

Recommendations from the Education Committee

28/22 Diocesan support for the development of missional leaders and excellent educators in Anglican Schools

29/22 Request to appoint a diocesan educational advisor

30/22 Establishment of an Education Committee

(A report of the Standing Committee.)

Key Points

- This report recognises that communication within the Diocese, especially between the Synod and our network of Anglican Schools, can be improved.
- Anglican Schools represent one of our largest mission fields. Synod works in fellowship with 40 schools in the Diocese of Sydney that collectively educate over 43,000 students, and employ over 5,900 Full-Time Equivalent staff.
- Suggested changes will provide opportunities for the Synod to demonstrate its fellowship with schools in concrete and effective ways.
- There are immediate practical steps that can be taken at no cost, as well as some more challenging opportunities that will require further thought and funding.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to –
 - (a) provide responses to a number of Synod resolutions made in relation to Anglican Schools, and Anglican education, and
 - (b) to expose some of the current issues of concern in Anglican education in the Diocese.

Recommendation

2. Synod receive this report.
3. Synod, noting the report 'Recommendations from the Education Committee' –
 - (a) acknowledge and thank Anglican Schools for their work as partners in the mission and ministry of the Diocese,
 - (b) request the draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education be presented to School Principals for their consideration and comment, including at the next Ascension Day meeting of Principals, with a view to adoption as a policy of the Synod in 2024, and
 - (c) encourage participation in mentoring, professional development and networking through diocesan associations and professional bodies.
4. Synod request –
 - (a) the Archbishop to consider appointing a suitably qualified education advisor to support his advocacy on behalf of Anglican Schools and to assist the Synod and schools to form an effective partnership towards their shared ministry goals, and
 - (b) the Standing Committee to consider ways to fund such a role.
5. Synod recommend that the Standing Committee –
 - (a) request SDS to include instructional training that provides contextual information about the Diocese and its structures in conjunction with SDS-supported AICD governance courses, and also requests including the offering of this training or an alternative version to diocesan school staff (possibly using a similar online platform as is currently operating for safe ministry training),

- (b) request the education advisor to report to the Standing Committee on the creation of tertiary training programs for school chaplains, assistant chaplains, and Christian Studies teachers, including the development of a sample K-12 Christian Studies curriculum,
- (c) request Youthworks to develop training units to support the teaching of the Bible in primary schools, and distinctive Christian teaching, and
- (d) consider ways to fund such requests.

Background

6. On 17 October 2022 the Standing Committee, having noted Synod resolutions 28/22, 29/22, and 30/22, appointed an Education Committee to address the requests of these resolutions, comprising Bishop Chris Edwards, Dr Jean Ashton, Mrs Jude Douglas, Dr Rahmi Jackson, the Rev Dr Michael Jensen, Dr Kaye Chalwell, Dr Wendy Moran, the Rev Dr Gavin Perkins, Canon Craig Roberts, and the Rev Peter Tong, to elect a Chair from amongst its members and with the power to co-opt.
7. The Education Committee met on the following occasions: 20 December 2022, 18 January 2023, 8 March 2023, 4 April 2023, and 8 May 2023. The Education Committee elected Bishop Chris Edwards as Chair, and the Rev Dr Michael Jensen as Deputy Chair.
8. Given the number of Anglican Schools, the number of staff schools employ, and the fact that they have enrolled over forty three thousand students - each with approximately 1,400 hours of face-to-face instruction each year – it is vital that Synod gives attention to this significant part of the Diocese’s mission. The Synod plays a significant role in the election of governors in most of the Anglican Schools in the Diocese of Sydney.
9. These schools work in partnership, together with the Diocese, towards “the great biblical goal of presenting people mature in Christ” by engaging each generation with the gospel and encompassing the “development of personal knowledge, and understanding, skills, character and virtues” (Diocesan Policy Statement on Education) and to present “the whole curriculum within a Christian worldview founded on the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ” with a distinctive Christian Studies curriculum (*Anglican Schools Ministry Ordinance 2016*).
10. In current times, these schools operate in complex, ever changing social and political landscapes, where what was once clear and uncontroversial is now unclear and controversial. Schools are also facing unprecedented difficulties in recruiting and retaining quality teachers and leaders who are Christians. As long ago as 2009, Archbishop Peter Jensen stated that “our Diocese is guilty of neglect when it comes to its schools and indeed to the issues involved with education generally.”
11. Urgent tangible action from Synod is needed to support the mission and ministry of Anglican Schools in the Diocese.

