

Australian Anglican



Schools Network

REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD STANDING COMMITTEE MARCH 2011

PURPOSE

The Australian Anglican Schools Network (AASN) is a collegial body comprising a diverse range of schools – urban, regional and rural, low through to high fee, single sex and co-educational, independent and systemic, day tuition and boarding. Overall, there is a strong commitment to the socially disadvantaged through bursaries and scholarships, indigenous education initiatives, community service and extension of the offering of each school's activities into local communities and parishes. Each Australian Anglican school has a School Council in place to ensure it is governed effectively at the local level, is fulfilling its Christian, academic and pastoral mission, is well managed financially and is meeting the needs of the school and wider community.

AASN is recognised by the General Synod of The Anglican Church of Australia under Part V of the *Strategic Issues, Task Forces and Other bodies Canon 19, 1998* as a Network. Our purpose is as follows:

The Network, giving honour to God, putting God first and working within God's will, seeks to:

- Provide a forum at National level for Anglican schools to facilitate discussion particularly on spiritual, moral and values related issues as they have a bearing on education.
- Be an effective network of General Synod of the Anglican Church.
- Achieve recognition of Anglican Schools as part of the mission of the Anglican Church.
- Engage with the Commonwealth Government, national Anglican agencies, other national education bodies and industry groups on matters which affect the Church's mission through Anglican schools.
- Be a forward-looking, dynamic organisation aiming to develop a strong unity of purpose among Anglican Schools.
- Report to General Synod on major matters discussed at the Network.

ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

There are 156 Anglican schools located in twenty Dioceses across Australia. Our schools educate almost 150,000 pupils. Anglican schools are the third largest schooling sector in Australia, after government and Catholic schools.

MANAGEMENT

The work of the Network is managed throughout the year by an elected Management Committee. The Committee meets up to six times a year, of which three meetings are face-to-face and up to three are by teleconference.

The current Management Committee comprises:

President: The Reverend Peter Laurence

President-Elect: Mr Stephen Norris

Immediate Past President: Mrs Lynne Thomson

State Representatives

Queensland: The Reverend Paul Bland (to December 2010)

New South Wales: Mr Tony Cummings

Victoria: Mr Stephen Higgs

Tasmania: Mr Stephen Norris

South Australia: Mrs Fiona Godfrey

Western Australia: Ms Anne Ford

Chaplain: The Reverend Janet Story

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Over the past decade, our focus as a Network has been to provide a national forum for member schools to meet and discuss issues of common interest. The primary means for this to occur is through our annual National Conference, which is held in August or September each year, in a different state on rotation. Approximately 200 governors, Principals, Chaplains and other senior staff attend each year. The Primate and a number of Archbishops and Bishops from across Australia have attended the conference. Our recent Conference themes have included:

- Faith in Action: Living the Gospel in Anglican Schools
- Beauty for Brokenness: The Appeal of Anglicanism
- Burning but not Consumed: Faith through the Fire

The 2011 National Conference is being held in Hobart, Tasmania. The theme is *Growing Up: Innocence to Inner Sense*.

CHAPLAINCY SHADOWING

AASN has played an important role in supporting and nurturing School Chaplains through our Chaplaincy Shadowing Program. The purpose of Chaplaincy Shadowing is to provide an opportunity for Chaplains to share with each other, become refreshed/re-energised and refocused, to get new ideas and to develop a spiritual mentor/buddy with whom to 'share the journey'. Two Chaplains, generally from different Dioceses, are paired for a period of one to three years, spending one week a year in each other's schools. Over fifty pairings have taken place since the program commenced, with most encouraging reports received from both Chaplains and schools.

INDIGENOUS EDUCATION

In 2010 AASN published a *Statement on Indigenous Education in Anglican Schools*, together with a *Checklist for Anglican Schools* in relation to indigenous matters. This document was adopted at the Network's Annual General Meeting in August 2010. It is an important statement about Anglican schools' involvement in educating young men and women throughout generations, with particular reference to Indigenous Australians, their culture and history.

A copy of the *Statement on Indigenous Education in Anglican Schools* and *Checklist for Anglican Schools* is ATTACHED to this Report.

ADVOCACY

AASN plays an important role in advocacy. This enables AASN to play some role in engaging with the Commonwealth Government, national Anglican agencies, other national

education bodies and industry groups on matters which affect the Church's mission through Anglican schools. Two issues on which the Network is currently advocating are:

- The Australian Government's Review of Funding for Schooling
- The Australian Government's National School 2011 Chaplaincy Program Review

PRAYER DIARY

AASN provides online Prayer Diary for schools enable members and others to pray for each other systematically throughout the school year.

ANGLICAN SCHOOLS CELEBRATION

AASN also provides online resources to support schools and Dioceses to hold an annual Anglican Schools Celebration - a focus on what it means to be an Anglican school. Resources support the holding of services at Diocesan or Provincial level in which schools, staff and students give thanks to God for this remarkable educational and missional enterprise.

The Reverend Peter Laurence
PRESIDENT