

Proposal for ACLE4

Submission of Abstract

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- College Web site - www.endeavour.sa.edu.au/
- Chosen Theme
 - *What contemporary educational movements need to be engaged, to make Lutheran schooling better?*

Our Abstract

Which way? – The Endeavour Way

(Anchoring Restorative Practices and Values Education in Theology to enhance school culture)

This workshop will take participants on a voyage charting the steps taken to implement an integrated approach to key lifelong values and restorative practices, while keeping the focus of the centrality of Christ and His teaching in our school.

Positive cultural and behavioural change in schools can be challenging to navigate and it is important for Lutheran Schools in the 21st century to maintain focus on their mission and purpose. Learn how one school has approached this challenge by enhancing school culture through increased staff and student engagement, classroom practice and pastoral care structures to form *The Endeavour Way*.

This is a dynamic and interactive workshop to be presented by Marni Harding and Sandra Barry. Follow the cultural change over the last 4 years through the unique and creative implementation of restorative practices and values education at Endeavour College as they share details of the journey so far.

Curious about which way? Come and experience *The Endeavour Way*.

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Endeavour College Restorative Practices Working Group

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Cathy Willsmore

Dale Gosden

Greg Fowler (former College Pastor)

Endeavour College Leadership

Heather Vogt

Ray Soekov

Conference contact

Derek Bartels

USEFUL RESOURCES

This list includes some of the many resources that we consulted and found useful.

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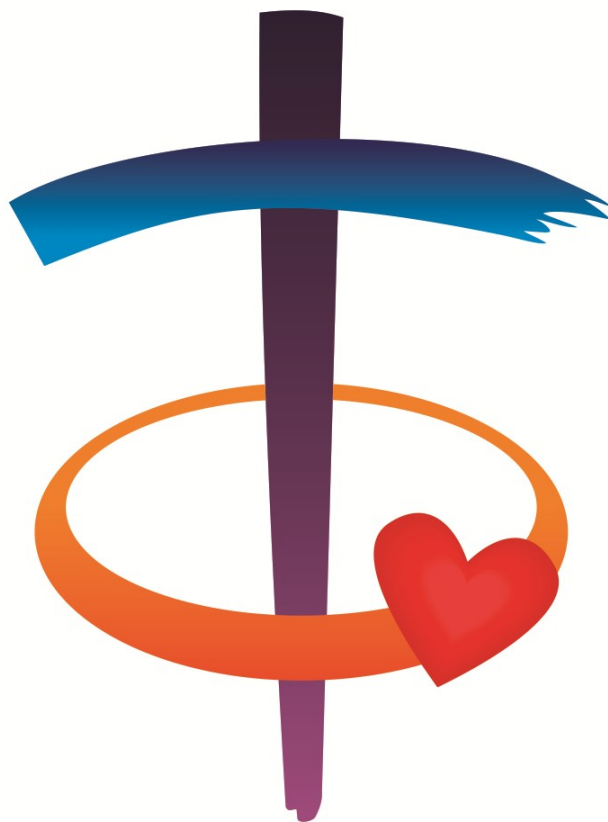
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the endeavour way

love / courage / forgiveness / hope

LOVE – it's about reflecting the unconditional LOVE of God by showing respect, compassion and kindness in our relationships.

COURAGE – it's about accepting that it takes COURAGE to own our behaviour, take responsibility for our actions and share our experiences with others.

FORGIVENESS – it's about showing FORGIVENESS and acceptance towards ourselves and others with grace.

HOPE – it's about resolving issues in a way which brings HOPE to our relationships and instils faith in our capacity to fulfil our God-given abilities.

the endeavour way

in action

living in Grace

LOVE

I am committed to....

- + **Acting** respectfully towards all people and property
- + **Accepting** others and valuing their differences
- + **Valuing** the school as a place of learning

COURAGE

I am committed to....

