



# Mackay Christian College Newsletter

## 2025 Term 1-1

### 'Christian Education on Purpose'

*News from the Principal,  
Dr Lesley Tunnah*



The 2025 College educational year has begun and I say thank you to all teachers, staff and students for your part in making Day 1 run smoothly.

Our goal is 'Christian Education on Purpose', which means decisions made are thoughtful and always consider the foundational vision and mission of the College. We are not a welfare hub, though we care deeply for our students and refer them to appropriate providers when necessary. We are primarily an educational hub, where students are given a variety of opportunities, mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually, to learn knowledge and life skills so that they may develop and become all God has purposed them to be.

To help achieve this, we have welcomed a number of new staff who bring with them their unique gifts and talents – but our foundational attitude is to serve God and honour Him through serving the College and its families.

Please enjoy the photo gallery in this newsletter along with the names of our latest additions to the MCC Team. I encourage you to welcome them warmly to our MCC community.

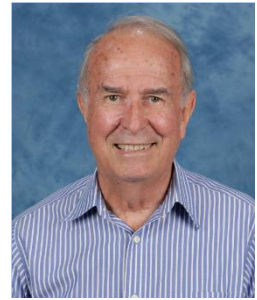
I especially thank Mr Jarrod Leeson, our Maintenance Supervisor, and Mr Darryl Grant, our Grounds Supervisor, who have both toiled mightily with their teams to maintain and freshen up our buildings and gardens. Nearly all rooms on both campuses have now been painted internally which then led to a huge clean-up of the cupboards and equipment as well. There is still more to do – renovating Faith Centre and preparing it for the musical later this year, moving old equipment out and the new in and deciding upon where to store important resources all takes time. But it will be achieved one step at a time...

Unfortunately, a few parents become anxious at this time of change and express their concerns in unacceptable ways. In response to this, I have included at the end of this edition a copy of the MCC 'Parents and Visitors Code of Conduct' policy. You will notice that most expectations are simply good manners. However, you will also read that there are some strict consequences for unacceptable behaviour while on College property or attending College events. We appreciate your attention to being a positive role model for all our students.

If you have any concerns, please contact the relevant leaders in our College including Ms Deb Wright (Head of Secondary), Mrs Michelle Brownsey (Head of Primary), Mr Brett Hobbs (Manager ICT), Mr Doug Graham (Head of Academics), Ms Ulla Hansson (Pastoral Care Coordinator), Mrs Catrien Oosthuizen (Learning Enrichment) and Mrs Tania Buttle (Business Manager) through the College Office on 4963 1100.

As this year of new beginnings and adventures unfolds, my prayers and blessings are for you and your family.

Dr Lesley Tunnah



### *News from the Board Chair,*

*Ps Rob Booth-Jones*

Welcome to our 42<sup>nd</sup> year. What began as a fledgling school with 18 students has developed to a substantial educational institution of nearly 1000.

We have had our challenges, and some years were not as favorable as others but by perseverance and putting our trust in God we have continued. When things get tough, I remind God that He called this school into being so I am turning to Him for the help and blessing we need. And God has been faithful.

This year looks like being a very good year. Possibly the best yet. We have excellent leadership in place, a Principal who is carrying the grace of God to bring forth God's will, and some fine staff to support her.

The Board is considering some building possibilities and there will be other ongoing developments, repairs and maintenance to enhance the facilities.

What is of importance is the students, for that is the reason for a school such as ours, but there is a further dynamic with the fulfilment of the purpose for which God said to begin MCC. That is the Christian factor. It is the most important because it affects a life beyond the current existence we have. We desire our students to do well in their studies but also to experience the reality of Jesus Christ the saviour of the world. To this end we seek to show them God's love through example and prayer. Our desire is that our MCC community will also be involved by Christian encouragement.

Faith is founded on expectation, so join me in believing for a God blessed year for our school and a belief that we will see the best year yet.

In His love.



### *News from the Head of Primary,*

*Mrs Michelle Brownsey*

Welcome to 2025. I pray that your little people have all settled in well and are enjoying their lovely new classes and classmates. If you have any concerns or questions at any time, please reach out to your class teachers via email as generally they will have the most detailed information relating to your child.

A big thank you and shout out to our incredible Parent Association, who came and gave out Zooper Doopers during our Meet, Greet and Book Collection event. They really hit the spot!

