

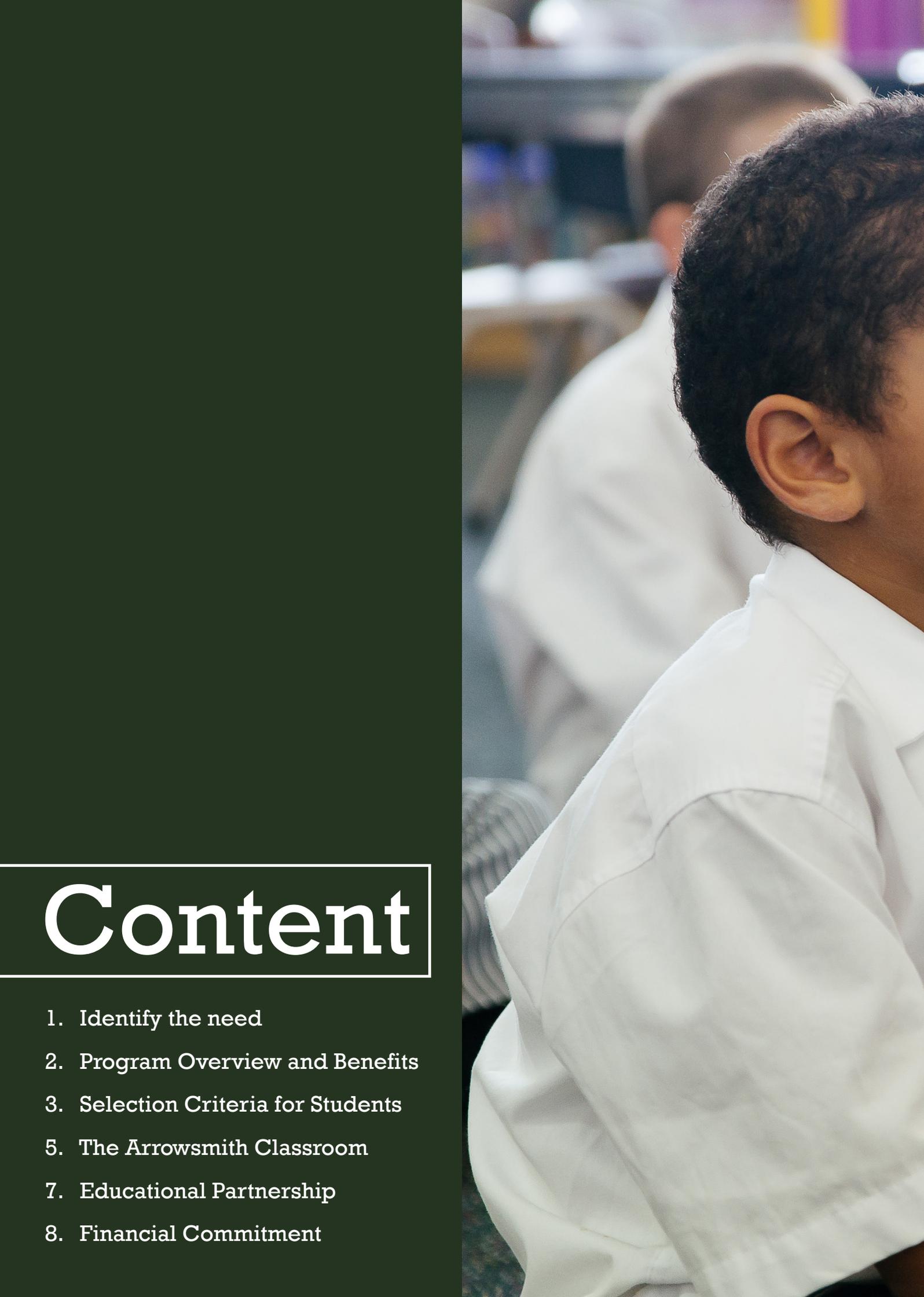


Arrowsmith PROGRAM

Strengthening Learning Capacities



Plenty Valley
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
In Christ: Wisdom & Knowledge



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Identify the need

Australian surveys suggest that approximately 10 percent of Victorian school children have a learning disability. The majority of these students do not qualify for any form of additional government funding to assist with meeting their educational needs. The Australian school system traditionally supports efforts to treat the symptoms of a learning disability rather than addressing the root causes.

At Plenty Valley Christian College we are constantly looking for ways to enhance student learning and outcomes for all students entrusted to our care.

