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EDITORIAL
Lana Hibbard

Change is a factor in every aspect of our lives and the world of education is no exception. In many cases, we can choose whether or to what extent we will adopt or adapt new ways of thinking and doing. Teachers are urged to utilise best practice in planning lessons that enable students to learn desired skills and competencies. Considerable effort is also directed at effecting change in the attitudes, behaviour, values and beliefs of students.

As professionals, teachers must remain up-to-date with developments in their field. However, it is easy to be consumed by changes such as the release of a national curriculum, developments in technology, innovations in pedagogy, or advances in assessment methods, and lose the central focus of Christian education—revealing Christ in order to evoke change in people’s lives.

A significant number of those who enter the teaching profession do so because they want to influence the lives of young people. Teachers become proficient at identifying the need for change in students and are skilled at planning for such change; however, they tend to resist making changes to their own attitudes, behaviour, values or beliefs. Many will say, “I’m happy for things to change so long as you don’t ask me to change who I am. Don’t ask me to be someone I’m not.”

Many fear change, yet God has clearly told us that spiritual growth is about change. “We are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory” (2 Corinthians 3:18). God has already planned many changes for you and I, and not just changes around us but, more significantly, inside us. An intimate relationship with God cannot leave us unchanged; He wants to transform us. God’s ways of thinking and doing are so far removed from human ways that you cannot simply adapt to suit your preferences. A total transformation is needed.

By establishing an intimate, trusting relationship with the creator of the universe as our father, guide and friend, we will experience a transformation of our attitudes, behaviour, values and beliefs. Philippians 18 says, “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” This total life change is for all Christians, for every one of us.

Unfortunately, many Christians have failed to pursue a transformed life. “We live in a day when millions of people have made a commitment to Christ and yet few lives are really transformed by his power…in the end most believers end up as much a part of the world’s way as their nonbelieving neighbours” (Jacobsen, p. 18).

Christian teaching that reflects today’s postmodern philosophy offers a gospel without demands, a down-playing of our sinful nature. In this case, there is no need for a total life change, no need to live the radical discipleship of Jesus. As Jesus’ followers, we must represent the alternative way of life He taught and lived. We need to have a Kingdom lifestyle both corporately and individually. We must give up the comfort of remaining who and where we are right now. We will only be credible Christians in the eyes of the world if we practice what we preach, if we present an alternative lifestyle, if we allow God to change us.

The distinctiveness of Christian education relies on the call, dedication and spiritual maturity of its staff. Christian teachers play a significant role in the lives of students and occupy a unique position of influence on individuals and families. As your life changes in the hands of God, you will be in an optimal position to act as a facilitator of change in the lives of others—students, colleagues, neighbours and strangers. Your interactions with students (and others) should reveal to them the character of Christ, arousing in them a desire for inner change.

Make change a part of your life and open yourself to the transforming power of God.

Reference

[Photography: Ann Stafford]
Readers Theatre, Bible, and fluency

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Readers Theatre has been a dramatic genre for many years. Only recently, however, has it been seriously applied to educational endeavors and, even then, seldom to the teaching of Biblical themes and related values. In view of the mandate to integrate literacy into every area of the school curriculum, this article explores how expression, fluency, and intonation of oral reading may be improved using Readers Theatre in faith formation classes.

Readers Theatre: yesterday to today

Readers Theatre had its resurgence in the 1940s of the theatre world, New York. The stated purpose of the production was “to give the people of New York an opportunity to witness performances of great dramatic works which were seldom if ever produced.” Six years later George Bernard Shaw’s Don Juan in Hell was produced with just four readers using scripts with a maximum of staging. The following year, with three readers and a chorus of twenty, Stephen Vincent Benét’s The Riddle of the Sun was performed (Coger & White, 1967). In English departments in American universities began taking Readers Theatre as a serious dramatic genre in the 1960s (White & Coger 1967). From there, the idea spread to middle and elementary schools as a means to teach content and fluency. However, it wasn’t until the mid-1990s that Readers Theatre became an instructional strategy that was taken seriously. Even so, it wasn’t until the twenty-first century that major language textbook writers began offering Readers Theatre scripts along with the reading series.

The number of returns from an Internet search for Readers Theatre scripts or books that address the writing, staging, or instructional implementation has increased exponentially over the past ten years.

Benefits of Readers Theatre

Anecdotal evidence for the effectiveness of using Readers Theatre can be found in the literature (Rinnehart, 1999; Moran, 2006; Tyler et al., 2000). Many teachers who use Readers Theatre in their classrooms have communicated with us concerning its value in enhancing overall fluency. Only in the last 10 years, there has been any quantitative research on the use of the strategy in the classroom. A 10-week study on the use of Readers Theatre in a second grade language arts classroom showed an average rate increase of seventeen words per minute over the control group (Martinez et al., 1999). The work of Millin and Rinnehart (1999) showed similar results. Keen (2003) study of second graders using Readers Theatre showed statistically significant gains in rate, retelling, and expressiveness by low achievement students, while the “high-achievement readers made statistically significant gains in measures of comprehension and word-recognition.”

Hudson (2006) provides a concise list of the benefits of Readers Theatre. Readers Theatre:

- provides an authentic purpose, legitimate reason, and motivation for rereading text multiple times;
- uses repeated reading to help students develop accuracy, rate, and prosody;
- helps students understand the importance of intonation and how it relates to context;
- improves students’ comprehension of text through repeated readings and variations in interpretation;
- requires teamwork among students; and
- sanctions peer interaction and fun.

Readers Theatre, Bible study, and fluency

In Christian schools, Bible is taught alongside other academic subjects. It is the purpose of this paper to suggest that biblical Readers Theatre scripts can enhance fluency whilst teaching biblical content. There are three basic types of Readers Theatre: interactive, presentational, and echo. While the following examples may not be used as given, they will provide the reader with ideas for writing and producing scripts that meet the objectives of their Bible courses.

Since Readers Theatre is presentation and not representational drama, it is well suited for classroom use. Acting with the voice brings biblical themes to a heightened level of appreciation. The readings below are given as samples of the types of Readers Theatre that can be used in worship services, school programs, or Bible classes. The primary goal of these readings is to bring the biblical stories alive. The added advantage is the enhancement of fluency.

To demonstrate a variety of Readers Theatres, only sections of each reading are given. The precise manner in which these readings are to be implemented is open to the creativity of the instructor. To fine tune one of these readings for performance, such things as casting, voicing, and staging need to be considered (see Campbell & Cleland, 2003).

Conclusion

There is a host of Readers Theatre available on the Internet; however, it may be difficult to find a script that matches one’s curricular objectives. This is why we encourage instructors to develop their own scripts. Often Readers Theatre scripts found on the Internet or in commercially available sources are written with long lines, lending themselves to a form of round-robin reading. We advocate a style with a faster pace and a focus on deeper meaning.

