



# TEACHING AND LEARNING AT DCS

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# Introduction

## Welcome to your role as a teacher at Dubbo Christian School.

This document provides an overview of the DCS philosophy and approach to teaching and learning.

DCS considers teachers as;

1. God's image bearers
2. Having unique experiences, understandings, areas of expertise, interests and quirks
3. Not simply a means of achieving the educational objectives of the school

We acknowledge teachers operate professionally in line with the school's Christian objectives.

This document sets the foundations of what we do at DCS. Teachers are invited to join us in exploring and developing their practice towards the goals and frameworks presented as identified below;

1. We have a vision for students at DCS that underpins how we approach our task of teaching and learning, setting an endpoint that we want for each student.
2. We have a framework for thinking about Christian teaching and learning at DCS that provides the context for how curriculum, classroom and community work together towards developing transformation in students' lives.
3. We have a pedagogical model that helps keep us on track and gives us a common language to talk about improving as Christian teachers.
4. We have a coaching model that we use to support each other towards being better and meeting the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST).

It is a journey to become a really good Christian teacher. The following traits underpin this journey;

1. A strong sense of mission – a teacher's mission goes beyond academics. God has called you into the classroom to change lives.
2. A desire for excellence – do your best for Christ and for your students. Expect the same from them.

3. A love for your students – this will make the biggest difference in students' hearts.
4. A focus on the heart (not just outward behaviour) – keeping order is important but truly lasting impact is found in changing the heart.
5. An authenticity and humility – be the best you can, be real about your struggles and ask for forgiveness when you fall short (as we all do).
6. An encouraging foundation – words and actions that make our students more determined to improve and do their best. Edify your students and each other.
7. A strong relationship with God – prayer, bible reading and your relationship with God are vital keys to your work in the classroom. Don't neglect these in the busyness of your role.
8. A commitment to thinking Biblically – regardless of the situation you are dealing with, from girl dramas to career advice, a Biblical view of the situation is the starting point.
9. A trust in God – teaching can be stressful. Look for God's peace. Trust Him by relying on His strength and resting in Him.
10. A flourishing of the fruit of the Spirit – build love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control into your life as a teacher.
11. An emphasis on strong relationships – Biblical worldview is 'caught, not taught'.

It is not easy but we support each other in this process. That's a critical part of the journey.

I am thankful that we have a great team, dedicated to their work in Christian teaching and learning. I am hopeful this document is helpful to you as part of this team.

In Christ,

**Warren Melville**  
**Principal**

# Our vision for teaching and learning

## Curriculum



Christ-centred  
Bible-based

### Essential Understandings

Identifying, preparing and delivering curriculum and exploring with students a Biblical perspective through the filter of **Creation – Fall – Redemption – Restoration (CFRR)**.

Using the **Transformation by Design Framework** to help students understand how knowledge must be understood in the context of an eternal perspective and how to respond in obedience as Christians in meaningful ways.

## Classroom



God-centred  
learning spaces

### Pedagogical Practices

Using 'teachable moments' and 'appropriate informal opportunities' alongside planning for intentional delivery of curriculum content through visible learning and organisation of learning spaces, integrating Biblical perspectives and Christian worldview into a range of teaching approaches, built on a core **Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI) pedagogy**.

## Community



Being together

### Creating shared experiences

Sharing activities and learning together in ways that demonstrate what worship and Christian community/response looks like;

- Assemblies
- Bible Studies
- Devotions/PCG
- Excursions
- Prayer
- Service projects
- School climate
- School themes

### What are we working towards?

- Developing wisdom
- Building faith
- Building Bible knowledge
- Providing opportunity to learn and achieve

academic goals for each student to be able to follow God's purpose for their life and take their place in God's redemptive plan

- **Berakah living** coming out of a deep understanding of our place in God's story, working towards redemption and restoration