Discussion

30/22 Establishment of an Education Committee

12. The text of resolution 30/22 is as follows –

“In light of the termination of EdComm and in the absence of any diocesan body to undertake the important work of resourcing and advocacy for and oversight of education in the Diocese, this Synod requests the Standing Committee to establish a suitably qualified committee to bring to the next Synod –

- (a) a clear diocesan statement on what Reformed Anglican Education is,
- (b) a report on what initial and ongoing training in the fundamentals of Anglican Education is currently available for school governors,
- (c) recommendations for a specific program for school chaplains and Religious Education teachers, and

- (d) recommendations for ongoing in-service programs on the application of Christian principles to education as a requisite for practising teachers (which may form part of teacher registration).”

13. The Education Committee devoted a significant portion of its time developing a draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education. This was in response to the Synod request, and an acknowledgement that deep theological reflection is required. The draft statement is found in Appendix 1 to this report, and is the foundation upon which the Committee considered the other components of the Synod resolution, as found below.

30/22(a) a clear diocesan statement on what Reformed Anglican Education is

14. The answer to this question is already formed within Sydney Anglican documents such as: The Diocesan Policy Statement on Education, and the *Anglican Schools Ministry Ordinance 2016*, and publications such as *New Perspectives on Anglican Education* (2011). The attached statement (Appendix 1) seeks to summarise these and define a Reformed Anglican Education by its theology and practices.

30/22(b) a report on what initial and ongoing training in the fundamentals of Anglican Education is currently available for school governors

15. All ‘responsible persons’ in a school are required by NSW Educational Standards Authority (**NESA**) to undertake initial and ongoing governance training; however, the training that is currently offered focuses (appropriately) on such areas as compliance and risk, child protection, strategic thinking and board effectiveness, to name a few. There simply is no systemic initial or ongoing training in the fundamentals of Anglican Education available for school governors.
16. Developing a NESA-Approved course in the fundamentals of Reformed Anglican Education, that would contribute towards requisite hours of governance training, would be a valuable outcome. It would further incentivise participation for existing governors and contribute to their triennial training obligations.
17. While a significant amount of training is provided for school governors, very little, if any, of it is focused on Reformed Anglican Education. It needs to be understood that policies, ordinances and guidelines are currently the principal means by which the Diocese communicates with schools. There is an expectation of compliance, but little or no assistance to school leaders in understanding their obligations.
18. A survey of school governors, conducted by the Anglican Schools Corporation, reinforced that a significant proportion of our schools are not doing what would be the minimum required to ensure school governors, especially alumni/community representatives, are trained adequately in the Christian ministry, character and purposes of their school.
19. There is an urgent need to provide more, and strengthen what is already provided, with Synod providing some (tailored) training modules for each diocesan school as part of an induction of new school governors. This could also expand beyond provision to new school governors on appointment, to include Principals and members of school executive teams.

Suggestions for induction and ongoing training

20. Induction programs and training for governors should identify and highlight the basis for the Christian character of each school found in the relevant constituting ordinance. For instance, one school’s ordinance stipulates that it is to be a school “in which the teaching shall be throughout in accordance with the principles of the Church of England” and similar phrases occur in other relevant ordinances.
21. The goal should be to ensure that each school governor has a deep understanding of what it means for them to support and strengthen the Christian ethos of the school, and the governance structures of the Diocese. Ongoing programs and training should specifically equip the governing body of each school to better deal with issues around the key Christian/societal pressure points in sensitive and thoughtful ways.

30/22(c) recommendations for a specific program for school chaplains and ‘Christian Studies’ teachers

Current situation

22. As is the case with school governors, no specific training program currently exists for school chaplains or Christian Studies teachers.
23. There is no specific pathway into School Chaplaincy and ‘Christian Studies’ in Anglican Schools in the Diocese. Moore College, Youthworks, and other institutes provide appropriate theological training but no specific chaplaincy or Christian Studies teaching training. The formation of the Youthworks Centre for Christian Education is a welcome development, but for now this means that the level of theological training, teacher qualification, ministry or pastoral experience varies widely across Diocesan Schools. Specific programs to support, train and develop those engaged in School ministry need to take into account the variable starting points of those engaged in these ministries.

Youthworks Centre for Christian Education

24. Youthworks College has launched the Centre for Christian Education with the aim of “deepening the gospel expertise of Christians in the teaching profession”, as well as creating a “pathway for schools and churches to raise up more Christians for the teaching profession.” The Diploma of Theology incorporating work placement in a school presents a useful model.
25. The Diploma of Theology for Christian teachers includes Christian Doctrine as well as Christian Ethics, Sexuality & Identity, and Formative Christian Teaching, and is designed for teachers to complete either before, during or after their formal teaching qualifications. The flexible format of the course allows for existing teachers to complete the 8 units through 3x 2-day blocks on a Friday and Saturday each semester.
26. This course would provide a thorough theological foundation and reflection to inform both practice and cultural engagement within Anglican Schools.

