

Muswellbrook Christian School

2017 Annual Report



**To establish Faith in Christ
to impart Truth with Godly Character
through Educational Excellence.**

2017 Annual Report

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This report is compiled in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act (as amended 2004).

Contact the Principal, David O'Hara, in relation to this report or other school matters.

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School Overview

Contextual Information about the Muswellbrook Christian School

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Muswellbrook Christian School was established as Dunmore Lang Christian Community School by the St John's Presbyterian Church in 1999, in Muswellbrook. In July 2010 the school name was changed to Muswellbrook Christian School (MCS). The school is currently located in the St John's hall and a two classroom block built using BER funding. The school has two classrooms, a toilet block, a library, a multi-purpose learning space, reception area, office and kitchen.

Muswellbrook is a country town with a local economy based on coal mining. Muswellbrook Christian School's aim is to provide affordable Christian education to local families. A condition of enrolment is that families are expected to accept the school's Statement of Faith (refer to appendix) and agree to abide by all policies.

MCS strives to provide an environment that encourages a loving, caring, Christian atmosphere, where students support each other, particularly new enrolments and younger children.

Muswellbrook Christian School is fully registered with the Board of Studies and offers courses from Kindergarten to Year 6. All mandatory subjects are taught including English, Mathematics, Human Society and Its Environment, Science and Technology, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. Our curriculum also included study of the Bible during Devotions, and teachers teach their subjects from a Christian perspective. Discussions are encouraged amongst students concerning aspects of the Christian faith and how it applies to contemporary life.

Our mission statement is:

"To establish Faith in Christ to impart Truth with Godly Character through Educational Excellence."

Vision Statement

Muswellbrook Christian School is a Presbyterian co-educational Kindergarten to Year 6 School run as an activity of Muswellbrook Presbyterian Church. We aim to provide a quality education in a secure and supportive Christian environment. We strive to give every assistance to each student to develop:

- Their academic gifts
- Their social abilities
- Their physical endeavours
- Their spiritual awareness.

We encourage students to pursue success in all their undertakings in order to prepare them for a life of contribution to the community while serving Christ.

Muswellbrook Christian School exists to serve students and families from Muswellbrook and the surrounding area.

The School seeks to honour God at every level:

- Through honest Governance and management practices
- The development and implementation of all policies and procedures
- The employment of dedicated Christian staff
- The provision of quality curriculum programs
- By nurturing and caring for everyone in the MCS community
- Being a positive witness for Christ both within MCS and the wider community
- Encouraging the whole MCS community to grow in their individual relationships with God
- Maintaining a high standard of integrity, honesty and compassion in all areas.

Message from Key School Bodies

2017 Principal's Report

2017 has been an eventful and important year in the life of Muswellbrook Christian School. Our vision statement says, "We aim to provide a quality education in a secure and supportive Christian environment. We strive to give every assistance to each student to develop:

- Their academic gifts
- Their social abilities
- Their physical endeavours
- Their spiritual awareness."

Throughout 2017 the vision statement has been lived out in the life and activities of the school.

Muswellbrook Christian School strives to offer a high quality academic education. With small class sizes teachers are able to focus on individual student needs, and assist student progress, further develop their skills, and overcome areas in which they struggle.

The teaching of English and Maths (Literacy and Numeracy) is a particular focus at the school. It is encouraging and rewarding to see the growth students have achieved in the various stands of literacy and numeracy. This has been measured by formal assessment including NAPLAN, as well as teacher assessment and observation in the classroom setting.

Going hand in hand with this is the engagement of students, and their enjoyment of these subjects. Some of the measures the school has used to foster this has been using practical activities in the class, engaging online tools for teaching literacy and numeracy, as well as special events such as the Book Day and the 40 Days of Reading. Recognising and acknowledging student achievement is also important in developing the students' enjoyment of literacy and numeracy.

An important part of Muswellbrook Christian School life is the school culture. The school has a warm and friendly atmosphere. Children are taught to respect each other and be kind to each other, and this is evident in the way students relate to each other both in the classroom and the playground.

Students from across the grades have participated in a range of extra curricula activities through the 2017 school year. These have included visiting the Life Education Van, a visiting Science Show, participating in the Science and Engineering Challenge Day, School Sports Carnivals for athletics, cross country and swimming, Sports Gala Day, Interschool sports / competition trips for athletics, touch football, soccer and chess, weekly violin lessons for the students in Years 3 to 6, and preparation and performance of the musical A Bee's Life

At the Commonwealth census in August 33 students were enrolled at MCS. This allowed the school to employ teaching staff to the equivalent of three full-time teachers. In 2016 Muswellbrook Christian School had the following classes:

- Kindergarten / Year One – taught by Joyce Andrews and Kylie Moors
- Year 2 – taught by Anna Loiterton
- Year 3-6 – taught by David O'Hara

Alison Wright began working at Muswellbrook Christian School in March as the Business Manager. Jess Dugan has continued her work as the Administration Officer. Due to the size of the school both of these positions were part time, but their working hours are such that the school office is operated each day of the school week.

