibling enrolled at the school.
3. Children of families where at least one parent is a Christian who have been on the waiting list. These are processed in order of receipt.
4. Where families don't fill the criteria of one parent being a Christian, they have to be able to support the Christian ethos of the school. These are also processed in order of receipt.

In 2007 there were around 190 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6, most coming from a radius of about 7 to 8 kilometres around Greenacre. These families come from a wide variety of nationalities with significant numbers of Korean, Indonesian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Pilipino, Lebanese, Italian, Egyptian, Jordanian, Sri Lankan and Anglo backgrounds. There are several other families from other nations also. The delightful mix of Mediterranean, Asian and Anglo backgrounds is a reflection of the Greenacre community and surrounding areas.

Future enrolments are encouraging. There is a demand for school growth as there are large waiting lists in several grades. More land for playground and further buildings would be needed to be acquired if the school decided to grow beyond its current single stream status as Bankstown Council has imposed a ceiling of 200 students on the current site.

## **Student Welfare Policies**

The school's strength is in Pastoral Care and welfare policies are a part of this area. The school's mission is to "*enable the children to take their place in the community as witnesses to the power of God in their individual lives*". At the beginning of the year, teachers were directed to that statement and in turn they have been able to work toward that goal. Our Pastoral Care policy, which we believe is generally working most successfully, provides students with the opportunities to develop the knowledge skills and dispositions for positive relationships as defined by the National Safe Schools Framework (p. 5).

From this policy, students are taught the vital values of respect, kindness, safety and stewardship. These are entrenched in our Biblical Studies program but reinforced through our Protective Behaviours and Relationships program and a number of lessons in each class early in the year with an anti-bullying focus. These programs allow for the children to identify and discuss issues regarding relationships in the classroom and in many cases deal more effectively with matters when they arise in the classroom.

Occupational Health and Safety is recognised as being a vital component in the protection of staff, students and families. The school has a reputation for listening to its community and acting swiftly upon notice of any concern in this area. Teachers have the opportunity at regular staff meetings to raise any potential hazards and a risk assessment is undertaken by the principal. As a result the classrooms and playground are of high quality in the area of safety.

In 2007, an anti-bullying policy was developed by the principal from the policies used successfully in a number of other schools. This was created to expand upon the Pastoral Care policy in a proactive way. The full policy can be obtained from the office.

## **Discipline Policy**

This policy centres on three areas:

1. We want our school to be a safe place.
2. We want our school to be a safe place where students feel loved.
3. We want our school to be a place where all children are treated fairly and with justice.

The discipline policy did not change during 2007. The policy in itself is an important part of the pastoral care of the students. There are also appropriate policies in this area that sum up the school's Biblical focus on nurturing.

The school does not administer corporal punishment nor does it work with parents to administer any form of corporal punishment in partnership with the home.

The school's full policy can be obtained from the office.

## **Complaints and Grievances Policy**

The school has a copy of the Grievance Policy. It is followed in many cases although it is recognised that there can often be extraordinary situations in human nature where other approaches may be required.

We desire to be God-honouring in the ways we deal with complaints and one way this can be done is to work through issues at the earliest possible time and at GBCCS, staff, parents and students are encouraged to “nip problems in the bud” before the matter escalates. Nevertheless, there are specific procedures to be followed in the case of more serious disputes or grievances.

No changes were made to this policy in 2007.

## **Priority Areas for Improvement**

The school aims to continue to improve its focus on Information Technology in two areas:

1. To provide an area in the school library for class group computer activities.
2. Increase the number of computers in Years K-4 classrooms.
3. To further assist teachers in becoming more proficient in the use of computers in both their own skills and in developing student skills.
4. To see computers used more regularly and more productively in each KLA.

The school has become more active in team sports. It is hoped to commence a program that will give children access to most of the team sports available in the Bankstown area over Years 3-6. Each year, the school hopes to become more involved in competition both internally and with other schools.

The school grounds have improved in appearance with the breaking of the drought in Sydney. The lawns and gardens are quite presentable. The school owns some adjoining land and needs to consider growing the school playground. The car park needs to be relocated which will also provide children with a bigger play area.

