

Restructuring Plenty Valley Christian College

Plenty Valley Christian College has served families for more than 35 years based on a firm belief that parents and teachers, working in partnership in the education of their children, create a powerful and complimentary support structure for children. We believe that children are created in the image of our Heavenly Father; that each one is unique, valued and created with intent. Our purpose as a college, is to support Christian families in the education of their children through a Christian worldview, to nurture and equip them to become servants of the Kingdom of God and citizens of their nation and world. At Plenty Valley Christian College, our students are *Nurtured to Thrive and Empowered to Influence*.

The traditional school model of Primary and Secondary has served the community well in establishing a foundation of education for our children. The College Vision Statement calls us to have the creative and responsive mind of Christ and as our society has changed rapidly over the years that the College has served, we recognise the need for change in our model of education.

In 2018, we will begin a two-year process of restructuring the College to better serve the needs of our students and to ensure the best educational outcomes for all our students.

The Big Picture

Our students come to us as very little children (from 3 years old in 2018) and emerge as young adults of 18 or 19 years old. Over this period of time there are vast changes in personal and career interests, the way children's brains perceive and process the world around them, important milestones in personal development, physical changes, important relationships change, and stages where emotional development requires particular attention.

The traditional model of Primary and Secondary schooling is stretched to cater for these changes. At times, there is a mismatch in the structure of the College and the particular stage of student development it seeks to serve. The early years of Secondary are well-documented as a difficult transition for many students where students move from a one-teacher, one-room model to a distinctly different model of multiple-teachers, multiple-rooms; all whilst undergoing the challenging developmental changes that come with puberty.

Changes in societal expectations are reflected in greater use of and dependence on technology, increasing methods of and demands on communication and the extension of the period of adolescence, as children learn to navigate an increasingly complex society.



To reflect these changes in the needs of our students, PVCC is moving to a One College – Four Sub-Schools model, a more integrated and continuous model of education that encompasses four graduated stages of development: Early Years Sub-School, Junior Years Sub-School, Middle Years Sub-School and Senior Years Sub-School

A Two-Year Process



The restructure process will take two years (2018/19), to allow for a strong transition from our current model, to a more sophisticated and developmental-focused model that better provides for the complexities of children's developmental stages.

In 2018, we will focus on establishing the new structure and strengthening our teams dedicated to serving the needs of specific developmental stages. The restructure will continue in 2019, with more specific goals in curriculum, pedagogy and support structures for each sub-school.

Initially, the sub-schools will use current curriculum and programs and be led by a Head of Sub-School. The Early Years Sub-School will be led by Mrs Susan Phipps and encompass Preparatory to Year 2. Our ELC, Plenty Kids will start from the beginning of the year in their brand-new centre and Prep to Yr 2 will move into their part of the centre ready to start in Term 2. The Junior Years Sub-School, led by Mrs Rebecca Matthews will serve Years 3 to 6. The Middle Years Sub-School, led by Mr Paul Oldman will be comprised of Years 7 to 9 and Senior Years Sub-School, led by Mrs Monica Olivier, Years 10-12. The Heads of Sub-School will also have Assistant Heads of Sub-School who will assist them to lead their team of teachers to develop curriculum, support mechanisms, sequences and processes that best serves the developmental needs of the children in their sub-school.