Recommendations

27. The Anglican School context is unique. While there are parallels to parish ministry, university ministry, cross-cultural mission, or other forms of chaplaincy, the context of ministry in Anglican Schools in 2023 is unique. Several factors about these Schools highlight the need for specific training for those who work and minister in them –
 - (a) An exemplary standard of teaching and godly conduct is required of Christian teachers and Chaplains because of the vulnerable age of children at school.
 - (b) The intersection of Christian principles and secular thinking creates tension which needs to be navigated faithfully, wisely and sensitively.
 - (c) Each school carries cultural norms and expectations that need to be understood for effective ministry to take place. The dynamic between compulsory and voluntary ministry settings within a school impacts what biblical messages can be emphasised.
 - (d) The practical limitations of timetables and term dates impact the format of ongoing professional development. Every school is different and has a different rhythm and cadence. Hence it is very difficult, for example, to find a consistent time for training across multiple institutions.
28. Identifying, recruiting and developing future Chaplains is also a challenge.
29. In light of the large responsibility that the Bible gives to teachers of the Bible (James 3:1, 1 Timothy 3, 2 Timothy 2:15) and the integral importance of these roles to a school’s ministry and *raison d’être*, it is suggested that schools recognise the importance of these roles by prioritising the appointment of staff to these roles with significant training for the role, and facilitate on-going professional development and networking for staff in these roles.

30. The following two strategies are recommended as specific programs for school chaplains and Christian Studies teachers. A third strategy, for an Anglican Schools Executive Leadership program, is outlined in our response to Synod resolution 28/22, below.

Strategy 1: Ensuring appropriate qualifications are available and delivered for roles with responsibility for teaching the Bible to the school community

31. It is noted that the *Anglican Schools Ministry Ordinance 2016* already requires someone appointed to a Chaplain role to have a qualification in theology “commensurate with the position to which they are appointed that is acceptable to the Archbishop” and that this requirement is largely equivalent to the current requirements for practising teachers (generally four years of tertiary training). It is recommended that these requirements are extended to the role of Christian Studies teacher (or equivalent title). The Table in Appendix 2 sets out the recommended qualifications necessary to equip staff for the common variations of these roles, in addition to appropriate educational qualifications.
32. In making this recommendation it is recognised that –
- (a) a great variety of staff are already appointed to these roles without this level of training,
 - (b) the recommended elective units do not currently exist, and
 - (c) the current staffing, administrative and financial barriers and other burdens on schools and teachers makes widescale adoption of this recommendation very difficult.
33. Nonetheless, it is strongly suggested that the Synod works in partnership with schools to remove and reduce these barriers and increase the training supports and requirements of these roles. Specifically, it is recommended that –
- (a) schools preferentially appoint staff with this training to these positions,
 - (b) when staffing pressures result in the appointment of a person without these qualifications (including currently appointed staff), that the school facilitates and supports the staff member to complete this training within a reasonable timeframe to ensure they are effectively supported in their important role,
 - (c) these elective units be developed urgently by tertiary providers, particularly the Centre for Christian Education, and
 - (d) every step possible is taken to make the delivery of the one-year and three-year theology degrees appropriately flexible and financially feasible to be completed by staff working in full-time roles.
34. A shared curriculum for Christian Studies K-12 does not exist and this forms a significant barrier for collaboration and cross-school support. It is therefore recommended that a sample K-12 Christian Studies curriculum be developed by a collaboration between Youthworks Centre for Christian Education and experienced teachers of Christian Studies. It is recommended that the sample curriculum then be integrated into the Christian Studies method elective unit(s). It is noted that the needs of a K-12 Christian Studies curriculum to be delivered within Reformed Anglican Schools will have different requirements and standards to the SRE program delivered within public schools.

Strategy 2: Mentoring, professional development and networking programs for the teaching of the Bible in an Anglican School setting

35. It is recommended that a program of partnership be provided between the school, its local parishes and ministers and other chaplains and teachers across local schools. This strategy is modelled on the Ministry Training and Development (**MTD**) program which exists to provide ministry training and support for those in the first three years of ministry after ordination.¹ The MTD program works in partnership with rectors to “further integrate the participants’ theological understanding with their personal life and ministry practice.” There is a focus on personal formation and the competencies required in pastoral ministry during the early formative years. The use of ministry professionals and mentors are key facets of the program and the formation of diocesan fellowship across parishes is a highly positive outcome.

