



# The Launceston Preparatory School

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## PRINCIPAL ANNUAL REPORT 2023

2023 marked a year of significant global shifts and milestones. As the world grappled with over 38 conflicts, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the Gaza battle, headlines were dominated by turmoil. Amidst these events, notable celebrations such as the centenaries of Disney and Warner Brothers, alongside the coronation of King Charles, captured international attention.

Meanwhile, at The Launceston Preparatory School, we embarked on the final year of leadership tenure for two exceptional individuals, Leonie McNair and Harriet Thyne. Their contributions to our school community, its culture, and its identity have been monumental. Their dedication to excellence, both in representation of and in fostering a nurturing learning environment, is not only commendable, it is simply inspirational. Their decision to remain on staff as educators within our classrooms speaks volumes about their deep commitment to positively influencing others and the school.

In parallel, as a nation, we collectively engaged in the pursuit of change, demonstrated through the Voice Referendum. Our school, too, embraced the concept of voice, integrating it into our Term 4 theme. This exemplifies one of the many ways we harness current affairs to enrich our learning experiences, fostering deeper understanding and engagement, whilst showing an awareness of perspective, offering our "caring and active citizens of the world" sentiments justification in spades.

Throughout the year, our strategic priorities guided us towards continued growth and adaptation within our school community. We undertook comprehensive assessments of how best to promote The Launceston Preparatory School, ensuring that while we remain steadfast in our core values, we also evolve to meet the demands of 21st-century education. Central to our approach is the preservation of traditional practices and a commitment to holistic student development, all while fostering a culture of community richness. Examples of linkage to our Paideia philosophy, where the whole child and their intellectual, artistic, emotional, physical and social development is developed are numerous.

In retrospect, 2023 stands as a memorable year, marked by challenges, celebrations, and growth. The journey has strengthened our school, reaffirming our commitment to excellence and innovation in education.

### Student experiences

Camp offers students invaluable opportunities for personal growth, fostering resilience, teamwork, and independence. Through outdoor activities and immersive experiences, students develop essential life skills, forge lasting friendships, and gain a deeper appreciation for nature and their own capabilities. For students in Groups 4,5,6, the offerings of Camps HOBART (4,5,6), The Lea for Leavers, and MT CAMERON continue to promote our school's identity and offer defining memorable moments for Senior students and staff alike.

### **Senior Sports Roster**

Competing in sports against other schools cultivates teamwork, discipline, and sportsmanship. It instills a competitive spirit, fosters camaraderie among teammates, and provides opportunities for personal growth and skill development in a supportive and challenging environment.

Alongside this, we were lucky enough to have representation at several Interschool (NIJSSA) events, showing we well and truly bat above our average in the sports realm, but hold strong to our identity and represent our values beyond the school's walls with grace and honour. The shape and form of these carnivals change with each year, as does our results but our reputation as quality sports people is unwavering.

### **Leavers' Dinner and Assembly**

Change also came in the form of transition for our Leavers, marking the end of their time at The Launceston Preparatory School. The final year of primary education is a pivotal moment, filled with cherished memories, lasting friendships, and milestones. It marks the culmination of childhood adventures and the anticipation of new beginnings in the journey ahead. The level of enrolments from families who were once students themselves at the school is indicative of just how special the school journey is to our students. And what better way to celebrate than with a Dinner and community Assembly.

'**Transition Thursday**' was back allowing all other members of our student cohort a chance to meet their new surrounds, teacher and peers for 2024, brewing an excitement for the imminent change in student life.

### **Weekly Resilience**

Resilience in children is crucial as it helps them navigate challenges, bounce back from setbacks, and adapt to change. It fosters mental strength, emotional well-being, and confidence, equipping them with essential skills to cope with stress, build healthy relationships, and thrive in the face of adversity throughout their lives. The students speak openly about topical interactions and happenings in our community, allowing time to think, respond to and enact learnings from collaborative conversation in our weekly open forums.

### **Professional Development as staff**

Staff professional development is vital as it enhances teaching effectiveness, keeps educators abreast of latest pedagogical trends, and fosters a culture of continuous learning. It promotes innovation, improves student outcomes, and ensures educators are equipped to meet the diverse needs of learners in an ever-evolving educational landscape. Leonie McNair's role on the IST Board allows us as a staff to get a first-hand look into the current challenges, movements and practices that are shaping our Independent School landscape. This further enriches staff knowledge, and experiences so the student outcomes at our school is always held at the forefront of any teaching and learning, and strategic planning.