Time to think differently

Learning disabilities can be difficult to identify as students often develop a range of coping and masking strategies to assist them with 'getting by' in the classroom. For those who don't take the path of least resistance they can often be misinterpreted as daydreamers, lazy, or even defiant. Our expectations can, at times, be lowered in an aim to assist to make schooling easier for these students. The Arrowsmith Program thinks differently about learning disabilities and literally teaches students to think differently by enhancing specific neural pathways. This cognitive program turns on parts of the brain that have been weak and enables students to learn and progress in ways not thought possible in the past.

Although this type of cognitive education is innovative in Australia, the Arrowsmith program is not new. It has proven effective for over 30 years of implementation with a variety of learning disabilities including; difficulties with reading, writing and mathematics, comprehension, logical reasoning, problem solving, visual and auditory memory, non-verbal learning, attention, processing speed and dyslexia.

Mission and Vision

Mission

The Arrowsmith Program at Plenty Valley Christian College (PVCC) targets students with cognitive learning difficulties. By strengthening student cognitive capacities through the Arrowsmith Program in a compassionate and supportive learning environment, students will be enabled to return to a mainstream academic program with little or no need for additional assistance.

Mission and Vision

Vision

Through the Arrowsmith Program, PVCC aims to ensure that:

- The Arrowsmith Program is authentically implemented.
- Whilst catering for student's individual learning needs they have a sense of belonging and connection to the wider school community.
- Students participating in the program capitalize on their strengthened cognitive capacities to be effective, confident independent learners for life, and empowered to achieve their goals.
- Personal development, positive self-esteem and individual growth are celebrated.
- Parents are supported and fully informed about the Program and their child's progress.
- Staff are highly professional and committed to the program and that those implementing the program are fully trained by Arrowsmith Program accredited trainers.

Program Overview and Benefits

The Arrowsmith Program is a result of a personal journey and later research by Barbara Arrowsmith-Young (the author of 'The Woman Who Changed Her Brain'). The Arrowsmith Program is drawn from research in neuroscience and over 30 years of experience. This research and experience has led to the understanding that specific areas of the brain can be developed by strengthening otherwise weak cognitive capacities.

Students with learning disabilities have traditionally been treated using programs designed to compensate for their difficulties - students who have difficulty processing speed, for example, would be taught to use a keyboard or accommodated with more time to write during examinations. By contrast the goal of the Arrowsmith Program is to help students strengthen the weak cognitive capacities underlying their learning. The Arrowsmith Program deals with the root causes of the learning disability rather than its symptoms.

In the Arrowsmith Program, students receive an individualised program designed to address identified areas of cognitive weakness. Upon completion of the program, students are able to capitalize on their increased learning capacities and after a three to four year program they are reintegrated into a full academic curriculum with little to no further special education assistance or program modifications. Upon completion of the program students may require one to two years to gain experience using their newly acquired skills. Even if a student is unable to complete the three to four year program, they will achieve benefit for every year they are in the program.

Benefits of The Arrowsmith Program*

The Program:

- Identifies the cognitive areas to be addressed on the basis of a detailed assessment of nineteen cognitive areas
- Uses clearly defined and individualised goals
- Strengthens working memory, processing speed and cognitive efficiency
- Improves fine motor skills for writing
- Strengthens executive functioning of the brain
- Trains visual and auditory memory
- Improves attention and concentration
- Builds the capacity for verbal and non-verbal thinking, reasoning and problem-solving
- Provides a positive, supportive and structured learning environment.

*as identified by Arrowsmith schools.

Further information on the Arrowsmith Program can be found at:
www.arrowsmithschool.org



The Arrowsmith Program deals with the root causes of the learning disability rather than managing its symptoms.

Selection Criteria for Students

Students selected will:

- Be between Year 2 and Year 9 when they first commence the program
- Be enrolled or to commence enrolment as a student at PVCC (having met PVCC's selection criteria)
- Be currently receiving documented curriculum adjustments in a mainstream setting
- Be of average to above average intelligence documented through an educational psychological assessment such as a WISC IV or WIAT II
- Be identified as having a combination of the learning dysfunctions described by the Arrowsmith Program cognitive profile questionnaire
- Not be diagnosed as having severe intellectual, emotional or behavioural disorders that would significantly affect his/ her ability to participate in the Arrowsmith Program or relate to his/ her peer group and teacher
- Not be identified as having a brain injury

The program is appropriate for students who have learning dysfunctions ranging from mild to severe, including those who are experiencing difficulty with just one or with several subject areas. Research has demonstrated that students of all ages benefit equally from the program.

A student's eligibility to participate in the Arrowsmith Program will be determined by the Principal/ Head of School, in conjunction with the Head of Teaching and Learning Support at Plenty Valley Christian College. The selection decisions of the team are final.



