

# ESPERANCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

2020

## ANNUAL REPORT



# SCHOOL OVERVIEW

## Contextual Information

Esperance Christian School (ECS) is an Independent, co-educational primary school catering for Pre-Kindergarten to year 6. ECS is part of a worldwide Christian Education system (Adventist Christian Schools). The school was initially established in 1979 as a single teacher school with an enrolment of only 9 students and has slowly grown in numbers and infrastructure since then.

In 2020, the school employed 4 full-time teachers, one full-time and one part-time Education Assistant, one full-time Administration Assistant, 0.5 cleaner and 0.2 gardens and grounds person. Culturally our school is diverse, comprised of Australian, South African and Indian nationalities. Most use English as their first language.

## GOALS OF ESPERANCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

The primary goal of the Esperance Christian School is to provide each student with a safe and nurturing God-centered environment in which they can learn and grow. Intentional emphasis is placed on developing all aspects of each student, in a secure yet challenging atmosphere, that allows them to thrive. Our School provides a vital hub, integral to this welcoming, inclusive family-based community. Class sizes range from 15 – 25 students.

Our school's goals are an extension of our mission, where we strive to further develop a community based on acceptance and tolerance; where students, staff and families, respect and value others. Our school culture is highly caring and nurturing. This is promoted through our schoolwide buddy system, fostering leadership, friendship and stability and enhancing life skills that benefit the entire community.

In this supportive environment, students can come to know Jesus and model their lives on Him, to respect God and other people, to develop a desire to learn and to strive to achieve standards of excellence in all areas.

Students also gain an understanding of the impact a healthy life can have on academic, social and spiritual development. Our school promotes individual creativity, allowing the growth of talents and gifts that God has given.



**MISSION STATEMENT**

Esperance Christian School exists to provide a caring, nurturing environment where students are educated for a life of service to both God and the community. Our school encourages excellence through the balanced development of the mental, physical and social domains of each child, encompassed and nurtured through a focus on strengthening of Christian character.

**VISION STATEMENT**

The vision of Esperance Christian School is to grow our students holistically, through a Christ based education, to flourish and serve God and the community.

**VALUES STATEMENT:**

L O V E	EXCELLENCE	...is patient...always perseveres	S E R V I C E
	COMPASSION	...is kind...keeps no record of wrongs...does not envy	
	HUMILITY	...does not boast...is not proud...is not easily angered	
	RESPECT	...is not rude	
	INTEGRITY	...is not self-seeking...rejoices with the truth	
	JUSTICE	...is not self-seeking	
	DISCERNMENT	...rejoices with the truth...does not delight in evil	
	RESPONSIBILITY	...always protects...never fails	
	HOPE	...always hopes...always trusts	

**Our Motto**



**Our Staff :**



Mrs Julie Hall  
Principal



Mrs Danae Hall  
Pre /Kindy Teacher



Mrs Sonja Sutter  
PrePrimary / Yr 1 Teacher



Mr Nick Saul  
Yr 2 / Yr 3 Teacher



Mr Jared Watts  
Yr 4, 5, 6 Teacher



Mrs Natasha Bailey  
Education Assistant



Mrs Lee-anne Chambers  
Education Assistant



Mrs Rhonda Wohling  
Admin Assistant

**Staff roles and qualifications are as follows:**

Staff Name	Position	FTE	Qualification	TRB Number
Julie Hall	Principal Teacher K-6 (providing DOTT for other teachers)	Full Time	B.Sc. Grad Dip. Ed	33070715
Danae Hall	Teacher Pre-Kindy, Kindy	Full Time	B.Ed ECE	33085500
Sonja Sutter	Teacher PrePrimary, Year 1	Full Time	B.Ed ECE	33072500
Nicholas Saul	Teacher Yrs 2, 3	Full Time	B.Ed. Prim	33087632
Jared Watts	Teacher Yrs 4, 5, 6	Full Time	B.Ed. Prim	33075514
Pr David de Klerk	Chaplain	0.6	BA.Theol	N / A
Rhonda Wohling	Administrative Assistant	0.9	Cert III Teacher Assistant	N / A
Lee-anne Chambers	Teacher Assistant	Full Time	Cert III Teacher Assistant	N / A
Angelissa Mesec	Cleaner	0.6		N / A
Ben Shirt	Gardener/Groundsman	0.1 approx		N / A

One staff member and the Chaplain are of South African origin, with English as their second language. There are no Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders currently employed.

## Progress Against Identified Priorities

In 2020 the staff members continued to develop a culture of quality improvement, implementing the Quality Adventist Schools Framework and National Quality Standards processes, reflecting on our teaching and learning practices and gathering evidence to inform future directions.

Literacy and Numeracy performance levels continued to drive further improvements in both teaching and learning, through intentional professional development and acquisition of and implementation of resources such as the Renaissance platform, Talk For Writing program and Mathematical Think Tanks.

