

# ***St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College***



# ***Annual Report***

# ***2007***

*Prepared by Executive Staff*

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# **Message From the Principal**

St. Mark's is a K-12 co-educational college, operating within the Association of Independent Schools (NSW). St. Mark's was established in 1996 at rented premises in Lidcombe and moved to our present site at Wattle Grove in 1999.

We are proud of our Coptic Orthodox heritage and this faith is the cornerstone of our College community. Apart from the Coptic people of Sydney, we are attracting increased interest from members of the local community who value the strong Christian ethos of the College. There is a strong family feel to the College, with the wider Coptic Community, the Coptic Church, the parents, the students and staff all contributing to the welcoming atmosphere of the College.

Participation in Music, Sports and other co-curricular activities is strongly promoted within the College, with the view to producing well-rounded individuals who can contribute positively to Australian society. Camps are an important feature of the College curriculum, providing important experiential learning and a diversity of cultural experiences for our students.

All of our students are encouraged to strive for excellence in all of their pursuits. Excellence is always defined in relative, rather than absolute, terms. Personal best becomes the reference point for these determinations. A strong staff assists the students to achieve their educational goals, within a caring and safe environment.

## ***School Performance in State-Wide Tests and Examinations***

### ***Curriculum Report 2007***

#### **Overview**

The 2007 Academic Year once again demonstrated the quality teaching and learning occurring at St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox College. The staff and students of the College are to be commended for their efforts throughout the year and for the wonderful results attained.

#### **Higher School Certificate Synopsis**

In 2007, 55 students sat for the New South Wales Higher School Certificate in 22 courses. In total, 99% of candidates across all courses achieved marks of 50 or more (Band 2 or higher) with 41% of these placed in Band 5 and 6 (80-100 marks) and nearly 71% of candidates in Band 4 or above. Of the 42 candidates who sat for one unit extension courses, all achieved 25 marks or more out of 50, with 36% of these achieving in the highest bands with 40 marks or more.

Some notable achievements are tabulated below:

| <b>Subject</b>               | <b>Band Range</b> | <b>School (%)</b> | <b>State (%)</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Biology                      | 5 – 6             | 53                | 33               |
| Business Studies             | 6                 | 9                 | 6                |
| Chemistry                    | 5 – 6             | 50                | 39               |
| English (Standard)           | 4 – 6             | 53                | 39               |
| English (Advanced)           | 5 – 6             | 76                | 47               |
| English Extension 1          | 5 – 6             | 100               | 80               |
| Mathematics General          | 4 – 6             | 75                | 59               |
| Mathematics 2 Unit           | 5 – 6             | 56                | 39               |
| Mathematics Extension 1      | E4                | 42                | 32               |
| Mathematics Extension 2      | E3 – E4           | 89                | 83               |
| PDHPE                        | 4 - 6             | 78                | 63               |
| Physics                      | 6                 | 11                | 9                |
| Studies of Religion I        | 6                 | 18                | 9                |
| Visual Arts                  | 4 - 6             | 100               | 90               |
| Arabic Continuers            | 5 - 6             | 75                | 36               |
| Information Technology (VET) | 4 - 6             | 71                | 51               |

The Coptic Community can once again be proud of the achievements of the students of the College, having performed with distinction in the 2008 Higher School Certificate Examinations. On an individual basis, of the students who have contacted the college, 15 students (55 students completed their HSC this year) received UAI's of 90 or above, with our highest rated student receiving the outstanding UAI of 99.6.

In 14 out of the 22 courses students attempted, St. Mark's exceeded state averages in the following:

- Advanced English, Standard English and Extension 1 English;
- Mathematics 2 unit, Mathematics Extension 1 and Mathematics Extension 2;
- Biology, Chemistry and Physics;
- Business Studies;
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education;
- Visual Arts;
- Arabic Continuers;
- Information Technology (VET).

In subjects that were not as statistically successful, impressive individual results were obtained and the individual needs of students were properly provided for in all cases. Overall, the College came 79th out of over 750 schools in the achievement of marks over 90 as a factor of the number of examinations attempted by our students.

The College and Coptic communities can be justifiably proud of the achievements of all of the students who completed their studies in 2007. We thank the community and parents for their support, the students for their efforts and all of the staff of the College, of whom have contributed to this success. In particular, we thank the teachers for their efforts, which went

above and beyond professional requirements and clearly demonstrated their love for their students.

We look forward to continued success in 2008, with God's blessings and your continued support.

### **Post School Destinations**

88% of our cohort went to university in 2008. Of these a significant number chose science related subjects including Medicine, Pharmacy and Engineering. A few chose education and social work.

### **School Certificate**

The 2007 School Certificate results are summarised in the table below:

| Test   | Number of students | Performance Band Achieved by % |                         |
|--|--------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
|  |                    | Bands 1 – 2                    | Bands 3 – 6             |
| English – Literacy                           | 60                 | 3                              | 97                      |
| Mathematics                                  | 60                 | 17                             | 83                      |
| Science                                      | 60                 | 7                              | 93                      |
| Australian History, Civics and Citizenship   | 60                 | 17                             | 83                      |
| Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship | 60                 | 10                             | 90                      |
|  |                    | <b>Competent</b>               | <b>Highly Competent</b> |
| Computing Skills                             | 60                 | 52                             | 47                      |

With virtually every student at the College progressing to further studies, the School Certificate Examinations are not as crucial to St. Mark's students as they are in many other schools and, as such, they do not necessarily receive the same level of interest and attention from our students. Nevertheless, our students have performed particularly well, demonstrating superior understanding in Mathematics and Science.

In Mathematics, 43% of our students were placed in the top two bands (there are 6 bands in total), compared to only 22% across the state. Similarly, in Science, 68% of our students, compared to 66% across the state, were placed in the top three bands.