The school continues to provide well for students with disabilities and ESL children but the number of these children appears to be on the increase. The school needs to tackle this area efficiently to reach a greater number of children. Some work has been undertaken with children who are classified as Gifted and Talented Students. This is an area to be developed in future years.

## **Actions Undertaken to Promote Respect and Responsibility**

The school has developed respect and responsibility by:

1. Providing an environment where teachers require children to be respectful to adults, Australians of different nationalities and to each other.
2. Displaying the Commonwealth’s “Values for Australian Schools” posters in its administration area and teaching those principles at all grade levels.
3. Having the children sing the national anthem in assemblies.
4. Upholding the principles of the National Safe Schools Framework and displaying the framework poster in the administration area.
5. Producing a new anti-bullying policy and following its procedures in the case of an incident.

## **Teacher, Student and Parental Satisfaction**

The stability of the school over a number of years has been based on parent and student satisfaction. Teachers have traditionally enjoyed a long tenure at the school with maternity leave being the most common reason for a teacher's departure.

Anecdotally, the parent community remains positive about the school. The school's spiritual focus is a major reason but there is also a positive regard for the teachers and the school's wonderful nurturing environment.

There is a strong sense of community with a high parental involvement in excursions, special days and a good turnout at school functions such as the musical and bi-annual barbecues. There are still many parents who offer their services to help in the classroom with reading and writing programs and they are quickly welcomed as important members of the class community.

Positive responses were appreciated with the increased focus on team sports in 2007. A number of parents commented on their child's enjoyment at having the opportunity to represent the school in cricket, softball and soccer during the year as well as the regular sports provided by the school.

Similar comments were made about new excursion opportunities and other activities that were a break from regular class routine. The special focus of learning in National Literacy and Numeracy Week were positively received, especially with the success of the Poetry Reading competition.

The school will continue to monitor the parents' impressions of the school and look to new ways to provide for the children to the satisfaction of all sectors of the school community.

## **School Finances**

Summary of Financial Performance for the year ended 31 December 2006:

### **Income 2006**

Income from student fees	21%
Government Recurrent Grants	71%
Other Capital Income	8%
Other income	less than 1%

### **Expenditure 2006**

Salaries allowances and other related expenses	67%
Non-capital expenses	29%
Capital expenditure	4%

# Appendix 1

## Greenacre Baptist Christian Community School Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

### Policy Statement

Every child at Greenacre Baptist Christian community school (GBCCS) has the right to come to school and enjoy positive relationships with their peers, those in other classes and their teachers. Children should be able to learn in an environment which is free of intimidation and violence so that they can continue to develop in their character, their relationship with God and in the academic and physical aspects of school life. All teachers are committed to providing the children with a safe and caring environment.

***Bullying in any form will not be tolerated at GBCCS***

### Rights and Responsibilities

- Everyone in the school has the right to be safe
- All children should be responsible for not bullying others in any way
- It is the responsibility of all children to let staff know about bullying situations of which they are aware.

In a godly school a person's problems are a shared concern. We ought to feel for the child that is facing issues in their life and should encourage children to be prayerful of others' needs. In this way, any bullying situation becomes a concern for all. ***Bullying is everyone's problem.*** If anyone is being bullied there is an atmosphere of intimidation that creates a classroom or playground climate of fear rather than one of peace. Everyone is damaged in that environment.

### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is a sustained or repeated series of activities aimed at hurting, alienating, embarrassing, frightening or humiliating another person via verbal, physical or interpersonal means. It can be direct or symbolic in nature.

### Examples of Bullying

Verbal:

- Using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their loved ones.
- Using put-downs, belittling others abilities and achievements.
- Making degrading comments about a person's culture, religious or social background.

- Ridiculing another's appearance.

#### Physical

- Any form of violence such as hitting, pushing, inappropriately touching or spitting on others.
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it.

#### Interpersonal

- Hurtfully excluding others from a group.
- Forcing others to act against their will.
- Writing offensive notes about others on paper, electronically or via graffiti.

## **Anti-bullying Procedures**

#### Students:

- Tell a teacher or other staff member immediately.
- All reports will be taken seriously and will be part of an investigative process.
- Students will be regularly updated on playground expectations and any recent behaviour concerns by class teachers and by the principal at whole school assembly.