We are in for an exciting Term. We look forward to presenting our Student Leaders with their badges in the coming weeks and down the track our K-2 Fun Run, 3-6 Cross Country, P-2 Wet and Messy Day and 3-6 Swimming Carnival. We also have NAPLAN on the agenda and will end the term with Parent Teacher Meetings.

Student of the Week Awards will commence in Week 3, as we delighted to have our College Principal, Dr Lesley Tunnah sharing with us in Week 2. So that we can continue to hand out Thank you Cards like confetti, to shower our students with positive encouragement, we will continue to hand out Thank you Certificates within Village Assemblies, rather than during our main Assembly. To continue to provide for individual family privacy needs and preferences, we will continue only displaying and reading first names and last initials within our Assemblies. When browsing the interactions within the unofficial 'MCC Family Group' Facebook page, there was a significant number of families choosing to only list their child's last initial or not to list their child's last names, so with so many families enjoying photo and video opportunities within assemblies and Facebook sharing afterwards, it appears this is the preferable option for many families.

I look forward to seeing you all around Campus.

Kind Regards & Blessings,

Mrs Michelle Brownsey



## *News from the Head of Secondary*

### *Ms Deb Wright*

Well, we've definitely hit the ground running! Welcome to all our families, and particularly to those starting with us this year. In walking around the campus on the first day of school, you could see the anticipation of students as they begin new subjects and learn from new experiences. Added to this is the journey of further developing relationships with peers and of course different teachers. All and all, it was a big day. It went well and would not have been possible without the tremendous efforts of so many. We look forward to partnering with parents/carers so that every student is supported and challenged to become all God wants them to be.

The reality is that sometimes things don't always go smoothly but we can take 'confidence' as I will explain. This is one of five areas that our students will be hearing this year as part of a C.L.E.A.R. program. In Chapel this week, we explored the historical account of David and Goliath. Goliath was a giant soldier who, to the Israelites, seemed too great to challenge in battle. David was in his teens and relatively small in stature; not even considered as a contender to bring down Goliath. He was known for his Christlikeness as he had a heart after God. As you may be aware the 'C' in C.L.E.A.R. stands for Christlikeness. David didn't look at his own abilities when faced with the challenge but took confidence that God was with him, no matter what. We believe that our students need to know that they have been fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14). When they grab a hold of what the Word of God tells them, they too can have confidence as they step through the different challenges that will no doubt come their way.

This year we are blessed with a team of wonderful teachers who bring a variety of experiences and skills. One notable aspect was that many of our new staff they felt the calling from God to teach at Mackay Christian College. We have Mr John Stringer, Mrs Kerri Wakefield and Mrs Hannah Atherstone teaching in English and Humanities along with Mrs Di Gauci continuing in Art and

English after starting with us in Term 4 last year. We are also pleased to have Mr Alex Marshall join us in teaching at our Trade Training Centre with his expertise in engineering.

Ms Ulla Hansson is our new Pastoral Care Coordinator who comes with a wealth of knowledge and experience in Pastoral Care and has had wonderful success in seeing students grow and develop, particularly those who may have disengaged from education. Supporting Ms Hansson is our new Youth Support Counsellor, Mrs Pamela Jackson, who comes with 30 years of experience in child safety. In addition to this, Mrs Julie Hughes supports the Pastoral Care team through administration and her efficient set of skills while Mrs Belinda Niemann continues as our Data Manager.

With a restructure of Pastoral Care for this year, we have new roles for the House Family Coordinators. We have been blessed with Mr Morne Meiring for Averill, Mr Dan Bryer for Dennis, Mr Rob Ruge for Evans and Mr Chris Lee for Young. The focus of the coordinators is discipling students through positive role modelling and discussions, and developing a positive House Family culture. Together, they are working towards more opportunities for service activities and competition between Houses to further build House Family spirit. In speaking of building House Family culture, Joshua shows the best way to do this. In Joshua 24:15, Joshua proudly states, “As for me and my House (Family), we will serve the Lord.”

We look forward to what 2025 will bring. In that regard, please keep your eyes out for more information on the Parent/Teacher ‘Meet and Greet’ coming up Tuesday, Week 3 along with the Signing in of the Student Leaders on Wednesday, Week 3. Breakfast Club starts up again this coming Thursday with the Chaplains and Care Ambassadors hosting. They will no doubt have some keen and grateful consumers.

One week down, 37 weeks to go!

Ms Deb Wright.

