



**ASSOCIATED CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS**  
ACN: 78 139 981 972

**CYCLICAL REVIEW: SHALOM CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**

**DATE: MONDAY 19 JANUARY 2015**

**VALIDATOR'S REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

Shalom Christian College is a Uniting Church co-educational day and boarding school located in Townsville. It caters specifically for indigenous students from the region and remote parts of Australia and has an enrolment of approximately 300 students from Prep to Year 13, about half of whom are boarders. It operates over two campuses, Condon and Crystal Creek.

Students enrolled at the college are drawn from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Island families in remote communities from the Kimberly regions in Western Australia through to the Northern Territory, northern Queensland and the Torres Straits. The balance of the student cohort is drawn from local Palm Island and Townsville communities. As a result, the student population encompasses seventeen different language groups which require Shalom Christian College to provide approximately 40% of the students with full ESL support. Half the student population speak Aboriginal English, which requires a heavily scaffolded EAL/D program.

## Review Committee

Shalom Christian College's participation in the cyclical review program was managed by a review committee consisting of the following members:

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Mr Mike Millard        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair Shalom Christian College Board</li> <li>• Experienced Principal</li> <li>• Experienced in School governance</li> <li>• Experience with managing reviews and as External Validator</li> </ul> |
| Mr Christopher England | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal Shalom Christian College</li> <li>• Experienced Principal from NZ</li> <li>• Worked in cultural settings</li> </ul>  |
| Ms Sandy Oxenburgh     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Principal</li> <li>• Responsible for the College's pastoral care systems as well as Health and Well-being Centre</li> </ul>  |
| Mrs Toni Simmons       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Primary</li> <li>• Long history with school and has worked across all year levels</li> </ul>   |
| Mrs Sharyn Ives        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head of Curriculum</li> <li>• Extensive curriculum experience and is the liaison person with ISQ</li> </ul>  |
| Ms Brenda Fruitier     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Manager</li> <li>• Experienced school business manager</li> </ul>   |
| Ms Janet Lodge         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PA to Principal</li> </ul>   |

In conjunction with members of the governing body, the Board of Directors who managed the review processes through its regular meeting schedule and by working with a number of other key staff members to assist it with aspects of data collection, analysis and interpretation.

The validation of the review findings was undertaken by Lynne Doneley, Executive Officer of Associated Christian Colleges. The following validation report addresses the accreditation criteria and all evaluation questions identified in the College's cyclical review plan. These evaluation questions are:

1. What governance and management processes are in place to ensure ongoing compliance with legislation and other requirements?
2. How does the College ensure that staff and families have access to the most up to date policies and processes?
3. How are connections with remote communities fostered to support students culturally, socially and academically?
4. How is information collected being used to monitor student progress and well-being.
5. How are relationships with stakeholders nurtured?

## **CRITERIA 1**

### ***The College's Administration and Governance Arrangements***

- 1.1 Since the previous cyclical review there have been significant changes to the governance arrangements of Shalom Christian College. The College is governed by the Uniting Church Property Trust (Q.), effective 2013. Prior to this date, the college was owned and operated by the Congress Community Development and Education Unit (CCDEU), an indigenous body linked nationally with the Uniting Church through a covenant. The CCDEU was a Company Limited by Guarantee operated by a totally indigenous board. The infrastructure and funding of the CCDEU was not able to sustain the operations of the college campuses and related businesses. As a result, the CCDEU entered Voluntary Administration, with Deloitte being engaged as the Administrators. Subsequently, the Church through its Schools Commission and Finance Department worked with the Administrators, staff and communities throughout 2013 to restructure the school and engage a principal.
- 1.2 The College holds Certificate of Accreditation issued by the NSSAB for its two campuses, located at Condon and Crystal Creek.
- 1.3 The Validator noted that the Governing Board of Shalom Christian College had implemented a number of commendable risk management strategies to secure its ongoing future viability.