Our challenge, as a College Community, is to convince the students of the importance of the School Certificate Examinations. There are very few occasions when we have the opportunity to accurately gauge our progress against external standards. It is critical that our students perform to their potential so that we get a true picture of their relative performance and so that we can attain a thorough understanding of any weaknesses that may need correction, in order to better assist our students with their progression towards their HSC.

For the students, these examinations represent an important opportunity to familiarise themselves with the processes of external examinations and to practise the study techniques that they will apply to their HSC Examinations.

I would like to congratulate our Year 10 Students on their results and know that they will go on to bigger and better things. My thanks go to the parents who have assisted them on their journey and to the Coptic Community who have supported all of our endeavours. Many thanks go to the teachers who contribute so ably and so willingly.

### ***Literacy and Numeracy Assessments in Years 3, 5, 7 & 8***

Results for the Basic Skills Test and the Writing Assessment are summarised in the table below:

| <b>2007 Test</b>               | <b>Year 3</b> |                    | <b>Year 5</b>      |                    |
|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                                | <b>Band 1</b> | <b>Bands 2 - 5</b> | <b>Bands 1 – 2</b> | <b>Bands 3 - 6</b> |
| <b>Basic Skills Test (BST)</b> |               |                    |                    |                    |
| Aspects of Literacy            | 8%            | 92%                | 10%                | 90%                |
| Aspects of Numeracy            | 11%           | 89%                | 7%                 | 93%                |

Our Year 3 results were particularly pleasing and indicate that the Spalding approach, which had been trialled through Years K – 2, has been effective in addressing our previous concerns over literacy. Numeracy results are also improved. A number of special programmes have been initiated, which appear to be helping to improve standards. For our Year 5 students, they have continued to produce pleasing results.



Results for ELLA and SNAP are summarised in the table below:

| 2007 Test   | Percentage of students achieving Elementary Band or Higher |        |
|---|--|--------|
|   | Year 7   | Year 8 |
| <b>English Language and Literacy Test (ELLA)</b>    |  |        |
| Writing   | 100  | 100    |
| Reading   | 100  | 100    |
| Language  | 95   | 100    |
| <b>Secondary Numeracy Assessment Program (SNAP)</b> |  |        |
| Numeracy  | 100  | 100    |
| Number  | 100  | 100    |
| Measurement   | 97   | 100    |
| Space   | 95   | 98     |
| Data  | 100  | 100    |
| Patterns and Algebra                                | 92   | 100    |

The results in ELLA for Year 8, when compared to Year 7, showed that our standards are continuing to rise against external indicators, with all students recording overall progress in literacy.

SNAP results are also continuing to trend upwards in all areas, reflecting the improvements made to the curriculum after analysing earlier results. College results are above state average in every SNAP category. The vast majority of students in Year 8 improved upon their Year 7 results. These represent our College's best ever results.

**Teacher Attendance and retention:** For the Year June 2006 to June 2007 the teacher attendance daily average was 94%. The retention rate was 88%

## Teacher Standards

46 Full time teachers

3 Part Time teachers

40 Fully Accredited teachers

9 Teachers with Degrees and undertaking study in a Diploma of Education.

All teachers are encouraged to attend a variety of in-service training and all teachers attend at least two in-services yearly. All teachers will renew their First Aid Certificates in October 2008. Some attained a variety of sports coaching certificates.

## **Retention Rates**

In 2007 the retention rates in Year 7 to 12 was 105%. In Years 6 to 7 nearly all students continued at St Mark's College and enrolments increased in Yr 7. In Years 7 to 12 enrolments grew slightly with almost 100% retention rates for existing students. New enrolments created a growth in enrolments as the 2007 Year 10 cohort moved into Year 11. Enrolments increased significantly over the whole year due to the community's support of the College and its strong religious, pastoral and academic programmes.

## **Capital Works**

Over the last year the College has added six new buildings. These are a Food Technology Centre, new change rooms, two classrooms and a Chapel as well as a Uniform shop. In addition the Commonwealth Government assisted with a grant for the Hard-court facility which is so popular with the students.

## **College Policies**

### ***Child Protection***

The School's "Child Protection Policy" details legislative requirements (Ombudsman Act 1974, Child Protection Act 1998, Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998, Children Care and Protection Act 1987 and Amendment Act 2003 and Children and Young Persons' Protection Act 1998. This introduction briefly explains the procedures to be followed, with the Head of College in reporting instances of abuse to the appropriate authorities.

Advice is given and professional development days are set aside to outline to staff the "Do's and Don'ts" when dealing with children under their care and explains how to be aware of behavioural signs of physical, verbal or sexual abuse. The procedures for dealing with, and the reporting of, these incidents are discussed at length and are set in place for staff to follow.

One staff member has received training from the AIS in conducting investigations and is responsible for the process. Any allegations raised against staff are taken seriously and the school follows the process as recommended by The Association of Independent

Schools and the NSW Independent Education Union: 'Protocols for Internal Investigation and Disciplinary Proceedings'. Any behaviour that has been found to be reportable conduct is passed on to the appropriate authorities (DOCS, Ombudsman and the Commission for Children and Young People) by the Head of Agency (Head of College). Information is passed on to students through Coptic Orthodox Studies, PDHPE and Pastoral Care lessons and at special assemblies. Parents are made aware of Child Protection issues raised through the College Newsletter or notes sent home. Employees are screened prior to employment through an extensive interview process, with follow up calls to previous employers and referees, and by completing a Prohibited Employment Declaration Form.

## ***Anti-Bullying***

This policy is clearly outlined in the school diary which is disseminated to all within the community. It defines bullying as “any single or repetitive act whose intent is to cause hurt or unhappiness” and details types. Teacher responses and sanctions are outlined.

## ***Occupational Health and Safety***

Occupational Health and Safety refers to the relevant legislation, incident prevention and management, obligations of employer and employees, and Workers’ Compensation requirements of the College and staff. A College OHS Committee is being formed under the leadership of Mr Austing and, over the last term a large number of issues have been rectified. The College board is informed of OHS issues each meeting and reviews of policy and situations are taking place regularly.