Areas identified under the QASF as intentional priorities in 2020, involved enhancing our caring and nurturing environment, through a purposeful focus on student and staff well being, as well as further growth of our cohesive whole school culture. The anticipated flow on effect of improved culture and well-being is hoped to result in improved learning and academic performance.

Ongoing focus areas incorporated emphasis and reconnection with mission, vision & values; directed professional growth supported by culture of learning improvement and professional partnerships, and finally increased communication and feedback to our students and families.

All focus areas will continue to be systematically examined, discussed and planned. Evidences and data will be gathered and decisions made as to how well our school rates against the criteria for excellent practice as part of our Quality Improvement Plan.

The implementation of our differentiated curriculum, helping students to thrive, is of vital importance. An intentional increased focus on development of Individual Education Plans (IEP) to better address specific student needs has been undertaken. Early Years Teachers participate in the annual audit of National Quality Standards ( NQS).

Our ongoing aim is to increase achievement levels, through implementation of a variety of activities and resources. Part of this focus, incorporates our newly introduced the ukulele ensemble and AUSLAN, with an aim to improve neural plasticity and to further engage our students.

Plans, for the further development of the Nature/Play based Space, incorporate construction of new pathways, sensory gardens and extension of accessible grounds as well as investigation stations is intended to support inquiry learning, increase student resilience and performance levels.



## Staff Professional Development:

To assist in enhancing student achievement of outcomes and educational development in the classroom and in conjunction with QASF, AISTL, NQS reviews and feedback, each teacher is encouraged and expected to engage in various Professional Learning each year. In 2020, in addition to in-service training, staff participated in and attended the following Professional Learning seminars:

- Quality Adventist Schools Framework - all teaching staff
- Spiritual Renewal – all staff
- Child Protection - all staff
- Code of Conduct- all staff
- Mandatory Reporting - all staff
- Class Act- all staff
- First Aid /CPR /Asthma Anaphylaxis Training- all staff
- SEQTA unit planning - all teaching staff
- Renaissance – ( Literacy) – all teaching staff
- Be you – School Leaders ( Beyond Blue)- JOHall
- DSF- Dyslexia Speld – Talk For Writing ( Literacy)– S.Sutter, N.Saul
- NESLI Advanced Leadership Program - JOHall

## Staff Attendance:

The number of days taken by full time and part time teaching staff for sick, bereavement and personal leave during 2020 was 45 days. This gives an approximate 96 % attendance for teaching staff. Staff retention has been excellent. The majority of teaching staff, from the previous year, were retained in 2020. It is noted that R. Watts provided Long Service relief during Term 1 for S. Sutter while D. Hall provided Long Service leave relief in Term 1 and then relief for Special Leave in Terms 2, 3 & 4 for A. Bezuidenhout.



## REPORT TO PARENTS – SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INFORMATION 2020

In accordance with Federal Government reporting requirements, the following information outlines our school's performance in specified criteria for 2020. The information is to assist parents to understand how our school performed in 2020. Any further questions regarding this material can be directed to the Principal, Mrs Julie Hall.

### School Enrolments

As at the August, 2020 Census, the school had an enrolment of 71 students from Kindergarten to year 6. This comprised of:

Pre-Kindy:	9 students
Kindergarten:	5 students
Pre-Primary:	7 students
Primary:	50 students

### Special Character:

Esperance Christian School is supported by a strong parent body, our Home and School committee and School Advisory Council, promoting a welcoming and inclusive community. Permeating each teaching and learning activity is a Biblical world-view. This means that ECS is a place where students, teachers and parents work together to develop the positive values based on the Christian faith - values of respect and care for God, others and themselves.

### Our Key Strengths:

At Esperance Christian School, our small class sizes, promote close relationships where student well-being is at the forefront of every decision we make. We believe that our Christian values, that are embedded in all we do, allow students to feel safe and well cared for, so that they can prosper and flourish. We endeavour to place a strong emphasis on meeting the emotional needs of every student. We actively plan holistic educational activities that are designed to provide effective learning and teaching strategies to ensure each child is working at or toward their individual potential, intellectually, spiritually, socially and physically. We understand that each child is valuable to a loving and caring God and also to every staff member of the school.

### Pastoral Care:

Esperance Christian School provides pastoral care for students, staff and family members associated with the school. The school is provided with funds from the National Chaplaincy Program, which allows us to engage the services of a part-time Chaplain, Pr. David de Klerk. The Chaplain's main role is to develop resiliency in our students. In 2020 the Chaplain engaged with students mainly by way of class and parent visitations, assembly presentations, the mountain bike program and general physical activity in the playground.

