Aspirations for Christian Education at Wellington Hills Christian College

What is required to build a high quality, authentically Christian school that is anchored in Holy Scripture and the gospel of Jesus Christ, honours our bi-cultural heritage, caters to the educational needs and aspirations of families in the greater Wellington area, and enables students to grow strong in faith, hope, and love?

Foundational aspirations and beliefs

- To provide a non-denominational, broadly evangelical, Christ-centred, quality education that holds fast to the core essentials of the Christian faith as outlined in the NZCPT document 'Our Faith.' We seek to be a community of learning that searches out the truth together in humility and is characterised by the words: in essentials—unity; in non-essentials—liberty; in all things—charity.

- To seek to create a Christian community of learning that acknowledges that God is King, that Jesus Christ is Lord, and believes this is good news for the world. The grand narrative of Scripture, which finds its fulfilment in the gospel of Jesus Christ, provides us with a unique story of human history and a vision for the future that enables us as followers of Jesus to adapt, improve, and navigate our way through changing cultural circumstances while maintaining our 'true north' over multiple generations.

- To provide a Christian education that affirms that the Triune God, who spoke all things into being, fills the universe with life, meaning, and purpose. Therefore, all our learning, teaching, and working deals in some way with God's world, and all that is true is God's truth, no matter where it is found. We affirm God's wisdom in creation, providence, and redemption, and acknowledge that God is the source of all wisdom.

- We believe that to build a truly Christian school, where curriculum, policies, and pedagogy reflect our Christian character and where students are encouraged to grow in faith, are inspired to learn, wonder, imagine, and discover God's world, and are equipped to apply their knowledge wisely, we need board members and teachers who are genuine disciples of Jesus Christ, who seek to be informed by Scripture and guided by the Holy Spirit, and are committed to ongoing professional learning and development.

- We believe that God has endowed Christian parents with the responsibility of nurturing their children in the faith and encouraging their growth in Christ-like character. We therefore acknowledge that it is a privilege to partner with parents in the provision of their child's education. We seek to honour the parent-school partnership.

- We seek to provide a Christian education that encourages and inspires young people to grow strong in faith, wisdom, and Christ-like character, loving God and others, and fulfilling their God-given calling in the world and contributing to the common good.

- We affirm that God is triune in nature and holy and loving in character, modelling for us

what it means to live and work in community. Just as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit live in unity, mutual submission, generosity, harmony, trust, and love, so we, who are united in Christ by the Holy Spirit, are called to love on another, respect one another, submit to one another, and work towards trust and unity. We recognise that as individuals we will be at different points in our journey of faith, but we share a common goal—to become more like Christ. Therefore, we foster unity but not conformity. We value the freedom to explore ideas and better ways of doing things. We seek to be a community that embraces our diverse cultures, values our bi-cultural heritage, welcomes new staff and students, adopts inclusive practices, and listens to one another. We seek to be a Christian community of learning that embraces unity in diversity.

- The school recognises Te Āti Awa and Ngāti Toa as mana whenua and wishes to honour that by seeking ways of working together in a meaningful manner.

- Christian schooling in the Wellington area is unique due to its location near the seat of government, its local history, its community make-up, and its thriving cultural scene. This offers our students unique opportunities for learning in context and community engagement. We seek to nurture students to become curious, innovative, and culturally sensitive learners who are strong in faith and able to discern the needs of our culture, so that many will be motivated to go on to further study and become thought leaders who can bring about positive and transformative change for the common good.

- The school board and senior management will take their lead from NZCPT with regards to the delivery of education with a Special Character. NZCPT is legally bound to ensure the maintenance and preservation of the school's Special Character as outlined in schedule six of the NZ Integration Act. The NZCPT Special Character documents (Our Faith, Theological Framework, and Special Character Guidelines) provide the school board, management, and teachers guidance in the delivery of their Special Character.

Educational aspirations

General aspirations

- The key defining component for student success is highly effective teachers. Based on a relationship-based learning approach, the school will have dedicated, highly skilled teachers who care about the students, have high expectations of their potential, and are inspiring models of a flourishing Christian life.

- As a biblically faithful, Christ-centred community of learning, the school will work to be culturally capable, seeking positive relations with local iwi and whānau, honouring our bi-cultural heritage, upholding the articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and thereby demonstrating that this school is culturally located and rooted in Aotearoa New Zealand.

- While providing a Christ-centred, biblically faithful education, the school's approach will be child-focused, personalising learning as far as is possible according to students' unique gifts, skills, interests, and abilities. To this end we will endeavour to keep class sizes small.

- A genuine Christian education will value student voice, encourage student agency, provide opportunities for leadership and service, will encourage curiosity, empathy, and discernment, and will equip students with skills to manage themselves and their time, and to make wise choices.
- The school will deliver the *New Zealand Curriculum,* including its key competencies, in a way that aligns with its Christian character.
- The school will be holistic in its approach, recognising and supporting each student, valuing their language and culture, and recognising that no student can flourish without first being firmly rooted in a place of belonging, understanding, and acceptance.

Student aspirations

- Christian education affirms the dignity of every child, created in God's image, and deeply loved by God. We believe every child is 'wonderfully made,' is endowed by God with gifts and talents, and is called to a vocation that includes love of God and neighbour, and wise stewardship/kaitiaki of creation.
- As a Christian school community, we recognise that as with all human beings we are deeply flawed. Therefore, as we desire to grow in Christ-like character, we will extend grace towards one another, recognising that we are each a work in progress. We will also provide clear boundaries, guidelines, and pastoral support to ensure the safety and flourishing of all students.
- We are committed to nurturing students in an enriching Christian environment so that they may grow in Christ-like character, and become people of faith, hope, and love. We long for our graduates to become shining lights offering hope and a way forward in their generation.
- Students will be encouraged to put their faith, hope, and love into action, through opportunities to support mission, engage in service, and contribute to society.

System aspirations

- The school will cultivate an authentic Christian community in which students experience God's love and can reach their potential with the support and celebration of a community of devoted whānau, teachers, and peers.
- Our teachers, in addition to being highly effective educational practitioners, will model faithful discipleship and will endeavour to integrate their personal faith with the task of education.
- The school will model an atmosphere of growth, where teachers, students, and whānau are encouraged to grow in faith and learning, where it is recognised that students will be in different places in their journey of faith, and where teachers will be committed to meeting students where they are at and accompanying them in their journey of faith.
- Mātauranga Māori (*Māori knowledge)* will be valued and included in our education even as many aspects of Western culture will be valued and included. However, both

perspectives will be subject to an ongoing process of discernment and critique in the light of the Scriptures and the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- The human journey from childhood to adulthood includes a transition from dependence upon others to greater independence, responsibility, and contribution to the common good. To support the flourishing of students on this journey, our schools will endeavour to protect and nurture students when they are young, and support and encourage them as they grow while providing the necessary skills, knowledge, and opportunities to take responsibility, think critically, persevere in difficulty, choose wisely, and serve faithfully.
- Trust is built with the school community by developing systems and structures that meet the current aspirations and the levels of comfort of the majority of families and students, including the practical implementation of such things as the school timetable and uniform.

The Wellington Hills Christian College Board