References


Sample scripts

Presentational readings

Presentational readings, as the name suggests, are carefully rehearsed readings designed for audience listening. Their impact comes from the use of the voice as a dramatic tool.

Title: Nathan and David

Source: taken from 2 Samuel 12.

Length: 53 lines

Reader 1: There are five readers—readers 1 and 2 are Nathan, they carry most of the story line; readers 3 and 4 take the parts of the 8th man and poor man, respectively, reader 5 takes the role of God.

Comments: The interpretation of the story is open to the instructor. During the last 15 lines, the readers become more and more intense, at times, even raising their voices for emphasis.

Reader 1: David, I am Nathan, a prophet of God.

Reader 2: I have a tragic story to tell you.

David: I am David.

Reader 2: In a certain town.

Reader 1: there were two men—

Reader 3: 1 am very rich.

Reader 4: I am very poor.

Reader 2: I have very large herds.

Reader 1: He had herds of cattle and sheep.

Reader 2: which made him very, very rich!

Reader 1: The poor man had—

Reader 2: A child!

Reader 1: David began to rant and rave—

Reader 2: and so he should have.

David: If there is a God—and surely there is—

Reader 2: David made the child on the floor and prayed to God—

David: I am David, I am David—

Reader 2: I have a business—

David: But look at my own—

Reader 2: David is a good man, a good man—

David: and to live in a good inn—

Reader 3: Huh!

David: And so he should have—

Reader 2: David, David—

Reader 1: And so he should have—

Reader 2: David made the child on the floor and prayed to God—

David: David made the child on the floor and prayed to God.

Reference

**Teaching & Professional Practice**

**Interactive readings**

Interactive readings involve audience participation, and require audience members to adopt a particular role. The impact of this style of Readers Theatre is that the audience is absorbed into the story and becomes part of the action. Used in a classroom, this is a wonderful confidence booster for struggling readers, as they are one of a chorus of voices.

**Echo readings**

Echo readings also involve the audience, but in this case, the audience echoes a key reader’s words and mimics the nuances of expression. While at first glance it may appear that echo reading is to be used only with young children who cannot read (indeed, it works very well with the very young), it is surprisingly effective with adult audiences as well.

**Teaching & Professional Practice**
Gen Z, on the other hand, can't even remember a world devoid of the internet, iPods and mobile phones. Their skills as users outstrip both their teachers and Gen Y students.

**Nature-illiterate**
Linked closely to time spent with technology and the protective measures of parents is the lack of connection that today’s children have with the natural world. Children may have knowledge of rainforest habitats and threats to the environment via the virtual world of the internet, yet have never experienced the sounds, smells and sights of a rainforest first hand. As a result, they lack empathy with nature, and have increasingly less or no experience of the wonder of God’s creation and the mysteries of the natural world.

**Mini-adults**
We are witnessing the demise of childhood, and the rise of the ‘little people’ generation. Children and even toddlers, listen to adult music, play adult games, watch adult television shows, wear scaled-down versions of adult clothing, engage in adult talk, and are increasingly pressured by society and educational curriculum to think, behave and make decisions like adults. As a result of pressure to prematurely deal with adult issues, anxiety disorder and depression are on the rise among pre-teens.

There are many risks associated with a school excursion. Every teacher’s worst nightmare is that someone may be left behind somewhere. Other hazards, both minor and major, wait to trip up unsuspecting students and their teachers.

Schools are diligent in identifying risky situations. They assess potential hazards and the severity of these hazards according to a risk code. However, identifying the risk is not enough. Schools must demonstrate that they have implemented measures to control the risk and minimise the possibility of harm to any student. Are we as diligent and intentional in identifying spiritual hazards, assessing spiritual risk and implementing strategies to ensure our students’ eternal health and safety?

Below is a spiritual risk assessment activity that may be done individually or collectively by teachers. For each of the following characteristics of Gen Y (children born between the early 1980s-late 1990s) and the upcoming Gen Z (children born in the 21st century or late 1990s), answer the following questions:
1. What are the potential hazards this characteristic poses when it comes to the spiritual development of this generation?
2. How great are the risks?
3. What can Christian educators do to minimise the risks?

Each generation (Builders, Boomers, X, Y, Z) is the product of social and global issues of a particular era. The four characteristics that follow are broadly indicative of students in our schools. They apply to Gen Y, but are even more characteristic of Gen Z, who have reached primary school but are yet to make their presence felt in high schools.

**Technology-savvy**
Gen Y has grown with information and communication technology. Almost every year of their lives, a new application has hit the ICT market, and Gen Ys have embraced them enthusiastically.

**Risk-averse**
Michael McQueen (2008), social researcher, indicates that later Gen Y and in particular Gen Z, unlike their confident older sibling Gen X, are more averse to taking risk. These children have been born into a society that fears everything from global warming, terrorists, neighbours and strangers to the unknown, failure, and litigation. The consequences of this fear are becoming increasingly apparent in the inhibitions of young children.

We cannot change the characteristics of the generations we teach, anymore than we can change who we are. It is, however, our responsibility to understand the forces in society that have shaped Gen Y and are shaping Gen Z so that we can interact with them in appropriate ways and build authentic relationships that will lead them into a saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
The New South Wales Quality Teaching Model is widely accepted as providing a sound framework for quality teaching. The goals of this model are:

- promote high levels of intellectual quality to produce deep understanding of important, substantive concepts, skills and ideas;
- establish a high-quality learning environment to create classrooms where students and teachers work productively in an environment clearly focused on learning; and
- generate significance by connecting students with the intellectual demands of their work to help make learning meaningful and important to them. (McLeod & Reynolds, 2007, p.46)

While all three domains of the Quality Teaching Model are essential for quality learning, and all three goals may be enhanced by the use of computers, this article focuses on the dimension of intellectual quality as it relates to computers in the classroom. Intellectual quality refers to teaching that focuses on a small number of key concepts and the relationship between these concepts in order to promote deep knowledge and understanding. Six elements make up the intellectual quality domain. A description of these elements is found in Figure 1.

When using computer technology in the classroom, it is important to move past Type I applications that focus on the acquisition of facts, and even beyond word processing activities and internet research to reach a more instructional approach. This is not to say that word processing and research are not valid uses for computers. The use of technology, particularly computers, dramatically increases the range of techniques available to support quality teaching. The integration of computers into the learning environment must link computers to learning and the sociocultural environment (Lim, 2002).