### Social and Emotional Care:

Staff at Esperance Christian School positively value all students, and are very aware of their ongoing needs. Staff strive to ensure the healthy social, emotional and mental health of students. The 'Kids Matter' initiative, coupled with St Luke's Resiliency resources, continued in driving a number of resiliency programs delivered by teachers within the classroom setting. One of these programs, the 'PATHS' -Promoting Positive Thinking Strategies- provides students with strategies to cope with their emotional needs.

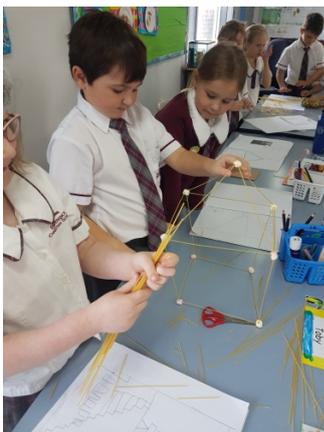
The 'Keeping Safe : Child Protection Curriculum' program is the basis of our *Child Protection Curriculum*, presented to each year group throughout the year. The Principal is fully trained in the *Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum : Training the trainer Program*.



## Curriculum:

The Esperance Christian School plans and implements teaching and learning activities fully aligned to the outcomes of the *WA Curriculum*. The Early Learning Program is aligned with the *Early Years Learning Framework*, the *Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines* and the *National Quality Standard*. The school's 'Whole School Curriculum Plan' was reviewed and continues to be implemented to ensure that a good cross-section of the outcomes are addressed in all learning areas.

- French is currently being offered as the LOTE program, with AUSLAN being trialled.
- Choir and drama play a major role in our music program. As part of the end of the year festivities, our outstanding musical production, "Oh Chicken of little Faith" was presented to the local community at the Esperance Civic Centre, with resounding success.
- ECS acknowledges the importance of a healthy lifestyle and integrates this concept throughout the learning areas. A minimum of two hours of physical activity per week is included in the school sports program and personal health education programs as part of our whole school approach. Funding was received from 'Sporting Schools' to assist us in our Squash and Athletics program.
- The *Stepping Stones Maths* program is used as the basis for teaching Maths in Kindy and also in year 5 & 6. This program provides huge scope for the teachers to prepare and implement direct instruction and hands-on activities that relate to real-life experiences. Teachers use concrete materials and interactive IT resources to assist in teaching, allowing students to learn through active involvement and substantive communication between the teachers and students.
- Some teaching staff expressed a preference for the Go Maths program which was utilised in Year 3 & 4, Year 1 & 2 and Pre Primary. This resource is to be reviewed at a future date.
- The English program utilises *SoundWaves Spelling Conventions* and *Grammar Conventions* programs for the students in years 1-6. Kindergarten to Years 1 students also use the *SoundWaves Jolly Phonics* program and specialised speech techniques developed by the local Speech Therapy and OT Department. All teachers are committed to teaching all the forms of writing on a daily basis, and allow students time to develop their writing skills across the genres. In an attempt to further improve our student's writing abilities, all staff have completed training and are initiating the introduction of the Talk For Writing and Renaissance Reading programmes.
- The students have access to iMac computers, ipads and interactive white boards, providing them with opportunities to learn and extend their IT knowledge and skills. Teachers also use robotic resources, including Lego Technics to teach the concepts of programming and coding.
- History, Geography, Science and Technology, aligned to the WA Curriculum, are taught to ensure that all requirements of the WA Curriculum are met. The Science program is based on the *Primary Connections* program, and is taught by a specialist teacher.



## Parent Body:

ECS values the involvement of parents, as well as the Home & School Committee, in their children's education and planning for the future development of the school. Our parents contribute their skills and talents, promoting our school values, and demonstrating a caring, inclusive ethos to our students and all our extended school community.

In 2020 parents, were welcomed to be involved in many different areas. These included:

- Assisting with reading and other in-class activities on a regular basis
- Assisting with concert production, with make up , costumes, catering
- Assisting with the planning, preparation and catering for our school sports carnivals
- Assisting with the running of the school canteen, providing organisation of various functions.
- Consultation regarding the proposed master plans for our school's development.

## School perception Survey:

Despite the turbulent times, the ECS chose to participate in the annual School Improvement Survey, conducted in 2020. The results of the School Improvement Surveys provide information about the culture in our school and were utilized as a reflection on how well our school was serving our school community and more generally, how our extended school community was coping with the additional stresses during Covid-19.

The survey data reflected a significant overall improvement in student well being, previously identified as an area of concern. Reflecting effective implementation of management strategies which minimized potential bullying, and provided a supportive and nurturing learning programme and environment.

Our extended School community however expressed a need for a greater level of communication, with more frequent updates and continuous information of events being provided. A decrease in social connection was also identified, contributed by an inability to enter school grounds and socialize with other parents, as previously was normal practice. The School responded by greatly increased level of communication through all channels, such as See Saw, Skoolbag, emails, weekly newsletters and FaceBook, ensuring a more constant provision of information and contact was maintained with the school community. Community relationships and connections also became an intentional focus for all our staff, supported through an increased number of social events held and through encouraging parents back onto the school site, when permitted. Due to these measures, positive feedback of improved community perception and engagement followed.