## ***Risk Management***

Risk Management describes how to identify and manage risks in all aspects and areas of College life. It includes a Risk Management Checklist and Risk Management Procedures with sample plans. Risk management takes place for every excursion.

## ***Policies for Emergencies and Critical Events***

Policies for Emergencies and Critical Events define procedures and drills, duties, and the possible need for Counselling subsequently. The Deputy Head of College oversees, reviews and implements policy. Emergency Drills are conducted each term for the whole College Community.

## ***Excursions***

Teachers are responsible for Risk Assessment before excursions. Preparatory activities, procedures for organising, procedures following an accident, and student/adult supervision ratios are documented.

## ***Professional Standards***

Professional Standards refers to the responsibilities of staff for students in their care during class time and at play/sport times. It explains the use of grounds and facilities, and it details security (eg. locking all classrooms when no teacher present). Overall responsibility for College security is in the hands of the Deputy Head of College.

## ***Student Attendance***

Student attendance equals to a 96% daily average.

Student Attendance refers to attendance requirements and the sanctions that flow from inadequately explained absences. Duties include: using rolls to record absences; contacting parents; seeking formal notes; or contacting the appropriate authorities.

## ***Complaints and Resolving Grievances***

### **1. Curriculum**

#### **Junior School**

Complaints and grievances are referred to, and resolved by, Classroom Teachers, Junior School Stage Leaders, Head of Curriculum and the Head of College. All complaints are investigated and, depending on the severity of the Complaint, any, or all, of the persons mentioned above may be involved in the resolution.

Curriculum matters are governed by Board of Studies Requirements and College Assessment and Reporting Policies.

#### **Senior School**

Complaints and grievances are referred to, and resolved by, the Classroom Teachers, Heads of Faculties, Head of Curriculum and the Head of College. All complaints are investigated and, depending on the severity of the complaint, any, or all, of the persons mentioned above may be involved in the resolution.

Curriculum matters are governed by Board of Studies Requirements and College Assessment and Reporting Policies.

### **2. Welfare**

#### **Junior School**

Complaints and grievances are referred to, and resolved by, the Classroom Teachers, Junior School Stage Leaders, Deputy Head of College and the Head of College. All complaints are investigated and, depending on the severity, of the complaint, any, or all, of the persons mentioned above may be involved in the resolution.

Welfare complaints may also involve the College Priest, College Counsellor, School Investigator or/and external bodies (eg DOCS or other Child Protection Authorities).

#### **Senior School**

Complaints and grievances are referred to, and resolved by, the Classroom Teachers, House Tutors, House Patrons, Deputy Head of College and the Head of College. All complaints are investigated and, depending on the severity of the complaint, any, or all, of the persons mentioned above may be involved in the resolution.

Welfare complaints may also involve the College Priest, College Counsellor, School Investigator or/and external bodies (eg DOCS or other Child Protection Authorities).

## ***Enrolment Policy***

The College is a fully comprehensive co-educational school from Kindergarten to Year 12, underpinned by religious values and operating within the policies of the NSW Board of Studies. Parents and students are interviewed by the Head of College prior to enrolment. Parents are expected to provide all the appropriate documentation from preschool or other schools, including: academic, pastoral, administrative and medical information. The Christian ethos of the College and the pastoral policy is expected to be upheld and fully supported by the parents and the students.

Procedures:

1. All applications are processed within the School's Enrolment Policy.
2. Each applicant's educational needs are assessed and considered, through the collation and viewing of information.
3. Strategies are identified and reviewed based on the needs of the applicant, before enrolment takes place.
4. The responses derived from the interview are considered regarding their willingness to be a part of the School Community and to support the School's Ethos.
5. Students with learning difficulties are accepted with the parents being told the level of support available.
6. Parents are informed formally of the outcome.

The School had an enrolment of 615 students in 2007 from Kindergarten to Year 12. Our student population comes from a vast area of Sydney and its outer metropolitan area and have varied social and language backgrounds. A number of students are ESL and some require special needs. In addition, some enrolments include overseas students.

## ***Student Welfare Policy***

### **A Christian College**

The College seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which minimises risk of harm and ensures that students feel secure. St Mark's College supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of all students.

The College implements measures designed to promote the safety and well-being of students. The College exercises its professional judgement as to what is required and will include in its consideration such matters as:

- a) appropriate levels of supervision;
- b) security of buildings;
- c) procedures in case of fire (Evacuation Policy);
- d) use of grounds and facilities;
- e) travel on College related activities; and
- f) Other appropriate matters.

The implementation of these requirements and procedures will be monitored for compliance from time to time.

All employees (both teaching and non teaching) are screened for 'Child Protection' prior to the commencement of employment at the College.

Appropriate measures are taken by College Staff to seek to ensure that all students are adequately cared for and supervised while undertaking both on-site activities, bearing in mind the type of activities and the age of the students involved.

Genuine care for the students is in our hearts at all times – even when student behaviour has been frustrating. Bad behaviour must not be taken personally, but, rather, professionally. It should be dealt with firmly, but without ceasing to communicate the teacher's care for the student. Some form of resolution and restoration of the relationship between the teacher and the student is necessary after disciplining. Follow up of students in distress is essential. *“For I will not contend forever, nor will I always be angry. For the spirit would fail before Me and the souls which I have made” (Isaiah 7:16)*

If a student feels genuine care from their teacher; they will generally be willing to accept almost anything from them.

These principles are reinforced regularly in staff and faculty meetings and briefings – at every opportunity.

Existing staff that go outside these principles are counselled and advised appropriately by the College Leadership Team.

Only teachers who are capable of effectively implementing the Christian aspect of the College's belief statements are employed.

## **Professional Support**

The College employs a Counsellor (2 day per week for 2006). Teachers refer students to her, or students may approach her independently. The counsellor works in concert with staff, parents and parish to meet students' needs.

