

BURDEKIN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

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GOVERNANCE POLICIES HANDBOOK

**The Board Relationships, Vision and
Goals, Executive Policies and Limitations**

Policies, Information and Procedures

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PART A

The Board

This Handbook

In order to guide its own operations and to provide clarity for the governance of the College, the Board has adopted the policies and procedures in this Handbook.

This Handbook therefore has the force of Board policy. It is a living document which the Board may amend when appropriate.

Where any conflict inadvertently arises between this document and the Constitution, the Constitution prevails.

The Board's Role: General

The Board's primary task is to seek Godly wisdom and to act on behalf of those served by the College, to achieve the following:

1. Clearly articulate the vision and goals of the College.
2. Establish policies aimed at achieving the vision and goals.
3. Appoint a Principal who is equipped to provide leadership in achieving the College's visions and goals.
4. Govern by policy determination, establishing executive policies and limitations for execution by the Principal.
5. Ensure that in achieving the vision and goals the Principal is provided resources which are adequate and appropriate.
6. Ensure the accountability of the Principal, and itself(the Board).

Functions and duties of the Board

In order to fill its roles the Board will

1. Seek Godly wisdom for the College and its mission in the community
2. Maintain an active interest in matters impacting on Christian schooling, especially as they affect the ability of the College to fulfil its vision and goals.
3. Bring relevant knowledge and prayerful consideration to all matters.
4. Act at all times in accordance with Australian law, and the Constitution of the company.
5. Enable the Principal to be the operational executive of the College, being regarded (for the purposes of corporate governance) as the only employee of the Board.
6. Establish policies which govern the relationship between itself, as the Board, and the Principal (the Handbook).
7. Ensure the work of the College is adequately resourced and, through the Principal, that these resources are managed effectively.
8. Establish policies and limitations policies for the financial operations of the Company, and
9. Approve and monitor the budget prepared by the Principal in accordance with these policies.
10. Establish Board Committees to ensure effective planning and assist in providing advice to the Board and Principal.
11. Receive reports from the Principal about College operations.
12. Ensure accountability of the Principal and, through the Principal, other staff.
13. Ensure the highest standards of ethical behaviour and corporate accountability.
14. Demonstrate leadership in the community of the College and the wider community.
15. Promote and support the work of the College among parents and the wider community.
16. Act as a sounding board for matters, normally for management decision, on which the Principal seeks the advice and wisdom of Board members.
17. All other matters for which the Board is responsible under the Constitution.

Board Meetings

Conduct of meetings, roles of Directors

1. Under God the Directors commit themselves to seek Godly guidance and wisdom in ensuring the incorporated body and the College which it operates, remains true to its calling in furthering Christian education.
2. The Board's makeup is established by the Constitution and the Board is subject to its provisions.
3. Directors (Board members) will act in accordance with Australian corporate law.
4. Directors will ensure the highest standards of ethical behaviour and corporate accountability.
5. Directors will ensure they act at all times in the best interests of the legal and moral ownership of the College (i.e. the membership of the College company and the community it serves).

Conflict of Interest

6. The overriding responsibility of Board members is to put the interests of the College above all other interests. Directors will exercise this responsibility by putting aside, in Board deliberations and decisions, any other interest they may hold whether it is as a member of another organization or as an individual.
7. Where Board members are members of a group served by the College they will not act in a way to advance their *individual* interest. As previously stated it is however the Board's responsibility to act in a way which serves the *general* interests of those served by the College, including parents and students who represent the 'moral ownership' or the community served by the College. If the interests of an individual are advanced only as part of a general group (for example the group of parents at the College) no personal conflict exists, provided the Board member satisfies themselves before God their decision was made to serve the interest of others.
8. Where Board members have a material financial interest in a matter they will declare their interest and not debate or vote on the matter in question.
9. This principle (above) does not apply when the member is affected as part of a general class of persons, as in parents affected by the setting of College fees.
10. If a Board member has an indirect material interest in a matter they should declare the interest which should be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The Board may then decide, by vote, whether the members should take part in the discussions or vote on the matter.

Serving together as community

11. The Board is a Christian community serving and worshipping together. Such a group is like the body of Christ. Each member brings gifts, perspectives, intellect, wisdom, experience.