# Our vision for students

*“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” (NIV)*

**Galatians 6:9**

ASPECT	DESCRIPTION
<p><b>God Follower</b></p> 	<p>Students understand that worshipping God is about celebrating who God is, what God has done and is doing, and what God has created. It is literally about standing in awe and wonder of Him and His promises. Students see this worship as a way of life and appreciate God’s all sufficient grace as they develop an authentic faith.</p> <p><b>Learning Target: I can love God and seek Him in all parts of my life</b></p> <p><i>Mark 12: 30-31:</i>  <i>“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ 31 The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (NIV)</i></p>
<p><b>Bible Believer</b></p> 	<p>Students build knowledge of the Bible and weave God’s Story into all areas of life applying the stories of Scripture, seeing God’s faithfulness in the lives of His people, including their own. They understand the summary of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration (CFRR). They discuss alternative stories but are reminded that every square inch we explore, learn, discern, or encounter in education and life is informed by a strong understanding of the Bible and they discern and inform decisions with Scripture.</p> <p><b>Learning Target: I can apply God’s Word in all areas of life</b></p> <p><i>2 Timothy 2:15:</i>  <i>“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth”. (NIV)</i></p>
<p><b>Image Bearer</b></p> 	<p>Students bear the image of God in their daily lives. Being an image bearer isn’t something we do. It is something we are. We learn to see God’s image in others.</p> <p>As co-creators with Christ, students rely on the Holy Spirit to work in them for mind, heart, life and character transformation.</p> <p>They are challenged to seek and discern God’s calling for their lives and explore how they can use their gifts and talents to live a Berakah life.</p> <p><b>Learning Target: I can develop the talents and gifts God has given me to reflect God and serve others</b></p> <p><i>Genesis 1:27</i>  <i>“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” (NIV)</i></p>

# Our vision as teachers

## T.R.A.C.K

T

### **Transformational Vision**

Our deep desire as Christian teachers is to guide each student to discover and understand the God-given meaning and structure of the world, and their place and purpose within it. As they develop in their understanding of God's story, they will learn that they are part of this story and move towards serving God as life-long learners and responsive disciples.

R

### **Responsive Discipleship**

Our deep desire as Christian teachers is to model and engage students in actively responding to God's story throughout their schooling. Learning will involve the head (cognitive), the heart (character) and the hands (response). They will move towards becoming people who bless the world - "Berakah" people. (TbD – Threads and Deeper Learning Experiences)

A

### **All Things In And Through Christ**

Our deep desire as Christian teachers is to help students see God's fingerprints in all things. He created all things and although the fall affects all things, redemption impacts all things. We desire to cultivate and develop the God-given potential in each student so they can be part of God's purpose in bringing renewal to His world. (TbD & EDI)

C

### **Crafted Teaching**

Our deep desire as Christian teachers is to use a strategic collection of instructional practices combined together to design and deliver well-crafted learning experiences (EDI and Visible Learning). Through the mastery of skills and understanding of concepts, our learning spaces are places where students and teachers can explore and appreciate God's world and Word, and where they grow in their awareness of their place in God's story.

K

### **Kingdom Building**

Our deep desire as Christian teachers is to invite students into God's BIG STORY; the story of redemption and the coming of God's kingdom – that shapes what we do in our school. We desire to tell the STORY, to seek out and help students to see the STORY in all (worldview) and to give them opportunities to respond.

# Our vision for teachers

## Getting ready to teach

1. Knowing the content
2. Mastering the pedagogy
3. Setting instructional goals
4. Using resources
5. Developing assessments
6. Using data to inform practice
7. Knowing your students
8. My Deep Hope (TbD)

## Creating the classroom

1. Developing classroom management skills
2. Building a positive learning attitude
3. Creating relationship and respect
4. Designing the physical space
5. Extending the classroom through ourDCS.