¹ [MD Program – Ministry Training & Development \(mtd.org.au\)](http://mtd.org.au)

36. A program either following the MTD model or being a sub-set of MTD could be ideal for the school setting, especially with the focus on skill based development, personal reflection and practical and spiritual mentoring. For those who work in small Chaplaincy teams, the fellowship developed across Schools could provide life-long ministry partnerships. The Sydney Anglican Schools Ministry Association (**SASMA**²) is a logical point for networking in this context.
37. In addition to the question of a specific program for school chaplains, a broader range of issues related to current school chaplaincy require further consideration (such as by the proposed education advisor) –
- (a) more detailed guidelines regarding what chaplains are actually required to do,
 - (b) the extent to which schools understand the place of the chaplain as a church worker,
 - (c) issues related to conforming to *Faithfulness in Service*,
 - (d) having an Archbishop's licence,
 - (e) the greatly varying status of the Chaplain in different schools,
 - (f) the role of the local Rector as Chaplain in schools that are not extra-parochial,
 - (g) specific requirements of educational and theological training,
 - (h) what is meant by pastoral responsibility to the school community,
 - (i) the Synod relationship being framed as *offering assistance* as opposed to *imposing requirements*, and
 - (j) the way in which the chaplain 'represents' the Diocese in their school community.

30/22(d) recommendations for ongoing in-service programs on the application of Christian principles to education as a requisite for practising teachers (which may form part of teacher registration).

38. The important role that all Christian teachers play in contributing to the ministry of the school is recognised, as they role-model Christian character, explore a Biblical world view of their academic subject areas, deliver classroom devotions, engage with a variety of non-Christian world views embedded in educational resources and syllabi, engage with supporting families with complex social issues, care of vulnerable people, apologetics as related to their subject areas, i.e., they seek to deliver an education transformed by Biblical truths.
39. With the closure of the Anglican Education Commission, the Synod does not currently provide any training or support for the application of Christian principles for practising teachers. Therefore there exists a great need for such training to exist and be available in flexible and financially viable formats. The work of the Christian teacher, to provide an education transformed by the Christian world view, requires academic training as well as professional development, mentoring, and networking. It is suggested therefore that the following strategies be adopted –
- (a) in recognition that diploma-level courses are not feasible for all Christian teachers to be able to complete, it is recommended that the preferred academic training to support all Christian teachers be formed as a Preliminary Theological Certificate (**PTC**) elective course on Christian teaching, to be written and delivered within the existing PTC course structure,
 - (b) that schools provide support for teachers to complete training units (including theology units and Christian teaching units),
 - (c) that schools are encouraged to appoint positions of leadership to develop and champion distinctive Christian teaching, mentoring teachers within the school and contributing to inter-school networks to develop and promote initiatives for improving Christian teaching,
 - (d) that such leaders be encouraged and supported to undertake training or research to deepen their understanding of Christian teaching, such as the diploma offered by the Centre for Christian Education or the Master of Education from the National Institute for Christian Education, and
 - (e) the formation of a network or association for Christian teachers linked to the Centre for Christian Education to facilitate professional development, conferences, research and mentoring partnerships.