The New South Wales Quality Teaching Model was introduced in response to the challenge of maintaining a high-quality learning environment in the face of increasing student diversity. It is a model that guides teachers in their decision-making about the use of technology in the classroom. The goals of this model are:

- promote high levels of intellectual quality to produce deep understanding of important, substantive concepts, skills and ideas;
- establish a high-quality learning environment to create classrooms where students and teachers work productively in an environment clearly focused on learning; and
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When using computer technology in the classroom, it is important to move past Type I applications that focus on the acquisition of facts, and even beyond word processing activities and internet research to reach a more instructional approach. This is not to say that word processing and research are not valid uses for computers. These uses alone cannot justify the financial investment schools make in computer technology (Maddux, Johnson & Willis, 1992), and do not necessarily satisfy the elements of quality teaching. Therefore, it is important to develop strategies that use computer technology whilst addressing key elements of the intellectual quality domain. This article presents six strategies that utilise computer technology in the classroom. These strategies have proved effective in engaging students in learning, and promoting intellectual quality. Although the examples given are in the field of Geography, they can be adapted to other subjects as well. Geography is defined in New South Wales by the Board of Studies as being “an investigation of the world which provides accurate description and interpretation of the varied character of the earth and its people” (Board of Studies, 1999, p.5). As such, it develops knowledge and understandings about how people interact with their environments, and includes a strong skills component, which encourages students to investigate and communicate geographically. The strategies described in this article are presented with a sample activity in which each has been tailored; however, each has been widely applied to other topics and stages of the curriculum.

1. Online readings and discussion forums

Encouraging senior students to read a wide range of current literature from a variety of perspectives on mandatory topics is always a challenge. Utilising the school intranet, selected readings may be placed in subject folders for students to complete for homework.

Sample activity: Yr 12, reading on world cities

Task: A reading about the future of world cities has been placed on the school intranet for you to download, read and discuss. You may comment or react to content in the article, ask follow-up questions, pose hypotheses or seek clarification of meaning by posting on the discussion forum. Alternatively, you may respond to a post made by a classmate.

Benefits
- Students become more interested in completing the homework readings and posing questions/comments for classmates.
- Students were engaged in their favourite pastime—talking to friends—but with one significant difference.
- Readings cannot be lost or left at school.
- The use of the intranet has significantly improved both the completion rate of readings and the interaction between students on selected topics.
- Readings cannot be lost or left at school.
- The teacher’s awareness of the comprehension levels of individual students is enhanced, allowing for differentiation.

Suggestions
- Be familiar with the reading, its relevance to the syllabus and possible avenues of discussion that may be prompted by the reading.
- Check the discussion pages regularly to ensure students keep to the topic, and to engage in the discussions taking place.
- Vary the length, difficulty and source of the readings in order to maintain interest.
- Observe copyright regulations.

2. Podcasting

A podcast is an audio or video file that is usually made available for others to download.

Sample activity: Yr 12, World Heritage sites

Task: Use iMovie to make a video podcast of a world heritage site with which you feel a connection. The podcast must include the specific details and meet the given production criteria. What is more, this was taking place outside of class hours.

Benefits
- Allowing choice of site gave students a sense of control over their learning.
- In-depth investigation of one site allowed them to build deep knowledge and understanding around the single concept of what constitutes a world heritage site.
- The podcast encouraged students to use appropriate metalanguage.

Deep knowledge on a small number of key concepts and the relationships that exist between the concepts.

The students demonstrate a profound and meaningful understanding of key concepts and the relationships that exist between the concepts.

Deep understanding of meaning by posting on the discussion forum.

Alternatively, you may respond to a post made by a classmate.

Students are encouraged to seek alternative solutions and question existing ones.

Teachers and students use the specialised terminology that relates to the lesson content and discipline.

Students are engaged in meaningful conversations about the concepts and ideas presented in classes.

Although technology is not a substitute for quality teaching, it can enhance quality teaching.

Highly effective teachers don’t just teach in one way—they have a repertoire of instructional techniques, teaching behaviours, and essential skills on which to draw, depending on the needs of their students, the nature of the subject, and the complexity of the learning outcomes. (McEwan, 2002, p.81)

The use of technology, particularly computers, dramatically increases the range of techniques available to support quality teaching. The integration of computers into the learning environment must link computers to learning and the sociocultural environment (Lim, 2002).
The teacher may wish to view the video diaries to ensure they have titles and that days or dates are clearly identified, this also allows for teacher censorship.

Careful naming of files helps prevent accidental deletion. Students found the activity engaging, fun and relevant because they used items of their own.

Students could observe their data being processed immediately on the pie graph.

Although conducted individually, students quickly began to engage in substantive communication as trends began to emerge. Students did not predict all the results correctly, thus the element of surprise kept them interested in the task.

Higher order thinking was required when students had to analyse their findings and write their report.

Metalanguage was encouraged in the report writing.

**Benefits**
- Research supports modelling as a powerful teaching tool (Bandura, 1997; Homer, Bhattacharyya & O'Connor, 2008; Schunk, 2004), and students were able to watch the modelled process as often as necessary.
- Each tutorial focused on one skill and included both the skill and a problematic application of the skill. This helped the students develop deep understanding and encouraged problematic knowledge.
- Students were exposed to metalanguage.
- The tutorials provide a non-threatening and non-assessed opportunity for skills acquisition outside the classroom. Students who were reluctant to complete a practice skill page were more likely to watch a video clip.
- Students could replay the tutorial while practising skills or preparing for assessments.

**Suggestions**
- Upload the tutorials when the skills are introduced in class.
- Remind the students to use the tutorials for revision before assessments.
- Place downloadable skill worksheets on the intranet. The multimedia nature of virtual field studies can never replace the benefits of genuine field experiences, they introduce the tools that geographers use when engaged in fieldwork.

- The intranet enables the teacher to monitor who views the tutorials when the skills are introduced in class.
- Set completion dates for each step/stage of the activity. This might allow for skills acquisition outside the classroom. Students who were reluctant to complete a practice skill page were more likely to watch a video clip.
- Students could replay the tutorial while practising skills or preparing for assessments.

**6. Data Collection and Analysis**

**Sample Activity:** Yr 7, Global change

**Task:** Each student needs to bring a bag of clothing items they would normally wear on the weekend. Classroom 1: Check the label of each item to determine where it was made. Using your laptop, enter this information in Pages (a software package). As you enter information, a pie graph will be generated and updated with each additional entry. After 1 minute, you will rotate to another student’s data and enter the relevant data, and so on.

Class period 2: Analyse the data you have collected. Create a report that includes the pie graph, a definition of globalisation, an explanation of the results, a statement of how this study affects you, and a portrait photo of yourself as the reporter.

**Benefits**
- Students found the activity engaging, fun and relevant because they used items of their own.
- Students could observe their data being processed immediately on the pie graph.
- Although conducted individually, students quickly began to engage in substantive communication as trends began to emerge. Students did not predict all the results correctly, thus the element of surprise kept them interested in the task.
- Higher order thinking was required when students had to analyse their findings and write their report.