- + **Achieving** to the best of my abilities
- + **Participating** in school activities—give it a go!
- + **Making** my learning a priority

FORGIVENESS

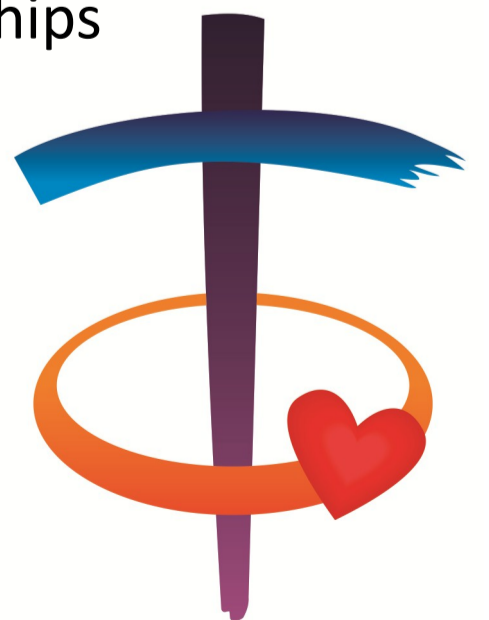
I am committed to.....

- + **Aiming** to forgive myself and others
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- + **Using** opportunities to rebuild relationships

HOPE

I am committed to....

- + **Developing** my God-given abilities
- + **Building** positive relationships
- + **Investing** in my future by being 'prepared' to learn



Which way? The Endeavour Way

Anchoring restorative practices and values education in theology to enhance school culture

Marni Harding & Sandra Barry

Presented at

Wise Up! Australian Conference of Lutheran Educators 2013

Which way? The Endeavour Way:

Anchoring restorative practices and values education in theology to enhance school culture.

Positive cultural and behavioural change in schools can be challenging to navigate and it is important for Lutheran Schools in the 21st century to maintain focus on their mission and purpose, keeping Christ and His teachings central. Endeavour College, a Lutheran secondary school in the Adelaide suburb of Mawson Lakes, has risen to the challenge by implementing an integrated approach to restorative practices and key lifelong values. The result thus far has been a marked development in school culture through increased staff and student engagement, improved classroom practice and more responsive pastoral care structures; a new way of being, known to the College community as The Endeavour Way.

A Journey of Connections Begins

For Endeavour College the restorative journey began in 2009. The College was 11 years old, with a newly appointed principal, Heather Vogt. Endeavour was an “innovative school”, with “enthusiastic teachers” and “good students” with no significant behavioural issues. It did however lack an identity beyond that of a young Lutheran secondary school in the Northern suburbs of Adelaide. Like many other schools in Australia and around the world, the leadership team at Endeavour was drawn to restorative practices as an inclusive, relational approach that focused on the development of positive relationships within the school community, with the primary intention of addressing behavioural concerns. As a result, the College undertook to implement a restorative approach with the hope of bringing about cultural and behavioural change.

While this vision was clear to management, the initial presentation about restorative justice to all staff by an external group, was not well planned or received. Restorative practices can challenge deeply held beliefs about behaviour and discipline (Blood & Thorsborne, 2005), and there was concern from some staff that the approach may not be best for the College community. There was some debate and speculation about what direction the College should take. Leadership however, remained committed to the concept as the way forward for the College and committed to take its own restorative journey, rather than follow the path others had used. This resolve led to a sense of freedom to design a tailor made model based on best practice from a series of concepts and theories. One that built upon the theological principles of the College and in all ways reflected the College itself. Hansberry (2010) also expressed this contextual imperative,

“The eventual form that Restorative Practices take in any school will be a result of that school’s unique situation and context. Restorative approaches need to be responsive to the particular needs of the school community they serve. No one size fits all and needs will be different in different contexts.” (Hansberry, 2010, p 2)

Connecting to Theology

The exploration of restorative practices in a theological context was the logical starting point for the College’s new restorative journey. The College’s direction had to be authentically reflected in all actions

Which way? The Endeavour Way:

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and beliefs. While reflecting on restorative practices and change management theory in the early stages of planning, the College also made time to be informed by the Gospel. Initial links between restorative practices and theology were reflected upon in relation to Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 6:1-11. The need for strong relationships and fairness are intrinsic in the gospel message and once again cemented the College's view that restorative practices were the right direction for the community.

