



THE WAY



FROM THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

When I ask prospective parents what are they looking for in a school, I receive very similar responses

“A good education! Solid values, and the provision of a safe, supportive environment!” I must admit I had a very similar motivation when choosing my children’s school. Choosing the ‘right school’ is a very important decision, however, I know Thomas Hassall Anglican College is a very good choice for families that are looking for this style of education. Of course I am biased, but I truly believe what we are doing here at Thomas Hassall is giving our students a unique opportunity to experience life to the full.

The College vision, ‘Growing and nurturing excellence in learning, wisdom and service in the South West’, is undergirded by our commitment as a Christian school to honour Christ in all that we do. These are lofty ideals but they are central in all the decisions we make across the College. When we give practical expression to the vision I believe their needs to be evidence of a diverse and rich education that is of the highest quality. For instance, ‘learning’ in the classroom is a very high priority. Programs are in place to support all of our students from the most gifted to those who find learning difficult and everyone in between. These programs include a wide range of programs to enhance academics: study skills, online tutor programs to enhance mathematics, science, literacy and various HSC disciplines and access to the Study Centre tutor program. However, learning is not just optimising the academic results. Learning also involves developing good communication skills, which could include things such as debating, public speaking, drama and performance or reading and playing music. This has meant that we have worked hard to offer students opportunities to have a choice of languages, learn an instrument or to take part in a diverse co-curricular program.

Growing excellence in learning is foundational, but learning how to live and negotiate life with all its complexities is something that takes discipline, self-control and hard earned experience. This includes negotiating relationships, overcoming obstacles and persevering when life is difficult. Our teachers are focused on ensuring our students can successfully navigate these challenges with a sense of hope, optimism and joy. Our wellbeing framework attempts to support this in a variety of ways from carefully planned and executed Pastoral Care programs, targeted opportunities like the camp program, the Duke of Ed program and clear guidelines around behaviour and dress.

Excellence in learning and wisdom are fantastic goals, but if this is achieved at the expense of 'character' then we would have failed. Character is developed when we are truly grateful for the abundance that we have. Part of that gratitude is to have a sense of the 'other person' to reach out beyond our own personal interests and to serve our community. This may be something as simple as helping someone in need, being a friend to someone that is outside the group or to get on board and help raise funds for a multitude of good causes.

"Excellence in Learning, Wisdom and Service" is a wonderful aspiration and when fully expressed, gives birth to 'life in abundance'. Let's aspire to this lofty vision with the same sense of passion and commitment, reflected in the Scriptures:

*"Love **the Lord** your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."³⁸ This is the first and greatest **commandment**.³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Matthew 22:37-38*

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