

Meriden Girls:

Creating and Leading the Future

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019–2022



MERIDEN
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL FOR GIRLS



A young woman with brown hair tied back, wearing a dark blue school jacket over a white collared shirt, is looking upwards with a slight smile. She is positioned in the lower right of the frame. The background is a large, golden, geometric structure, possibly a dome or a large sculpture, made of many intersecting lines, set against a clear blue sky. The lighting suggests it's daytime.

“

Meriden girls are confident but compassionate, hard-working but gentle, determined but patient, responsible but joyous. With leaders like this, the future of our communities and country would be in safe hands.”

DR JULIE GREENHALGH
PRINCIPAL

From the Chairman

It is with great pleasure that the School Council, together with our Principal, Dr Julie Greenhalgh, presents our 2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan, *Meriden Girls: Creating and Leading the Future*.

Leadership is one of those things that is easier to spot than it is to define – we know it when we see it. Using the different powers that we have – abilities, roles, opportunities, resources, and experience – for the good of others and for strengthening communities is at the heart of leadership. And when good leadership is being exercised, there is little doubt it is a force for enormous good. This strategic plan puts the challenge of seeing every Meriden girl develop her leadership potential at the centre of our focus for the coming years.

Our world is crying out for good leadership, in politics, in business, in the social sector. Perhaps never as much as now is the lack of high quality, sacrificial, servant-based leadership at so many levels of society evident. This strategic plan provides a road-map for ensuring that Meriden girls grow in their capacity as confident, articulate and responsible leaders in their vocations and communities. I warmly commend it to you.

Andrew Katay

REV DR ANDREW KATAY
CHAIRMAN



From the Principal

Since 2007, Meriden has been defining its way forward through the implementation of three-year strategic plans. This approach has served the School well, so it is not surprising that, at the conclusion of the previous strategic plan, the School Council and I began to plan for the next edition.

Over the past few years, the staff and I have been preparing the girls to deal with constant change, develop the resilience to face life’s challenges, analyse written material with a critical eye and evaluate research with discernment. I believe our girls can now do this.

The time has come to take the next step. We want our girls to be the makers of the change, the movers and shakers of our community, the writers of the analysis, and the front-line researchers. They no longer need to be solely the responders; they can be the creators of the future. So, with an eye for innovation, sustainability and flexibility, this strategic plan aims to give our girls the opportunities to be the creators of the future, and then to lead that same future.

Meriden girls are confident but compassionate, hard-working but gentle, determined but patient, responsible but joyous. With leaders like this, the future of our communities and country would be in safe hands. And what a blessing that would be!

Julie Greenhalgh

DR JULIE GREENHALGH
PRINCIPAL



Preparing for the Strategic Plan

Meriden is an Anglican school for girls, located in Strathfield, NSW. Founded in 1897, Meriden has a long tradition of academic excellence, personalised care for the individual student, and a strong sense of community.

Over the past twelve years, Meriden has completed five comprehensive strategic plans:

- *Moving Meriden Forward* (2007 – 2010);
- *It's All About the Girls* (2010 – 2012);
- *Women of the Future* (2012 – 2014);
- *Excellence and Wellness for Girls* (2014 – 2016) and
- *Go Girl: Strengthening Meriden's Voice* (2017 – 2019).

The fulfilment of these plans has brought Meriden to the forefront of education in Australia and has seen significant and continued improvement in the quality of teaching and learning at the School; the standard of the facilities; the level of pastoral care; the range and significance of the values, ethics and Christian education on offer; and the extent and level of opportunities offered to the girls.

In preparation for this most recent strategic plan, the Principal and senior staff carried out extensive reading and research of the contemporary issues surrounding young women in Australia. The need for personalised and flexible education, the emphasis on sustainability and innovation, and the importance of helping girls to take ownership of their learning as they prepare for their futures became evident.

With this in mind, the Strategic Plan 2019 – 2022 is entitled *Meriden Girls: Creating and Leading the Future*. It is designed to build upon the progress that the School has made in recent times, to address issues currently facing Australian school girls, to prepare Meriden graduates for life after school, and to continue to make a significant contribution to Australian education and society. The School Council was also mindful of the fact that this strategic plan will culminate in the 125th anniversary of the School.

The Principal and School Council are grateful for the input – both formal and informal – from parents, staff and girls towards the writing of this strategic plan.



The Meriden Vision

By the time a girl leaves Meriden at the end of Year 12, it is hoped that she will be a:

- Confident, articulate and responsible leader
- Aspiring and academic achiever
- Well-informed and critical thinker
- Well-rounded and resilient team-player
- Creative innovator and collaborative problem-solver
- Compassionate, healthy and optimistic global citizen
- Woman of integrity, appreciative of the Christian faith.