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12. Belonging to the body means recognizing, in full parity and equity of relationship, the gifts and contributions of others. Wherever possible the Board will try to reach a consensus agreement rather than working on the basis of a simple majority vote.
13. The Board acts, at all times, as a corporate body. Unless otherwise delegated by the Board, no Director has individual authority outside Board meetings.
14. Board decisions are binding on Board members, who have a responsibility to act in accordance with them. Debate about decisions is internal not external; and Board discussions are confidential.
15. The Board has a single mind, that being the decision reached at Board meetings. Directors will of course canvass the opinions of a wide variety of stakeholders on matters before the Board. However they are not at liberty to reveal internal Board discussions with others (other than when required by law) and once a decision on a matter is made, Directors are bound to uphold it in their actions and in any discussions with others.
16. Remaining a Board member means agreeing to adhere to these principles. Board members seek to remain in fellowship with each other and to act as a body. Should any Director feel in conscience they cannot agree with the direction of the Board, abide by these provisions and remain in fellowship with other Directors, their best option is to resign.

Agenda

1. The Board Chair and the Principal will determine the agenda for Board meetings and ensure it is communicated to Directors.
2. Any business individual Board members wish to be included should be submitted to the Chair or Principal prior to the meeting.
3. Papers will be circulated at least (seven days) prior to each meeting.

Board accountability

The Board will:

1. Enforce upon itself the disciplines for excellence in governance.
2. Be accountable to the members of the Company, to parents, the community, staff, the appropriate authorities under law, and to God for the effective achievement of its goals.
3. Ensure that the doctrine of Board responsibility applies:
 - 3.1 that each member is bound by the decision of the whole
 - 3.2 that no one member can speak on behalf of the Board unless authorized to do so
 - 3.3 that the Chairman is the presiding officer at Board meetings, but has no role for unilateral decision making outside of meetings, unless otherwise authorized by the Board
 - 3.4 that members will respect the confidences of the Board

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4. Ensure a regular review of Board policies, and initiate this procedure itself, not leaving this responsibility to staff.
5. Monitor and discuss its own procedures and performance, and ensure ongoing training and development for Board members. This includes induction of new Board members.
6. Relate appropriately to the Principal.

Office Bearers

Chairman

1. Presides over meetings.
2. Is responsible and accountable to other Board members for leading Board meetings in such a way as to maintain the fellowship and disciplines of the Board.
3. Ensures good order at Board meetings, that the agenda outcomes are achieved in a timely fashion, that Board members all are able to contribute but that no one member dominates unfairly or inappropriately.
4. Provides leadership for, and on behalf of, the Board within the ambit of Board decisions.
5. Is responsible for ensuring, through the Company Secretary, the correct organization of Board affairs including minutes, annual reports and other statutory reporting requirements.
6. Responsible for Board meeting agenda, in consultation with the Principal.
7. Outside meetings, has no individual authority other than that delegated by the Board.

Secretary

1. Maintains all company records including Constitution, company register, minutes of meetings, annual reports and other statutory documents.
2. After consultation with the Chair and Principal, distributes notices of meeting.
3. Is the Public Officer of the company.

Board Treasurer

1. Provides advice to the Board on the financial performance of the College.
2. Assists the Principal in his/her role of presenting financial records to the Board.
3. Assists the Principal in his/her role of preparing a budget for Board approval.

Board Executive

1. The executive consists of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.
2. It is chaired by the Board Chairman.
3. As with all other Board committees the Principal is an ex officio member of the Executive and should attend all meetings other than those convened to review the performance of the Principal.
4. The executive assists in the preparation of the Agenda for regular Board meetings.
5. The executive is a standing committee to which decisions required to be made between regular Board meetings can be referred. In the exercise of this authority, the executive must act only within the ambit of the referral by the full Board.
6. The executive may make recommendations to the full Board and suggest agenda items but, unless otherwise delegated, has no individual authority.