**Metalanguage** was encouraged in the report writing.

**Helpful Pointers**
- Encourage all students to have their items ready on the data collection day.
- Leave the clothing in small piles and move the students from one pile to the next.
- Explore the different graphing options available and choose the one best suited to the purpose (pie, bar, column).
- Use questioning to promote higher order thinking, for example, origin of brand names versus origin of manufacturing.
- The photographic identification is fun and fast (if your computers have the necessary tools) but not essential.

**Conclusions**
- These activities demonstrate that the intellectual quality domain of the New South Wales Quality Teaching Model can be enhanced by the use of computer technology when addressing syllabus requirements for Geography. In addition to the specific strategies listed in this article, students in...
Teaching & Professional Practice

Geography classes have designed and created multimedia presentations, collected and interpreted a variety of electronic information, and learnt to refine search techniques using the internet, all of which are syllabus suggestions for integrating ICT into the Geography classroom.

Computers are an essential commodity in the personal lives of most high school students. In order to maintain educational relevance for Gen Y and the even more technology-wise Gen Z students, teachers need to embrace computers as a teaching tool, as well as become smarter and more effective in using them to enhance quality learning. It is important to remember that computer technology will only be as effective as the teacher using it. When teachers create ICT pedagogies that meet the criteria of the New South Wales Quality Teaching Model, everyone wins—students are able to work with familiar technology and enjoy their learning; teachers see students engage and learn about the world in which they live. In addition, society benefits from young people who are equipped with both learning and ICT skills for use in the real world.

References

Computer technology will only be as effective as the teacher using it.

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There arose a generation that did not remember
The challenge of maintaining distinctively Christian institutional cultures in an era of change

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Throughout history, the visionary exploits of countless leaders have birthed the legacies of an untold number of Christian institutions and enterprises. What distinguishes these initiatives is invariably a founding leader or group of people that had something extraordinary to say, to do, to expose, to construct or to reveal. Trace the cultural stories of fledging Christian schools, colleges, and universities and the tale of sacrifice, risk-taking, uncertainty, hardship, ridicule, yet miraculous and sovereign provision and leading from God repeatedly resonate in the hearts and minds of those who were privileged to experience these pioneering days. Whilst ossified within their generation, God’s sovereign work was at hand, establishing and blessing the faithfulness and sacrifice of a founding generation to see a vision become a reality. Such a calling lies at the heart of most founding movements, institutions, schools and ministries. These pioneers were also driven by deep convictions of what needed to be done, but more specifically what had to be done, whatever the cost and despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

The organisational midlife phase
Inevitably, all organisations enter a second phase of historical development which Schein (2004) terms midlife. Schein (2004) reveals that this period is often marked by leadership succession and a relegation of the charismatic founder to a role of symbolic or metaphorical leader. Schein (2004) describes this subtle change in focus as transitioning from the founding vision to the development and articulation of the organisation’s “self-concept” or institutional identity. Peacock describes this process by proposing that “this idea—that the firm must now know itself—is the essence of the company’s self-concept” (1982, p. 21).

Table 1: Synopsis of theories of cultural development / dis-integration within organisations

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Throughout this period, effective institutions develop “tangible mechanisms” within their structures to ensure that core cultural values, vision and identity are not lost during this critical phase (Collins & Porras, 1995, p. 46). These elements, which include rituals, ceremonies, stories, honouring of heroes, and articulation of values and beliefs, are often made more explicit and tangible by this second generation. One particularly powerful cultural element that begins to carry great meaning within this phase is the use of meaningful signs, artefacts, symbols and documentation that suitably represent the ‘essence’, ‘identity’ or ‘organisational self-concept’ of the institution. Whilst these symbolic elements may be inherited from the first generation (for example crests, mottoes, chapels or logos), the mid-life phase must decide what meaning and purpose the symbol or artefact was intended to convey, and must thereby articulate and assign meaning and significance to what the first generation may have perceived as ‘second nature’ or ‘assumed’ knowledge.

Weber (1947) proposes that this second phase of development could be termed Veralltaglichung—which literally translated means “rendering into everyday” (as cited in Berger & Berger, 1976, p. 339). Berger and Berger (1976) vividly articulate this consolidation or midlife phase.

All this changes drastically when a new generation that was not present at the inception of the movement comes into being and grows into positions of leadership in whatever structure the movement has set up. The second generation has not participated in the great events that saw the beginning of the movement. They only know these events by the stories of the elders. Most fundamentally however, that which was extraneous, now, becomes part of the ordinary fabric of social life. (1976, p. 339)
Limerick et al. (2002) highlight this “rendering into everyday” of the mid-life phase or what they term “consolidation phase”. Because the emergent meta-strategic design is a worked-out version of the founding vision and identity, the two become indistinguishable in the minds of organisational members. The result is that, almost imperceptibly, the vital founding vision is forgotten and its configuration counterpart takes its place... instead of becoming a means to an end, they [the configuration system] become the right way of doing things. (p. 175)

During this second phase, the routine of the configuration system therefore becomes the mission and replaces the original vision in both intent and purpose. Willard (2003) comments that mid-life leaders sometimes “do not carry the ‘fire’... the mission or missions that have been set about begin a subtle divergence from the vision that gripped the founder, and before too long the institution and its mission have become the vision” (p. 1).

Many second generation Christian educational institutions mistakenly embrace the operational systems of action for the original vision at this critical phase of development, and inadvertently allow the “rendering into everyday” of a range of core and non-core cultural elements and ideology. Confused over the mission, operational plans, strategic goals, structural re-building and founding ideology, ethos and vision, some educational institutions fall victim to the preservation of the current mission of the Christian college or school, with all its contextualised and fluid strategies, processes and operational values, whilst inadvertently relinquishing the core cultural values, vision and identity that established these institutions and shaped a margin of differentiation within the socio-cultural milieu.

There is a real point to saying that in religious matters, nothing fails like success. These types of movements touch the human heart very deeply and serve profound human needs. Because of this, they soon attract many who do not even want the fire of the founder—they don’t really understand it. But they do need and like the light and the warmth it provides. (Willard, 2003, p.3)

The vision that so powerfully shaped the first generation now becomes incrementally replaced by a ‘mission for the vision’. Obtaining a level of reputation, status, power and prestige that the founders could only dream of, the second generation may seek the extension of their own colleges and kingdoms, rather than maintaining their focus upon the preservation and maintenance of the original vision. Put simply, too much is now at stake within the institution to revert back to founding visions and values—reputation, status, success, prosperity and wealth abound but there is a subtle and incremental ‘turning of heart’ and decreased devotion.

