



TOWARDS 2021



INTRODUCTION

The word 'strategy' originates in the Ancient Greek word for 'general': it is the art of deploying your troops to win the battle, or – transferred to a 21st century girls' school – applying our resources to achieve our objectives. The first step in doing this effectively is to articulate the philosophy and beliefs that will shape our aspirations.

Queenwood was founded in 1925 and for nearly 70 years was guided by three women, Miss Lawrance, Miss Rennie and Miss Medway, who were driven by their conviction that young women were entitled to high-quality education. They built a school in which each girl was encouraged to balance her academic endeavours with a broad program of participation and contribution, a school with a culture of warmth, curiosity and openness, a school which was distinctive for its size and strength of community – large enough to provide the full range of opportunities, and small enough for each girl to be known.

This has created an enduring legacy which is woven into the fabric of our culture and community. We reaffirm our commitment to these elements of a Queenwood education as we consider future development of our school for the benefit of all our girls, the youngest of whom will be moving on to university and the workplace in 2029.

Long-term strategy and planning require a healthy and sustainable foundation, and we have considered the four key domains in which we can apply our human, financial and material resources to ensure that we have the appropriate capacity, infrastructure and investment to allow our school to flourish. With these foundations secure, we can provide the best possible opportunities for our girls to learn and grow into world citizens who are equipped and motivated to make a difference. The capacity to understand new and different environments, to respond to them flexibly and effectively, and to sustain meaningful and fulfilling relationships will prepare them for lives of unprecedented longevity in a world changing at an unprecedented pace.

With this in mind, we have identified four strategic principles which will shape our approach to planning and development.

Firstly, we are restating our commitment to providing a liberal education – an education which, at its core, develops rigorous thinking and the practice of inquiry. We are committed to providing a well-balanced curriculum that caters to individual differences and reflects our purpose of stimulating a lifelong awakening to the complexity of the world.

Secondly, we have recognised the development of independence as a central objective. In the spirit of our founders, who were women of intellect, energy and purpose, we aim to develop young women who know their own minds and navigate their own path, whilst remaining open to alternative views and receptive to nuance.





Thirdly, our young women must develop a broad perspective on the world. As they grow in their understanding of and familiarity with different ways of thinking and being, they will deepen their acceptance and appreciation of people of diverse backgrounds and experience and will appreciate the immense privilege and corresponding obligations of receiving a first-class education.

Finally, and most importantly, Queenwood will work to ensure that the achievements and strengths of our community are directed outwards, with our graduates disposed in heart and mind to serve others, and equipped to make their own contribution.

The Strategic Direction that we have developed according to these principles builds on key achievements of the last five years, including:

- major improvements in the implementation and integration of digital technology in our curriculum and teaching K to 12;
- strengthening of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program;
- the introduction and expansion of programs in the Junior School including Mandarin Years 3-6, Mathematics Enrichment, Debating, ICT and expansion of extra- and co-curricular offering;
- completion of an ambitious program fully refurbishing Junior School facilities to the highest standard;
- the introduction of a range of pastoral and wellbeing initiatives, including the Senior School tutor system and wellbeing programs across the School;
- a range of measures to enhance professional development opportunities and career progression for staff;
- significant contribution to social justice campaigns and communities in need, such as our long-term projects in Cambodia.

We have reflected carefully and consulted widely, but even as we set out here the key elements of our Strategic Direction, we are alert to the dangers of reductionism. This document serves as an introduction to the principles on which our school's future development will be founded, but a rich and complex community like Queenwood cannot be described in a few pages. The School must continue to reinvent itself if it is to continue to flourish, and this is just one step in that ongoing process.

“From our beginning with five pupils our objects have been the same – to give our girls a happy school life, with opportunities for each to learn, to win and to accept defeat gracefully, to do her best work, to play, to develop her manifold and varying interests, to accept responsibility and to find eventually an adult life that is satisfying.”

Miss Medway, 1960 Report





OUR PURPOSE

Our founders established Queenwood for a world that needed 'women of strength and courage and purpose'. This statement of purpose gives fresh expression to that call:

Queenwood is an internationally-minded girls' school that offers a contemporary liberal education. Our purpose is to develop in students the intellectual rigour, independence, character and skills to contribute sustainably to the world.