## *News from the Pastoral Care Coordinator*

### *Ms Ulla Hansson*



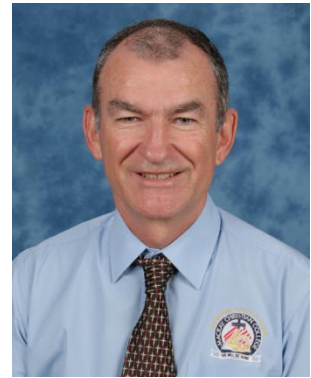
At Mackay Christian College, we are committed to supporting our students throughout their school journey. Our Pastoral Care team plays a vital role in ensuring that every student feels valued, safe, encouraged and supported in their academic and personal growth.

We are pleased to introduce our dedicated Pastoral Care team. Ms Ulla Hansson as our Pastoral Care Coordinator, Mrs Julie Hughes, Administration Assistant of Pastoral Care, Mrs Belinda Niemann, RTLTC Administration Assistant, Mrs Pam Jackson, serving as our Youth Support Counsellor and Chaplains Mr Robert Ruge and Mrs Angela Wilkins. Together, we are here to serve, encourage, and care for all students, helping them navigate challenges and celebrate successes.

Our approach to pastoral care is grounded in our faith. We believe every student is precious in God’s eyes. Our team is dedicated to walking alongside them, providing guidance in discipling, equipping them with essential skills and strategies, and offering support, prayer and practical assistance in their school life. We look forward to working together as a community to create a caring and Christ-centred environment for all.

## *News from the Head of Academics*

*Mr Doug Graham*



A very high proportion (95%) of last year's Year 12 MCC students achieved a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). We congratulate them for this achievement, along with some students achieving excellent ATAR scores, being offered University places (12 students) and a high proportion of our Trade Training students securing full time apprenticeships. There are many individual stories of success which can be told about this cohort as well our current students.

Subject changes for Year 11 and 12 students should have been finalised as classes are now six weeks into Unit 1 or 3 courses. Further changes need to be completed by the end of week 2 but only in extenuating circumstances. Year 7 or 8 subject changes for electives need to be finalised by the end of week 3. Year 9 and 10 subject changes for electives also need to be finalised by the end of week 3 but these will only be approved with extenuating circumstances as electives are started over three years from Year 8 through to Year 10. A number of Year 7-10 elective subjects are full so students wanting to move into these classes will be placed on a waiting list. **Students should book an appointment with our Vocational and Learning Pathways Coordinator, Mrs Dani Beck to discuss potential subject changes.**

Year 7-12 Semester 1 Assessment Calendars will be published in the next few weeks. These will be emailed to parents and students and made available on the College website.

I wish all our students much success in their learning journey this semester. My prayer is that they understand more and more how much God loves them. God's love for all of us has no bounds and this is reflected in our focus Bible verse for the first half of Term 1.

**Rom 8:39 No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

God bless

Mr Doug Graham

## *News from the ICT Manager*

*Mr Brett Hobbs*



*'Keeping our students connected'*

Welcome to 2025! If you're new to our College community, we're excited to have you. Please take a moment to download and install the MCC Orbit app and enable notifications. You can find instructions under the "Mobile Parent Orbit School app" section on the College website. This will ensure you receive important updates directly on your device.

Our ICT Team has been hard at work over the break, creating new e-learning spaces and updating many digital resources for our students. Some of these improvements include expanding the College



Library Computer Lab to support extended digital learning classes with high-performance computers. The AD9 computers have been upgraded with specialist parts to enhance their performance for high-demand learning. We've also continued to upgrade our backbone infrastructure and classroom devices to ensure faster speeds and better connectivity for all students.

In addition, 2025 sees the introduction of a one-to-one laptop program for year 5; exciting times ahead! The Providence STEM class has also been refreshed with today's technology which includes a new laptop trolley and laptops (because those year ones can design great water toys!).

May God bless your 2025 with peace and joy,

Mr Brett Hobbs

### *News from the MCC Parent Association*

*Mr Mathew Drysdale - President*

*Mrs Tara Drysdale Secretary*



The Parent Association got off to a “chill” start by sharing icy cold treats at the book pick up afternoon. The best part was meeting so many families and welcoming them to the new school year. Our new PA postcard highlights the many ways we as a PA serve our school community throughout the year so please collect a copy from the College Offices.

Our first meeting will be Wednesday the **12<sup>th</sup> of February at 6pm**. All meetings are held at Kings Park in the ‘Blue Room’ under Faith Centre. Please follow the signs. We invite you to come and find out what we are all about. You don’t walk away with a job (unless you want one lol) but new ideas and members are always welcome. An exciting initiative this year is that all parent and grandparent volunteers will receive House Family points, and we will have a volunteer of the year award presented at the end of the year.