Parish Priests who visit the College may also be used as a resource for counselling students and/or parents where appropriate.

The College Counsellor will be a resource person who can refer people on to other professionals as required.

Special Ed. The school has 3 part-time special Education Teachers

## **Welfare Committee**

A committee made up of the Deputy Head of College (Chairperson), Junior School Head, COS Head, Administration Head, House Patrons & College Counsellor meet fortnightly to assess the needs of individual students who are facing problems and work towards finding solutions, including rigorous review and follow-up of strategies.

Mentors from among the staff are assigned to individual students by the Committee. Plans are devised and put in place for helping students. This might include the teacher asking about the student on a daily basis, encouraging, praising good efforts and behaviour, liaising with other staff, counselling, or simply being a “friend”. We all know how powerful such individual relationships can be.

## **Building Love and Other Virtues**

Staff create opportunities to mix with students informally: interaction with students when teachers are on playground duty; coaching of sporting teams; and pastoral care period. This increases the respect and love of the students for the staff and enhances the love and care of the staff for the students.

A House System is in place in the College. All students are members of one of four Houses. In the Senior School each House has four House Groups consisting of students from Years 7 to 12. This allows students to have the opportunity to mix with students from different Year Groups and Year 11 & 12 students are encouraged to become both good role models and a support mechanism for the Year 7 to 10 students. House Tutors also have the opportunity to play a stronger pastoral role. The House System allows a rapport to develop and deepen and makes caring for the students easier.

Pastoral Period occurs once a week. During this period House Tutors conduct Pastoral lessons with students. Topics are determined by the Head of COS or the Welfare Committee, depending on student needs.

School Assemblies take place on a daily basis. It is a time where, as a school, we pray together, acknowledge achievement (academic, sporting, positive behaviour) and incorporate activities that teach etiquette, courtesy and cooperation

Years 5 to 12 students all attend Retreats each year. The programs for each Retreat include time for staff and students to pray and to play together, to get to know one another and to participate in activities that develop cooperation. This is especially helpful for Year 7 whose transition to a new stage of education is made easier as they feel welcomed and at ease with their new teachers.

*The Student Welfare Policy and associated procedures is provided to all members of the College Community through the Staff Handbook and the Student Diary.*

*This policy is reviewed and developed through consultation with all College Staff by the Welfare Committee on a yearly basis.*

# Pastoral Care Program



## ***Rational***

***"I have come that you may have life and have it to the full."***

**John 10.10**

The Pastoral Care of students has always been a feature of St Mark's Coptic Orthodox College. The word 'pastoral' is derived from the Latin 'pastor' or 'shepherd' referring to Jesus, the Good Shepherd who cares for his flock. Pastoral Care refers to the total care of the student and is based upon a belief in the dignity of the person. In our school, it is expressed through:

- the establishment of an effective care network for every student,
- the provision of satisfying and fulfilling learning experiences within a safe, encouraging, and compassionate environment, and
- The development of quality relationships within the total school community.

Everyone in the College is involved in pastoral care. Pastoral care is not solely a responsibility for Roll Call teachers, Heads of House, College Fathers, or other specialist staff. Every member of staff (teaching and non-teaching) has a responsibility and is accountable for the pastoral care of students. The well-being and care of students is the core of the College's teaching and learning program (curricular and co-curricular).

At St Mark's College, we are committed to assisting each student to mature in every area - spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally. We seek to establish structures and policies which will allow young people to experience "life to the full". "Living life to the full" means the recognition and celebration of achievement and satisfaction, while also showing perseverance and the personal power to manage difficulty.

To enable students to do this we:

- Promote the fostering of high quality interpersonal relationships between students, parents and staff as a responsibility shared by everyone.
- Foster students' self discipline and responsibility, wherein students grow progressively in their capacity to exercise moral judgement, democratic values and a concern for the common good.



- Provide a Pastoral Care program as a specific and planned means of helping students to value themselves and to experience well being.
- Provide a comprehensive and high quality curriculum so that students are afforded the competence, confidence and right to participate in the cultural and productive life of society.
- Provide supportive organisation and administrative structures, which are responsive to the needs and well being of students.
- Promote the relationships of trust, cooperation and partnership between the school and family members, and the maintenance by school personnel of respect for and sensitivity to diverse cultural values and family structures and issues.

We seek to achieve these principles through:

- The COS and Retreat program
- Promoting Interfaith and Intercultural Understanding in School Settings Pilot Programme
- National Values Programme
- Camp programs
- Liturgies and Assemblies
- Guest speakers
- Pastoral Care program
- House structure
- Personal Development program
- Curriculum
- Co-curricular activities
- Availability of committed staff
- Daily interaction that supports a students personal growth

### *Pastoral Care Structure*

Effective Pastoral care is built upon a partnership between the College and parents. Parents and guardians are an essential part of the pastoral care network in the College and will be consulted on all important issues concerning their children and where possible should be included in decision-making processes. It is essential therefore that there is open and efficient communication between the College and home.

Every teacher is committed to the pastoral care and guidance of students in his/her care. The school acknowledges that parents are the main pastoral carers of their children and where concerns arise; every attempt will be made to work through these problems jointly by involving parent, student and staff. The school undertakes the following procedures where concerns arise:

- the Roll Call teacher is first involved and makes every attempt to sort out the problems with the student
- where difficulties still arise the House Patron will follow up by interviewing the student
- If concerns continue then the School Counselor and/or Deputy Principal will be involved.

Parents may be contacted at any time throughout the above procedure.

Students are free to approach the School Counsellor, House Patron or Roll Call teacher for an interview. Some students need short term individual care while a longer period of care is required for others. Confidentiality of the student is maintained.

Relations between staff and students are based on trust and a mutual respect for another. Pastoral care respects the personal rights and confidences of each individual. Staff will be informed by House Patrons on a "need to know" basis of information pertinent to the care of any individual student. Where it is deemed appropriate students will be referred on to those with professional expertise for help and guidance.