² <https://www.sasma.asn.au/>

40. Notwithstanding the suggested training strategies above, it is recognised that the current chronic teacher shortage is creating difficulties when it comes to recruiting qualified teachers, especially in specific subject areas. In regional schools, recruiting in almost all subject areas is very difficult. Caution should therefore be given to placing any additional requirements on suitably qualified teachers. Such a step may well result in continued unfilled vacancies in Anglican Schools as potential applicants seek less restrictive opportunities in other Christian, independent, or government schools.
41. In response to the wording of Resolution 30/22, it is noted that teacher registration is not required in NSW, rather, teachers are accredited by the NESA according to their pre-service teacher qualifications. Accordingly, the word “registration” has been interpreted as if “accreditation” was meant. Nonetheless, extra requirements as part of accreditation cannot be added by employers.
42. There was a strong feeling among some members of the Education Committee that it is unreasonable to expect in-service Christian education programs to be mandatory for teachers in Anglican Schools. Other members believe that, if people are going to work in our schools, then their induction could involve in-service and professional development focus areas such as, Reformed Anglican Education. The Education Committee agreed caution should be given against issuing “decrees” which cannot be enforced or monitored.
43. The resolution requested a focus on in-service programs. An agreed understanding of what is meant by the “application of Christian principles” to education is an essential starting point for considering ongoing in-service programs. The draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education (Appendix 1) seeks to address this foundational issue.
44. It should also be noted that, in line with respected contemporary professional learning practices, the use of in-service programs (only) for effective professional development is no longer considered to be the best approach. While programs and more formalised learning were the primary focus of present consideration, other forms of learning were also considered that could be more effective. Furthermore, if a 10-hour module could be developed (at a price teachers could afford), then an understanding of “Christian Principles” may contribute towards a Proficient Teacher’s Elective Professional Development requirements.
45. There are a range of Anglican Schools where factors such as school councils, prevailing cultures and Principal perspectives influence the success of any professional development opportunity for staff. It can never be a one-size-fits-all. Therefore, a range of strategies and offerings facilitating involvement at a collective and individual level is necessary. To assist teachers in Anglican Schools to develop skills in applying evangelical Christian principles to education, a ‘scattergun’ approach (i.e. by considering many different possibilities) is proposed to, through God’s providence, meet teachers where they are at.
46. The difference between **offering** ongoing in-service programs to Anglican School staff focusing on the application of Christian principles and **encouraging** school staff to engage with these programs was considered. Specifically, consideration was given to the supportive and hindering factors to both offering and encouraging school staff to engage with ongoing in-service programs or professional learning of some nature.
47. Ultimately, a higher education institution may need to be established to provide a range of courses for all school leaders (including chaplains and school governors) and teachers providing clear direction in, and definition to, Reformed Anglican Education. Avenues for higher degree research would need to be developed to enable exploration of Christian pedagogy within a Reformed Anglican perspective.
48. This is a solution that is bold and courageous and would provide the very opportunities we seek to formalise Reformed Anglican pedagogy and provide the resources and training needed. This higher education institution, whether established *de novo* or growing out of existing institutions, could start by offering formal and informal courses for preservice teachers, established teachers, aspiring school leaders, chaplains and school governors. It could be an advocate for Reformed Anglican Education and could expand over time to encompass a range of disciplines.
49. An informal group should be established under the guidance of the suitably qualified education advisor to continue the conversation about a potential Anglican tertiary institution, noting that it is a

long-term, aspirational goal, and may grow organically out of an existing institution such as the Centre for Christian Education, Moore College, or an existing school, perhaps through the formation of a University College.

50. The education advisor should identify and promote courses that support Christian pedagogy. For example, the Youthworks in-service one year Diploma of Theology, which is referenced above as a recommendation for Chaplains and Christian Studies teachers. The Diploma would also be suitable for any teacher interested in developing their Christian pedagogy. Studying with staff from a variety of Anglican Schools would also foster a culture of collaboration.
51. It is important to foster a culture of collaboration between Anglican Schools to share exemplars of Christian pedagogy. Courses may also be identified from higher education institutions that have been 'vetted' for alignment with Reformed Anglican perspectives, and a suitably qualified education advisor may investigate partnership with an established university willing to offer a subject in Christian teaching, or willing to do cross-institutional credit. Options to reduce participation costs could also be investigated, such as Commonwealth Supported Places.
52. Five key approaches and sample strategies have been identified that would assist in supporting school staff to teach using a Reformed Anglican pedagogy, regardless of context. The appointment of a suitably qualified education advisor would facilitate the promotion of these strategies to Anglican Schools.
 - (a) Define Reformed Anglican pedagogy and articulate high-level practices –
 - (i) Survey educators in Anglican Schools about: what they think teaching Christianly is; their views on the distinction between Christian education and Reformed Anglican education; to what extent they feel they are teaching Christianly; the support or resources they need to improve.
 - (ii) Survey students about the degree to which they think that they have experienced a distinctive teaching style that is Christian.
 - (iii) Fund a scholarship (or find organisations who will) for researchers to undertake higher degree research in this area.
 - (iv) Write a statement (no more than a page, or two at most) defining what it is to teach using a Reformed Anglican pedagogy to assist teachers to understand the ethos of the school and what is required of them. This would be based on the draft statement of Reformed Anglican education, once it is finalised, and adopted by the Synod.
 - (b) Offer formal and informal development opportunities –
 - (i) Promote courses like the Youthworks in-service one year Diploma of Theology (part time mode needs to be readily available and delivered asynchronously).
 - (ii) Develop a menu of courses available from higher education institutions that have been 'vetted' for alignment with Reformed Anglican perspectives. Where possible, show how combinations of subjects might lead to micro-credentialing or full diplomas, and master degrees.
 - (iii) Partner with an established university willing to offer a subject in Christian teaching or cross-institutional credit. University courses in education are usually viewed in a favourable light with regards to NESAC accreditation.
 - (iv) Establish a platform to act as a broker for sourcing providers of Christian education training, without necessarily trying to be a provider.
 - (c) Model exemplars in a variety of contexts for celebration and inspiration –
 - (i) Foster a culture of collaboration through inter school conferences where schools share their successes in developing a strong Christian pedagogy. It might need incentives via awards and conference dinner highlights with special guest speakers.
 - (ii) Make available twilight sessions where Anglican teachers, emerging leaders and leaders can share ideas and listen to key speakers. These can be recorded and offered to those not able to physically attend.
 - (d) Provide opportunities for teachers and school leaders to explore and unpack according to their own context –
 - (i) Consider offering an online introductory course (maybe ½ day's worth) for teachers who are not Christian / Anglican to assist them in understanding what Reformed