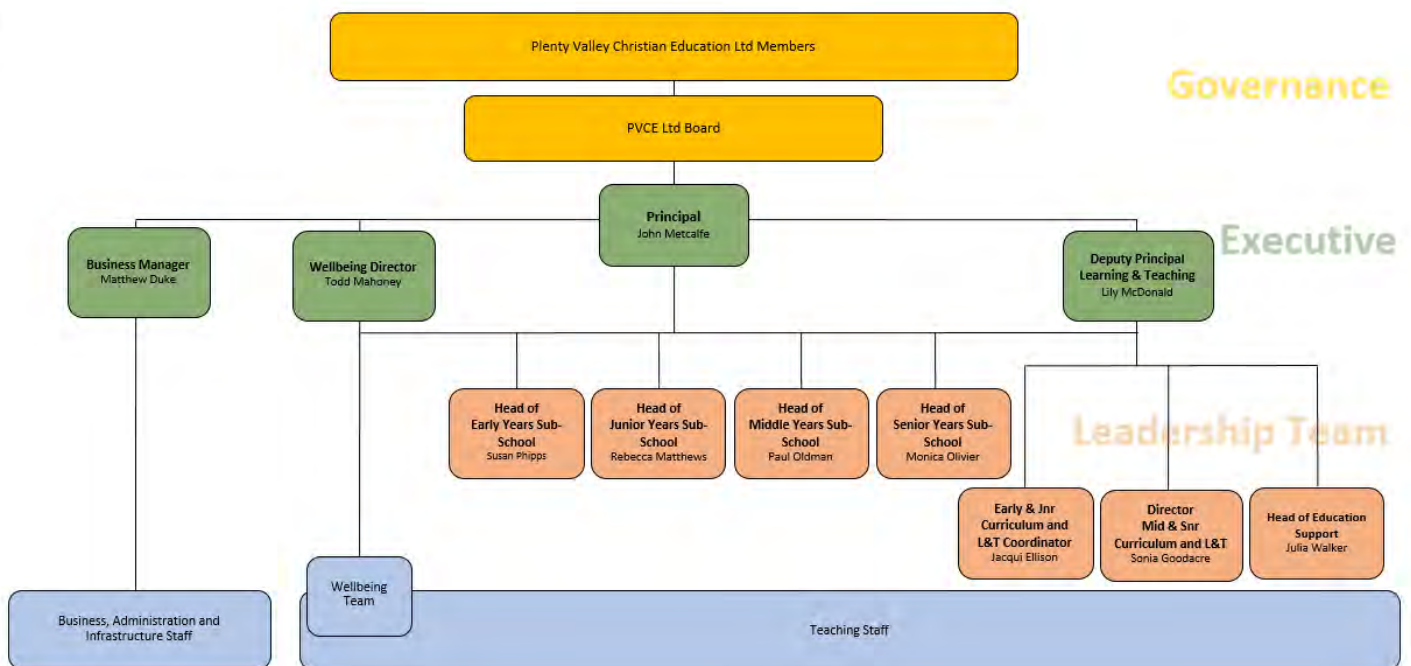
The second stage of transition in 2019, will see the focus progress to the implementation of more specific targeted curriculum, teaching methodology and pastoral structures to meet the needs of each child. These will be developed by the learning teams in each sub-school during 2018.

To ensure that we have an effective One College model, the College executive will have whole school responsibilities. These responsibilities will correspond to the areas that are most important in the development of the College.

Research consistently indicates that the best way for schools to improve student outcomes is to improve the quality of teaching in the school. The Learning and Teaching Team, encompassing curriculum, pedagogy and teacher professional development, will be led by Mrs Lily McDonald and focus on supporting our teaching staff to make sure they are the best practitioners that they can be.

The other whole-college focus area will be Wellbeing, ensuring that pastoral care for students is age appropriate, thorough and proactive. The Wellbeing Team led by Mr Todd Mahoney will bring the ability to plan for developmental milestones of students and respond swiftly to needs arising amongst the student population. Executive members will work together to ensure that student transitions between sub-schools is smooth and that curriculum and pastoral care is sequenced and flows well across the entire College.

Together with the Principal, the Executive staff will work with four Heads of Sub-School to form a leadership team that will take the College into a new and more responsive structure.



ELC and (3 and 4 Year Olds) and Early Years Sub-School (EY) - Prep to Year 2

The early years of child development are crucial to developing strong foundations for life. It is widely held that children learn more in the first five years of their lives than the whole of their formal schooling. The majority of this learning is observation, investigation and practice through play. In the Early Years Sub-School children will be intentionally guided through the transition from home to school in an environment that nurtures them, encourages curiosity, teaches through play, encourages community and establishes strong foundations in Literacy, Numeracy and Social Skills.



Beginning in the ELC with playgroups for 3 year-olds and moving into a more structured play-based Kinder program for 4 year-olds; children will be prepared to enter their Foundation year of schooling (Prep) with an already developed sense of good social interaction and a curiosity to learn. Pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skill development begins in Kinder, and are intentionally strengthened and developed to create strong foundations in Prep to Year 2 that will serve children well in the remainder of their schooling. Children will be given opportunities to begin learning about a broad range of areas including the Humanities, Sciences, Languages and The Arts and to develop their gross motor skills through Physical Education.