The pastoral care of students is woven into their daily lives at school through formal and informal contact with staff, COS Program and Retreats, Pastoral Care Program, Special Education Program, Orientation Program for Year 7, Activities Program, Camping Program for Years 7 - 10, and Sport.

### ***Promoting Interfaith and Intercultural Understanding in School Settings - Pilot Programme***

St Mark's College was selected in 2007 to participate in the Promoting Interfaith and Intercultural Understanding pilot program. We are one of several schools within the Macquarie Fields cluster of schools who are piloting this programme, along with schools in the Lakemba cluster. Our college has chosen to incorporate **Interfaith and Intercultural Understanding** within its **Pastoral Care Program**. We feel that it ties in strongly with the themes and values which our PC Program is based upon. Therefore, throughout our PC Program, the IIU principles that our college has selected (HEART), which is outlined below, will need to be incorporated. It is important that staff and students are made aware of the importance to promote **Interfaith and Intercultural Understanding** within our college whenever it is placed within the PC Program.

#### **Project Title: Walking to the Heart of Australia**

##### **Brief project overview**

##### ***Overall Outcome to be achieved:***

Celebrating **H**umanity, **E**quity, **A**cceptance, **R**espect and **T**olerance (**HEART**), with each other as Australians living together in God's great garden – Australia.

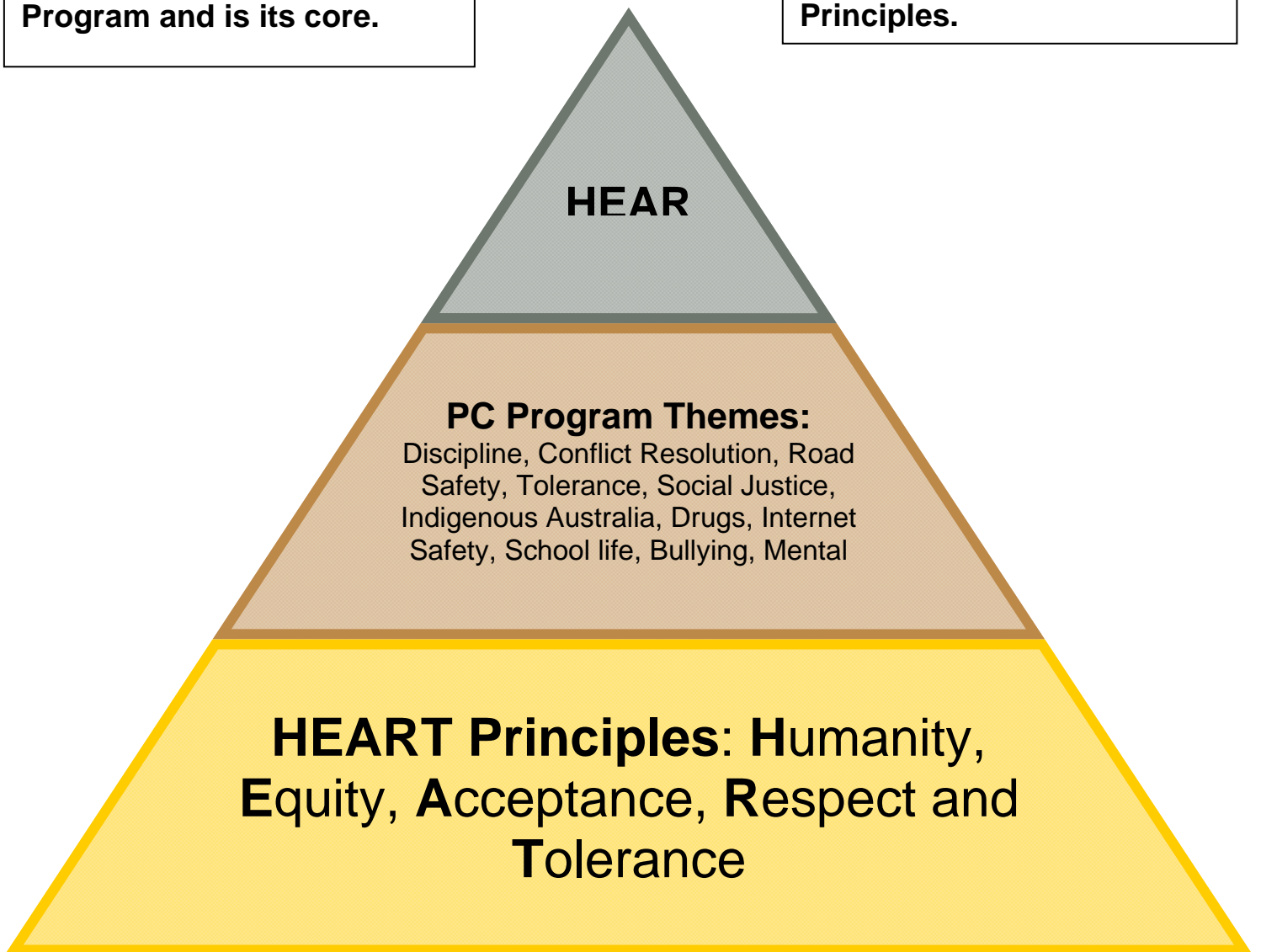
At St Mark's College, we want to incorporate IIU within our Pastoral Care Program, as well as into our specific projects which occur on an annual as well as one-off basis, such as Harmony Day, People to People Project, Korean Exchange Program, and World Youth Day etc.

##### ***The ways that this project responds to local needs:***

At St Mark's College, our students and parents are dominantly of one faith and culture, that being Coptic Orthodox and Egyptian / Sudanese. Therefore, our IIU project hopes to widen our students, parents as well as the wider local community, about the wealth of benefits which the diversity of faiths and cultures within our nation have to offer.