Anglican Education is about, based on the draft statement of Reformed Anglican education. It could even be a *Christianity Explored* kind of course.

- (ii) Develop a model of mentorship that schools can adopt which facilitates expert Christian pedagogists who can work with teachers who are unsure / unclear how to teach Christianly in their subject area / stage.
- (e) Stimulate dialogue via a forum/platform which houses quality research and links to useful resources and courses –
 - (i) Establish a platform that presents a range of resources e.g. books, articles, podcasts, videos that teachers and leaders can access in their own time.

28/22 Diocesan support for the development of missional leaders and excellent educators in Anglican Schools

53. The text of resolution 28/22 is as follows –

“Acknowledging the enormous missional task before us, the increasing population of our Diocese, and the need for even more schools in the coming generations, Synod requests the Standing Committee to prepare a report for the next Synod, outlining the ways the Diocese can support the recruitment and development of outstanding Christian missional leaders who are excellent educators.”

54. Diocesan programs to support the recruitment and development of outstanding Christian missional leaders who are excellent educators do not currently exist.

Anglican Schools Executive Leadership program

- 55. The skills required for executive leadership in the Anglican School setting build upon the formation described above for all teachers, yet require a greater degree of expertise and specific training. The fact that the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) NSW³ runs several executive leadership courses highlights the acknowledged need for specific training in executive school leadership. The strength of AIS courses for Anglican Schools is their real-world rigour, though the drawback is that they do not grapple with the specifics of the Anglican context nor navigating theological and spiritual leadership in this setting.
- 56. The mentoring and networking strategies outlined in paragraphs 35-37 (above, specifically for Chaplains and Christian Studies teachers) seek to meet the need for preparing men and women to lead Christian ministries and other aspects of School life within the context of Sydney Anglican Schools. Just as the Presbyterian program sits within MTD, a similar model could be offered where candidates indicate they are ready to prepare for leadership roles within Schools. The use of mentors, intensives, psychometric testing and partnership with School Principals could be adapted for the school context.
- 57. The Committee notes that as effective training, mentoring and networks for the development of executive leaders in schools is the responsibility of the Principals, and executive leadership program such as that outlined above could come under the oversight of an organisation such as Sydney Anglican Schools Heads Association (SASHA).

29/22 Request to appoint a diocesan educational advisor

58. The text of resolution 29/22 is as follows –

“This Synod requests the Standing Committee to take whatever steps may be necessary to ensure the appointment of a suitable person who is qualified in –

- (a) educational philosophy,
- (b) educational practice, and
- (c) educational leadership,

³ [AISNSW](#)

to advise and represent the Diocese in matters relating to education and to provide annual reports to the Synod on the status of Anglican Education in the Diocese.”

59. Given the importance of this role, the Standing Committee should consider ways to fund a diocesan education advisor. The Standing Committee should also consider ways to fund the development of the recommended courses and elective units, and other initiatives recommended in this report.
60. The education advisor will need to have credibility as an education researcher and school advocate, understand the school environment, work collaboratively with schools, and be funded in a way different to the EdComm model. The brief will be to support the Diocese and its schools to work collaboratively to deliver an effective Reformed Anglican Education.
61. The education advisor should work collaboratively with existing diocesan associations to focus on assisting schools to deliver Reformed Anglican Education, at least partly in response to areas of need identified by the schools themselves.
62. Consultation with established organisations (such as SASMA, or SASHA) will assist in testing the willingness of schools to partner in specific initiatives and assist the diocesan educational advisor and association where best to direct their relational energy. Communication with schools and related organisations will be crucial.
63. Synod would continue to be the body with the authority to set requirements (e.g. by altering ordinances) and the advisor report to Synod, with no delegated authority.

For and on behalf of the Standing Committee.