Laetitia Botha is employed as a teacher's aide. She assists particularly in the delivery of literacy and numeracy programs, and provide support to students who may experience difficulties in these areas.

Each day at the school this year began with a devotion time, which included a Bible reading, teaching and prayer. Each Friday the classes would have joint Devotions. Twice a term we held assemblies. These were well attended by parents. At a number of these assemblies we had a guest speaker, including Darryl Spicer (Baptist Church), Garth Belford (Hope City Church) and Jim Dugan (Word of Life International).

The school has a small but committed and active Parents and Friends Committee. The committee held a Mother's day stall, a Father's Day stall two school discos, and ran the canteen each week. Members of the P&F have also assisted greatly in working bees and many other jobs around the school.

The school was in a sound financial position throughout 2017, despite the drop in enrolments since 2016. Reserve funds have been held from previous years, and the school has long been aware that mining towns such as Muswellbrook are vulnerable to population fluctuations and economic changes.

Muswellbrook Christian School Board was a committee of St John's Presbyterian Church, given the responsibility of governing Muswellbrook Christian School. During 2017, the Board consisted of:

Mr Adrian Lamrock, Board Chairman
Mrs Mary Bowman, Church Representative
Mrs Barbara Turvey, Community Member
Mr John Weedon, Community Member
Mr Noel Eveleigh (ex officio)
Mr David O'Hara (ex officio) School Principal

At the end of Term 3 the school community was given the sudden, sad and shocking news that Muswellbrook Christian School would close at the end of 2017. The reason for this was that the St John's Presbyterian Church, Muswellbrook had formally closed earlier in 2017. The congregation had not been meeting for a few years, but formally closed in 2017. As the school was established by the church, the school would also close. This was an upsetting time for staff, students and families.

After a series of negotiations with the Presbyterian Church of NSW, Muswellbrook Christian School will be joining the Pacific Group of Schools in 2018. From the beginning of 2018, Muswellbrook Christian School will be known as Pacific Brook Christian School. The school will be operating on the same premises for the foreseeable future, and the majority of the current staff will be reemployed.

This news provided a huge relief to the whole school community, and provides hope for the long term future of the school. We look forward to seeing what 2018 brings.

David O'Hara (Principal)

Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy Testing

It is to be recognised that education is more than just test scores. Overall performance of the student, along with the development of character, behaviour and faith-in-action gives a more comprehensive picture of what “To establish Faith in Christ to impart Truth with Godly Character

Through Educational Excellence.” aims to produce within the Muswellbrook Christian School environment and within the community.

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 were required to participate in the NAPLAN (National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy) tests. Muswellbrook Christian School students in Year 3 and Year 5 participated in NAPLAN in 2017. Detailed information regarding student results in these assessments can be obtained from the My School website at the following web address: <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

As cohort numbers are small, specific performance data cannot be given without infringing on the Privacy Rights of individual students. If more details of this information are legitimately required, it may be obtained from the school administration office upon request.

The tables below show how many students achieved a result in each band.

Reading

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8
Year 3			1		1	1		
Year 5						3		

Writing

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8
Year 3			2		1			
Year 5					3			

Spelling

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8
Year 3			1	1	1			
Year 5					1	1		1

Grammar and Punctuation

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8
Year 3				1	2			
Year 5						2	1	

Numeracy

	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Band 8
Year 3				1	2			
Year 5					2			1

Although the school can only publish NAPLAN results, there are many other areas where our students achieve excellent results. These are not always as easy to quantify and measure, and therefore very difficult to report on accurately. NAPLAN only reports on a small part of student achievement.

Staff

Teacher Qualifications

All teachers hold appropriate qualifications as required by NESA. All teachers at Muswellbrook Christian School are Category (i), having teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI – NOOSR) guidelines.

In 2017, Muswellbrook Christian School employed the equivalent of three full-time teachers for the whole year. Two teachers were employed on the Kindergarten / Year One class, Joyce Andrews for three days per week and Kylie Moors for two days per week. The Year 2 class was taught by Anna Loiterton and the Year 3-6 class was taught by David O'Hara.

Teacher	Teacher Accreditation Status
Joyce Andrews	Proficient
Anna Loiterton	Provisional
David O'Hara	Proficient

All teachers employed by MCS in 2017 had teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia, including one teacher with a Master's degree. No teacher has a known Aboriginal background or heritage.