**HEART is central to our PC Program and is its core.**

**IU underlies the HEART Principles.**



**Implementation: Pastoral Care**

Pastoral care affects the lives of staff, students and families associated with the College and is the responsibility of all. It is reflected in the teaching and co-curricular programme, the Camp programme, the liturgical life of the College, and all interactions within the College community. Most specifically, the House system is a key organisational structure that exists to implement Pastoral Care for students at the College.

## **The House System**

The House system is responsible for student welfare, student behaviour, organisation of interschool competition (sports, cultural) and for fostering the further development of school spirit and a sense of community. The vertical Roll Call Homeroom structure remains an integral part of House organisation and the Roll Call teacher is the first (and central) link in the pastoral structures within the College.

The House system is a primary structure in helping develop students' sense of belonging to the school and also in fostering school and community spirit.

The House system aims:

- To provide continuity in pastoral care within the Houses over Years K - 12, allowing the House Patron and Roll Call teachers the opportunity to establish ongoing support and understanding of students, a means of monitoring their personal development (intellectual, emotional, psychological) and to maintain strong pastoral links with families.
- To help cultivate and identify student leadership within the College.
- To develop student awareness of personal responsibilities as members of the College community and the values of the College.
- To simplify the communication channels between home and school for each individual student.
- To promote and more clearly articulate the role and importance of the Roll call teacher as mentor.
- To naturally complement the other vertical structures within the College and make House activities more effective.
- To strengthen student identity within the College and the Houses, further fostering House/school spirit.

The House Patrons are specifically responsible for the following areas:

1. Pastoral Care
2. Discipline
3. Student Welfare
4. Supervision of Houses and Homerooms
5. College Liturgies and social activities – Camps/Retreats
6. Inter-house activities

## Academic Care in NSW Independent Schools

(A Charter for Academic Care - August 2004)

**Academic Care** is a construct arising from research conducted by the Pastoral Care Network operating in the NSW independent school sector. The research showed a strong need for all teachers to better understand their pastoral role and its impact on student learning and well-being. This charter encourages continuing discourse to promote the integration of pastoral and academic domains of schools.

**Academic Care:** enhancing student learning, well-being and resilience through pedagogies that are sympathetic to student needs and embedded in learning experiences.

### **Schools that promote academic care:**

- demonstrate an understanding of the strong links between learning, well-being and resilience;
- believe that all students can succeed;
- promote student connectedness;
- stimulate student engagement with learning;
- foster high intellectual Endeavour;
- engage staff and students in understanding learning;
- promote protective processes to ensure positive developmental outcomes;
- effectively utilise support networks and resources;
- implement academic and organisational structures sympathetic to student needs; and
- Value respect and fairness.

### **Teachers that promote academic care:**

- foster the strong links between learning, well-being and resilience;
- support individual talents and learning styles;
- offer authentic learning experiences and opportunities for reflection;
- embed assessment for learning within classroom practices;
- develop a climate where students enjoy learning and are willing to take risks as learners;
- have clear and consistent behaviour and learning expectations;
- utilise pedagogy that provides a quality learning environment resulting in enhanced student resilience and connectedness; and
- Develop relationships that allow all students to feel valued, safe and supported.

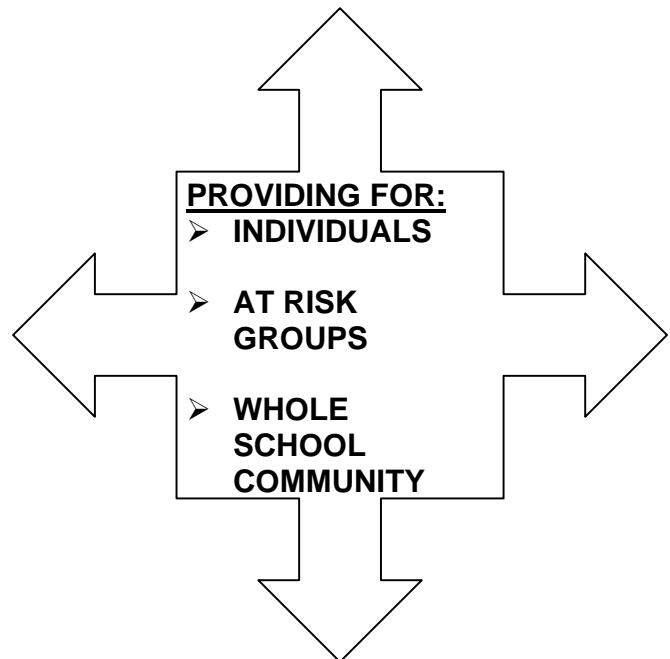
## Making Connections - The Pastoral Care Jigsaw

### **Ethos and environment:**

- Safe / harassment free
- Cultural diversity valued and celebrated
- Caring, constructive relationships
- Opportunities for Participation, Contribution and Recognition
- Safe, welcoming spaces
- Positive role models
- Clear expectations and boundaries
- Social responsibility

### **Academic Care:**

Promoting wellbeing through academic structures and processes which are sympathetic to adolescent needs.



Partnerships with:

- **Agencies**
- **Research bodies**
- **Health professionals**
- **Community groups**
- **Parents & School networks**

Partnerships are Active, Consultative and Responsive

# Student Discipline Policy

## ***Rationale***

It is a stated aim of St. Mark's College to provide quality education aimed at the total development of the student in a safe, Christian environment.

St. Mark's is a College where the welfare of the students is seen by staff, administration, parents and the community as one of the highest priorities.

Student Management views the young person as a whole, acknowledging that in a supportive environment students will achieve at their best.

Student Management embraces the development of strategies to promote self-discipline within the student; discipline within the context of Student Management at

St. Mark's College is focussed less on being punitive, but it is about developing appropriate behaviours and responses in students, encouraging acceptable behaviour by all students, in an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and to the intellectual, social and emotional growth of all.