It is also during such periods that the potential for triumphalism can usurp the original vision, and the mission for the extension of the institution becomes the goal rather than God’s glory alone (Dielens, 2003). Furthermore, the ‘rendering into everyday’ of so many aspects of the founding generation’s ideology and values creates a conspiratorial, which breeds a sense of self-satisfaction and cultural Laziness towards founding principles and ideologies, and the potential for compromise, dilution of values and watering down of core ideology.

Maturity and decline phase

As an organisation continues to grow and develop, a third phase of cultural development occurs which Schein (2004) defines as the maturity and potential decline phase. Whilst it is not inevitable that an organisation’s culture will atrophy, the tendency within many organisations is towards cultural decline during this third generation. Berger and Berger (1976) contend that this phase is merely the logical extension of the routinisation phase leading inevitably towards rationalisation. Whilst Weber (1947) saw inherent benefits in the process of bureaucratisation within institutions, from a cultural re-negotiation perspective, such de-personalising and systems-orientated approaches can stifle rather than stimulate both the embodiment and preservation of core cultural identity and ideology within the organisation, and hinder innovative and divergent approaches to cultural change, regeneration and renewal.

Schein suggests that this is a primary cause of decline within organisations during this phase as long held assumptions and deeply embedded systems of action “now operate as filters that make it difficult for key managers to understand alternative strategies for survival and renewal” (2004, p. 313). Limerick et al. (2002) expand on this further by proposing that during this phase there is a tendency for organisations to become locked into structured and deeply ingrained systems of action that make organisations “prisoners of the social systems” which were created during the consolidation phase.

The line of decline conceptual model

Based upon a synthesis of this research, the task of preserving and perpetuating core cultural values and identity within institutions entering a mid-life phase of cultural development would appear to be a challenging yet critical undertaking. James Burtchaell describes the historical erosion of core cultural values and identity as a slide from “vision towards rationalisation” (1998, p.846) and proposes that Christian institutions that are not intentional and explicit in their engagement with core cultural values and distinctiveness will, over time, relinquish all forms of Christian organisational memory and ethos from their daily cultural practices.

The auspicious ‘line of decline’ represented within this diagram, whilst not inevitable within a Christian institution or movement, would nevertheless appear to be the common trajectory beyond the second generation of cultural development (Burtchaell, 1998). As the effect of time ‘renders unto everyday’ what was truly extraordinary and significant to the founding generation, routinisation of cultural elements and distinctiveness occurs, leading to indifference and/or irrelevance of the core cultural elements that were the distinguishing mark of the founding phase of development. One specific study that powerfully exemplifies the line of decline is by Dosen (2001), entitled “The Intentional Secularisation of a Denominational College—The Case of Webster College.” As secularisation and the routinisation of processes within Webster College became more prevalent, no intentional re-casting of the original vision was deemed necessary and the college disengaged with the original vision and core values that had shaped its cultural development in the founding phase. Dosen (2001) concludes his study by reinforcing the imperative of leadership in preserving and perpetuating core cultural values and identity.

The threat of secularisation within Christian schools and colleges

The challenge of intentionally breaking this ‘line of decline’ within schools and colleges is one that the Christian tradition is made more complex by the historical propensity for such institutions to be prone to the dis-integration of their cultural distinctiveness through processes of secularisation.

Marsden (1994) identifies three phase process that contributes to secularisation and erosion of core cultural values and identity from Christian institutions (see Figure 2) (Marsden as cited in Benne, 2001, p. 4). These stages of decline were articulated by Marsden after studying such prestigious institutions as Harvard, Yale and Princeton. James Burtchaell reiterates the processes that underpin Marsden’s phases by contending that “Once the colleges had settled into the indifferentism their inclusivist language expressed, they were within each of that more degraded and more incisive form of liberalism; rationalism” (1998, p.846). Burtchaell therefore cautions all those involved with Christian educational institutions with this sobering plea:

Christian institutions that are not intentional and explicit in their engagement with core cultural values and distinctiveness will, over time, relinquish all forms of Christian organisational memory and ethos from their daily cultural practices.
Benne’s emphasis upon re-casting, re-articulating and embodiment of the college’s core cultural vision for every generation is grounded upon a belief that the vision is foundational. The Christian story as a comprehensive, unrepeatable and central account of reality must be held strongly and confidently enough to shape the life of the college decisively in all its facets. That is why these six colleges have maintained their religious identity in face of powerful secularising forces. The persons responsible for them...have had enough confidence in the Christian account of life and reality to insist that it be the organising paradigm for the identity and mission of the college. (Benne, 2001, p. 96–97)

Such an all-encompassing vision enables each generation to hold fast to non-negotiables, but also emancipates the institution from the fetters of systems of action that are often mistakingly perceived by those within the organisation to be ‘not negotiable’. In reality, such systems must change and adapt to socio-cultural shifts and emphases for the school or college to survive, but Benne contends that such re-casting must always remain grounded within the core vision and values of the college. This contributes to the breaking of the ‘locked flywheel’ within such institutions, whereby second generation schools and colleges often become prisoners of their social systems and empty traditionalism; they cannot innovate and change their ‘way of doing things around here’ because their focus is no longer upon the central vision as an organising paradigm but rather the fluid expressions of such a vision through functional, culturally embedded and operationalised systems and design mechanisms and structures.

Benne’s research also reveals a range of key foci that facilitate the preservation of Christian distinctiveness and core ideology. These include the maintenance of denominational alignment, preservation of chapel services as central to the institution, and careful attention to staffing and student enrolment policies. Benne concludes his study with the following imperative for all leaders within Christian institutions seeking to preserve their core ideology within the current educational milieu.

The foundational values of CPC schools will not continue to provide impetus and direction to their prevailing practices of these CPCS schools were generally holding fast to core vision, values and assumptions. However, Justins’ study also identified the challenges that confront the new Christian schools movement regarding the perpetuation of foundational values. Justins warns:

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Benne reveals that “the external demands of the marketplace create an internal culture of caution about religious matters” (p. 24), particularly in schools that are struggling to attain or maintain their market share. He contends that such atrophy of the founding vision will inevitably continue unless either “a traumatic crisis” forces a re-alignment of the school’s identity or strong leadership steers the vision and direction of the school back to their founding values and mission. This necessitates a proactive solution for preventing cultural atrophy and secularisation within Christian schools and colleges.

Preventing cultural atrophy and indifference to prevailing cultural environments.

Two particular studies identified within the literature provide proactive solutions for preventing cultural atrophy and secularisation within Christian schools and colleges. The first of these is Robert Benne’s (2001) study of six premier colleges and universities within the United States that are effectively ‘keeping faith’ with their founding visions and values. Benne’s excellent analysis of these six institutions is far more optimistic in its prognosis, and he perceptively identifies three pivotal components that must be cultivated if such institutions are to effectively preserve their core ideology beyond the founding phase of cultural development. These include vision, ethos and the embodiment of this vision and ethos in its leaders and people. Benne (2001) declares, it is clear that each school’s animating vision...has to be articulated and embedded in the ongoing life of the college. It has to be articulated in the organisational environment of the college and in the school’s presentation of itself in admissions and development materials. But above all it has to be embedded in its people (p. 204).