In addition to qualified teaching staff, MCS employed two part time staff in administration, one teachers' aide and a part time cleaner in 2017.

All teaching staff are committed Christians and subscribe to the school's Statement of Faith.

Professional Development

During 2017, teaching staff engaged in a wide range of professional learning (PL) provided both externally and internally.

Muswellbrook Christian School is committed to ongoing professional development of all staff through participation at in-school activities, regular staff meetings, external courses and conferences. For other professional development, staff were released to attend specific training seminars during school hours or have attended workshops held at school.

The *Institute of Teachers Act 2004* defines professional development as *formal and informal learning activities designed to maintain and enhance the knowledge and skills of teachers*.

In 2017, teachers at MCS undertook the following professional development:

- NSW Christian Schools Australia NSW Conference
- NAPLAN Inservice

- Seven Steps to Writing Course

Students

Characteristics of the Student Body

Muswellbrook Christian School exists to serve students and families of the Muswellbrook district who desire a Christian education that compliments the teachings of the Church and home.

In 2017 there were 33 students enrolled at Muswellbrook Christian School at the time of the Commonwealth Census. These students were predominately from the Muswellbrook township with some from nearby areas. They represented a mix of cultural backgrounds and heritages.

Enrolments at August 4th 2017

	Total Enrolments	Boys	Girls
Kindergarten	8	2	6
Year One	7	3	4
Year Two	8	4	4
Year Three	3	2	1
Year Four	3	3	0
Year Five	3	3	0
Year Six	1	1	0
Total	33	18	15

Attendance Rates

School attendance rate for the whole school and each year level were as follows in the table below.

Year Level	Attendance Rate
Kindergarten	89%
Year One	87%
Year Two	94%
Year Three	92%
Year Four	77%
Year Five	91%
Year Six	66%
Whole School	89%

Attendance Register

Muswellbrook Christian School has a paper roll where teachers record student absences. The Office Administrator records absences electronically on the school network.

Attendance Registers should reflect the highest professional standards. They are a legal document and can be inspected at any time. Therefore rolls must be accurate and up to date.

All details including the following are recorded:

- Daily attendance of students which may be noted by recording absences
- Absences
- Reason for absence
- Documentation to substantiate reason for absence
- Common codes (approved by the Minister of Education) of registering absences must be used.

Register of Enrolments

Muswellbrook Christian School complies with NESA requirements by maintaining an enrolment register that includes the following:

- The students
 - Name
 - Age
 - Address
- Parent/caregivers
 - Name
 - Contact address
 - Telephone number
- Date of enrolment and, where appropriate the date of leaving the school and the student's destination
- For children older than 6 years, previous school or pre enrolment situation
- Where the destination of a student below 17 years is unknown, evidence that the student's details are forwarded to the Director General of Education.

General Roll Marking Procedures

- The roll will be marked on all days that the school is open for instruction, including sports carnivals and excursions.
- Students involved in an official school activity must not be recorded as absent
- Students who arrive late or leave early must have the precise time of arrival or departure recorded.
- The correct codes must be used by staff maintaining rolls.
- If a child is absent, parents or caregivers can notify the school via

- An email to the school
(school@muswellbrookchristianschool.nsw.edu.au)
- A facsimile (02 65431114)
- A letter sent to the school.
- If a child is marked as absent and there is no known reason,
 - The parents/caregivers will be contacted by phone by 9:30am on the day of absence to alert them to the absence and to notify the school of the reason.
 - If no response is received a second contact will be made 3 days after the absence
 - Again if no response is received a letter is sent from the office.
- For partial absences the parents/caregivers need to notify the school of the late arrival or early departure time and the student needs to sign in or out at the administration office.
- Parents/caregivers may use the school Absentee Note.

Muswellbrook Christian School welcomes applications for enrolment of students whose parents are seeking education for their children within a Christian context. The conditions for enrolment are set out below:

Conditions of Enrolment

1. In enrolling a student at Muswellbrook Christian School, the parent(s) or guardian(s) accepts and agrees to be bound by these Conditions of Enrolment, and acknowledges liability for fees and charges in respect of tuition.
2. Once a student is in attendance at Muswellbrook Christian School at least one term's notice of withdrawal must be given in writing to the Principal. In default of such notice the upcoming term's fees will be required to be paid in full before the student leaves.
3. Annual fees can be paid by three different methods of payment. They include: one annual fee to be paid by the last week in March, payment by the term due by the second week of the term; payment weekly. All fees MUST be paid by November 30th each year.
4. In the event of financial difficulty, special arrangements may be made. Early notification of problems will help prevent debt collection action.
5. Respecting and caring for others are Christian values foundational to Muswellbrook Christian School. In accepting enrolment, students and parents acknowledge their intention to follow policies outlined in the Parent Handbook.
6. It is an expectation of Muswellbrook Christian School that all students participate in the Christian activities provided in the school.

