

GIRTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2028



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge that Girton Grammar School is on Dja Dja Wurrung country, of which the Djaara people have been custodians for millennia and have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal.

We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in the life of this region. We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual, and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

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FOREWORD FROM THE 2022 CHAIR

The Girton Grammar School community expects excellent levels of service and delivery of high-quality education for their children. The retention of the School's academic standing in the Bendigo region is an important factor in meeting our community's expectations and continuing to be an institution of importance to the entire Bendigo community, providing choice and opportunities to as many families as possible.

The 2023 - 2028 Strategic Plan positions high standards and exceptional educational outcomes as a priority for Girton Grammar School by offering diverse student learning pathways that prepare young people for a successful future. The Strategic Plan recognises the changing nature of the higher education and jobs sector by placing emphasis on 'enterprise skills' that will advantage young people as they leave school to become fully independent adults.

From consultation with the Girton community, we know that families value their child's overall happiness and wellbeing equally alongside academic achievement. The learning environment, student support programmes, community involvement, and School values are all tied to the School's culture. We recognise that we need to work hard to ensure that Girton continues to be a place of inclusion, diversity, and broad opportunity where every child feels they belong and can thrive.

For the period 2023 – 2028, five strategic priorities have been identified based on the four pillars of strategic intent in the Mission and Values document. Each of the priorities has a measurable Statement of Intent supported by a range of aims. The School will develop an annual Implementation Plan based on these aims. It should be recognised that the School's priorities must continue to be shaped by the latest thinking and must be adaptive to the evolving needs of the School community and external pressures. Therefore, the Strategic Plan is not intended to be static but will act as a framework that will be revisited annually and adjusted if necessary.

Girton Grammar has a unique history, with the intent and values of our founders reflected proudly in the School today. Time after time, the School community has displayed its ability to adapt to a changing world around us, whether it be gradual change or major global setbacks such as conflicts, pandemics and financial crises. The hard work and loyalty of staff, students and parents - so characteristic of Girton's history – has allowed the School to thrive through these many challenging periods and will continue to do so.

This Strategic Plan enables the School to continue to be simultaneously progressive and steeped in tradition, to fortify against future challenges, to build on strengths and to create new opportunities to meet the contemporary needs of students and staff.

Mr David Jemmett
Chair

As we prepare to leave the School at the end of this year, we are grateful for all we have been given and the education we have received at Girton Grammar School.

This Strategic Plan will ensure that the students who follow us will benefit from many of the things we did while preparing them for an unpredictable future. It is pleasing for us to see that the Plan is intended to accommodate a range of learning pathways for all kinds of students. One of Girton's strengths is that it is a non-selective School with students from diverse backgrounds and with varying abilities. We see the Girton student population as a reflection of the 'real world', helping to nurture an attitude of tolerance and inclusion that we have enjoyed for many years and that we hope continues to characterise the School.

Acknowledging each teacher as an expert in their field is important. During our Girton journey, we have had so many teachers with varied teaching styles, often unique to their subject and valuable to us for different reasons. The 2023 Strategic Plan is explicit in recognising the professional judgement of Girton teachers and the impact this can have on a student's life, and we wholeheartedly support this notion.

The high academic standards that the Strategic Plan aims to continue driving, we believe, will be largely possible because of the many moving parts within the School that provide such excellent student care and opportunities to immerse in what we love. We know that students need to feel safe, calm, and supported before learning can even begin. Our experience at Girton has been that these things are achieved through fantastic co-curricular activities and teachers who know their students and care deeply. Each of us can name several teachers who have gone 'above and beyond', making an enormous difference in our learning journey.

We wish the School well in implementing the Strategic Plan in the coming five years and urge our fellow students to continue to play their part in enacting the School's mission of striving for excellence in all that you do.

