

Marrara Christian College 2023 Annual School Report



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NT Christian Schools Vision Statement

'We desire to be a Christian community, learning together to live life as God intended, offering hope for the world'.

Mission Statement

'Marrara Christian College seeks to be a learning community where parents and staff partner together, and where students are nurtured through a loving, biblically based school curriculum to build their faith, character and desire to serve.'



Principal's Message

2023 was a year of significant change at Marrara Christian College.

After years of faithful service to this community as Principal, Joel Van Bentum completed his tenure at our school to take a position as Principal of Green Point Christian College in NSW. His passion for Christian Schooling has been deeply appreciated and he has left a legacy. During the year the College has implemented several decisions designed to improve the educational outcomes of the students in our care. Whilst some do not directly impact explicit educational outcomes, they have significant impact both on the wider outcomes that we would seek to achieve with the students in our care. Others will help develop an educational environment in which students are more likely to flourish and grow in academic endeavors. A number of these were in implementation phase in 2023 and the school is in a consolidation phase during 2024. Some of these are included below.

Peacewise.

This program is designed to help students navigate conflict in a healthy and biblically grounded method. We have already seen early fruits of this work in the life of the school which is exciting.

“Learnership” Program.

This project is designed to help students understand themselves and how they approach learning. It gives a common language for staff and students to use , giving them a goal to aspire as they navigate the learning process.

Zones of Regulation.

This is designed to help students understand and regulate their emotional/mental wellbeing and how to move towards a better place in which they are more likely to engage in the learning process. In a time of hyper stimulation and information overload, students are much more likely to engage positively if they are in a better head space where they are considerably more ready to engage in learning within a classroom environment.

We are confident that each one of these programs will give students and staff tools to talk about learning and to understand how to maximize the educational experience at school while skilling them with lifelong skills, that will benefit them and the wider community in which they live. Each of these programs take a long-term view of the goals of learning and student growth will take place over a long term.

We are grateful for the passion and dedication of our staff to be Godly role models to students in our care, and to speak into their lives. We are also grateful for the work of the Board that seeks to ensure that we fulfil the vision and mission of the school and to provide sound governance and oversight of the school.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to serve as the Interim Principal for 2024 as the Board seeks to find the next Principal to lead the school into its next phase of growth.

Bill Rusin

Interim Principal 2024



Marrara Christian College and NT Christian College

Marrara Christian College and NT Christian College have partnered together successfully in the care and education of Senior students for many years. Together we are able to provide high quality Senior Secondary education for students at Marrara Christian College. Information on the success of our Senior students and their teachers, can be found in the NT Christian College Annual Report.

The NT Christian College Annual Report is available alongside this Annual Report, on our website <https://www.mcc.nt.edu.au> and at our college Reception.



Staffing Information

All teachers have a minimum of four years training and are registered with the NT Teacher Registration Board. We are also happy to note that we have many staff who have completed, or in the process of completing their professional master's degrees.

The school has a commitment to the professional training and growth together with a financial commitment to encourage staff to complete master's degrees.

Highlights of the School Year

Like each year, 2023 was filled with many highlights and events that enrich the life of the school community. Many events are school driven, with an increase in events that are instigated and implemented by our student body.

Following is a snapshot of some of the things that happen across the school.

Primary School had a busy and productive year as they developed students' foundational understandings of the world around them, grounding them in solid literacy and numeracy development.

Many initiatives taken to help develop and foster communities of belonging for our students and families across 2023. Staff engaged in explicit practices to teach the school's **RiSe CoDe** values and to create classroom environments that made students feel welcome, known, safe and ready to learn every day. By acknowledging positive attitudes and behaviors we encourage students to see that these behaviors are worth emulating and are a significant focus of what we as a school value, rather than just academic and sporting prowess.



Crafted teaching

A continued significant focus on the academic development of students, took place through cultivating highly crafted teaching practice across the Primary School. Some ongoing focal areas of 2023 areas were:

- A lower primary literacy focus –This involved the roll out of a new literacy program based on the science of Reading.
- Developing formational learning curriculum connected units – The introduction of formational learning across the college was a major focus for primary. They had an emphasis on ensuring highly integrated and formational connected units were in operation across the primary school.
- STEAM in Year 3 to 6 – In line with the formational learning focus and connected units, the Year 3 to 6 teachers had a deliberate learning time in the area of STEAM. They undertook professional learning and crafted a number of highly interactive units that the students participated in.



Community Engagement

Since covid community engagement has not been as good as we would like. The school has started to look at ways to reinvigorate community engagement with the wider school community. 2024 will be a time of re-engaging parents and others to restore community engagement and participation.