PART B

Relationships

Board/Principal Relationship

1. For the purposes of governance, the Principal is effectively the only employee of the Board. The Board will select, appoint, terminate and hold accountable the Principal.
2. The Principal is CEO of the incorporated body, and authority of the Board is thus delegated to the Principal for operational matters including employment of all staff, unless otherwise provided for in the “policies and limitations” section.
3. The Principal attends and participates fully in all meetings of the Board, unless the matter for discussion is to review the Principal’s performance and remuneration.
4. The Board will establish the vision and goals for the College and delegates to the Principal responsibility for carrying these out, within the limits set by the policies and limitations policies.
5. The Board relates to the Principal as a body. Individual members cannot direct the Principal unless acting under delegated authority by the Board.
6. The Board will regularly receive reports from the Principal about the operations of the College. The reports will be the process by which the Principal accounts to the Board for progress in achieving the vision and goals, in accordance with the executive policies and limitations, as set out in this handbook.
7. Board members can and should maintain a regular dialogue and fellowship with the Principal. Directors may raise issues with or seek information from the Principal about matters relating to their Board responsibilities at any time, respecting the workload and day to day responsibilities of the Principal’s role.
8. Concerns about the operation of the College or actions of the Principal may be raised individually with the Principal, bearing in mind the points above.
9. Unresolved issues, or those requiring determination, must be brought to a meeting of the Board. Again, individual Board members can not direct the Principal unless they are acting under delegated authority.
10. Regularly, but not more than annually, the Board will conduct a review of the Principal’s performance against agreed outcomes, including progress towards achieving the objectives contained in the handbook. Personal professional goals may also be established for the coming year and reviewed annually. The Board may delegate to the Board Executive the task of reviewing the Principal and reporting to the full Board, with recommendations for action as necessary. This function may include the review of the Principal’s remuneration.

Other staff

1. The Board relates to staff through the Principal.
2. Board members cannot direct staff other than the Principal and then only as a Board.
3. Any concerns about staffing matters should be raised with the Principal at a meeting.
4. The Principal selects, appoints, terminates and holds accountable all staff.

PART C

Vision, Beliefs, Values and Goals

Vision

To provide education from a Christian World View.

Beliefs

The beliefs provide a framework for a Christian World View.

1. There is one True and Living God who is Eternal, who has revealed Himself as One Being in three persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit and who is the Creator and Preserver of things visible and invisible.
2. Man was created by God by specific and immediate act and in His image and likeness, morally upright and perfect, but fell by voluntary transgression. Consequently all men are separated from original righteousness, being depraved and without spiritual life.
3. God's answer to man's sinful state is in the death of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross. His suffering and shed blood have made full atonement for the sins of the whole world, both original and actual, and that there is no other ground for salvation.
4. At the pre-millennial, imminent and personal return of our Lord Jesus Christ His people will be gathered unto Himself. Having this glorious hope and earnest expectation, we purify ourselves, even as He is pure, so that we may be ready to meet Him when He comes.

Values

These values arise from our relationship with God, with each other and with the environment.

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| 1. Family and Community: | People, relationships and love matter more than structures, power and control. |
| 2. Intimacy with God: | Intimacy with God is a constant state of mind and an activity of prayer. |
| 3. Sustainability: | Maximization of the College's physical and human resources in a way that is ecologically, socially and economically sustainable. |
| 4. The Wisdom of the Bible: | Scripture is our reference to re-align our values. |

Goals

These goals reflect the National Goals of Education.

1. Schooling should develop the talents and capacities of all students in order to
 - 1.1 equip students for life long learning by developing, amongst others, skills in problem solving, communication and working with others.
 - 1.2 develop qualities of strong moral values, sustainability, openness to God and a commitment to excellence as a basis for potential life roles in family, community, workforce and mission.
 - 1.3 exercise judgment and responsibility in matters of morality, to respond to God's purposes to make informed decisions and to be responsible for their own actions.
 - 1.4 foster relationships with members of the local community and to appreciate the impact of the wider community on the local community.
 - 1.5 achieve the standard of education required to access the pathways available for further education, training and employment.
 - 1.6 be effective users of information and communication technologies to equip them for the future.
 - 1.7 be stewards of the environment through ecological, social, economic and political sustainable practices.
 - 1.8 follow the seven natural pathways to a healthy eating pattern and active life style in a loving and safe environment.
2. In terms of curriculum, students should be able to
 - 2.1 attain their highest standard of knowledge, skills and understanding through a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in the compulsory years of schooling encompassing the agreed eight key learning areas:
 - The Arts
 - English
 - Health and Physical Education
 - Language other than English
 - Mathematics
 - Science
 - Studies of Society and Environment
 - Technology
 - The inter-relationship between them and Christian Living.
 - 2.2 attain the skills of numeracy and literacy in order to numerate, read, write, speak and spell at an appropriate level.