## ***Student Management and Teachers***

The Student Management Policy provides a positive behaviour development plan for both the whole school and individual teachers.

The Student Management Policy provides a plan, an ordered system of concepts about behaviour, which allows the teacher to practise effectively in all situations. It provides for teachers to incorporate the following phases:

**Preventative** - for example, establishing rules and providing a suitable setup of the learning environment.

**Maintenance** - simple ways for getting students back on task.

**Supportive** - use of encouragement, good communication approaches.

**Reactive** - what to do if things come unstuck, logical consequences.

Teachers have a tactical plan, which includes practical responses and ways to establish and maintain order and respond to misbehaviour. There are a number of tactics, well-known and practised by teachers, including non-verbal, messages and brief in-class withdrawals. Teachers are aware of what not to do and learn tactics like anger containment and avoidance of dead time. Teachers need to know and routinely prepare and apply a range of tactics within a coherent strategic plan.

## ***Behavioural Levels System – Demerits***

The Behavioural Level's System of student management has been designed and adopted at St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox College, to provide an effective system for the management of students. It is intended to be developmental and preventative in nature, and to promote self-discipline and responsibility for behaviour upon the individual student.

When a student fails to obey the **School Rules** or disregards the **Student's Rights and Responsibilities**; the student enters the **Behavioural Levels System**. In circumstances where a student fails to respond to the school's programs, strategies or resources, the Behavioural Levels System provides the school with the comprehensive documentation necessary for the student management process.

The behavioural levels system is used to identify and report student behaviour.

The behavioural level system has a range of 9 bands, which reflect the behaviour of any given student.

Level One = Exemplary Behaviour

Level Nine = Behaviour needs correction

A student's behavioural level and number of behavioural merit and demerits will be included in each school report.

Students are awarded merit points or demerit points by the House Patron (Years 7 to 12) and the class teacher (K to 6) to move the students along the behavioural levels. Consequences of poor behaviour, breaching the school rules, may result in a lunch detention, after school detention, within school suspension, out of school suspension, or expulsion.

Each new student to the school and students entering Year 7 to 12 have their behavioural level set to level 5.

Reaching behavioural level nine leads to an automatic suspension from school for up to a period of 5 days. If a student reaches behavioural level nine for a third time, he/she will be viewed as failing to meet the College's behavioural requirements and may have her/his enrolment withdrawn.



## ***Behavioural Levels System – Merits***

Rewarding good behaviour is a very effective way of stamping out bad behaviour. Teachers often do this by simple words of encouragement. However, we have also been developing more formal ways of rewarding good behaviour. Our award system acts as an encouragement to the individual student, as well as an incentive to other students.

### **Junior School**

Three small Certificates of Merit are given weekly by each class teacher for Christian behaviour, good behaviour, effort or achievement.

A larger Certificate of Merit is given weekly by each class teacher for excellent behaviour / cooperation in the classroom and about the College.

When students have won 5 Awards; students receive a Silver Award from the Junior School Head.

When students have won 3 Silver Awards; they receive a Gold Award from the Junior School Head.

Birthday Certificates are also awarded to students who have had their birthday during the past week.

Small Silver and Gold Certificates are also awarded for particular behaviours or achievements.

Coptic Orthodox Studies, Coptic, LOTE and relief teachers are also able to use these awards.

All Awards are presented at the daily Assemblies (parents are welcome to attend).

Students that have progressed through the Behavioural Levels to attain Levels 1, 2, or 3 will be presented with colour coded merit badges, which are to be worn either on the tie or the shirt collar.

Behavioural Level 1 Blue

Behavioural Level 2 Green

Behavioural Level 3 Yellow

The badges are presented to the students at the Whole School Assemblies. Further to this, the names of the students are reported in the school's newsletter.

### **Senior School**

Certificates are awarded for academic achievements in tests, assignments, improvement, good behaviour, following instructions, punctuality, representing the College well, community service and similar.

5 Blue Merit Certificates lead to a House Patrons Awards

3 House Patrons Awards lead to a Head of College Award

The Certificates are presented to the students at the Whole School Assemblies. Further to this, the names of the students are reported in the school's newsletter.

*The Student Discipline Policy and associated procedures is provided to all members of the College Community through the Staff Handbook and the Student Diary. This policy is reviewed and developed through consultation with all College Staff by the Welfare Committee on a yearly basis.*

*The Complaints and resolving Grievances Policy is currently being developed to include complaints and grievances associated with all aspects of school life.*

## ***Detention Policy***

At St Mark's College, we wish to be consistent and uniform in how we treat our students in terms of their education as well as their discipline. Subsequently, outlined below are some amendments to the College's Afternoon Detention Procedure.

The College Discipline Policy is intended to:

- provide an immediate consequence for inappropriate, irresponsible behaviour;
- reinforce the position that participation in class depends upon behaving appropriately

## ***Afternoon Detention***

Currently, students can be placed directly on Wednesday Afternoon Detention for serious incidents of misbehavior which may occur in or outside the classroom. Students are also monitored by their respective House Patron and those students who receive 3 or more demerits on their conduct card, can also be placed on detention, if their House Patron believes it is warranted.

### **Amendments to Discipline Policy (Effective June 10, 2008)**

***Failure to attend Afternoon Detention will NOW result in the following procedure:***

Students who use church buses will no longer be given immunity from receiving after school detentions. House Patrons may choose to use discretion, if a student has a valid reason, then 5 Half- Lunch time Detentions may be used in place of an afternoon detention. Repeat offenders and/or serious discipline issues will be given after school detentions regardless of the above, and parents will need to organise for their child to be collected from school.

Students who cannot attend an Afternoon Detention must notify their House Patron **in writing** from the parents with an explanation, **at least one day prior to the detention date**. Students will be given the opportunity to complete the detention the very next day or as agreed by the House Patron and parents.