Our school has a team of parents who regularly pray for our staff and students, and this has become one of the focal points for re-engagement.



Pastoral Care

All students participate in pastoral care classes as Marrara Christian College places a high value on the social and emotional needs of all students. Students and staff engage together in a range of Teaching and learning wellbeing activities that focus on spiritual, emotional, and mental wellbeing allowing students to engage in their academic domains with confidence.

Pathways

Marrara Christian College in partnership with NT Christian College seeks to assist students to find their path and step into their future. 2022 saw us continue to support its careers provision through the development of a Pathways team. This team seeks to support students as they plan for the future and to give them confidence as they move through their senior years learning with the end in mind.

Interactive University Visits and excursions took place throughout the year as students explored various career pathways and educational options. Year 10 Work Experience was once again an amazing experience for all the students. Students were able to explore work opportunities across the NT and represented both the College and themselves as well.



Excursions

At Marrara Christian College, we believe that good education cannot only occur in the classroom therefore, importance is placed on the range of camps and excursions that students can participate. 2023 saw a focus in local excursions and online experiences that allowed for fresh opportunities for our students.

Academic

Please refer to the Annual Report of NTCC to read about the academic outcomes of the senior high school students.

Our students participated in the Naplan Tests again in 2023. Below is a report on the academic outcomes for Naplan. As stated elsewhere in this Annual Report, we have a high number of students from NESB where English is not their first language, with a larger contingent of Indigenous students from remote communities who enter the school at Year 7 with very low literacy levels. This impacts both Literacy and Numeracy outcomes.

NAPLAN 2023

In 2023 ACARA changed the form of testing and presentation of resulting data, which meant schools can no longer compare previous NAPLAN results with the 2023 results. One significant change is that the tests are now completely online and adaptive. Another change being that the categorizing of achievement into four proficiency levels.

Assessing for Proficiency Levels

Under the new NAPLAN approach in Term 1 of 2023, students were assessed against four levels of proficiency: 'exceeding', 'strong', 'developing' and 'needs additional support'.

The [ACARA four proficiency levels](#) :

- **Exceeding:** result exceeds expectations at the time of testing
- **Strong:** result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing
- **Developing:** result indicates the student is working towards expectations at the time of testing
- **Needs additional support:** result indicates student is not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing and are likely to need help to progress

In Comparison with the National Results

In 2023, approximately 44% of MCC students achieved the new proficiency levels of 'exceeding' and 'strong', compared to the higher national average of 66%.

56% of students at Marrara achieved the level of 'Requires Additional Support', compared to 34% nationally. Notably, this was an increase for Marrara by 2.6%, which is also reflected in the increase of EAPs for students in 2023 compared to how many the college had in 2022.

Key Findings:

Marrara's largest distribution of students is in the proficiency band 'Developing' (39%), followed closely by the 'Strong' proficiency (38%), indicating that 77% of all students were in the mid-range of achievement.

The number of Marrara students in the 'Strong' proficiency level is 13% lower than the national average, while 'Developing' level is 16% higher.

2. Support Needs:

- The proportion of students needing additional support is consistent across primary and secondary levels (17%).
- Indigenous students represent a significant portion (39%) of Year 7 and 9 cohorts.

3. Year Level Observations:

- Year 3: Strong performance in Writing, while Numeracy needs improving
- Year 5: Writing had highest results; Numeracy and Grammar both need to see improvement.
- Year 7: Highest need of all year levels for support across all subjects, particularly in Numeracy.
- Year 9: Highest proportion at 'Developing' and 'Exceeding' levels; Numeracy is the area which needs the most improvement.

Planning for Improvement:

Following the results of NAPLAN from Term 1 in 2023, there has been a strategic response in the following areas:

1. Training for staff with a focus on understanding the new proficiency levels, especially for the students at the 'Developing' level. Identify ways to 'move the middle' results and see improvement to be closer to the national levels.
2. Teachers engaged in data analysis across a range of data sources, with a view to set learning goals. The NAPLAN 2023 results were confirmed by those in the PAT Adaptive scores for the same time. Teachers participated in data-informed dialogue to identify specific areas of need, understand specific students, set learning goals related to test proficiency needs, and collaborate to identify supporting strategies.
3. High priority was placed on seeing Numeracy improvement, as it was the only area without progress from 2022 to 2023. In Primary school, the classes started using the 'Science of Numeracy' program in 2023, with a view to embed this as a permanent strategy. Meanwhile, Secondary teachers did a survey of how all learning areas have a plan and strategies for supporting the Numeracy capability.
4. Another area of strategic response is in improving the culture of the Math's classrooms in Middle School. There has been a need for more settled learning environments, with an increase in students engaging positively with Math's teachers and activities. Teachers have engaged in a series of coaching about Math's class culture, improve student mindsets and building positive relationships. At the start of 2024 we have begun to see significant changes and will continue with this key strategy for the year.