OUR VALUES

The Queenwood values have taken different forms since the inception of the School. In developing our Strategic Direction we have reaffirmed the values **Truth, Courage and Service**, as declared by our founders and expressed in the words of the beloved School Hymn.

IN TRUTH WE:

- seek knowledge and a deep understanding of the world;
- act with honesty and integrity;
- grow in wisdom with a strong sense of identity and self-knowledge;
- lead upright lives with a strong moral compass.

WITH COURAGE WE:

- persevere through adversity;
- think and act with independence;
- engage openly and confidently with diverse people and ideas;
- rise to the challenge of the complex and the unfamiliar.

Star of Courage, so inspire us
That we fearlessly may fight...
In the cause of truth and right.
Star of Service, make us dwell on
Not our own but others' needs...

- School Hymn

THROUGH SERVICE WE:

- respect the value of humanity in all its diversity;
- seek justice and peace with humility and compassion;
- stand with the vulnerable and marginalised in our local community and beyond;
- cultivate a generous and joyful spirit.

“*Our underlying reason for education - to fit our young people for a happy place in life – can never be changed. Our hope is that, looking back on your school days, you will remember kindness, encouragement, sympathy; that you will be a performer, and not an onlooker; that you will find enjoyment in the 'struggles' as well as in the 'stars' and that you will have learned to give of your best.*”

Miss Medway, Principal 1942 – 1982

OUR STRATEGIC DOMAINS

The quality of a Queenwood education will be secured by building and maintaining capacity, infrastructure and investment across four key domains.

CULTIVATING LEARNING

A liberal education of the highest quality will require:

- thoughtful, integrated, rigorous development of the curriculum and co-curriculum so as to incorporate practices that are supported by the best research and responsive to the characteristics of our students and staff;
- development of a digital curriculum that supports, enables and equips students in the judicious use and application of technology in learning and life;
- a strong learning culture that extends expectations and opportunities beyond the classroom;
- ongoing development of a framework for care and wellbeing which encourages girls at every stage to aspire to excellence, and develop the character and dispositions that nurture and sustain effort and success.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Our staff are the key to providing the highest care, richest opportunity and best teaching for each student. This requires us to:

- attract and retain the most talented educators as leaders and teachers;
- build their professional expertise in their academic disciplines, in pedagogy and in student wellbeing;
- support all staff with appropriate resources, strong leadership and an ethos of professional autonomy;
- create pathways for professional development, collaboration, research and thought leadership;
- sustain and enhance staff wellbeing through programs that strengthen their personal and professional capacity;
- establish connections with tertiary institutions, schools and other organisations that expand learning opportunities for staff and students.





“The old school had a life of love and care and gave us once a sense of freedom. But freedom needs constant activity to maintain it. From the old school’s traditions we have won freedom now and must be prepared to strive for it in our future.”

Miss Medway, at the opening of the new buildings in 1968

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

Our community is central to the identity of Queenwood. Strengthening this community requires:

- clear articulation of our ethos and how this is expressed and embodied in the life of the school;
- active engagement with stakeholders in ways that meet their interests and needs, through a variety of events, publications and communication channels;
- continual investment in our relationships at every level of the wider community;
- an attitude which honours our heritage, respects diversity and embraces change as we express our traditional values of Truth, Courage and Service in contemporary ways;
- investment in programs that harness the skills, strengths and capabilities of our community, past and present, to our students’ learning, development and awareness of service and contribution in action.

ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY

Student learning and development requires programs, systems and infrastructure of high quality and long-term strength and stability. We must ensure sustainability by:

- developing our asset base to provide contemporary, versatile facilities and precincts that foster learning in cultural, sporting, artistic, intellectual and emotional terms as well as and nurture relationships;
- investing in physical and digital infrastructure that supports teaching and operational efficiency;
- creating a culture of philanthropy that contributes to the independence of the School;
- operating in our physical setting in a way that is respectful of the environment and our impact on it;
- ensuring financial strength, good governance and compliance with regulatory requirements.