This vision rests firmly on the values which permeate the Meriden environment and community: excellence, grit, kindness, gratitude, joy and hope.

In order to help Meriden girls fulfil this vision, it is important that the School be at the forefront of educational thought in NSW. It is also important that the School be mindful of the areas that are driving changes in the workforce, namely automation, globalisation and the gig economy, as well as the industry requirement for employees to have foundational skills, technical skills, enterprise skills and career management skills (CEO Perspectives: *The Future of Schooling in Australia*, AISNSW and Knowledge Society, 2018).

Furthermore, given the uncertainty that seems to exist currently about the best way forward for educational direction, it is important that Meriden be contributing to the determination of that forward pathway. Therefore, this strategic plan aims to enable the School to be:

1. Leading in Student Understanding
2. Leading in Student Care
3. Leading in Innovation
4. Leading in School Christian Ministry
5. Leading in Leadership and Excellence.






Meriden has every reason to believe that we can define and lead the future of Australian education. As a school, we have confidence in the intellectual ability and personal values of our girls; we have a team of exceptional staff members who care for the girls and who are clever and passionate about their disciplines; and we believe in a Creator who loves us and gives us hope for the future. Furthermore, we know that the unifying factor among our diverse community – staff, parents and girls – is the importance that we all place on learning in all its dimensions – curricula, cocurricula and lateral learning. Combined, this means that we have a school community which can lead learning into the future with excellence, grit, kindness, gratitude, joy and hope.

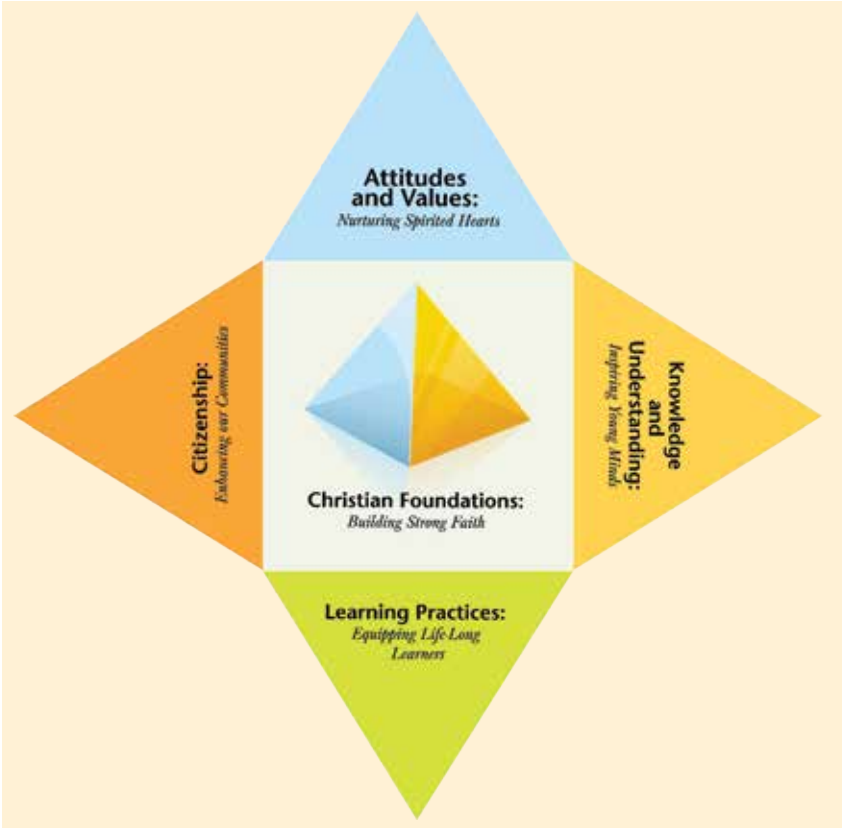
The Fidelis Model

The holistic teaching and learning that occurs at Meriden is consistent with The Fidelis Model. The Fidelis Model sets the breadth, the depth and the direction of the School’s education and has been used to unite and coordinate all aspects of a Meriden girl’s learning – both inside and outside the classroom – since 2011.

This framework has the girls as its prime focus, aiming to enable them to learn optimally and to leave school ready for the challenges ahead.

The Fidelis Model outlines the Christian foundations upon which Meriden is based; the knowledge and understanding that the girls need to acquire; the learning practices that they need to master; the capabilities, competencies and skills that they need to develop; and the attitudes and values that they need to foster, as summarised below:

-  **Christian Foundations:** Building Strong Faith
-  **Knowledge and Understanding:** Inspiring Young Minds
-  **Learning Practices:** Equipping Life-Long Learners
-  **Citizenship:** Enhancing our Communities
-  **Attitudes and Values:** Nurturing Spirited Hearts.