Connecting with Essentials

In preparation for the journey, a restorative practices working group was formed, external consultants and trainers were engaged at various times and significant commitments in terms of time and money were made in a planned and staged approach.

The Restorative Practices Working Group

The establishment of a restorative practices working group at the College, and the provision of a regular time for this group to meet to work on the implementation process was critical to keeping restorative practices on the agenda. The group consisted of staff interested in and passionate about restorative practices, from various roles including the Pastor, the College counsellor and teaching staff. The group reported directly to management and consulted regularly with staff about the development of restorative practices within the College. The working group also delivered regular professional development to staff, in addition to the outsourced training.

Professional Development

Sourcing the appropriate restorative practices training for Endeavour staff was critically important. Initial consultation with Margaret Thorsborne of Thorsborne and Associates, Queensland, led to further confidence that the College could develop its own way forward and manage the change effectively. Early in 2010, significant time and monetary resources were allocated to train the 13 member Pastoral Care Team in restorative conference facilitation over an intensive two day period. Bill Hansberry from Hansberry Education Consulting in Adelaide assisted in the design of a professional development program and provided ongoing staff training over a period of several years.

Financial and time commitment

College management were under no illusion that the implementation of such a system and school wide culture change would require a significant monetary investment as well as an investment of time. Time was needed for the working group to meet, for interested staff to develop their practice and for those who had not yet come on board, to become accustomed to the new philosophy. Finance was allocated over several years to fund ongoing professional development, buy resources and to contract specialists for various tasks. The College anticipates, that this implementation phase will end in 2016, at which time the College hopes to be known as a truly restorative school community.

Role of the Principal

Crucial to the success of the implementation process and cultural change was the role of the principal. The principal was firm in her belief that this was the right action for the school and enabled the College to move forward in the identified direction, whilst maintaining the centrality of Christ and His teachings.

Which way? The Endeavour Way:

Anchoring restorative practices and values education in theology to enhance school culture.

Connecting with the community

A critical first step in the change management process is capturing the hearts and minds of staff (Blood & Thorsborne, 2005). Importantly for Endeavour, this process included identifying gaps and challenging usual practice in behaviour management, as well as linking in to other priorities for the school, including the College's Lutheran identity and improved learning outcomes. Developing a College wide shared vision and understanding of the direction of the school was the next critical stage of the change management process as outlined Blood & Thorsborne (2005). There was hope that restorative practices could support the school's Christian mission and assist the community in creating a relational Christ-centred approach to all aspects of school life, while improving student engagement, behaviour, and learning outcomes.

Connecting with Restorative Practices

The process of developing a shared vision for the College included building a framework for practice and assisting staff to reach an understanding of how restorative practices might create a positive impact on the school's vision for cultural change (Blood & Thorsborne, 2005). The Social Discipline Window (McCold & Wachtel, 2003) is a well-known restorative justice concept with a broad application in many settings, particularly schools, to assist in conceptualising the cultural change required to work restoratively.

The Social Discipline Window describes four basic approaches to discipline, based on the factors of high or low levels of control (limit-setting, discipline, firmness) and high or low levels of support (encouragement, nurture, kindness). The window concept provides a useful visual tool to identify where the punitive, negligent, permissive and restorative approaches to behaviour fit, and how these approaches result from greater and lesser degrees of control and support. The restorative quadrant is highlighted as desirable and most effective, by combining both high level control and high level support, to form an approach of doing things "with" people, as opposed to doing things "to" or "for" them (McCold & Wachtel, 2003).