## TEACHING ENHANCEMENT CYCLE

## Professional commitment

- Evaluating teaching of effectiveness
- Keeping up-to-date and accurate records
- Communicating with families
- Producing informative student reports
- Developing professionally
- Fulfilling professional responsibilities

## Delivering lessons

- Using Student Engagement Norms
- Checking for Understanding
- Setting the lesson objective
- Activating prior learning
- Delivering concepts
- Developing skills
- I do - We do - You do
- Closing effectively

## Our vision for teachers (continued)

Getting ready to teach		
DESCRIPTION	TEACHERS ARE WORKING TOWARDS	APST REFERENCE
1. Each teacher has mastery and a deep understanding of the content they teach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extending their knowledge of the key concepts underpinning their discipline and identify links between disciplines.</li> </ul>	2.5, 6.2
2. Each teacher has a thorough working knowledge of effective pedagogical methods with a particular focus on each aspect of the EDI model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mastering each component of the EDI model through research, application and reflection on practice.</li> </ul>	2.1
3. A teacher has a clear understanding of the purpose of each program, unit of work and lesson and can translate this into learning goals for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refining programs of work, developing learning experiences and enhancing teaching practices that focus on students achieving the learning goals.</li> </ul>	1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3
4. Teachers use a wide range of resources to effectively support learning objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using available resources, evaluating the need to purchase new resources, and developing their own targeted resources to assist students reaching learning goals.</li> </ul>	1.6, 3.4
5. Students develop targeted valid and reliable assessment activities for, as, and of, student learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that assessment activities are aligned to learning goals.</li> <li>Clearly communicating assessment criteria to students</li> <li>Using the results of assessments for, as and of learning to guide teaching practice.</li> </ul>	1.5, 2.3, 5.3
6. Teachers gather, analyse and apply information derived from assessments to inform classroom learning that is differentiated according to student needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the results of assessments to differentiate the learning experiences in the classroom.</li> </ul>	1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.3, 3.2, 5.1, 5.3
7. Teachers have a strong working knowledge of the varied needs of students that forms the basis of making decisions about differentiated learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initially creating and then regularly reviewing their class profiles in order to provide differentiated instruction.</li> </ul>	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6
8. Each teacher has a “Deep Hope” for the learning experiences they are creating for students, and this is embedded in programs using the principles of Transformation by Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing a clear understanding of what their deep hope for students is based on a biblical world-view. This deep hope will be expressed in each unit of work using the Transformation by Design Framework.</li> </ul>	1.3

## Our vision for teachers (continued)

Creating the classroom environment		
DESCRIPTION	TEACHERS ARE WORKING TOWARDS	APST REFERENCE
1. A teacher manages student behaviour so that all students are able to learn effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing interactions in a way that demonstrates genuine respect between the teacher and students and where students genuinely care for and support one another.</li> </ul>	4.1
2. A teacher develops in students a positive attitude towards learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engaging students with the content of lessons so that they are actively participating in learning.</li> <li>Having high expectations for all students.</li> <li>Guiding students to become self-initiated learners.</li> </ul>	4.2, 4.3
3. There is a supportive attitude of respect between all members of the class that promotes the achievement of learning outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing in students a sense of being a blessing to their peers through activities that encourage selfless classroom interactions that support others in reaching learning outcomes.</li> </ul>	1.6, 2.4, 4.1
4. The physical space of the classroom supports the attainment of learning outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using all aspects of the physical classroom to assist students in their learning – including (but not limited to) walls, boards, windows and seating.</li> <li>Developing mastery of the technology in the classroom (interactive whiteboards, the internet, resources available through the network) to enhance the engagement levels of students as they work towards learning goals.</li> </ul>	1.6, 3.4, 4.4, 7.2
5. The physical learning environment extends cohesively into the virtual learning environment of OurDCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extending the physical classroom into the virtual learning spaces available to students through their class pages on OurDCS where students can work together or individually using the advantages that come with Learning Technologies, including Social Learning Technologies that focus on collaboration.</li> </ul>	2.6, 4.5

