



# Does a Christian school have Christian learning?

Inviting young people to see and understand the world through the perspective of God's truth.

Wycliffe Christian School is seeking to faithfully unfold a Christian education. What does this mean for learning? We believe that whether it's learning how to write an essay, learning how to triple jump, learning how to spell "pneumonia", or learning to factorise a polynomial, all knowing has its ultimate meaning and purpose when framed by God's big picture story anchored in Jesus. This story gives the starting point for learning and the end application for all knowing—to bring God glory and to serve others.

All schools and forms of education have a particular perspective

on life. It may not always be obvious or overtly stated, but this perspective will shape how things are understood and spoken about, how things are done, what is chosen to be taught, and the reasons given for why we might bother learning anything at all. This might be in the form of assumptions about the nature and origins of the world, or it might be evident through suggestions about the purpose of life and indeed what it means to be fulfilled as a human. No form of education is neutral as it will always be providing a particular lens through which students see the world and their place in it.



Wycliffe Christian School is in community and partnership with many other Christian schools around Australia as part of Christian Education National (CEN). What follows is an expression of how CEN schools think about learning.

## A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Christian education invites young people to see and understand the world through the perspective of God's truth. The Bible becomes the lens through which students view what they are learning. The lens focuses their thinking on ultimate truth—a biblical and Christ-centred vision for life where the world is created and sustained by God; where God has acted in history to deal with the distortions of creation caused by human rebellion; and where history is advancing towards a new creation in which all things are reconciled to God through Jesus who is not only the climax of the biblical story but is also the focal point of the lens.

## A WAY OF LIVING

However, Christian education is not just about a Christian way of understanding. It is also about a Christian way of living. When Jesus said "Follow me", he was expecting people to dedicate their whole lives to serving God. Christian education informs, invites, and inspires young people to live this way. The Christian school aims to teach this way of life every day through all that is done and taught. It does this in the setting of a unified community of love and learning involving parents, children and teachers.

## PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Parents have the ultimate responsibility to educate their children towards a relationship with Jesus, a biblical way of knowing and a Christian way of living. The Christian school community is a partnership with parents and the school sharing in this vision.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Doesn't the Christian school shelter children from the real world?**

Yes and no. All education (and good parenting) will have an age appropriate, gradual exposure to aspects and ideas in this world. Christian education is no different. However, it seeks to guide the students towards discernment about the distortions to God's good design. It can't do this if it ignores the "real world".

### **Do teachers in a Christian school tell the truth?**

It might seem like a strange question, but some parents wonder that if by giving a biblical perspective of everyday things, it might result in current scientific understanding being at best

ignored, and at worst denied. Christian education embraces science and human discovery as blessings from God but seeks to help students discern the assumptions underpinning current understanding. It helps them critique the extent to which conclusions are, and are not, consistent with a biblical worldview. We believe this makes Christian education a more rigorous pursuit of truth.

### **Are teachers in a Christian school just as professional?**

Just as there are well-trained and highly professional Christian teachers working in other schools, the teachers in Christian schools are no less trained and are no less professional. The parents of Christian schools expect no less.

**Christian education is not just about a Christian way of understanding. It is also about a Christian way of living**

### **Can you have academic rigour and Christian education? Isn't there a compromise?**

No. The school embracing Christian education may, in fact, have greater academic rigour. The same state curriculum, with its secular, humanistic and naturalistic framework, is taught in all schools. The Christian school will seek to equip the student with a critical discernment of the worldview assumptions of this curriculum; a discernment that critiques all that is at odds with a biblically informed view of life and the world. This has a greater academic rigour than accepting uncritically what is taught and learnt.

## A GOOD EDUCATION

Many schools provide what may be considered a good education. At Wycliffe Christian School we provide an education for parents asking the question, "what are the starting assumptions of this education and towards what endpoint is this education shaping the students?". Assumptions about the endpoint of education being individual power, career and fulfilment through competition and consumption are common. But Wycliffe Christian School offers an education that informs and inspires children and young people to be a distinctive, kingdom-seeking disciple who acknowledges that Jesus is Lord of all knowable and unknowable parts of this world. We see this as a truly good education.

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