April will be our AGM where all Executive roles will be up for re-election. More details of this will follow in coming weeks.

Term 1 is historically a busy term for the PA with prep and events. This term, we will be holding our first Primary school dance in week 7 and serving breakfast to students sitting Naplan.

The PA also provides a variety of breakfast bars to KP students who may arrive late to the College through no fault of their own.

Once again, the Parent Association welcomes you to the MCC community and we look forward to serving you and working alongside you this year. Keep your eyes peeled for PA info by following our FB page. Links to our page are on the PA postcard which is available at both reception offices.

God Bless and looking to a fantastic 2025.

Mathew Drysdale President and Tara Drysdale Secretary

*Photo Gallery – NEW Mackay Christian College Staff for 2025*

Father God's purposes include hand-picking each and every staff member who joins our team at MCC. Here are the new staff who have joined us for the 2025 adventure!



Alex Marshall

Caitlin Huston

Annalize Engelbrecht



Hannah Atherstone

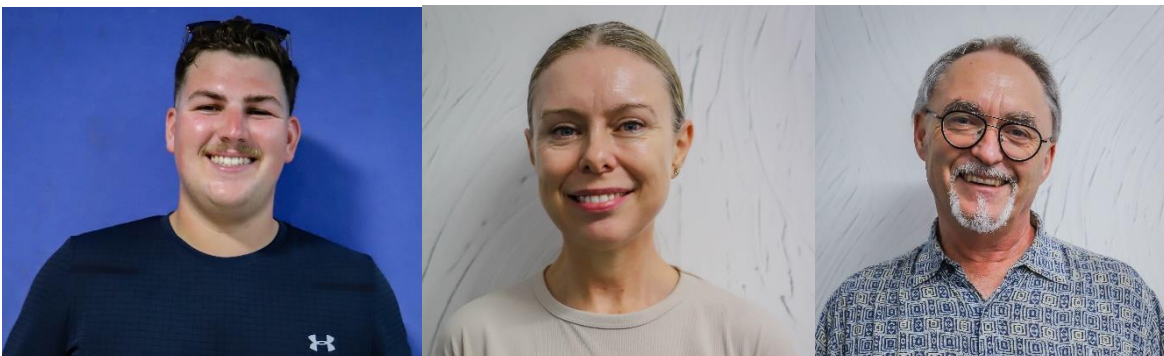
Di Gauci

Cherie Ban



Janeen Matthews

Jacob West



Kai Mullen

Julie Hughes

John Stringer





Madalyn Barret



Kim-ley Crouster



Kerri Wakefield



Pam Jackson



Nadine Stream



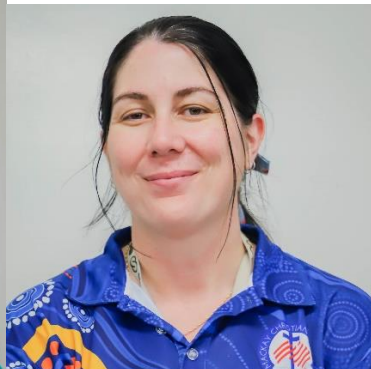
Matt Casey



Shey Tuibua



Samantha Geeves



Susan Jaavuo



Tehinnah Corbett-Cleaver



Zoe Roets



Ulla Hansson



Hannah Cooper

*Please remember to check your MCC Calendar for upcoming events!*



### **Policy 5K-27 Parents and Visitors Code of Conduct**

This policy supports the mission, vision and values of Mackay Christian College (MCC) and outlines expectations for all members of the College community including visitors, parents and those who are on either College campus or assisting with a College activity e.g. camps/excursions. The term “parent” may be read to include carer, guardian, grandparent, or visitor participating in College functions or activities, visiting classes, performing volunteer work, serving as a committee member (such as Parent Association), attending an interview with staff or entering College grounds during College hours.

#### **General Expectations**

- All members of the College community and all those with whom it engages, are to be treated with respect and courtesy
- Our words and actions will be used to build people up and not tear them down
- MCC community members will speak and act towards one another in such a manner that reflects the Christian ethos of the College and sets a positive example to the students
- All communications (whether in person, in writing, and/or online) between students, parents, visitors and staff members are required to be courteous and respectful
- College community members are expected to use peaceful, respectful means to resolve conflict in line with College policies and procedures.