Failure to attend a Detention without notifying the House Patron as mentioned above will result in the following:

The next day, the student attends school he /she will **not be permitted to attend normal classes**, but will be **internally suspended** and kept outside Mr. Vazouras' office or the House Patron Office, for the duration of the day. On the day of a student being internally suspended, House Patrons will inform parents of the suspension.

Students who behave inappropriately during detention/internal suspension will be asked to repeat the punishment, or may be sent to the **Deputy Head of College** who will contact parents and inform them of further consequences for repeated misbehaviour (out-of-school suspension).

Details of students suspended out-of-school, will be kept on House Patron Suspension Recording Sheets and added to the student file/records.

Students will move up another level according the Behaviour Level System.

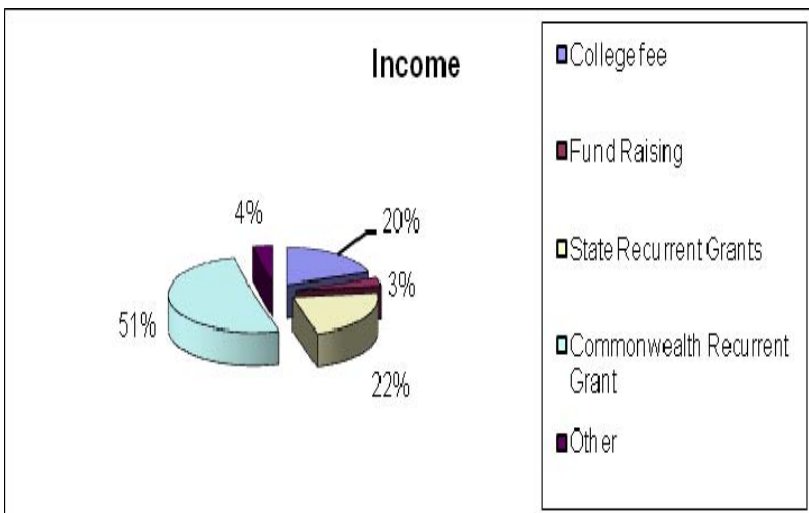
Parents and students are also reminded that if a student receives 3 detentions in a term then parents will be notified that a **fourth detention in a term may result in a 2 day out-of school suspension**.

We need to support each other to maintain the high expectations of the college and this can be achieved by working in partnership. As parents and teachers it is important that we guide our children and encourage them to take responsibility for what happens in our college. We should not excuse unacceptable behaviour or poor work ethics.

## Summary of Financial information Year 2007

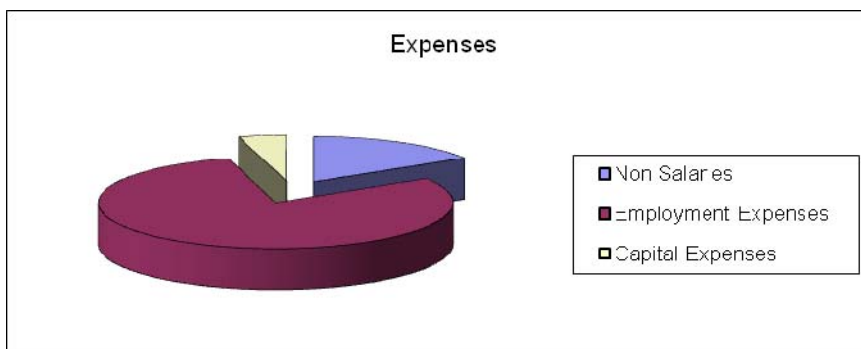
### Income

|                              |       |         |
|------------------------------|-------|---------|
| College Fee                  | 1,104 | 19.77%  |
| Fund Raising                 | 188   | 3.37%   |
| State Recurrent Grant        | 1,242 | 22.24%  |
| Commonwealth Recurrent Grant | 2,842 | 50.89%  |
| Other                        | 209   | 3.74%   |
|                              |       |         |
| Total                        | 5,585 | 100.00% |



### Expenses

|                     |       |         |
|---------------------|-------|---------|
| Non Salaries        | 890   | 16.17%  |
| employment Expenses | 4,379 | 79.55%  |
| Capital Expenses    | 236   | 4.29%   |
|                     |       |         |
| Total               | 5,505 | 100.00% |



## **Priority Areas of Improvement for 2007**

1. Target: Improve staff welfare.
2. Target: Rationalise administrative structures. Reorganise Primary Administration
3. Target: Review the Year 7 to 10 School Report.
4. Target: Continue to provide professional development across the board.
5. Target: Continue to improve teaching and physical resources – develop: Food Technology workshop; all-weather multi-purpose sport court; additional storage facilities; chapel; and improved staff facilities.
6. Target: Improve literacy in the whole School.
7. Target: Continue Music Instrument Programme for Year 2.
8. Target: Monitor new Pastoral Care Structure

## **Priority Areas Achieved in 2007**

1. Introduce specialised programmes for literacy and numeracy for Years 3 - 6.
2. Introduced new detailed assessment practices in the Junior School.
3. Reviewed the Junior School Report and introduced the new grading system as required by the NSW Board of Studies.
4. Continued to provide professional development across the board.
5. Continue to improve teaching and physical resources – developed specialised Design and Technology Workshops and Visual Arts Facility.
6. Improved Numeracy in Year 9.
7. Worked towards sustaining a compassionate and understanding environment at the College; one that engenders harmony and respect for all who learn and work within it.
9. Reduced the number of hours provided by part-time staff.
10. Employed more experienced teaching staff in the secondary.

## **Parent Teacher and student satisfaction**

The continued growth of the school and good level of parental attendance at P&F meetings as well as the continued support of the Coptic community indicates a good level of student parent and teacher satisfaction. The teacher satisfaction indicator is the relatively small number of teachers leaving. Over the last 2 years the school has increased significantly the sporting and extra curriculum activities creating good levels of student satisfaction which has been augmented by the outstanding academic results.