Ms Rena Nicol
School Captain

Mr Wil Hamilton
School Captain

Ms Astrid Jonston
School Vice-Captain

Mr Isaac Willits
School Vice-Captain

FOREWORD FROM THE 2022 SCHOOL CAPTAINS

GIRTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SNAPSHOT

1

CITY

22

TOWNS

IN OUR CATCHMENT

150,000

PEOPLE

IN OUR REGION

YEARS OF SCHOOL OPERATION	138	TOTAL STUDENT POPULATION: APPROX.	STUDENT COUNTRIES OF BIRTH	STUDENT HOME LANGUAGES SPOKEN	SENIOR SCHOOL STUDENT POPULATION: APPROX.
JUNIOR SCHOOL STUDENT POPULATION: APPROX.	350	1050	21	30	700

PERCENTAGE OF 2021 VCE STUDENTS IN TOP 10% OF VICTORIA:

32%

TOTAL STAFF POPULATION <small>(INCLUDES PART-TIME AND FULL TIME)</small>	VCE SUBJECTS OFFERED	NUMBER OF CO-CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES:	STUDENT POSTCODES	STAFF POSTCODES	AVERAGE VCE COMPLETION RATE:
215	41	55	60	39	100%

APPROACH

The Girton Grammar School Strategic Plan is guided by our Mission and Values. Under the four pillars of strategic intent articulated in the Mission and Values (Community, Student Wellbeing, Curriculum and Co-curriculum, and Campus), the School has devised five areas of strategic priority. These five priorities will guide the resources (human and financial) invested into the school over the next five years.

The five strategic priorities will help the School deliver on its longer-term strategic intent. The values (enablers) that will drive initiatives under each of the strategic priorities are People, Character and Learning as defined in our Mission and Values.

The Strategic Plan will evolve over time, guided by the latest research and thinking, by real-world developments, and by ongoing input from the whole of the Girton community. The Plan is intended to provide a five-year vision for the School. It will be revisited annually by the school's Senior Leadership Team and the Board to make adaptations as necessary and to ensure future actions are implemented so that Girton remains a leader in education in regional Victoria.

Girton Grammar School Bendigo

Girton Grammar School is an Independent, Co-Educational School from Preparatory to Year Twelve that strives for excellence in both academic and co-academic areas of education in a caring Christian environment.

MISSION

The Strategic Plan supports the school's overall Mission which is:

STRATEGIC INTENT

The aim of the Girton Grammar School Strategic Plan can be summarised as follows:

Our aim is to provide a strong culture of academic excellence and effort through a rich and rigorous educational experience that includes explicit teaching of emotional intelligence, exceptional wellbeing programmes, outstanding facilities, and a range of co-curricular opportunities so that Girton students develop their own identities, strengths and pathways to future achievement.

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE GIRTON STRATEGIC PLAN REMAIN UNCHANGED SINCE THE SCHOOL'S INCEPTION IN ITS CURRENT FORM IN 1993, NAMELY:

- Striving for excellence
- Character development based on personal accountability
- Student leadership and community service
- Wellbeing of students based on the House system in the Senior School and individual classes in the Junior School
- High quality staff
- Academic and co-academic achievement
- Quality campus and facilities
- Effective financial stewardship
- Responsible corporate governance
- Strong and inspiring leadership

The success of the School's Strategic Plan is measured by the delivery on our Mission and Values, the quality of departing Girtonians, student enrolment numbers, community support and financial viability. (Refer to the School's Marketing and Business Plans for further detail).

FORMATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Girton Grammar School Strategic Plan (2023 – 2028) has been compiled with input from Girton students, parents, staff, Board members and the Senior Leadership Team. Independent Schools Victoria has guided the compilation of the Plan and facilitated focus group sessions and surveys with various sections of the School community.

The Strategic Plan outlines the School's current strengths and the actions required to maintain or improve what we already do well. The Plan also identifies areas of operation for improvement and new areas of innovation for the next five years that will move the School confidently into the future.



KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES FOR A FULFILLING CAREER AND LIFE

BACKGROUND

The Girton Grammar School Strategic Plan is informed by the latest research on preparing the next generation for their lives as adults in a rapidly evolving world. In particular, our students will need to cope with uncertainty and continuous change in the future. This means providing a relevant and enriching education that equips students with the contemporary skills, knowledge and values needed to shape their future and live meaningful lives of contribution.

The School's smooth and effective adaptation to remote learning during 2020 and 2021 has shown us that the Girton community can rise to the challenges of uncertainty. With over 30% of VCE students ranking in the top 10% of the State in 2021, we can say with some certainty that the challenges caused by two years of disrupted classroom learning for the 2021 VCE cohort were largely overcome. Students from Prep to Year 12 and all Girton staff showed initiative and resilience and many students developed greater confidence in their ability to be self-directed learners.