- 1.4 The College has not changed its name since the last Accreditation Review.
- 1.5 The College operates as a not-for-profit body.
- 1.6 The governing body has not entered into a contract or arrangement with a for-profit entity that is not at arms' length from the College's legal entity.
- 1.7 There was no direct or indirect connection between the governing body and a for-profit entity that could reasonably be expected to compromise the independence of the governing body when it is making financial decisions.
- 1.8 The governing body has in place guiding principles and procedures for identifying, declaring and dealing with any conflict of interest a director of the governing body may have relating to an aspect of the operating of the College.
- 1.9 The Board of the College has reviewed its own processes of operation to ensure that it complies with all statutory requirements and relevant Australian standards and samples of best practice. The Board has implemented a number of strategic measures to ensure its future viability.
- 1.10 All members of the College Board hold current Suitability for Working with Children Notices (Blue Cards) issued by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian. The College has in place a system which includes a register of suitability card holders/numbers and expiry dates to facilitate the renewal of cards in a timely manner.
- 1.11 It was noted that the College Board had undergone a number of changes since the last Cyclical Review. These changes included a new Board, approved by the Uniting Church Synod Standing Committee and validated on reports from ASIC and the NSSAB.

The validator noted and confirmed the comprehensive data presented.

**CRITERIA 2*****The College's Financial Viability***

- 2.1 The College is in an unusual situation that it was part of a company called CCDEU which went into voluntary administration in July 2012. Since then the Uniting Church undertook expansive work with the administrators, Deloitte, to produce modelling which would determine the ongoing viability of the college.
- 2.2 The validator sighted relevant documents and statements which attest to the oversight by the Uniting Church Property Trust, and delegated reporting responsibilities. The validator also confirmed the processes and procedures for monitoring the finances of the College by the Board. These reports are analysed at each meeting of the Board. It was noted that the reporting procedures and information provided to the Board at their regular meetings was informative and substantive in their strategic intent.
- 2.3 The Validator sighted a Letter of Comfort from the Uniting Church Schools Trust and its long-term commitment to the College.

The validator noted and confirmed the data, reports and evidence presented.

**CRITERIA 3*****The College's Educational Program and Student Welfare Processes*****3.1 Statement of Philosophy and Aims**

- 3.1.1 The College Board reviewed its Statement of Philosophy and Aims since the last cyclical review. This Statement of Philosophy and Aims is consistent with the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians.
- 3.1.2 The College Vision is:

*Shalom Christian College will be recognised as providing innovative leadership and excellence in Indigenous Christian education.*

*By embracing indigenous Christian perspectives and Indigenous cultural knowledge and wisdom, it will foster in students strong, positive identities.*

*In its commitment to holistic education, it will create a safe environment in which students gain the knowledge, skills and purpose to attain economic independence, empowered to achieve their full potential and to contribute positively to their families, their communities, and to Australian Society.*

### **3.2 Educational Programs: Primary and Secondary**

- 3.2.1 The College's educational program is organized around the syllabuses produced by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA). The Core Values of the college are embedded in the unique college program through its spiritual objectives and Christian staff.
- 3.2.2 The college has undergone a process of preparation and revision of work programs as part of the ongoing improvement and planning for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, accompanied by appropriate and relevant educational adjustments for each student. The college has continually reviewed its programs to ensure effective and targeted provision of teaching and learning to enrolled students.
- 3.2.3 The College programs enable its students to achieve with appropriate educational adjustments. The College comprehensively analyses results from NAPLAN, diagnostic and other tests to enhance the learning of students, reporting progress and continuous improvement measures to the governing board.
- 3.2.4 The College maintains regular communication between the students, parents and carers regarding students' learning pathways, collectively and individually.
- 3.2.5 Curriculum change and development has been based on existing resourcing to implement the Australian curriculum. Specific, measurable, and realistic goals are consistently implemented and monitored. It was noted that the college has scheduled identified strategic processes in place for internal monitoring of data. This data monitoring assists staff in tracking individual student progress and modifying planning to determine how individual learner needs can best be catered.

3.2.6 The college is responsive to its students through intentional work programs, resources and assessment tools to enhance reporting procedures. These include: Bandscales for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learners, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), RoleM Maths from Prep to Year 3 and Yumi Deadly Maths from Year 5 onwards, which have delivered improved student outcomes.

3.2.7 The curriculum, and support programs reflect the cultural sensitivities of the student population and student placement.

The validator noted and confirmed the comprehensive data presented. In particular, the validator noted the alignment between the programs implemented and the student culture.

### **3.3 Students who are persons with a disability**

3.3.1 The College has implemented a comprehensive process for identifying and assessing students who require support and educational adjustment, with due consideration to the socio-economic and academic characteristics of students.