## Our vision for teachers (continued)

Delivering lessons		
DESCRIPTION	TEACHERS ARE WORKING TOWARDS	APST REFERENCE
1. Teachers use whole group engagement norms in each lesson to maintain student focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing high levels of skill in using a range of student engagement norms with the purpose of involving all students in the learning sequence.</li> </ul>	3.3, 3.5
2. Teachers check for student understanding throughout a lesson in order to readjust their teaching as necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequently (every 2 to 3 minutes) checking to see that students have understood concepts and skills that are being taught.</li> <li>Becoming experts in developing questions that accurately check for understanding, are sampling students appropriately when asking questions and are responding with skill to the responses that are given.</li> <li>Readjusting the teaching sequence according to the feedback from students.</li> </ul>	3.5, 3.6, 5.2, 5.4
3. Teachers set a clear goal for each lesson so that students understand the purpose of the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Setting clear, attainable learning goals for each lesson, ensuring students understand the success criteria for reaching a lesson goal.</li> </ul>	3.1
4. Teachers ensure that prerequisite skills and knowledge for each lesson have been activated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-teaching or reviewing the critical prerequisites that link directly to the content being taught in a lesson.</li> </ul>	3.2, 3.3
5. Teachers use clear and concise language when presenting concepts, breaking down complex concepts into small conceptual components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing “bullet proof” definitions for important vocabulary and segmenting complex skills into smaller instructional units.</li> </ul>	2.5, 3.2
6. Teachers take students step-by-step through the process of learning and mastering skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying the skills that match the outcomes of a unit of learning and providing students with a step-by-step method or approach to skill mastery. Steps are modelled using real problems as far as possible.</li> </ul>	3.2
7. Teachers model, guide and constantly check for understanding as they teach skills until students are able to work independently in the application of these skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing methods of checking for student understanding of skills by getting students to describe the thinking processes used to solve problems.</li> <li>Identifying when students are ready to work independently to reinforce their skills.</li> </ul>	3.5
8. Teachers revisit the content of each lesson at the time of closure to ensure students are ready to make connections with the next learning experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisiting critical concepts and skills at the close of lessons to aid retention and to prepare students to transition to the next related learning experience.</li> </ul>	2.1

## Our vision for teachers (continued)

Professional commitment		
DESCRIPTION	TEACHERS ARE WORKING TOWARDS	APST REFERENCE
1. Teachers recognise the importance of reflecting on their teaching, often with the support of their mentors and colleagues, in order to refine and enhance their practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflecting on the effectiveness of their lesson presentation by constantly collecting objective data from students through observation, interview and checking for understanding methods.</li> <li>Using a variety of methods to gather feedback on their practice, which will be used to refine their teaching skills.</li> </ul>	1.3, 7.4
2. Teachers keep accurate records that inform their teaching and assist in supporting student progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective recording of key indicators of learning that will help them make decisions about effective teaching and learning.</li> <li>Collecting and recording data that will accurately inform the reporting of student learning.</li> </ul>	3.7
3. Teachers recognise their partnership with families and ensure that communication timely and appropriate to the development and individual needs of students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using collected data on student learning that will lead to the sharing of relevant information on the progress of each student they teach.</li> <li>Responding professionally and in a caring manner to parental feedback regarding their child's progress.</li> </ul>	3.7, 5.5, 7.3
4. Teachers use collected evidence to produce accurate, meaningful and professional reports to families about the individual progress of students, including relevant strategies for the enhancement of a student's learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Producing professionally written reports that can be supported by collected data that give an accurate and meaningful statement of the progress of a student's learning, framed in such a way that it demonstrates genuine Christian love for both children and their families.</li> <li>Providing practical strategies to enhance student's learning and actively following through and monitoring these strategies.</li> </ul>	3.7, 5.5
5. Teachers recognise the responsibility they have to develop professionally. They recognise they are on a continuum of learning themselves, just as their students are. They recognise areas that they can work on and develop strategies to ensure their own professional learning goals are achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying areas in their teaching where they either desire or need enhancement.</li> <li>Setting attainable goals to enhance their role as a teacher.</li> <li>Developing and implementing a Personal Enhancement Plan in line with the Department and School Enhancement Plans.</li> <li>Seeking to work with their colleagues, mentors and supervisors to assist in reaching their goals.</li> </ul>	6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 7.4
6. Teachers recognise their role as professional educators and that the learning needs of their students are central to their decision making. They are models of integrity to their students in the way they live their lives in the classroom and in the playground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring the decisions they make both at and outside of school recognising that these decisions can impact the learning outcomes of students and the development of a student's world view.</li> <li>Modelling an authentic biblical way of living that demonstrates to students the fruit of the Spirit.</li> </ul>	7.1, 7.2



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