Chaplaincy Program:

Our chaplaincy program is an important element of the college pastoral care. The Chaplains provide a listening ear for students and an opportunity for them to share some of their

challenges. The Chaplains are trained to support and to refer students to other supports as required. The chaplains also share at college assemblies and run lunch time events.

Camping Program:

Marrara is very pleased with the outdoor program, not only for the events themselves, but for the often-profound impacts they have on student/teacher relationships, but student/student ones as well. Students often come back as more well-rounded people. Our staff must be commended for their commitment and willingness to adjust to the present circumstances.

Our Camping program is also a reflection of our view that not all learning can occur in the classroom and that students need the opportunity to lift their eyes beyond the horizon. There is a need for students to have opportunities to encounter risk and challenge in safe and supported ways.

We focus in our camping program on learning development, spiritual development, personal development, and social communal development.

Camps in 2023

- Year 3/4 City Camp
- Year 5/6 Adventure Bound
- Year 7 Katherine
- Year 8 Litchfield
- Year 9 Larapinta
- Year 10 Top End Adventure
- Prefect Camp

Prefects:

Our college leadership team were active within the college. Our prefects seek to foster and demonstrate the college RiSe CoDe values through servant leadership. They meet regularly throughout the year and help manage and facilitate a range of events across the college.



Parents and Community

Marrara, as a part of NT Christian Schools, is governed by the NT Christian Schools Board and usually has a college council made up of parents of the college, and member of NT Christian Schools.

The previous year's parental survey showed that the parent body was generally well satisfied with most aspects of life in the school. However, one area of focus for the school that required some attention is the perception of the academic outcomes of the school. This has become an area for attention in 2024.

This is within a context of the school offering tuition to students from remote communities who are accompanied with very poor English literacy and numeracy skills.

The college also hosted numerous opportunities for families together as community. These took the form of, mother's day breakfast, father's day breakfast, and Marrara on Show.



Facilities

Marrara Christian College, through its refurbishment and maintenance program, seeks to maintain its building and other infrastructure to a high standard within our financial constraints.

The College is also in a constant process of monitoring and planning, to ensure that all facilities provide learning environments that are not only safe and comfortable but are conducive to maximizing student learning.

In 2023 the college has been continuing to work through the current 5-year facilities development plan.

The following projects remain a strategic priority at the end of 2023 and are planned for a future time:

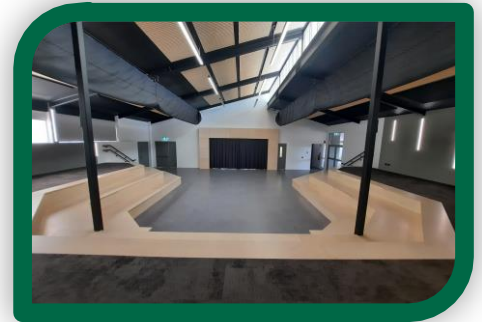
- Development of a new ELC space
- Incorporate old ELC into Primary Remove M block demountable and construct a new M block.
- Family Group Home facilities upgrade.

5-year master plan beyond 2023 include;

- Refurbish old Drama room.
- Refurbish E block.
- Refurbish F block.

Critical Incidents

There were no critical incidents in 2023 to report.



School Self-Assessment

In 2022, there was an internal leadership self-assessment for Marrara Christian College. The college also completed its 5 yearly external review. No assessment was completed in 2023. The results for the 2022 internal self- assessment can be found in the table below:

Criteria	Meets Criteria	Comments / Recommendations
Governance and Accountability	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The College is appropriately operated and administered. Leadership structures are clear and well understood. Educational programs are comprehensive and meet requirements. Governance structures are appropriate and effective. Facilities and educational programs are suitable for the year levels and numbers of students.
Staff and Management	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff/student ratios are appropriate. Policy and process is well documented. Staff professional policy to be updated. All required policies are in place and available.
Curriculum and Assessment	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum and subsequent programs meet NT Board of Studies requirements. Assessment procedures meet NT Board of Studies requirements. Reports and reporting procedures meet NT Board of Studies requirements. It was recommended that a specific policy statement addressing assessment and reporting be developed, including relevant links to Education NT Documentation Curriculum Plans are appropriate. EAL/D Policy and Procedures are appropriate.
Student Learning and Wellbeing	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student records are maintained appropriately. College meets the age of entry requirements. Students care and discipline documents are appropriate. Students with a Disability Policy and Procedure are appropriate. Reporting to Parents Procedure and documentation are appropriate.