This study also invites reflection on...the dynamics whereby any Christian endeavours can unwittingly be decomposed. It offers enough folly at close range for readers to be distanced to reflection about the circumstance and cianness we all require to review and renew earlier commitments without forfeiting them unawares. So much that is onward is not upward. (Burtschaell, 1998, p. 41)

Burtshaell and Marsden’s extensive research into the insidious and all-pervading nature of secularisation that occurs during the consolidation and mid-life phases of Christian schools and colleges highlight how subtly the cancer of secularisation can take hold within their institutions, and how the price of sustaining distinctively Christian educational cultures must always be ‘internal vigilance’ to core cultural vision, values and identity.
findings and the compromises evident within the schools' daily operations belied the rhetoric of the schools' distinctive philosophy and espoused worldview assumptions (Wagner, 1990, p. 206). John Hull sought to identify why deep structures of schooling are left unchallenged within Christian educational institutions.

When confronted by this evidence, my own allegiance to the ideal of Christian education sometimes wavered. The challenge of implementing a different, biblical model of schooling appears so far out of reach that I am tempted to think that the whole idea might be wrong-headed. At times I wonder if there really is such a thing as a Christian model of education, (Hull, 2003, p. 207)

Furthermore, Hull argues that Christian educators regularly compromise and “habitually settle for something less than Christian education”, leading to what he describes as “visionary downsizing” regarding the purpose and function of Christian schools (Hull, 2003, p. 219).

In stark contrast to these findings, research by Twheels (2005), Justins (2002) and Riding (1996) have each identified a distinctive and vibrant cultural ethos and identity within the Christian schools involved in their respective studies. Furthermore, Chittenden and Lowney clearly reveal the potential for distinctive core ideology to be perpetuated within institutional cultures that endure across generations (Chittenden, 1993; Lowney, 2004). These findings provide an optimistic caveat to the general tale of secularisation and atrophy that all too often befalls Christian institutions and their engagement with the corporate world.

Further challenges to preserving distinctively Christian institutional cultures

Apart from the challenges of a highly competitive educational marketplace and cultural accommodation, a range of other internal and external factors that inhibit preservation of core cultural values have been identified. These challenges include compromises due to tight government controls in relation to funding, market driven enrolment policies and financial viability (Benne, 2001; Carper & Layman, 1995; Justins, 2002; Twheels, 2005). Internal factors identified within the literature also include school governance and accountability structures, staffing policies and leadership succession processes and priorities (Benne, 2001; Hargreaves, 2005; Hargreaves & Firoozi, 2003; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2003; O'Donoghue & I.H., 1995; Wagner, 1990). The challenge confronting leaders within Christian educational institutions is therefore an administratively complex one—how can these...
How can our school use its current facilities and learning resources to attract prospective clients without the need for large outlay costs? As a marketing director, I was trying to create a marketing opportunity that would be successful, practical, achievable and affordable.

The origin of Early Years
Whilst lying in bed one night, a number of thoughts collided to give birth to the concept of Avondale School’s Early Years program. Parents want their 2–5 year olds to participate in engaging, age-appropriate learning activities, and are willing to pay for these opportunities. I know that if parents associate positive experiences with a school, they are more likely to enrol their child at that school. There is no better time to develop a positive relationship with prospective clients than before they begin school. It then hit me—Avondale School already has the facilities and resources needed to offer such programs.

The Early Years program
Avondale School’s Early Years program offers a variety of fun, educational opportunities throughout the school year. Classes—which include cooking, dance, kinder gym, science, art, computer, music and library—run once a week for six weeks during each school term.

Each lesson starts with half an hour of free play at Avondale Early Learning Centre. The Early Years program operates at the Early Learning Centre while the children have inside activities. Part of the philosophy of Early Years is to encourage children to try new things and that includes food. The school canteen prepares a healthy morning tea platter full of tempting delights from apples and carrots to olives, capsicum and dates, along with mini sandwiches or crackers.

All Early Years classes are hands on: in cooking, children break the eggs, chop the vegetables and knead the dough; during science, each child does their own experiments; and art classes require old clothes, as the children fully experience the materials they work with. At the end of many of the classes, the child is given something as a reminder of their experience, for example, a recipe book with pictures of themselves cooking, or their large art canvas. These mementos serve as a reminder of the fun that was had and the learning that took place. Each of the classes utilises existing school facilities that would not otherwise be used at that time of day, for example, multi purpose centre, cooking facilities, school library, music room, art room, and computer room.

Advertising Early Years
Early Years no longer needs to pay for expensive newspaper advertising. Promotion by word of mouth has enabled the program to grow from 10 children in 2007 to 70 children in 2009. Some classes require booking up to 12 months in advance.

At the end of the year, an Early Years Christmas party is held. Everyone who has attended one of the Early Years classes is invited and is encouraged to bring a friend. This is another way to make new contacts. Places for the following year’s classes are open for bookings at the Christmas party.

The marketing benefits of Early Years
Early Years has changed the way Avondale School markets to the community. Due to involvement in these classes, parents are on our campus before their children are old enough to start school. They interact with many of the facilities Avondale School has to offer and develop a sense of familiarity with the campus. Parents are told of the school’s successes and have an opportunity to meet some of the staff at Avondale School. Early Years engenders positive experiences and builds a relationship between Avondale School and the community. The friendships that parents and children make when they attend Early Years are also of benefit to the school. Friendship groups may influence choice of school as parents endeavour to place their child in a school where the child will have friends.

Avondale School’s Early Years program has enabled the school to open its doors to the community in a non-threatening way. Whilst the participation of children is the centre of the Early Years program, the marketing benefits make the program a real success. When parents come to Early Years classes, they can’t help but tell others about Avondale School. It is impossible to put a dollar figure on this positive word of mouth advertising.

“...When parents come to Early Years classes, they can’t help but tell others about Avondale School...”

Cooking up a marketing plan
Karen Zeuchener
Marketing and Development, Avondale School, Cooranbong, NSW
Chaplaincy in Christian schools

Towards a policy platform for productive partnerships

Wilf Rieger
Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Avondale College, NSW

Introduction
Pastoral care or student wellbeing, as it is often referred to, is a diverse phenomenon that has been addressed through various religious and secular institutions. The term ‘chaplaincy’ encompasses a wide range of roles in promoting the wellbeing of individuals and communities. In this article, we will focus on the role of chaplaincy in Christian schools.