BRIONY BOUNDS
Diocesan Secretary

14 August 2023

Draft statement on Reformed Anglican Education

1. **In theology**, a Reformed Anglican Education adheres to the evangelical mission and doctrines of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney. The mission of Reformed Anglican Education is synonymous with all Christian mission, the great commission in Matthew 28:19-20. The proclamation of the gospel therefore remains of pre-eminent importance. A Reformed Anglican Education provides the opportunity to engage each generation in the gospel, enabling young people to make an informed choice at the time when they make the majority of their most significant decisions about their lives.
2. For those who through the gracious activity of the Holy Spirit respond in repentance to the gospel, a Reformed Anglican Education must help connect them to their local Anglican church and in partnership support the development of mature disciples of Christ. This is described in the Diocesan Policy Statement on Education: *“The great biblical goal of presenting people mature in Christ (Col 1:28) encompasses the whole of life in every facet. The Christian life is the life of discipleship lived under the lordship of Christ through the authority of God’s word, which informs and moulds our thinking and directs our approach to God, others and the world that God has made. It encompasses the development of personal knowledge and understanding, skills, character and virtues.”*
3. The provision of Reformed Anglican Education in a post-Christian society is also a means to positively impact the lives and culture of non-Christians in the local community. We are in effect “exiles scattered” (1 Peter 1:1) amongst a non-Christian culture. Reformed Anglican Education therefore has a role in our community to be the ‘salt’ and the ‘light’ (Matthew 5:13-16). With wisdom and discernment, Reformed Anglican Education leads and shares eagerly in endeavours to serve others and to do good in society (Galatians 6:9-10; Titus 2:7-8) so that others may see and glorify God (Matthew 5:16), which cannot be achieved in abstraction from the gospel.
4. **In practice**, Reformed Anglican Education should have the following distinctive elements –
 - (a) A holistic approach to providing excellent education that is Christ-centred, student-focused and biblically founded, promoting the gospel of Christ and its importance for everyone.
 - (i) Providing a holistic and excellent education is a good goal that all schools share. However, the terms holistic and excellent will be redefined for Reformed Anglican Education.
 - (ii) Excellence is redefined away from an elitist perspective, where only high achievement is celebrated and valued. Rather in Reformed Anglican Education every student’s learning is valuable. There is therefore a specific focus on excelling at teaching students from diverse backgrounds and cultures and meeting additional needs of students, ensuring that for each student their learning pathway is achievable, appropriately challenging, and meaningful.
 - (iii) Holistic is also redefined as more than just a balanced development of academics, wellbeing, creative arts, performing arts, sport, service and character. Re-shaping this instead to have the goal of developing students in a manner to present them as mature disciples of Christ.
 - (b) The delivery of education transformed by a Christian worldview.
 - (i) “Christian Education” is defined as “the presentation of the whole curriculum within a Christian worldview founded on the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ” by the *Anglican Schools Ministry Ordinance 2016*. Thus, teachers of Reformed Anglican Education take opportunities to present how the Christian worldview transforms their understanding. In this manner, students are provided with a cohesive education where the importance of biblical understanding is made clear in all areas so that God’s true and good design may be known and of benefit to all.
 - (ii) Increasingly sophisticated competing paradigms are pervasive and are being overtly and subliminally driven into the minds of people through every media possible.

Christian education therefore seeks to equip and guide students to see God's wisdom in His design for the world, that they may benefit from the blessing of following His design. Further, that through an understanding of the Gospel and the Bible, that they may find the courage to take hold of the gospel and live life through Christ. The emphasis is explicitly not indoctrination¹, which demands students accept and do not think; rather a central goal is enabling students' informed critical thinking by comparing Biblical perspectives and the Gospel message to other perspectives and messages. In this manner students learn that God's design is distinct from, and better than, other competing beliefs and worldviews.