- 2.3 participate in activities through compulsory years of education to access vocational education and training.
- 2.4 participate in activities to develop their gifts and talents to maximize their opportunities for the future.
3. In terms of justice, to ensure
 - 3.1 student outcomes from schooling are free from the negative forms of all aspects of discrimination and of differences arising from socio-economic background or geographic location.
 - 3.2 learning outcomes of all students, especially educationally disadvantaged students, improve over their years of schooling.
 - 3.3 Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander and South Seas Islander students and ESL students have equitable access to, and opportunities in schooling, so their learning outcomes improve over their years of schooling.
 - 3.4 all students understand and acknowledge the value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders cultures to Australian society and possess the knowledge skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.
 - 3.5 all students understand and acknowledge the value of cultural and linguistic diversity and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding, to contribute to, and benefit from, such diversity in the Australian community and internationally.
 - 3.6 all students have access to the highest quality education necessary to enable the completion of school education to year 12 or its vocational equivalent and that provides clear and recognised pathways to employment and further education and training.

PART D

Executive Policies and Limitations

The Principal

The Principal is the operational leader of the College and is empowered to make those decisions necessary to further its vision and goals.

Employment

5. The Principal selects, appoints, directs and holds accountable all staff of the College.
6. The Principal will not appoint staff unless they profess and demonstrate in their lives an active commitment to the Christian faith, in accordance with the employment policies of the College and the Constitution of the Company.

Financial Management

1. The Principal shall present to the Board a budget for College operations annually.
2. The budget will be consistent with any guidelines established by the Board for the financial management of the Company as follows:
 - 2.1 The Principal will not allow the College to be in a position where it is unable to pay its debts as and when they fall due.
 - 2.2 The Principal will not cause the College to be in deficit without Board approval.
 - 2.3 The Principal will not cause debt-rent/student ratio to be more than 10% of income.
 - 2.4 The Principal will appoint teaching staff on a pupil/staff ratio of between 18% to 22%.
 - 2.5 The Principal will refer all bad debtors to the Board before any action is taken.
 - 2.6 The Principal will develop the budget with assistance from the Treasurer within approved parameters. There are –
 - Salaries – 70-75%
 - Other teaching expenses – 5-10%
 - Administration – 5-10%
 - Non-salary operations & maintenance – 3 – 10%
 - Rent – 5 -10%
 - Provision – 4 – 5%

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7. The Principal will report to each regular meeting of Board on financial performance with respect to the budget.
8. The Principal will ensure that no significant variation to the budgeted figures occurs without Board approval
9. The Principal is the executor of Board decisions and is empowered to approve and oversee expenditures within the budget established by the Board.
10. The Principal will not allow the Board to be uninformed about departures or likely departures from budget parameters.
11. Where the Board has allocated resources for a specific purpose or project, recurrent or capital, the Principal will not reallocate those resources for another purpose without Board approval.
12. The Principal will not approve capital works which do not conform to the Board's Master Plan for College development.
13. Works with bearing on the Master Plan or requiring additional resources as a variation to the budget, will come back to the Board for discussion and approval.
14. The Principal will not allow the College to be in breach of all accountability requirements to DEST and the Education Department for the use of public funds.

Critical Issues

1. The Principal is not to allow the Board to be uninformed about critical issues which may impact on the good standing of the College or Company.
2. The Principal will inform the Board about pending or threatened legal action, adverse media comment, industrial disputes, unresolved disputes between parents and teachers.

Operational Plan

1. The Principal will have in place an operational plan to give expression to the vision and goals of the Board.
2. The plan will not extend the resources beyond those available in the budget from year to year.
3. The plan will be tabled at a Board meeting for discussion and input by Board members, although while it stays within the general vision and goals of the Board the detailed educational operation of the College is delegated to the Principal.