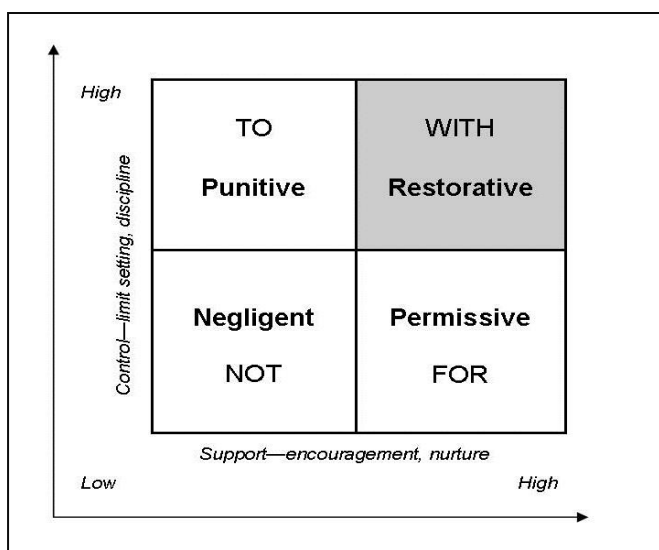


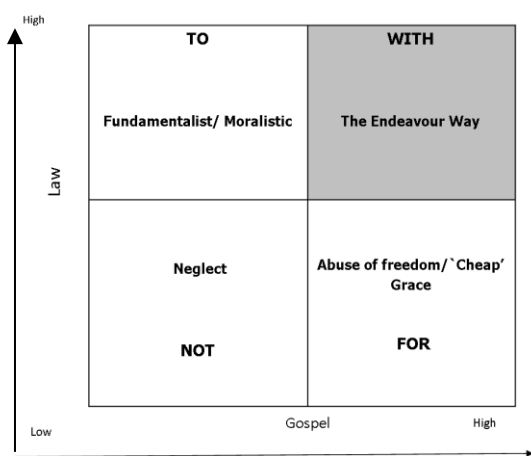
Fig.1 McCold & Wachtel, 2003

The Social Discipline Window helped staff to identify their own best practice goals and in turn, how a restorative approach was consistent with the direction the College was moving.

Which way? The Endeavour Way:

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As staff discussed restorative practices further, and learnt more about the approach, questions began to be raised about dilemmas on a theological level. Such debate centred on the relationship between God's Law, requiring obedience to a standard of moral behaviour, and the Gospel of Christ which necessitates living in Grace and allows for the forgiveness of sins. Amongst robust discussion about restorative practices and Law versus Gospel, the working group developed a way to explain the relationship that was accessible to all staff, regardless of the depth of their theological understanding in this area. The end result was a reinvention of the Social Discipline Window, depicting Laws versus Gospel, and the concept of Living in Grace, which staff aspired to.



Connecting with the College Values

A critical turning point on the College's restorative journey was the identification of the Endeavour values. Early in the implementation process, Margaret Thorsborne asked the Pastoral Care Team to articulate the school's values. While the staff readily recited the College mission statement and identified strongly with their lived experience of certain values in the College community, no one was able to articulate these in a definite or consistent way. It took courage to admit that the school's values were not explicit, and for the College community to respond positively to the challenge this presented.

As a result, the restorative practices working group began the process of identifying the Endeavour values through an extensive process of reflection, discussion, and consultation. Discussion centred on what the team knew was central to the College and the values they felt represented the school community. Reflections were made on the *A Vision for Learners and Learning in Lutheran Schools* (2005) document which already supporting the College's devotional program. After further work and consultation, Love, Courage, Forgiveness and Hope, were embraced by staff, students and families as the school's core values. The values themselves not only represented the Endeavour community, but reflected synchronicity with restorative processes, as well as the theological links that were critical to the identity and culture the College was creating. The Restorative Practices working group was quite particular about these values; the order reflected a restorative progression and the colours chosen were easily identifiable with the given value. The end result of the process of reflection, discussion and consultation was The Endeavour Way. (Appendix 1)

Which way? The Endeavour Way:

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The development of The Endeavour Way provided a common language and understanding and an increase in staff engagement and ownership of the approach was noted. The culture had started to change. The focus shifted from Restorative Practices as a way of managing behaviour, to The Endeavour Way as a way of life in the College community in which restorative practices had a key role. A combination of the Endeavour values and restorative language became embedded in all aspects of school life including policy and practice in pastoral care, curriculum and the spiritual life and wellbeing of students and staff.