Over the coming five years, we will continue to build on the experience of 2020/21, so our students embody the attributes and attitudes of The Departing Girtonian as described in our Mission and Values document. This includes achieving above their natural ability and becoming worthy, educated citizens with an international perspective and a positive outlook.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ROLES IN THE ECONOMY HAVE INCREASED BY OVER 50 PERCENT IN REAL TERMS SINCE THE EARLY 1990'S, WHILE JOBS THAT ARE RELIANT ON AUTOMATION OR ROUTINE PROCEDURAL WORK ARE DECLINING AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE IMPACTED BY TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN DISRUPTION.

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

A recent World Economic Forum (WEF) report predicts losses in routine white-collar office functions and an increasing number of roles in business and financial operations, management, computer and mathematical sciences, architecture and engineering, sales, and education. Refer to World Economic Forum "The Future of Jobs Report 2020" for detailed descriptions of emerging and declining jobs and skills.

https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2020.pdf

With up to 40% of jobs in growth industries requiring 'soft skills', preparing for the workforce of the future is not only about academic learning. It is about developing social and emotional skills to handle a dynamic labour market. In the next five years at Girton, there will be greater emphasis on creating an "emotional advantage" for our students, recognising that emotional intelligence influences personal effectiveness and success in all aspects of life and in the workplace. People with high emotional intelligence are more open to accepting feedback and learning from their mistakes. By contrast, people with low levels of emotional intelligence are less willing to accept criticism and self-improve, which is likely to hold them back in their careers.

There is a clear need for today's young people to develop skills such as problem-solving, interactive and social skills, judgement and

critical and creative thinking. These enterprise skills, along with verbal communication and interpersonal skills such as listening, empathy and persuasion, will be crucial to an increasingly globalised work environment and for ensuring the transfer of skills between future jobs and industries. According to the CSIRO, "education is likely to be one of the most critical factors shaping workforce outcomes in the future". "Tomorrow's Digitally Enabled Workforce", CSIRO:

<https://publications.csiro.au/rpr/download?pid=csiro:EP161054&dsid=DS1>

See also the Australian Centre for Educational Research (ACER) report, "Key Skills for 21st the century. An Evidence-based Review". This report looks at how to equip young people with a broader set of skills, namely: creativity, critical thinking and problem solving.

https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1358&context=research_conference

The Girton Grammar School Strategic Plan (2023-2028) acknowledges the findings of the most recent Gonski Report (Gonski 2.0), which calls for Australia's school system to prepare young people 'for a complex and rapidly changing world' in which they will 'need skills that are not easily replicated by machines, such as problem-solving, interactive and social skills, and critical and creative thinking.' The report notes the need for students to study a curriculum that adapts and responds to occupational trends.

WE RESPECT THE PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY OF OUR TEACHERS
AND HAVE TRUST IN THE PROFESSION OF TEACHING

OUR TEACHERS

This approach to meeting the future needs of our students must be coupled with meeting the eight learning areas of the Australian Curriculum: English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, The Arts, Technologies, Health and Physical Education and Languages. In each of these learning areas, the Australian Curriculum presents a developmental sequence of learning from Prep to Year 10, incorporating the disciplinary knowledge, skills and understanding that students should acquire.

As an independent school, there is scope for Girton teachers to deliver a curriculum to suit their individual teaching strengths and Girton supports the particular skills and strengths of its teachers, respecting that each teacher is an expert in their field. We respect the professional capacity of our teachers and have trust in the profession of teaching. While we expect teachers to be directed by the Australian Curriculum, student data, and the latest research, we also have faith in our teachers’ professional judgement, knowledge, and practice. There is a growing body of evidence that says that a fundamental element of quality schooling is being able to rely on the professional judgement of our teachers.

The Australian Curriculum is designed to help all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens. Our teachers are the key to enabling this and we will continue to support staff to improve and grow by investing in relevant and timely professional improvement and individual professional teacher passions. Refer to the Australian Association for Research in Education for more information about the importance of the professional judgement of teachers: <https://www.aare.edu.au/blog/?p=3919>

EXPECTED CHALLENGES

In the next five years, consideration will be given to evolving issues that will provide context and influence the development of the yearly implementation plan that the School will develop based on this Strategic Plan, including:

- The COVID-19 pandemic and recovery from the impacts of this, especially related to youth mental health
- The federal election and the impacts that will have on funding of independent schools
- The possible removal of the ATAR in coming years
- The move to a greater emphasis on vocational pathways and how these are integrated into the VCE
- The increasing mental health issues in young people, separate from the COVID-19 impact
- Teacher shortages, especially in regional areas

FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Below are the five Strategic Priorities for 2023 – 2028, based on the Mission and Values “pillars of strategic intent” which are in grey below.