7. In case of the need for urgent medical or hospital treatment for a student and if their parents or guardians are not readily contactable, a member of the school staff is authorised to give authority for such treatment without the school or staff member incurring any legal liability to the parent, guardian or student. In this regard, the parent or guardian indemnifies the staff, the school management, and the Trustees, against any claims which might arise as a result of such treatment.
8. The Principal reserves the right to suspend or terminate an enrolment. No remission of fees will be made in the case of suspension or removal of a student for unacceptable conduct or failure to pay fees.
9. These Conditions of Enrolment together with the general policies of the school as outlined in the current Governing Policies constitute the terms of the contract between the parents and/or guardians of the student/s and Muswellbrook Christian School.
10. Parents shall agree to allow the child to share fully in the life and program of the school, including the devotional activities and doctrinal lessons.
11. Parents shall support the aims of the school.
12. Any health or educational difficulties must be declared.
13. The parents undertake to provide the child with all the necessary equipment of a personal nature which will enable the child to benefit from the education offered.
14. That the parents undertake to provide the child with the correct uniform approved by the School Board, and to ensure that the child is always sent to school neatly and modestly dressed in the required uniform.
15. That all parents who are interested in volunteering their services to the school will regularly have to attend inductions for child protection and workplace health and safety, which are found in the respective policies.
16. Parents are required to disclose all relevant information to the school in regards to citizenship and residency status. Failure to do so can mean immediate termination of enrolment.
17. The school may suspend or terminate enrolment, at its discretion, for failure to comply with these conditions or other serious breaches of the schools rules and regulations.

Policies

All school policies were reviewed in 2015 as Muswellbrook Christian School prepared for the registration process with BOSTES (now NESAS). This was undertaken by the school principal.

A copy of all school policies including student welfare, enrolment, discipline, grievances, child protection etc. are available for parents to view by contacting the administration office at the school.

These policies aim to foster a safe, supportive environment where all school community members (students, staff and parents) are valued, respected and treated fairly. The policies are consistent with the school Core Values Statement, and are based on:

- The mandate to love one another as God has loved us
- God's pure and servant-like love permeating the school community at all levels
- Each person being acknowledged as a unique creation of our Heavenly Father, deserving of our respect and kindness
- The fruit of the Holy Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control) that should be evident and growing in our lives
- The partnership between family, school and church for the complete nurturing and education of children
- Encouraging repentance and restoration.

Some elements of the policies and their implementation include:

- Whole school training and reminding, e.g. during devotions and assemblies
- Teacher mentor approach
- Inclusion of relevant material in PDHPE programs, e.g. self-image, respect, building community
- Merit Award System: positive affirmations and rewards for positive choices and behaviours
- Consequences for poor choices and undesirable behaviour that are appropriate to the situation, age and understanding of the student
- Information for parent helpers
- Maintaining and improving communication and partnership between school and home.

The school has a zero tolerance to bullying. The school values and ethos are intended to promote God honouring and positive relationships

Summary of Specified School Policies

Child Protection Policy

Childhood holds a special place in time and in society. It should be a time of playing, learning and growing in peace and in the comfort of love and protection of others. Sadly for many children, this is not the case. Each person in the community has a responsibility for actively ensuring the protection of all the children in our community. In this responsibility, Muswellbrook Christian School (MCS) is responsible to provide a safe environment for its students and to provide an educational environment and curriculum which fosters healthy growth and development spiritually, emotionally, physically, intellectually and socially.

The aim of this policy is to provide:

1. The guiding principles that underpin child protection at MCS and
2. The framework for implementing the procedures and practices of child protection at MCS.

Scripture indicates the nurture of children is a great responsibility given to the community with specific responsibility given to their parents.

To Parents: *"Fathers, do not exasperate your children, instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."* Ephesians 6:4 NIV

To the Nation: *"...do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them."* Deuteronomy 4:9 NIV

All staff at MCS have a responsibility to love the children in their care. This love will guide staff actions and direction as they stand in the place of parents.

"Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." 1 Corinthians 13:6,7 NIV

When a child is enrolled at MCS the school enters a contract with the parents to assist the parents with the God-given responsibility of the nurture of their children. The school strives to fulfil this contract and support the family unit **but** never at the detriment of the welfare of the children. In every action related to the child, the best interest of the child is of paramount consideration. This forms the scriptural and moral basis that will enable the school to be involved in the process of protecting children.