In 2018, we are planning two Prep classes and three Yr 1/2 Multiage classes. In 2019, we plan to increase the numbers of Prep students and run three classes that will then flow into four multiage Yr 1/2 classes. "Research has highlighted the benefits for both teachers and children when learning and teaching in multiage classrooms. Benefits include more holistic, child-responsive curriculum practices that consider the understandings, capabilities and dispositions that children need for future work. Children and teachers usually have the opportunity to work together for more than one year, which enhances continuity of learning and the forming of positive relationships with teachers and children, and between children. Because of the mixed age group, the younger children benefit from the positive models of older children, often aspiring to their levels of capability. At the same time, the older children rise to the expectations of the younger children and teacher, being very responsible and having opportunities to lend and use their expertise." (Multi age Learning and Teaching, Queensland Studies Authority)

Junior Years Sub-School - JY (Years 3 to 6)

The Junior Years provides an opportunity for students to move from an early year's approach to more focused inquiry-based learning, teaching them to understand their role as members of families, and responsibilities as members of their class. Children in this age group will be challenged to use their foundational learning in Literacy and Numeracy to begin to express their own thoughts and to investigate their understanding of faith. The Junior Years curriculum will develop inquiry-based learning pedagogy to stimulate a thirst for learning and an increasing capacity to explore the key learning areas through a Christian world-view. Students will explore a broad curriculum incorporating various disciplines such as Science, Technology, Humanities and Mathematics in a trans-disciplinary model of learning. They will undertake various competitive sports and participate in swimming, athletics and cross-country carnivals. Students will learn a Language Other Than English, Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Health and Physical Education. They will be given opportunities to engage in leadership activities through class representation and investigate the responsibilities that his brings.



In 2018, we are planning three multi-age Yr 3/4 classes, two Yr 5 and two Yr 6 classes. Year 6 will be a particular focus as they develop leadership responsibilities learned in previous years and take a leadership role for Junior Sub-School as well as prepare to transition to Middle school.

Research demonstrates that multi-age classes have benefits in social participation and cognitive development, such as increased perception of the value of student contributions and the creation of a climate of expected cooperation. Researchers have observed an increase in children's self-regulatory behaviours and greater sense of social responsibility. (The Benefits of Multi Age Grouping. ERIC Digest)

Middle Years Sub-School - MY (Years 7 to 9)



Students in the Middle Years are undergoing significant physical and emotional changes as they move through puberty. It is a time of differentiating themselves from their parents/family and developing an increasing level of understanding of themselves as individuals and how that impacts their relationships with friends, families and the wider community. This is an age where hormones can sometimes play havoc with relationships and their sense of who they are, which in turn may lead to disengagement from learning and from their families.

The MYSS will provide a specific pastoral care program and curriculum to assist students with their transition from childhood to adolescence. The transition will be strategically staged to allow students to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. The Year 7 students will have a homeroom where the majority of their classes will be held providing a more secure "home-base" with some lessons in specialist rooms.

As students progress through Middle School they will gradually spend more time in specialist rooms in preparation for the Senior Sub-School model. Year 7 and 8 students will have the opportunity to try "taster" specialised subjects which will become "electives" in Year 9.

Year 9 will be a particular focus of Middle School with camps and excursions designed to push them beyond their comfort zones and bring out qualities that are hard to explore in the classroom. Year 9s will be expected to be outward focused and embrace servant leadership for the Middle Sub-School. The Wellbeing focus will specifically address the difficulties associated with moving through puberty and adolescence and understanding who they are as Christians, as individuals and as members of their community.

Senior Years Sub-School – SY (Years 10 to 12)



The Senior Years of schooling will provide opportunities for students to direct their learning pathway toward specific post-schooling goals. Year 10 will be an apprentice year where students will choose their pathway by either beginning VCE with the goal of entering University or gaining the VCE in preparation for other tertiary studies; or by choosing a specific VCAL program to prepare for a practical and hands on career.

Students in Year 10 will be presented with career advice and counselling on the most appropriate pathway to achieving their post-school goals. They will have the opportunity to try options through subject choice and work experience.

Years 11 and 12 will be taught by specialists in each discipline and program and the students will be given the respect, responsibilities and opportunities of adult learners. Year Twelve will be the culmination of 13 years at PVCC and these students will take on College student leadership roles of Captaincy and Student Leadership membership.

Pastoral care will focus on preparing for post-school life and the responsibilities of being an adult. Students of the Senior Years will be encouraged to prayerfully consider their studies; to actively seek both spiritual and career-based advice on their goals and to take active steps in working toward those goals. These senior students will be encouraged to lead the student body by considering themselves as role-models for younger students and representatives of the College to the wider community.