OUR STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

A QUEENWOOD EDUCATION

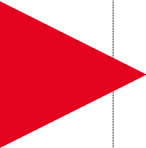
Our task of guiding and supporting our students in their intellectual and personal growth will be shaped by the principles of liberal education, independence, perspective and contribution. In our emphasis on this distinctive combination we eschew educational fads and instead give voice to the long-established ideals of Queenwood in a contemporary form.

LIBERAL EDUCATION

- A liberal education instils a love of learning for learning's sake, and develops the practice of inquiry across all disciplines.
- It is founded on a commitment to the life of the mind beyond the bounds of externally imposed curricula.
- It rests on the conviction that every student needs to experience both success and frustration to achieve full intellectual, social and emotional development;
- It sets high expectations of students based on belief in and respect for their capabilities and potential;
- Through this, students develop knowledge of the wider world, the character and disposition to engage with it effectively, and the autonomy and knowledge of self to drive exploration of it. They are thus equipped to manage complexity, diversity and change.
- Teaching is underpinned by an understanding of the differing needs, readiness and interests of students and is adapted accordingly. The quality of relationship between teachers and students underlies effective learning.

INDEPENDENCE

- Founded by purposeful, independent women who saw beyond their own horizon, Queenwood continues that tradition in producing girls and young women prepared to chart their own course, seek truth and live courageously.
- We aim to develop our girls into young women willing and able to make decisions and manage their lives independently and create a safe but challenging framework in which they learn to do so.
- We recognise that independence takes time to flourish and at Queenwood the progression from Kindergarten to Year 12 is a progression of increasing responsibility and wisdom, moving from dependence to interdependence and independence.
- Our structures, programs and relationship with parents are informed by this progression, so that together we can create an environment in which each girl can develop confidence, autonomy and self-respect.
- Our governance and finance structures sustain our independence, and our curriculum and programs are developed to meet the particular needs of our cohort of students, not simply the requirements of external curricula.



“*‘Per Aspera’ precedes ‘ad Astra’ and so it is that strength and courage are necessary, for the highest and best are not attained without struggle... There is so much that needs reforming in our world today, so many wrongs to be righted, so many poor and sick to be tended, so many weak to be protected. Are not these high adventures, which call for women of strength and courage and purpose?*”

Miss Rennie, Principal 1931 – 1962

OUR STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

PERSPECTIVE

- Education is a gift and from those to whom much has been given, much is expected. We seek to develop an understanding of our place in the world, as the first step to seeking justice, peace and prosperity for all.
- We are internationally minded, developing in every student intercultural understanding and respect and an awareness of contemporary social and political issues which complements and deepens understanding of our own cultural and national identity.
- We have a strong outward focus, actively engaging students in debates, issues and cultures beyond our boundaries, and offering a range of experiences that generate meaningful links with people who have different lives and perspectives.
- This goes beyond our rich language and student exchange programs to curricular, co-curricular and service programs that integrate deeper perspectives. Our partnerships locally and globally aim to create sustainable, long-term relationships with mutual engagement and learning as the foundation.

CONTRIBUTION

- Our ultimate objective is to produce young women of character, generous in spirit and motivated to apply their gifts and energies in the service of others.
- We encourage our students at every level to contribute in thought, word and deed: responding to the vulnerable and marginalised with respect and compassion; speaking out for them with courage; and taking action in their service. We acknowledge that in so doing we ourselves are enriched and find true fulfilment
- We begin the process of building this understanding through attention to the immediate world of the classroom, playground, sporting field and home, promoting the relationships of respect, care and appreciation for others.
- We seek to contribute by leading thinking in education in Australia and beyond, and applying the resources of our wider Queenwood community of Old Girls, parents and friends to make a difference beyond our own sphere.

“Our focus is certainly on teaching girls how to think – but they have to have something to think about. It is important that they understand the arc of history, the great intellectual and artistic movements, the major political ideologies.”

Ms Elizabeth Stone – Principal





Locked Bag 1, Mosman NSW 2088

+61 2 8968 7777

q@queenwood.nsw.edu.au | www.queenwood.nsw.edu.au

ABN 83000532696