The Child Protection Policy of Muswellbrook Christian School is based on three key pieces of legislation:

- a) The *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) (the **Care and Protection Act**)
- b) The *Ombudsman Act 1974* (NSW) (the **Ombudsman Act**).
- c) The *Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012* (NSW) (the **WWC Act**)

The first part of the policy explains the role of teachers and other staff as mandatory reporters. The policy gives detail as to when a mandatory report must be made and the steps that must be followed.

The second part of the policy is about reportable conduct. This section of the policy gives clear guidelines as to what constitutes reportable conduct, what steps should be taken, and which agencies a report must be made to, and how an investigation must be carried out.

The final section of the policy explains that all staff, and volunteers who work with children, must have a current Working With Children Check before beginning any paid or voluntary work at the school.

In addition to this, Muswellbrook Christian School also adheres to the requirements of the Presbyterian Church, set out in "Breaking the Silence."

Student Welfare

The health, safety and welfare of students is the highest priority at Muswellbrook Christian School. Staff are expected to make themselves familiar with the policies regarding the safety and welfare of the students. The following is a summary of the policies that involve the safety and welfare of students:

- Maintain a professional relationship with all students.
- Provide an environment which is free from bullying and harassment.
- Report any incidences where a suspected case of child abuse is apparent, to the Principal. Not be involved in acts of physical, emotional, psychological or verbal abuse towards children.
- Not place themselves in a position where a student can feel threatened.
- Model appropriate behaviour, dress and language at all times.
- Respect student's cultural and individual differences.
- Maintain an acceptable standard of supervision and discipline both inside and outside the classroom at all times.
- Know how to keep children safe in both the classroom and playground in a time of emergency.
- Inform the Principal of any children who are unresponsive to usual form of discipline so that appropriate steps can be taken.
- Deal with students who are upset or require medical attention in an acceptable fashion according to the school protocols.
- Complete child protection assessments for excursions.

These policies are reviewed and implemented annually and full statements of all policies regarding teachers' conduct and the safety and welfare of children are available from the school office upon request.

Discipline Policy

We believe that:

- Discipline has an important function to play in the development of God's children.
- Discipline is meant to be a source of encouragement not despair for God's people (Heb 12:5,6).

- God establishes the pattern for discipline and expects those who have been given authority over children to follow His lead (Ephesians 6:4, Hebrews 12:7).
- Discipline should be seen as contributing to the child's development as part of **training for righteousness and peace**, and of **correcting error**. Discipline should never be seen as solely punishment but also and equally as important, as a training of the child's will and nature into a maturity of living in, and relating to, the community around them.

The school believes that all students can expect to:

- Be treated as individuals, with respect, courtesy and kindness
- Feel and be safe
- Express themselves without ridicule
- Learn in a secure environment without intimidation or disruption
- Be given help and discipline if self-discipline fails, and if the privileges of others are abused
- Have rules and their consequences applied consistently and fairly
- Have the principles of Procedural Fairness applied
- Be encouraged toward responsible and cooperative play
- Have enforced the wearing of uniforms (allowing for special circumstances)
- Have peer and cross age sport promoted
- Benefit from regular teacher / parent contact.

The school believes that all students have the responsibility to:

- Contribute to and be involved in learning situations
- Be thoughtful, respectful and courteous to others
- Develop and exercise self-discipline and self-control
- Care for property (school, others, own)
- Ensure they do not disrupt the learning opportunities of other students
- Be a good ambassador for our school and for Christ
- Respect the rights of teachers, fellow students and the community
- Obey school and classroom rules
- Contribute to the school's clean and healthy environment
- Contribute to maintaining a safe school environment by not physically bullying, hitting or hurting anyone in any way

Safe Environment Policy

Muswellbrook Christian School is committed to a safe environment for all members of the school community. This Policy should also be read in conjunction with the MCS Discipline Policy. Both these policies are consistent with, and stem from, the Biblical Core Values of our School.

All members of the school community (students, staff and parents) have a responsibility to work towards fostering a safe and positive environment.

Bullying or harassment in any form by staff or students, or to staff or students, will not be tolerated.

Bullying is any repeated and/or serious intentional action or comment of a cruel, demeaning or intimidating nature by a person who is perceived to be more powerful than the person towards whom that action or comment is directed.

Bullying can include harassment, victimisation, sexual harassment, physical abuse and psychological abuse. It may occur in a variety of ways including the use of electronic technology and may take place off-campus.

Conflict will be managed where possible through dispute resolution processes. (see Communication Policy).

The School will ensure that:

- Legislative requirements to protect the safety of staff and students are observed.
- Students and staff are aware of the School's Safe Environment Policy.
- Support is available for victims and perpetrators of bullying/harassment.
- There are reporting/recording systems in place for bullying/harassment.
- Serious or repeated incidents of bullying/harassment are reported to parents.
- The policy and training, information and reporting procedures are reviewed regularly.
- Bullying/harassment procedures are compatible with the School's other policies and procedures.

Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct is underpinned by the School's Core Values, and reflects the expected standards of behaviour consistent with a Christian worldview and our Educational Creed. It should be considered in conjunction with other relevant MCS policies, including

- Discipline
- Safe Environment (Anti-Bullying)
- Communication

The Code seeks to:

- Give guidance on ethical issues and expected standards of behaviour at Muswellbrook Christian School
- Assist staff and volunteers to make informed choices about personal behaviour,
- Encourage a culture of edifying and God-honouring behaviour within the everyday life of our School
- Provide general guidelines to test whether a course of action is consistent with a Christian worldview, as well as giving examples of specific behaviours.

The Code acknowledges:

- The reality of living in a fallen world: mistakes will be made
- We all need the grace and forgiveness of God
- We should extend this grace and forgiveness to others, while at all times protecting the students placed in our care

- Each person is responsible for their own behaviour and needs to take accountability for choices made and the impact on colleagues, students, families and the School as a whole.

God has always given clear guidelines concerning his expectations of His people. He has not operated on the assumption that people will know what to do. In today's societal climate of litigation and the melding together of many different cultures and customs, it is not appropriate to assume that every Christian thinks alike concerning acceptable or non-acceptable behaviour.

Communication Policy

Muswellbrook Christian School believes that to function effectively in our educational task, communication is vital. This includes communication between students, parents and helpers, staff, the P&F, the Board and the wider community. Open and honest communication is always desirable, but must also be tempered with love and encouragement. Our Father God, who is Love, instructs us in His Word to love others (eg Matthew 22: 37-39), and to show love in our words and actions.

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.” (1 Corinthians 13: 4-7)

As we live in a world tainted by sin, our school community will be affected by complaints, grievances, offences and hurts. This Policy aims to educate all members of the school community in ways to minimise hurts, and to encourage responses that reflect the loving servant attitude of Christ our Lord.

Positive encouraging communication between all school community members is also vital.

We acknowledge rights to confidentiality and privacy, where these do not conflict with legal requirements (e.g. in the case of Mandatory Reporting issues.)

School Strategies

Priority Areas

2017 Targets	2017 Achievement
Continue to work towards increasing enrolments	<p>Unfortunately the enrolments fell through the course of 2017. The enrolment numbers at the 2017 census were 33 students, which was significantly lower than at the 2016 census date. There were a number of reasons for this.</p> <p>The school has continued undertaking a number of initiatives to promote the school within the community, including by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Producing a school brochure• Maintaining an active presence on Facebook by putting up new posts on a regular (at least once a week) basis.• Visiting preschools and child care centres to give brochures and inform them of the school. Primary students visited Muswellbrook Pre School twice through the year to help with a class of pre-school students• Have a visible presence at community events such as the ANZAC March and a store was operating at the Christmas Spectacular event.• Radio advertisements
Consider building a third classroom	Due to the decline in enrolments this was not done during 2017.

Goals for 2017 (as Pacific Brook Christian School):

The goals for 2018 are set out in the Action Plan. The Action Plan covers four strategic objectives:

- 1) Further develop teaching as a relational activity informed by research data, theory and the Bible
 - Provide pastoral care to support the wellbeing of students
 - Develop a culture of respect
 - Analyse NAPLAN data, standardised tests and other research to modify and adjust teaching strategy
 - Engage in the visible learning program
 - Develop Christian perspectives in the curriculum
 - Focus on Reading as a teaching priority
- 2) Further develop learning as a lifelong process informed by research data, personal testimonies, varied communications and the Bible.
 - Intentionally engage students and staff in meaningful evidence practices including the work of John Hattie, Guy Claxton and Carol Dweck.
 - Investigate a Pre-Kindy class
 - Develop the use of best practice with digital devices
 - Develop the use of best practice in contemporary learning
- 3) Further develop serving as an expression of the gifts given by God to bless our community (locally, nationally and globally) through Mission.
 - Communicate effectively through the school community
 - Maintain a culture of openness to feedback in the community
 - Use the gifts of the school and wider teaching profession to advance the capacity of the Christian Education Development Program (CEDP) on a local, nation and global level.
- 4) Further develop the Christian character of each member of the community as an act that glorifies God.
 - Engage the teachers in personal Christian formation in community.
 - Engage with sister schools, partner schools and other Christian communities to build our culture
 - Maintain a culture of community service, mission and global service through the CEDP.
 - Consistently monitor the stewardship of our resources

Respect and Responsibility

Due to the fact that we are a Christian school, we always encourage students to act in a Christ-like fashion. This means that we show respect to older members of the community and for our peers. Students are currently reminded of this through devotions, Personal Development and Health lessons and Bible teaching. Teachers encourage students who act in a caring and loving manner towards others and discipline students who do not respect others.

Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, to admit wrongdoing and mistakes and to accept sanctions and punishment. The demonstration of forgiveness when there has been wrongdoing is an important element in dealing with such matters. This approach helps students to deal directly with mistakes and wrongdoing and to modify behaviour in a supportive atmosphere where reminders of past misdemeanours are not used to pigeonhole or condemn students.

Some of the events and programs Muswellbrook Christian School has run through 2017 to promote respect and responsibility in the school community have been:

- Participation in the ANZAC Day March
- Holding a Remembrance Day Service
- Devotions, both in class and as a whole school, promoting treating each other in a Christ like, kind and caring manner.
- School policies which emphasise taking responsibility for our own choices.
- The senior students, especially the captains, taking a leadership and mentoring role with the younger students.
- The senior students visiting Muswellbrook Pre-school and assisting in classes.
- School assemblies promoting positive relationships through the way we interact with others.
- PDH units including units on Mental Health, Decision Making, and Cyber Safety. This included the Life education visit to the school.

Community Satisfaction

Student Satisfaction

In 2017 there was no formal survey of students to gauge satisfaction. However anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that students were successfully and profitably engaged in all school activities.

Verbal feedback from students shows their enjoyment of their involvement in Muswellbrook Christian School, and the various lessons and activities at the school. They have mentioned the learning they have done and the relationships with their friends and staff.

Parent Satisfaction

In 2017 there was no formal survey of parents to gauge satisfaction. However, conversation with parents has indicated that they find the level of care and the learning experienced by their children to be higher than what was experienced in other educational settings.

Communication channels have been provided by the school, so that parents are afforded the opportunity for feedback via means such as the newsletter, Parent/Teacher Conferences and daily access to teachers. This feedback has been generally positive.

Any constructive feedback from parents was duly followed up and appropriate action was taken within the feasibility of the school.

There has been a high level of parent and wider family involvement in school activities, from involvement in P&F functions, to assemblies and sporting days.

Staff Satisfaction

Feedback from staff continues to be positive. Evidence of this is our meetings which are celebrated with fun and enthusiasm. Staffroom banter, collegiality, educational risk taking and ongoing commitment to the school's ethos are other items of evidence. Once again, the staff have worked beyond their call of duty.

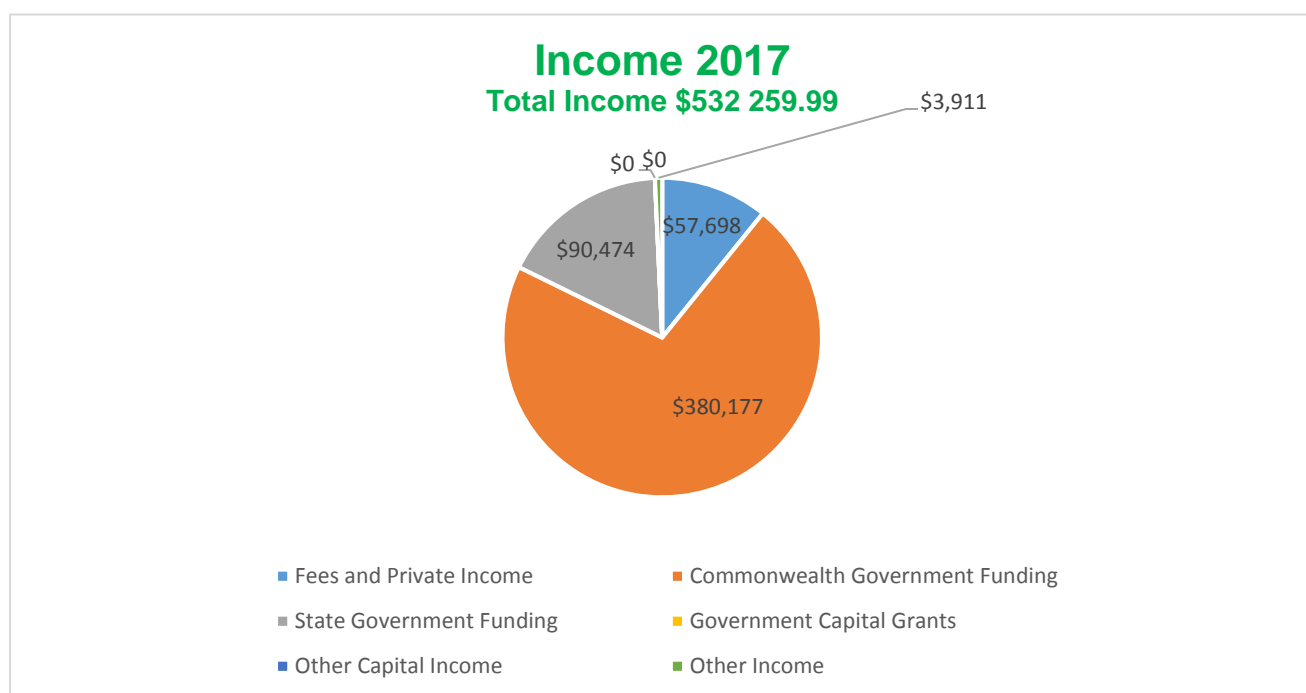
Staff have displayed a commitment to the school and a high degree of professionalism. There were many times when the self-sacrifice of teachers was evident. Whether it was at excursions, sporting events, social events or extra-curricular experiences, the involvement of Muswellbrook Christian School teachers displayed their commitment to the school and their sense of professional satisfaction.