- (c) The delivery of an academic Christian Studies course across all years.
 - (i) The Holy Spirit uses the word of God as the "sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17) and it is only through His work that some may be saved. The teaching of the Bible is able to bring wisdom, salvation, maturity, sanctification and equip God's elect for their good work (2 Timothy, 3:15-17). Therefore, the teaching of the Bible is of central importance to the mission of Reformed Anglican Education.
 - (ii) The direct teaching of the Bible includes the entire Biblical text with a focus on its connection together as one big story. In Christian Studies, students will learn how to read the text and interpret the author's intended meaning based on context, determine applications and implications from the text, and understand the history, geography, genre, Biblical context, and connections to archaeological findings from the text. It is important to maintain the teaching of the Bible to a similar depth and quality of other academic studies so that students may not dismiss the study of the Bible, or the Christian faith, as lacking credibility, academic merit, or value.
- (d) Providing effective pastoral care for staff and students.
 - (i) Reformed Anglican Education is not a volume of knowledge dictated to pupils, indeed, "knowledge puffs up while love builds up" (1 Corinthians 8:1). It is instead an approach to education that responds to the inherent value of people (Lamentations 4:2) and the destructive impact of false teaching (2 Peter 2:1). While providing quality Christian and Biblical education is a necessary component to this, it is important not to make the mistake of the priest and Levite from the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). If we are to teach students the truth of their inherent value and dignity as co-image bearers, we must demonstrate this in how we love and care for them and their families (e.g., James 2:14-17).
- (e) Upholding the diaconal ministry of Anglican Schools through appropriate appointment and professional development of school governors, leaders, teachers and other employees.
 - (i) The work of Reformed Anglican Schools, founded by the Anglican Church, is a targeted mission to reach and educate a large population that may otherwise not be engaged in the Anglican Church. Teachers and leaders in these schools therefore have a responsibility to teach the Bible to this population and provide effective pastoral care for them. The Bible warns us of the greater responsibility of Biblical teachers and leaders (James 3:1, 1 Timothy 3) and the importance of being trained in the Scriptures (2 Timothy 2:15). Therefore, it is reasonable to adopt these Biblical principles when appointing people to leadership and Christian teaching positions.
 - (ii) As not all staff in Anglican Schools come with sufficient knowledge of the Bible (or Christian faith), there is an urgent need for ongoing teaching of the Bible to staff as well as to students. It is therefore the responsibility of Synod to work in partnership with schools to support and equip staff with theological advice and training sufficient to carry out their roles and contribute to the school's ministry.
 - (iii) The Scriptures remain the ultimate source of authority for decisions that the school must make. Therefore, the Bible should be well understood by leadership staff,

¹ Collier, J. (2013) Models of Christian education. *TEACH Journal of Christian Education*, 7(1), 4-7.

ensuring all decisions and actions of the school are Biblically sound. There is also significant benefit for the schools as they are informed and supported by the combined and collaborative wisdom of the Church leadership, including the Synod.

- (f) Appointing Chaplains to minister to the school community in partnership with local churches.
 - (i) Reformed Anglican Schools commonly appoint suitably trained Chaplains to minister in the school community. The specific roles of the chaplain are guided by the needs of each school's community and their own set of strengths and abilities. Some common aspects of their roles include: the exhortation of the Gospel of Christ through chapels and devotions, ministry of Christian groups, nurturing individual's faith, pastoral care, teaching of Christian Studies, theological advice, recruitment into ministry and mission, school service programs, and theological development for staff.
 - (ii) The chaplain's role has a focus of seeking to encourage students, staff and families to active discipleship through membership in their local church, rather than to see the school or chapel as an alternative to church. See also the treatment of section (c) of the Synod resolution, below, on the role of Chaplains.
- (g) Working in partnership between Anglican and other organisations to develop, promote, research, and advocate for the advancement of Christian educational practices.
 - (i) Reformed Anglican Schools carry the name and reputation of Christ, not just of Anglicanism or a particular school. Therefore, there is a responsibility for all in governance and leadership to be faithful stewards of the resources God has given and utilise these for the furtherance of the ministry and mission of Christ in schools. This includes the collaborative development, research and sharing of educational practices, the promotion and advocacy of these and support for training in them.

Table – Recommended training requirements for certain roles

Role	Load	Training recommended	Elective units recommended
Any leadership or executive chaplaincy role	Full-time	Three-year theology degree (e.g. B. Th.)	chaplaincy in schools
Chaplain	Full-time	Three-year theology degree (e.g. B. Th.)	chaplaincy in schools
Chaplain	Part-Time	One-year theology degree (e.g. Dip Th. or Dip B Th.)	chaplaincy in schools
Assistant Chaplain	Full-Time or Part-time	One-year theology degree (e.g. Dip Th. or Dip B Th.)	chaplaincy in schools
Any leadership of Christian Studies or equivalent role (e.g. Head of Christian Studies, Coordinator of Christian Studies)	Full-time	Three-year theology degree (e.g. B. Th.)	Christian Studies Teaching method
Christian studies teacher (or equivalent, e.g., Biblical Studies)	Full-time	Three-year theology degree (e.g. B. Th.)	Christian Studies Teaching method
Christian Studies teacher (or equivalent, e.g., Biblical Studies)	Part-time (whether by appointment or regular timetabling practice)	One-year theology degree (e.g. Dip Th. or Dip B Th.)	Christian Studies Teaching method
Primary school teacher who delivers Christian Studies (or equivalent) to their class	Any	Completion of PTC	Teaching the Bible to children (Primary)