Strategic Goals



1. Leading in Student Understanding

In this section of the strategic plan, we are endeavouring to ensure that we stay at the forefront of teaching and learning. We want to protect the classroom from unnecessary disruptions, strengthen departments and Lateral Learning, build a state-of-the-art Centre for Music and Drama, provide excellent and on-going professional development for the staff, and do all we can to attract and retain outstanding teachers.

Goals

- 1.1 Continue to highlight and support the work of the classroom teacher
- 1.2 Continue at the forefront of contemporary pedagogical practice
- 1.3 Identify and implement ways to promote critical thinking among the students
- 1.4 Further individualise learning programs and progress for students
- 1.5 Further enhance the acquisition of the skills provided through Lateral Learning
- 1.6 Continue to work on the establishment of department precincts
- 1.7 Make a valuable contribution to the discussion of key educational issues at federal and state government levels
- 1.8 Develop a comprehensive strategy to attract high-quality staff to Meriden
- 1.9 Continue to work on developing the expertise of the educators at Meriden



2. Leading in Student Care

There are many challenges facing young people today, especially in the areas of social media and other social issues. Helping the girls to develop resilience and other strategies to stay safe and healthy is the core intent of this section. Strengthening the work of the pastoral teams in the School is fundamental to this part of the plan.

Goals

- 2.1** Ensure our pastoral program addresses all relevant contemporary issues
- 2.2** Allow for further opportunities for mentoring and individual conversations between staff and girls
- 2.3** Ensure Meriden is a child-safe institution for all students
- 2.4** Ensure the school site is safe and secure at all times
- 2.5** Continue to prioritise the physical well-being of the girls
- 2.6** Continue to prioritise the mental well-being of the girls

3. Leading in Innovation

The ability to be creative and innovative is a common feature of current educational journals. While we already have wonderful initiatives at Meriden in areas such as STEM and the Maker Club, more is needed. The formation of an Innovation Hub, along with our Foundry and the Hudson Library and Research Centre, as well as the deliberate teaching of design thinking and the introduction of effective sustainable measures in the School, should provide these opportunities for the girls.

Goals

- 3.1** Actively teach the skills of innovation and design thinking across the School
- 3.2** Increase the opportunities for students to engage in creative and authentic design
- 3.3** Expose the girls to contemporary innovations, developments and research
- 3.4** Further highlight the display of student work
- 3.5** Stay up-to-date with technology facilities and resources for the benefit of staff and students
- 3.6** Form an Innovation Hub within the School
- 3.7** Continue to improve the School's level of sustainability and self-sufficiency
- 3.8** Expand the specialist facilities in the School
- 3.9** Refresh the School's approach to marketing to highlight the importance of creativity and fresh ideas at the School
- 3.10** Celebrate with joy and gratitude the 125th anniversary of the School



4. Leading in School Christian Ministry

The Christian faith underpins all that we do at Meriden. Increasing the opportunities for Bible study and prayer, Chaplaincy training and discussions by the girls about topical issues is included in this section of the plan. Expanding the role of community service is also found in this section.

Goals

- 4.1** Link more tightly the Christian Education program with the pastoral program and the syllabuses of the other departments
- 4.2** Celebrate and honour the School's diversity
- 4.3** Extend the Student Christian Leadership program
- 4.4** Promote more opportunities for free-flowing and safe discussion about the Christian faith
- 4.5** Investigate the possibility of further service opportunities for the girls
- 4.6** Investigate the possibility of a Chaplaincy training program at the School
- 4.7** Increase the opportunities for prayer within the School's community
- 4.8** Provide more opportunities for Bible study within the School and local community

5. Leading in Leadership and Excellence

Remaining as a leader of educational excellence and expanding our spheres of influence are the centrepieces of this section of the plan. This includes identifying ways in which we can accommodate increasing demand for places at the School without compromising the individual attention and community spirit that are features of Meriden.

Goals

- 5.1** Work to ensure that Meriden continues as the school of choice for girls in the inner west
- 5.2** Proudly promote and maintain the School as a leader in educational excellence through the concepts of learning progressions and personalised learning
- 5.3** Investigate ways to accommodate increasing demand for enrolment at the School
- 5.4** Continue to update the School's Master Plan
- 5.5** Investigate ways to work more closely with Trinity Grammar School
- 5.6** Strengthen the connections with national and international tertiary institutions



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