Admin staff: 1.6FTE

Teaching Staff: 10.4 FTE

Teacher Assistant: 4.17 FTE

Consistency in staff and low turnover rates are linked to improved student performance, higher morale, and stronger school culture. Research shows that stable staffing fosters trust, continuity,

and collaboration among educators, leading to better outcomes for students and a more cohesive learning environment. This reiterates how appreciative our school is for having both Harriet and Leonie stay on as classroom teachers to help advance our school as we enter a new era. This being said, both Cath Kilner (covering Jane Dean on Long Service Leave for the year) and Charmain Hood (contracted in Kinder to cover our amazing Early Childhood educator, Jacqui Wise) brought a fresh layer of insight and spurred us all to continually grow in our own educational skin. We thank them both.

### **Special Occasions**

Footy Colours' Day celebrates team spirit and raises funds for charity, while Book Week promotes literacy and creativity through themed activities, author visits, and book fairs, fostering a love for reading. Both showed off our spirit for fun, engaged the whole community and inspired our scholars to further enrich their lives in study and community advancement.

Days like ANZAC and Remembrance Day reiterate the grass roots traditions of our country and how our student passion to learn is embraced through respectful curiosity.

The reverend ANZAC service commemorates the sacrifices of service men and women, honoring their bravery and legacy through solemn ceremonies, reflections, and tributes in remembrance of their contributions. Eddie Barnes and his HASS students embraced this experience and represented our school with great pride.

### **Good Citizenship:**

#### House Fundraising

Fundraising at school is vital for supporting various educational initiatives, extracurricular activities, and community projects. It can provide essential funds for enhancing student experiences, improving facilities, and fostering a thriving school environment, but what does do most certainly is instill a sense of belonging, service and a leadership compassion that we all wish to possess.

#### Buddy Play / Mixed Group mentoring

Kids mentoring and leadership programs empower young individuals to develop essential leadership skills, build confidence, and foster positive relationships. They cultivate a culture of support, growth, and peer mentorship within the school community. Something we pride ourselves on is the multitude of opportunity to embrace buddy time with all members of the student community. A brilliant display of fun, wonderment and togetherness – further empowering 'positivity' and 'kindness' in action.

### **Events:**

#### Excursions

Excursions offer hands-on learning experiences, broaden students' perspectives, and create memorable educational opportunities beyond the classroom walls.

Incursions offer something a little different but work wonders in breaking the script of everyday application, further enhancing school life. The views of guest speakers and visiting experts play a role in adding to a bank of opportunities to develop the whole child. Guest speakers and school visits enrich learning by providing real-world insights, diverse perspectives, and inspiring experiences for students. Where our point of difference lies is within the expert framework of how we operate

within our walls. Where in the educational landscape do students gain experiences that a program like DEEP offer?

Diverse learning experiences, including hands-on activities, group projects, cater to various learning styles, fostering engagement, creativity, and a deeper understanding of the subject matter that aligns with our philosophy and the themes that cycle through our planning. With an offering of Survival Skills, Mountain Biking, Dance and Cooking, Garden and Martial Arts, Obstacle Courses and Construction.

### **Strategic Priorities**

Master Plan – New works are on the horizon to enable growth in the quality facilities we offer our families. This is less about growing our population of students and more about providing our deserving student body an excellence in spaces to wonder, dream, plan, develop and create. An exciting time for the community.

Engaging the community through social media fosters transparency, communication, and collaboration. It promotes active participation, shares important updates, and builds a sense of belonging within the school community. The work we've done in this space continues to show off the evolution of education and schools but also how we strive for ways each day to communicate the identity of the school in all its brilliance.

In summary, whilst the changes were pivotal in 2023, The Launceston Preparatory School embraced something special, something more than other schools. The LPS will never stop looking at ways to enhance experience, whilst never backing down on the student first, enriching sense who we are. Yes, we are young, impressionable scholars but we are first good people. People who respect, and care for self, others, environment through Truth and Happiness.

Attributed to the character Tancredi Falconeri in the novel "The Leopard" by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa a quote comes to mind as to the vast differences that are upon us in 2024 whilst reflecting on 2023. In English, it translates to: "If we want things to stay as they are, everything will have to change."