Financial Summary

Categories for Financial Information are as required and outlined in the *Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual 2004, (Updated Online 2009)*, under item 3.10.1

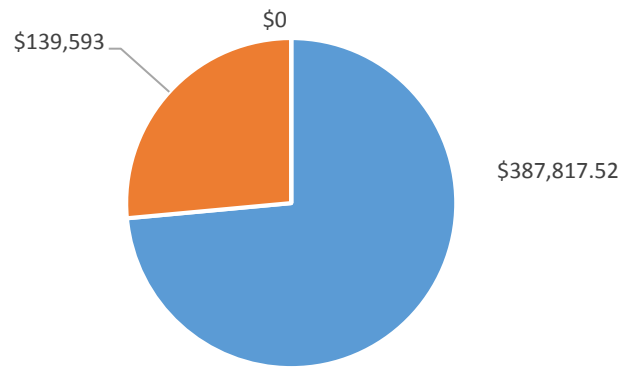
The Commonwealth and State governments are major contributors to the costs of running the school. We are thankful to the government authorities for their support. We give grateful thanks to God for his continued provision and pray that under His leadership we can be good stewards of the financial operations at the school.

The Board of Management, meet regularly to review the financial performance of the school and this allows for accountability and transparency in our financial dealings. The school is also aligning its financial plan to its priority areas to provide the resources and initiatives to the school.



Expenditure 2017

Total Expenditure \$527 410.04



■ Salaries, Allowances and Related Expenses ■ Non Salary Expenses ■ Capital Expenses

Statement of Faith

- We believe in the Divine inspiration, the infallibility and supreme authority of the Old and New Testaments in their entirety and that the Holy Spirit so moved the writers that what they wrote are authoritative statements of truth for all matters of faith and conduct.
- We believe there is one God in whom there are three equal Divine Persons, revealed as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and who of His own sovereign will, created the heavens, the earth and all that is contained within the Universe.
- We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is the eternally existing, only begotten Son of the Father, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. As God He became flesh and dwelt among us; as man He was God.
- We believe that everyone has sinned and fallen short of God's standard, and that everyone will be raised from the dead, some to eternal life with God and the rest to eternal separation from Him.
- We believe that the salvation from the penalty and consequences of sin is found only through the substitutionary, atoning death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- We believe it is the Holy Spirit alone who convicts men of sin; leads them to repentance; creates faith within them and regenerates and fills those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord. It is the indwelling Spirit who bestows the Gifts of the Spirit and manifests the Fruit of the Spirit in the believer.
- We believe Christ died for our sins, was buried and the third day rose from the dead; that He appeared to men who touched Him and knew His bodily presence and that He ascended to His Father.
- We believe the Lord Jesus Christ will return in person with His saints and that the full consummation of the kingdom of God awaits His return.
- We believe those who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit will receive a resurrection body at the return of Jesus Christ and be forever with the Lord, while those who have not believed will be resurrected to stand at the Judgment Seat of God to receive His judgment and eternal separation from Him.
- We believe in the actual existence of Satan who is the father of evil and opposed to God although ultimately subject to the purposes of God and destined to be confined forever to Hell.

- We believe the Church is the Body of Christ composed of all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, which finds its visible manifestation in the local community of believers and ministers through the cooperative exercise of God-given gifts by the entire membership. Each local community of believers is competent under Christ as Head of the Church to order its life without interference from any authority whether civil or ecclesiastical.*
- We believe there are two ordinances instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ:
 - Baptism by immersion of all believers; *
 - The Lord's Supper which is a memorial and proclamation of the Lord's death until He returns.

*Variations to these clauses will be accepted to allow for different convictions about these two beliefs.