Curriculum strategic intent

01
DIVERSE TEACHING AND LEARNING PATHWAYS WITH HIGH STANDARDS
AND EXCEPTIONAL OUTCOMES

Think, everyday, something no one else is thinking
Do every day, something no one else would be si
enough to do. It is bad for the mind to be always

Co-curriculum strategic intent

02
PURSUITS OF PASSION FOR ALL STUDENTS



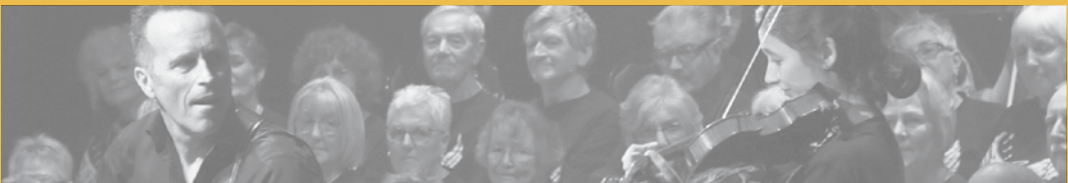
Pastoral Care strategic intent

03
EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT AND STAFF ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING



Community strategic intent

04
COMMUNITY COLLABORATION FOR FUTURE LEARNERS AND LEADERS



Campus strategic intent

05
STATE OF THE ART SPACES FOR LEARNING AND PLAYING



01

DIVERSE TEACHING AND LEARNING PATHWAYS WITH HIGH STANDARDS AND EXCEPTIONAL OUTCOMES

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

By 2028, Girton will have achieved academic results that are consistently in the top 15% of Victorian schools and will be catering for the growth and success of different learners with a 100% student completion rate for VCAL, VET and other emerging and innovative pathway qualifications.

Read, everyday, something no one else is reading.
Think, everyday, something no one else is thinking.
Do every day, something no one else would be silly enough to do. It is bad for the mind to be always part of unanimity.

Christopher Morley (1890)

STRATEGIC AIMS:

- Provide a rigorous curriculum that is engaging, challenging, inspiring, contemporary, broad, and compliant with Australian Curriculum requirements.
- Introduction of dedicated student extension programmes and opportunities for high achieving learners.
- Adopt and effectively integrate emerging technologies to support and amplify learning.
- Continue to acknowledge staff and student achievements and reward high standards and striving for excellence, including striving for excellence in effort.
- Develop a consistent and evidence-based School-wide approach to assessment that not only measures, but strengthens, student learning.
- Strengthen Collective Teacher Efficacy in recognition of this being the number one influence related to student achievement. (Refer Professor John Hattie, "Visible Learning").
- Maintain Continuous Reporting to reflect a comprehensive approach to the use of data to track and optimise student learning and achievements in Years 7 to 12. Consider what Continuous Reporting might look like in the Junior School.
- Develop teachers to become educational leaders recognised for their excellence in the education sector in Victoria.
- Consider the development of distinctive school sections such as a Middle School (for example, Year 6 to 8) and a Senior School (for example, Year 9 to 12).
- To increase the participation rate of students, especially female students, in STEM subjects and consider gendered learning differences in general.
- Strengthen differentiation in teaching to continue to integrate Inclusive Education programmes, practices and facilities into the mainstream classroom and cater to the learning needs outside the mainstream classroom where necessary.

02

PURSUIITS OF PASSION FOR ALL STUDENTS

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

By 2028, Girton will offer the broadest range of activities outside the classroom in the Bendigo region in the arts, sport, personal development and community service to develop and support student passions that drive individual and collective school engagement and success.



STRATEGIC AIMS:

- Maintain compulsory student participation in two co-curriculum activities in the Senior School and active involvement in the co-curriculum opportunities in the Junior School.
- Continue delivering a comprehensive, relevant and exciting Camps Programme as an integral component of every student's Girton journey.
- Continue to evolve the co-curriculum offering to suit a range of student interests and passions.
- Continue to award students who participate fully and strive for excellence in co-curriculum activities via the House Colours and Co-curriculum Colours system in Senior School and Student Awards in Junior School.