Teaching staff also indicated that the work demands were significantly increased, contributing to reduced staff wellbeing. In response, staff well was highlighted as a priority, with professional support and learning being organized. The promotion of good staff wellbeing remains an area for continued intentional support.



## Student Attendance:

It is noted that Student Attendance data was not published for 2020 due to inconsistencies in data as a result of varying health advice and schooling arrangements in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to and following Government regulations, school attendance is actively encouraged by our school administration and teachers. When a child is absent from school and the school has not been notified, a phone call to the parents/guardians is made. This is to ensure that the student is absent with parent/guardian knowledge. A note or phone call from parents is required, and if this is not received a follow up note or phone call from the school will ensue.

## Student Progress and Achievements

Esperance Christian School strives to be a place where students and families feel safe and valued. Our students represent a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds, individual abilities and needs. Learning experiences are designed to meet students at their individual level, yet extend them to reach their potential. A differentiated curriculum is implemented in every classroom, ensuring that each child is provided with teaching and learning activities appropriate for their ability level. While students are encouraged to extend their capabilities, they are not placed under any undue stress to work beyond their ability. Students who require extension also receive this within the context of the differentiated curriculum.

While NAPLAN testing was not conducted in 2020 due to the situation with Covid -19, our students, from year 1 to year 6, participated in PATS standardised testing. In the PATS – numeracy testing, net overall gains were generally demonstrated for individual students over shorter term periods. However due to our changing student population, reliable long term trends of a sufficiently large and consistent data set, could not be calculated. As anticipated, numeracy results indicated a need for intensive interventions at the various students level of educational need, extension and remediation, as well as resources to support these endeavours. Resulting interventions that have been initiated and embedded into practice, include development of IEPs and intensive remedial sessions for small groups of students.

Results from the PATS – Reading, Writing and Comprehension standardized testing reflected a similar trend due to small class sizes and wide range of capabilities. Further remediation, in addition to intensive intervention groups, that has been instigated is the Renaissance program, generating a more bespoke, individualized interactive literacy learning programme for students.

The Special Character of Esperance Christian School is deeply embedded in every aspect of school life. This Special Character upholds the values of God, and providing opportunities for students, staff and the school community to be involved in worship and praise, and to demonstrate inclusion, care and compassion.

During 2020 our students were involved in supporting different charities as part of the service component of our Special Character. Students are encouraged to express empathy for those who are less fortunate, and to discover ways they can contribute to the welfare of others. This included fundraising for Epilepsy, Asthma Foundation, the Lions Club of Australia and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.

Our school places a strong emphasis on students' physical development. Throughout 2020 students received training for and participated in: athletics, swimming, tennis, cricket, mountain bike riding, Interschool Chess tournament and soccer. Swimming and squash programs were funded by the *Sporting Schools* program. The students once again excelled in the end of year musical concert in 2020. Each student participated in this amazingly professional production, performing before approximately 300 people at the local Civic Centre.

The staff members at Esperance Christian School are proud of the academic and behavioural achievements of the students and continue to strive to improve all aspects of our school and ourselves.



## **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE :**

This annual Report for Esperance Christian School 2020, reflects a year of challenges in response to the changing COVID-19 climate. While our calendar of events became very flexible, with continual adjustments, staff adapted to the new, varied and greatly increased demands.

Staff are commended on their ability to re-envisage and re-schedule activities, maximising opportunities, such as the Year 6 "Canberra" Camp, relocated to Albany, the successful foray at the local Interschool championship, as well as swimming lessons for younger year levels. Despite the uncertainty of the year, our students performed magnificently well in the end of year musical production, "Oh Chickemn of Little Faith". While our students were unable to participate in the Esperance Music Festival, or undertake NAPLAN standardised testing, they enthusiastically engaged in the Week of Worship, and Carmel's Year 9 "Storm Co" visit.

We thank the extensive team members associated with our school; staff, students, parents and the wider school community, for their strong commitment to this school. As always their dedication, effort and support is gratefully appreciated. This year our Home and School committee, and amazing school canteen, enabled and catered for a various events and much fundraising.

This year has provided opportunities for further intentional growth, development and improvement. We rennovated classrooms, and re-structured and re-located classes. Our small class numbers, continue to allow and foster our commitment to, and inclusion of, students with individual specialised needs. Our school continues to constantly review our practices, striving to improve.

Our mission remains to provide the best possible caring and nurturing environment for our students, educating them for a life of service to both God and our community.

For further information, to arrange an interview or tour, please feel welcome to contact the school and make an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Hall  
( Principal )

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