#### Staff:

- If a student reports a case of sustained bullying or what could be the forerunner to same, staff will set in place an investigative process
- Teachers will listen to the child's version of events and acknowledge it regardless of whether the report appears trivial.
- Any incident of concern will be reported to the class teacher, Stage co-ordinator, or if of a more serious nature, the principal.
- The appropriate member of staff will make children and all relevant staff i.e. teacher aides, part-time teachers, aware of the process taking place and any resulting action, if necessary.

#### Parents and Caregivers:

- Parents will be aware of the school's anti-bullying policy and have access via the website or hard copy from the office.
- Parents will be informed of any inappropriate conduct by or against their child.
- Student behaviour and/or pastoral care policies will indicate the nature of inappropriate behaviour and the discipline process in the school. Parents should be aware of the school rules and encourage their children to follow them.

## **Intervention/Prevention Strategies**

Greenacre Baptist CCS will continue to develop strategies with the students during class and whole school devotions and during Personal Development lessons. There are some other strategies/options that are relevant:

- Child protection
- Drug education (including Life Education van)
- Buddy system with Kindergarten and Year 6.
- Harmony Day celebrations
- Support and ESL teachers
- Anti-bullying posters
- Occasional presentation by performers with an anti-bullying theme
- Referral to outside agencies where necessary
- Continual reviewal of playground rules and safety
- Continual identification of unacceptable behaviours in classrooms
- School leadership program

## **Strategies for Dealing with Bullies**

It is important to work with bullies in order to work through the issues that have caused the bullying. Very often, the bully has been bullied themselves. At other times, they have self-esteem issues that have caused the behaviour.

The role of the teacher is to encourage responses from the bully that may help the situation and bring about resolution to the conflict. Alone, the bully may be able to express an acknowledgement of wrongdoing to the victim and accept responsibility. It is vital in working through the issues that the bully is treated with respect themselves as this approach is much more likely to bring the two parties together in harmony at the conclusion of the investigation.

If a group of children have been involved in bullying a student, it is important to work with individuals in the first instance and then bring the entire group together for final mediation. All children should be treated with dignity and allowed to respond to allegations with out fear. They must also be given reasonable opportunity to arrest their behaviour via a “fresh start”.

The bully needs to be able to identify bullying behaviours. He needs to be aware of why his actions are not acceptable and take actions for his behaviour.

Bullies need to be able to establish a course of action that may resolves the problem with the victim.

## **Strategies for the Bullied**

When talking to the victim, it is important that a teacher use age appropriate language that gives that person the opportunity to identify the problem/behaviour that has occurred. Strategies should be given to help the victim deal with the problem.

Some important strategies for teachers:

1. Believe them “This is important to you.” “Thank you for telling me” “You have done the right thing in telling me.”
2. Determine feelings “How did you feel?” “How do you feel now?” “It sounds like you feel....”
3. Timeline episodes “Let’s take one specific, recent situation.” “Let me try to understand what happened.”
4. Introduce Concept of Vicious Cycle “Let’s try to see what happens in terms of a cycle which is self perpetuating.” “You are not to blame for the cycle but there may be something you can do to break the cycle.”
5. Behavioural Rehearsal “What can you say and do which would be different and which would break the vicious cycle?” “Let’s rehearse that now.”
6. Assertiveness Training “Practise ‘I’ statements.”
7. Praise, Encouragement and Goal Setting “This is fantastic – the new insights you have made.” “In the next few days, you could experiment with your new skills.” “How much energy do you need to put into this?”

## **Use of Sanctions**

Despite counselling and efforts to encourage the bully to feel concern for the victim and take responsibility to improve the relationship, the problem may still remain unresolved with the victim requiring protection. Serious talks with the bully and his parents may then be necessary. Sanctions may be imposed, resulting in detention, withdrawal of privileges and internal suspension. In the more serious cases, external suspension or expulsion may be required.

## **Resources**

The bullying policies of:

Christian Community High School  
Coffs Harbour Christian Community School  
Parramatta North Public School