3.3.2 The educational adjustments for students are facilitated through teacher aides, curriculum, lesson delivery, and assessment and reporting. Classroom teachers are supported through regular Professional Development. Teacher Aides support the teachers through this process.

3.3.3 All IEPs have a risk management component which is addressed for each student.

The validator noted and confirmed the comprehensive data presented.

### **3.4 Distance Education**

The College does not deliver distance education.

### **3.5 Flexible Arrangements**

The College does not cater for flexible arrangements.

**Validator's Response:**

The College has appropriate and responsive flexible arrangements in place for its students that are negotiated in partnership with parents and community elders. The college has established comprehensive options in available pathways, such as their Youth Learning Program, which provides training in work skills development to support students' pathways to employment and training.

**3.6 Health, Safety and Conduct of Staff or Students**

3.6.1 The College is currently implementing the recommendations from the comprehensive Occupational Health and Safety Gap Analysis conducted by AON Hewitt, dated September 2012.

**3.7 Student Welfare**

3.7.1 The College has in place policies for appropriate conduct of both staff and students, on reporting of harm to state authorities. These processes are written in Policies which are available to staff on the College IT network. Students are prepared on processes through regular advice at assemblies.

3.7.2 The College has revised its Child Protection policies and processes to comply with recent changes in legislation.

3.7.3 It was noted that the college has established a health and well-being centre, staffed with a doctor and other specialised staff, due to the majority of the student population being indigenous and the chronic health issues they present upon enrolment.

3.7.4 The College ensure that its students maintain their connections, understanding and knowledge of their Cultural heritage through a range of programs and activities such as:

- Cultural Practice Week
- NAIDOC
- National Sorry Day
- Maboo Day

- Rights of Passage ceremonies involving various elders to build cross cultural understanding
- Home visits with indigenous staff members

The College also has Cultural and Spiritual “Listeners” who accompany staff on visits to the communities where students originate to meet with parents and elders of the communities. They also meet with students and staff on campus where required.

The Validator was able to validate the data presented, including some revisions to practices, since the last review. The Validator noted the College’s intention for ongoing compliance and self-improvement through relevant staff training.

## **CRITERIA 4**

### ***The College’s Resources***

#### **4.1 Staffing**

4.1.1 The College keeps a register of all teachers to ensure compliance with all Queensland College of Teachers requirements for teachers, monitored through the College’s Enterprise Risk manager (ERM) system.

4.1.2 The ratios for teachers, teacher aides and other support staff cater to the unique student clientele and their individual educational needs, aligned with the college policy of employing qualified indigenous staff where possible.

#### **4.2 Educational Facilities and Materials**

4.2.1 The College has sufficient facilities and materials to support its educational program, which is able to cater for students in Years P-13.

4.2.2 A site tour confirmed that the College’s buildings, spaces, covered areas, and playing areas were located on a spacious and well planned site.

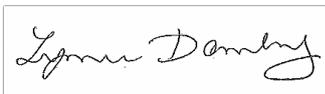
**CRITERIA 5*****The College's Improvement Processes***

- 5.1 The validator noted the intention of the College board to update the Master Plan for the Condon site during 2015, which includes an aged care facility operated by Blue Care. It was also noted the College Board's intention to review and research the long-term future viability and use of the Crystal Creek site.
- 5.2 The College ensures that it is supporting the needs of the College community through a variety of stakeholder discussions. The College also reports annually to the College community and the public through the Colleges Reporting requirements, including publication of appropriate and relevant reports.
- 5.4 It was noted that the College undertook a major review of policies during 2013-14 to ensure compliance and alignment with current legislative requirements and the new governance structure of the College.

**SUMMARY VALIDATION COMMENTS**

The review report concludes that Shalom Christian College is giving appropriate attention to fulfilling its compliance obligations in a comprehensive manner. The College has developed specific responses to areas identified for improvement as noted in this report. The College also maintains an ongoing strategic intent to continually develop relationships with students, parents, elders and relevant Indigenous communities to preserve the Culture and foundational Vision of the College.

The validator supports the review process and the report submitted to the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board.



Lynne Doneley  
Executive Officer  
Associated Christian Schools  
19 January 2015