The significance of Chaplaincy
Chaplaincy is not a recent phenomenon. Chaplains have a long history, dating back to medieval times in Europe. They also made contributions to the colonisation of America and Australia. Traditionally, chaplains have worked in areas where highly stressful situations are likely to be encountered. Under extreme pressure, or when facing a crisis, persons often turn to their spirituality as a means of coping. The armed services, prisons, and hospitals are institutions likely to employ the services of chaplains, but they are also valued by youth and community organisations. An interesting insight is provided by one recent example:

Optometry practice owner Janelle Macnamara says a chaplain visited her operation each week to chew the fat with staff. Macnamara could have hired a counsellor or a clinical professional but she wanted a chaplain. “He’s got a lot of ability to ‘speak’ to the perceived needs of stakeholders - and their circumstances. If you are looking after someone who is in pain, you want a chaplain there. They can’t be too soft - they have to be able to relate to the situation. I care, I care, I care,” she says. The chaplain in this case was able to provide support and guidance to the staff, helping them to manage difficult situations.

In an endeavour to provide a more comprehensive pastoral care package for their students, many schools have joined the list of institutions using or employing chaplains. Some private schools have utilised chaplains as part of a long-held tradition. Most public schools, on the other hand, have not been ‘down this road’ before, although schools in Western Australia are a notable exception. There, chaplaincy, since its inception in public secondary schools in 1982, has made a useful contribution to students’ wellbeing and grown significantly over the last two decades.

Much of the chaplaincy expansion in W.A. occurred prior to the Coalition Government’s announcement of the National School Chaplaincy Program (NSCP) in October 2006, and the subsequent $90 million funding of the voluntary program. Almost 1400 schools (public and private) across Australia received grants in the first round of applications. Three quarters of the recipients were public schools, the ratio of three to one reflecting the respective sizes of the Australian public and private education sectors.

The NSCP was perceived as meeting a need by many educators. But misunderstood by others, particularly special interest groups, it also became the target of special, partisan criticism. Although NSCP’s present three-year funding is assured until 2010, there are some questions about the program’s future under the current government. According to media reports, “Education Minister Julia Gillard’s office has confirmed the $90 million program will be changed into a secular scheme when current contracts expire.”

Under the present scheme all school chaplains are required to sign a code of conduct. In ‘religious-based schools’, the code does not prevent them from discussing their faith with students or conduct services according to the faith of the school. In ‘faith-based schools’, the code does not prevent them from discussing their faith with students or conduct services according to the faith of the school. Given the signalised change of direction by the incumbent government, if and how chaplains ministering in faith-based schools will be affected remains to be seen. Will funding be maintained, or will this ministry continue unfunded?

Perhaps the issue may be decided on whether faith-based schools (be they Christian, Jewish or other) are able to advance a convincing justification for chaplaincy and comply with any new conditions under the NSCP funding agreement. Furthermore, schools may be required to present a chaplaincy ‘curriculum’ or program with stated outcomes and how such a program links with other curriculum subjects such as Personal Development and Health / Physical Education. The roles of chaplains, their services, tasks, and necessary qualifications, among others, may also have to be explicated.

Policy development
Developing a succinct, workable school chaplaincy policy may be a first step in addressing some of these issues. It should aim to provide a school community with a platform for productive partnerships between stakeholders—students, teachers, parents, chaplains, administrators, churches, as well as government agencies.

What is a policy? An eclectic compilation defines it as, “a formal document outlining the ways in which an organisation intends to conduct its affairs. It comprises a cohesive set of responses to a given situation or environment, selected from among alternatives, that guides the implementation of present and future decisions for a long-term purpose.” Essentially, a policy incorporates aspects of Laswell’s classic communication formula: Who says what, to whom, why, how, when, where, how well? School chaplaincy policies may vary from school to school, depending on circumstances. Nevertheless, each policy should rest on an integrated, broad platform that relates to the school’s raison d’etre rather than being made on an ad hoc basis. This should make for greater user-friendliness, avoid problematic interpretations and permit wider and more routine and time-saving application. Among other things, policy may effect the ordering of priorities and the allocation of resources.

How might a school chaplaincy policy be developed? Not infrequently, institutions adopt specific, ready-made policies ‘lock, stock and barrel’ (separate from any mandated by legislation); the advantage being, not having to reinvent the wheel. The drawback of such a shortcut is the possibility of being unaware of the legal implications to which a school might ‘sign up’, not having ‘owned the policy’ in the first place. Ideally, for maximum effectiveness, the policy-making process should not only include those who administer policy, but also those who are affected by it. Additionally it should:

• Demonstrate feasibility and an awareness of available resources whether human, fiscal or physical.
• ‘Speak’ to the perceived needs of stakeholders and their circumstances.
• Incorporate the school’s ethos and values.
• Align with best practice and any applicable legislation.
• Take into account relevant current research findings.

"Essentially, caring is about valuing people, and an ethic of care is a demonstration of grace."
In offering a suggested chaplaincy policy prototype for a K–R–12 Christian school, the writer accessed findings from several pertinent research studies and has drawn on them. The main study involved a Delphi application that involved a representative panel of sixty members, made up of parents, students, chaplains, teachers, school principals and church administrators. The study’s main research questions were grounded in Christian faith-based schools and related to: The goals and significance of chaplaincy; desirable attributes of, and employment procedures and assessment criteria for chaplains; matters perceived as contentious in pastoral care; and the nexus between chaplaincy and pastoral care.

If an appointed chaplain does not have all the desired qualifications, then the applicants will be required to enter into an agreement to commence an appropriate professional growth course or study program approved by the school council or board of governors. This body may provide some financial assistance for such an ‘own time’ study program.

Appointment

Chaplains are appointed to schools on the following basis:

- **Student numbers**
  - 1–150 Pro rata budget, chaplain funded by school
  - 150–400 0.5 budget, funded by school
  - 400+ 1.00 budget for each 400 or major part thereof, funded by school (also N.C.P. funding)

The appointment of the school chaplain is a joint school and church function, undertaken in the following manner:

- **Principal** to notify the school council of the need to appoint a chaplain. As with other important staff appointments, forward planning is essential.
- **Position** will be advertised
- **Appointment** to be determined through an interview panel (including the school principal, members of the school council, and an appointed church representative)

Remuneration

The chaplain will be considered to be an employee of the school and remunerated on the basis of qualifications and experience.

Where a pastor/minister is appointed as a full-time school chaplain (ordained or not), the chaplain’s position is to be recorded as a secondment from a church to the school. The period of secondment will ordinarily be a maximum term of, for example, four or five years.

The school will enter into dialogue with the appropriate church administrative body no less than four months prior to the end of each year to determine whether the secondment will be continued or a replacement chaplain sought.

Where a teacher/minister is selected to be a chaplain, the leadership appointment may be an annual basis.