03

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT AND STAFF ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

By 2028, Girton will be the clear employer of choice in the Bendigo education sector and the teaching of emotional intelligence will be the cornerstone of a range of proactive student wellbeing approaches that are based on current and emerging research, helping to meet the needs of all young people.



STRATEGIC AIMS:

- To be an Australian leader in the teaching of emotional intelligence and a School where emotional intelligence is deeply valued.
- The provision of the highest quality teachers and support staff.
- Increased focus on “the other ATAR”, the enterprise skills required for students to succeed in the future workforce and in life.
- Maintain the House-based structure in the school and strengthen opportunities to build strong and distinctive House cultures and House leaders.
- Monitor implementation of the Student Behaviour Policy and the Student Code of Conduct to ensure that sanctions for significant breaches of behavioural expectations are meaningful and effective.
- Continue to value, acknowledge and enact the School's Imagine Charter and ensure its currency.
- Ensure implementation of student rights as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct to support a positive behavioural culture at the School that reflects School values.
- Continue to nurture a sense of belonging and inclusiveness to support the personal growth of all students and staff.

04

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION FOR FUTURE LEARNERS AND LEADERS

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

By 2028, through a range of community, industry, entrepreneurial and academic partnerships, Girton will be a recognised leader in developing the skills, capabilities and connections applicable to emerging and growth career and life opportunities, as well as being a place of belonging for its own community members.



STRATEGIC AIMS:

- Expand student voice opportunities within the School to strengthen student confidence and engagement.
- Expand and strengthen work experience and career pathway opportunities and support students in learning what is happening 'outside the School gates'.
- Strengthen innovative pedagogical practices and teacher efficacy by drawing on current research, educational partnerships, and industry connections.
- Strengthen student involvement in community service, issues of social justice, including indigenous voice and foster an international outlook for all students.
- Continue to embrace all kinds of diversity and to provide a variety of role models for Girton students.
- Build on and enhance the Girton work culture to support collaboration and innovation and improve communication across the School and between campuses.
- Consider opportunities to strengthen ties between the Junior School and Senior School students and staff.

05

STATE OF THE ART SPACES FOR LEARNING AND PLAYING

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

By 2028, Girton will be implementing a revised 2023 Campus Plan to meet Australian curriculum requirements, to meet our obligations as custodians of historical buildings, and to secure the facilities and resources required to deliver a high-quality education that prepares students for the future.



STRATEGIC AIMS:

- To expand and improve the quality of our subject offering in the fastest growing sector of the economy and to accommodate more students in VET and VCAL subjects.
- Develop School facilities in a financially secure manner and in accordance with the priorities identified by key stakeholders in our community and their aspirations for the Campus Plan.
- Consider the facilities that are required to deliver the pedagogy and programs to support the first strategic priority in this Plan; diverse student learning pathways with high standards and exceptional outcomes.
- To develop the School's facilities to inspire teachers and students.
- To preserve the history of the School and its traditions through the fabric of its buildings.
- To keep pace with the development of modern facilities at competitor schools around Bendigo.
- Incorporate consideration of environmental sustainability and pandemic-safe design in all new developments.
- Consider developing or acquiring offsite facilities such as a Year 9 campus, Early Learning Centre, or Outdoor Education/Camps facility.

REVIEW AND NEXT STEPS

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN PROVIDES GIRTON WITH A FIVE-YEAR VISION.

As outlined previously under “Approach”, the Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and the vision adapted if necessary to reflect local and broader economic, demographic, educational or other trends. It will be essential to remain flexible and open to the possibility of market disruption, changed thinking in the education sector, and aspirations of our school community. As a business, we will need to remain adaptable to local and global events.

Upon approval of the Strategic Plan, an Implementation Agenda will be developed by the School’s Senior Leadership Team with input from the various Heads of Departments, Heads of House and the Junior School leadership team. This will be an operational plan that details various initiatives and specific responsibilities for oversight and delivery of actions, and the corresponding budget required for these projects.

The Implementation Agenda will focus on the strategic priorities for the forthcoming 12 months, which will be identified from within this Strategic Plan.



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