OUR CHILDREN
NEED US
TO THINK
DIFFERENTLY

The Arrowsmith Classroom

The Arrowsmith Program classroom is similar to any other classroom, in that the students have the same needs and interests and require the same dedicated and trained teachers as every other student. However, the Arrowsmith classroom has a few differences:

- One trained authorized Arrowsmith teacher is required for every 10 students.
- The age range is wider and the cognitive programs look different from the standard academic curriculum.
- All year levels are accommodated in the Arrowsmith classroom with students rotating in and out to their age appropriate academic classes.
- Arrowsmith periods are not necessarily consecutive in the daily routine.
- Students will usually spend four 40-minute sessions per day, five days a week for three to four years on cognitive programs designed specifically for their areas of learning dysfunction. The other two sessions per day are spent with their age appropriate class in chosen subjects/activities. Students will share the same lunch and recess breaks with their age appropriate class as well as participate in extra curricula activities such as a camps, excursions etc.
- An Arrowsmith classroom is a joyful and rewarding place. Students who have experienced failure or who have struggled to achieve success in the past, enjoy a new found sense of accomplishment, working with their peers as they move through the levels of their program.

Each student will spend:

- A minimum of four x 40 minute periods per school day on Arrowsmith program exercises;
- A minimum of 60 minutes on homework each week night; and
- 120 minutes on homework each weekend throughout the school year.

Each identified learning dysfunction requires a minimum of three hours and twenty minutes of the program exercise per week (comprising one daily 40 minute period for five days per week)

**SCHOOLING
SHOULD BE
ORGANISED
AROUND CHILDREN**

Educational Partnership

PVCC students are nurtured and supported, but also challenged to achieve high standards in an educational experience that is framed by Christian beliefs and community. It is a privilege to share with parents the responsibility for shaping the lives of young people. We take seriously the development of a Christian view of the world in education and of inspiring children to be and to do their best.

PVCC is committed to the establishment of a close partnership with parents in the education of their children. A shared belief in the philosophy of the College and the Arrowsmith program is essential to optimizing the learning outcomes for children in the program. Prior to the commencement of the Arrowsmith Program, suitable applicants will undergo an Arrowsmith assessment. The diagnostic data provided by this assessment will determine the individual learning profile of the student and the individual program for that student.



**IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO
SHARE WITH PARENTS
THE RESPONSIBILITY
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Financial Commitment

As this is a highly tailored and specialized program, above and beyond the normal service provided by the College, additional fees are charged for those participating.

Parents will be asked to meet the normal school fee charges (see the College website for current charges) in addition to approximately \$13,000 (subject to exchange rates and yearly reviews) to cover the costs of paying Arrowsmith Canada as well as running the College Arrowsmith classroom.

This extra Arrowsmith cost covers:

- Provision of all classroom space, teaching wages, computers and other IT provisions, exercise materials from Arrowsmith and other miscellaneous supplies
- The Arrowsmith suite of cognitive programs comprising over 12,000 discrete levels of computerized, auditory and pencil-and-paper exercises that are refined and updated annually
- The Arrowsmith Program Web Assessment that identifies each student's cognitive strengths and weaknesses
- An initial Learning Profile for each student
- The Arrowsmith web-based Record of Program which allows teachers to enter the monthly quantitative and qualitative data for each student's program
- An analysis of the monthly data that compares each student's progress with Arrowsmith benchmark goals for each exercise
- A year-end assessment that measure student progress in each of the cognitive areas addressed
- A year-end Learning Profile based on improvements in the specific cognitive areas being addressed for each student
- A modified program of cognitive exercises for each year a student is enrolled
- A Program Coordinator assigned to each school to offer guidance in teacher and student selection, to answer the teacher's questions, to analyse student data and monitor student progress

Expression of Interest / Enrolment Process

Step 1:

- Read relevant information on the Arrowsmith Program and Plenty Valley Christian College (see www.pvcc.vic.edu.au)
- Complete and return the PVCC enrolment form as well as any other relevant documentation

The Registrar
Plenty Valley Christian College
840 Yan Yean Rd
Doreen VIC 3754

Step 2:

- Suitable applicants (as decided by the selection panel) will be invited to attend an interview with Head of School and Head of Teaching and Learning Support

Step 3:

- If your application is successful (as determined by the selection panel), the Registrar will contact you with an offer of enrolment to the College and/or the Arrowsmith Program.
- New enrolments to PVCC will only be possible where there is a vacancy in the age appropriate classroom
- If you wish to accept the offer of enrolment, a \$500 non-refundable enrolment fee is required as well as an additional holding fee of 20% of the Arrowsmith school fee is due to hold a place in the Arrowsmith Program (approximately \$1600). This 20% fee will be credited to your account in term 4 of the student's final Arrowsmith Program.





Plenty Valley

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