If an applicant for a chaplaincy position comes from other than a teaching ministry, pastoral ministry or counseling background, they must also satisfy the personal and professional qualifications criteria, and if such a person is selected, they will be appointed to the position of chaplain on the following basis:

- **A probationary period of 12 months**
- **An initial contract period of two years (inclusive of the probationary period)**

Employer-employee relationships

The initial interviewing panel should appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person to be the spiritual mentor for the chaplain and be a resource for professional development. It is recommended that the chaplain provides the principal with brief, half-yearly and end-of-year reflective reports about their work, activities and contribution to the school’s pastoral care program.

Chaplains are required to attend and participate in the following:

- **Professional in-service opportunities, seminars, conferences and ministerial meetings**
- **School registration days, ‘home and school meetings’, parent-teacher interviews (where available)**
- **Annual conventions or planning sessions held by the churches**

Ordinarily, chaplains will take their annual leave during school-term or year-end breaks.

Roles, tasks, and responsibilities

Chaplains are an integral part of the school’s staffing. As such the school principal will assist the chaplain in determining their weekly and monthly schedule. The initial interviewing panel will have a good understanding of their work, activities and goals, and their relationship to the church/es.

Chaplains are encouraged to participate in all aspects of school life, including church visitations, student and staff service activities, sports carnivals, campouts etc. Because every school is unique, the role in each case will vary in relation to available time and other circumstances. It is unrealistic to prescribe a single set of expectations to suit all chaplains. However, it is appropriate to identify and set a target of key responsibilities and activities and any such targets may reasonably become part of any pastoral chaplain’s ‘role set.’

Any appointment, the chaplain, together with school and church administrators should formulate (set down in writing) and agree on the chaplain’s role, and then review it from time to time. In recommending the following list of activities and responsibilities as suggestions, it is acknowledged that it is unrealistic to expect that every item in the following list will be included in any one person’s role.

The school chaplain’s ‘role set’ will include, but is not limited to, many of the following responsibilities and tasks:

- **Spiritual mentoring and modelling**
  - Be a spiritual mentor to students and staff
  - Contribute actively to building the spiritual tone of the school
  - Model an authentic Christian lifestyle

Worship activities

- **Plan and organise chasels and staff worship**
- **In partnership with school administration chaplain**
- **Staff**
- **Participate in the planning of worship events**

Bible study and teaching

- **Conduct special Bible study groups with a view to leading students to Christ and baptism**
- **Participate in such baptismal events**
- **Support the Bible/Biblical studies teachers in the school and contribute to the development of curriculum resources for teaching the subject**

Leadership in, and support of school-related activities

- **Worship and fellowship**
  - Lead out in worship and fellowship activities
  - Give leadership at, and provide support for youth rallies and week-end fellowships
  - Be a resource person for school-presented church programs

Outreach and service

- **Work collaboratively with teachers in planning service activities and community programs**
- **Organise and assist with outreach and service programs**
- **Plan and support discipling and training activities**

Social and recreation

- **Support and participate in formal and informal recreation activities and social events**
- **Attend school camps**
- **Participate in sports coaching**
- **Accompany school band tours**

Parents and the community

- **In collaboration with teachers, contribute and participate in the organisation of parent events**
- **Be actively involved in the induction of new students into the school as one of the points of contact between the school and students’ families to establish a relationship to serve possible future needs**
- **Contact or visit homes of students on a systematic basis to enquire on students’ progress emotionally, socially, spiritually, to pray with the family for the success of the children in the school and at home**

Nurturing and pastoral care

- **Be actively involved in the school’s pastoral care program, as leader of the pastoral care team**
- **Take part in the induction of new students into the school and function in the capacity of a student’s key」「n the delivery of pastoral care**

**Qualifications**

- **Personal**
  - A ‘short list’ includes: being readily available and approachable, an effective communicator and having a genuine interest in children/young people and their salvation; being a person of integrity with a positive outlook on life; exhibiting ethical behaviour and an authentic Christian lifestyle, and also having relevant life experience.

- **Professional**
  - Because school chaplains are spiritual leaders, the chaplain, preferably, should have a recognised tertiary qualification in theology, counselling or education (or a combination of these) from an accredited tertiary institution and have relevant practical experience.
In such communities each person knows and experiences love. They are no longer floating islands in a sea of humanity, or victims of the rampant individualism that presently characterizes much of Western culture. Each member finds support and spiritual nourishment in the fellowship of a Christian school community; where its “freedy students are” bringing their struggles, home issues and brokenness into every classroom”[27] and with teachers responding (at a level appropriate to their experience and expertise) not only individually, but also collegially, as each student is lifted up in prayer during daily staff worship in an atmosphere that sensitively balances genuine Christian concern with confidentiality. Such acts of ministry, among others, would lead one to conclude that policy is being translated into reality as, “The caring and concern central to a school’s social-emotional climate leads it to embrace the difficulties and pain of its students and [those of the] wider community.”[27]

Such school communities cherish and convey hope. They hope in the faithfulness and promises of God in Jesus Christ who addresses the most fundamental questions of human existence and thus sweeps away fear and existential despair. In the words of one school principal, it allows students “to view the world through the eyes of faith and provides a solid foundation for their spiritual development.”[28] In such schools we feel loved, safe and valued. We learn and experience that, according to salvation narrative, we are all precious in God’s sight—irrespective of individual gifts, abilities, social status, cultural background or race. We understand that from our very first breath we were intended by God to live in relationship and to each one is extended the invitation of accepting God’s saving grace. Herein is found authentic humanity. Regarding this, David Atkinson[29] refers us to the story of the Velveteen Rabbit who, with other toys, lived in the nursery.

The Velveteen Rabbit turned to the older, wiser toys and said, “Have you been loved? I mean, has someone really loved you for a long time?” The Skin Horse replied, “Real isn’t how you are made. It’s a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long time, that happens to you. When a Child loves you for a long time, that happens to you.”[30] The Skin Horse, for he was always truthful, “Does it happen all at once, or by bits?” “It doesn’t happen all at once,” said the Skin Horse, “you become. It takes a long time. …Generally by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out, and you get very shabby… but once you are Real, you can’t become unreal again. It lasts for always.”[31] The Velveteen Rabbit became real by being loved. It learned through relationships gradually over time, with police and struggle no doubt, to say, “I am loved, therefore I am Real”—a truly metaphoric transformation of Descartes’ aphorism.

Endnotes


[8] The ‘role set’ is based mainly on the research by Christian, T. (2010) and also on Adventist Schools Australia (2010b).


A concluding note

A carefully developed chaplaincy policy, potentially, is a valuable strategic instrument. However, what ultimately counts is what actually is put into practice and whether that makes a qualitative difference to the lives of the members of the school community.

A significant difference is made when everyone participating in pastoral care and chaplaincy in Christian faith-based schools sees themselves as being engaged in ministry that portrays and demonstrates Christo-centric relationships.