The following headings provide some examples of specific expectations:

#### **Teaching and Learning**

Teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to learn.

- Parents should expect their children to grow in knowledge from their school experience.
- Teachers are to encourage children to make appropriate behaviour choices and follow College rules.

#### **Respect and Understanding**

Parents, students and staff expect to be treated fairly with respect and understanding. This includes:

- speaking politely to College staff and students
- supporting staff in all they do, acknowledging that staff have responsibilities to meet government regulations and support College policies and instructions
- encouraging students to learn from their mistakes rather than seek to blame someone else
- ensuring that other students or parents are not denied social justice by any consideration given to you or your child
- protecting the good character of others by not engaging in gossip, slander or libel
- not intimidating, harassing, threatening or insulting any member of the community verbally or via text, email or other electronic means either directly or through third parties.

#### **Individuality**

Parents, students and staff expect to be treated as individuals. This includes:

- treating one another with respect and affirming people are different
- teaching children how to show respect and how to be polite to others
- recognising and respecting the gender, cultural, social, economic, political, linguistic and spiritual backgrounds of colleagues, students and parents.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Parents, students and staff expect to solve differences in a non-threatening way. This includes:

- consulting with College personnel about issues of concern
- working through issues in an open and friendly manner
- acknowledging and respecting the right of others to have a different opinion
- parents NOT approaching students to discuss any issues, including pastoral care issues – this must be done through the College Pastoral Care team.

### **Communication**

Parents, students and staff expect to communicate effectively and appropriately with all people. This includes:

- ensuring that any information given is accurate, relevant and provided on time
- establishing respectful contact between home and the College
- reading messages via email, Facebook, the Parent Lounge, Newsletters, notes home, etc
- asking for information at a mutually arranged time
- modelling and teaching children appropriate communication skills (verbal and non-verbal)
- discussing issues or concerns about the College, parents, staff or students through the correct procedures/channels with the utmost care and respect for others and not by rumours, gossip or threatening tone.

### **Active Participation**

Parents, students and staff are expected to participate in the various decision-making processes of the College. This includes:

- reading College notifications
- contributing where able to College activities and Parent Association activities
- attending advertised meetings; returning completed survey forms
- expressing one's views respectfully and honestly to the appropriate staff member in a considerate and courteous manner
- respecting and supporting decisions that have been made through the proper processes of the College.

### **Safety**

Parents, students and staff expect to feel safe. This includes:

- using appropriate language and behaviour on College grounds and during College activities
- being familiar with and supporting safety rules and regulations
- supporting the teacher by reminding children to obey all safety rules and regulations
- being vigilant and to report immediately any concerns to the College authorities
- parents/visitors not approaching students or speaking to students with malicious or angry intent but instead seeking appropriate information about issues from relevant College staff.

### **Property**

Parents, students and staff expect respect of other people's property. This includes:

- teaching children to treat College property with respect and return in good condition any equipment that has been borrowed
- teaching children to accept responsibility for any property lost or damaged and to offer appropriate contribution towards its replacement or repair
- clearly naming all children's belongings
- removing unnecessary temptation or risk of damage by not allowing students to take expensive toys, jewellery, gifts, electronic games, smart watches and digital devices to the College, other than

those approved by the Acceptable Use of ICT Conditions. Students may bring a mobile phone provided it remains switched off and 'away for the day'

- accepting responsibility for any damage of personal property caused by the student of their own property.

### **Health, Hygiene and Nutrition**

Parents, students and staff expect to work in a healthy positive environment. This includes:

- ensuring children are well-fed, clothed and groomed
- ensuring children attend the College regularly and have the necessary equipment to learn
- ensuring children participate in College activities and events such as swimming and athletics carnivals, camps and College excursions
- providing reasonable support plans for diagnosed medical conditions
- abiding by College directives in relation to student allergies or contagious diseases

### **Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

The consequences to a member of the College community for breaching the Code of Conduct will be as determined by the College Principal, Head of Secondary, Head of Primary or the Principal's delegate and may include one or more of the following:

- The College may ban any member of the College community from attending any co-curricular activity.
- The College may ban any member of the College community from being on the College grounds in general.
- The College may direct that any parent may only communicate with one or more staff members through a nominated College representative.
- In the case of extreme or prolonged breach of the Code of Conduct by a parent, the College may terminate the enrolment of the child/ren of that parent.
- The College may take any other steps within its responsible discretion to determine an appropriate response according to the nature of the breach.