Identifying the values was not enough to sustain the College through the implementation process. A more focussed outline was needed to indicate how these values were reflected in the actions and hearts of the community. *The Endeavour Way in action* (Appendix 2) was developed to clearly articulate the commitment from both students and staff, to live the school values every day.

The next stage required the College to develop effective practice to create a range of responses consistent with the Endeavour Way; ensuring policy reflected practice. Changes to the behaviour management policy were made only after staff had experienced and confirmed a restorative approach as analogous with future directions. A broad policy for student engagement was formed to reflect the love of God for each individual by seeking to provide a safe and caring environment for all members of the College community. Relevant legislation, including Valuing Safe Communities (Lutheran Education Australia), Safe Place Policy (Lutheran Church of Australia), National Safe Schools Framework (Australian Government), the Children's Protection Act, 1993 (South Australia), Protective Practices Guidelines, and Information Sharing Guidelines were referenced throughout, in order to assist the College to meet legal requirements and responsibilities.

Connecting with Values Education

Following the formal launch of the Endeavour Way, the College chose to revisit the role of values education. At this stage of the change management process, the College needed to refine the whole school approach (Blood & Thorsborne, 2005). Staff began to explore beyond the realm of pastoral care and the restorative responses already being used and looked to the teaching and learning program for opportunities to teach values more explicitly. The connections were seen within the general capabilities in the Australian Curriculum and values education soon became reflected in a number of teaching programs. These were informed by best practice in the area and served as models for other subject areas.

Flanagan in Hendry (2009, p.32) states that "If we are not modelling what we teach, then we are teaching something else." Modelling became a key driver in increasing the ownership of the Endeavour Way by students and staff, and shaping the cultural change taking place. Values based activities were trialled with staff prior to teachers using them with students. Time was invested in designing ways of engaging all learners, especially more kinaesthetic and visual learners, as well as meeting curriculum and pastoral aims. This created an invaluable alternative interpretation of the Endeavour Way in Action across the community. The College was also guided by the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools which emphasised that the most effective values education "occurs in partnership with students, staff, families and the school community as part of a whole school approach" and "articulates the values of the school community and applies these consistently in the practices of the school" (Dept. Education, Science and Training, 2005 pg. 5).

Which way? The Endeavour Way:

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Connecting with Change

The College's strategic management of the change implementation process was critical to its success in achieving cultural change. In addition to the recommended processes for implementing restorative practices, the College was also informed by the staff engagement model for values education. This suggested that staff in leadership positions have a clear understanding of the model in order to actively involve all teaching staff in whole school values based reform in the classroom. This model follows a process of engaging staff, involving staff in the big picture, introducing new pedagogical approaches, creating a new curriculum model and applying the model in practice. (Dept. Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009)

Connecting to Staff

Parallel to the focus on values education, the College continued to skill all staff in using restorative conversations in a way that was meaningful to them in their specific role. As part of the implementation process and to support the desired change in school culture, the College aimed to have all teachers and Lutheran School Officers comfortable in responding restoratively.

Over a period of approximately 3 years, the College utilised Bill Hansberry for tailor-made professional development sessions for staff, covering affect theory, hierarchy of behaviours, restorative chats, a mock conference, classroom conferencing and circle work. The Restorative Practices working group also took responsibility for the provision of training and time was routinely dedicated to this area of professional development on staff in-service days.

The College also utilised staff meeting time to reflect on and model restorative practices. This included staff sitting in a large circle where possible and practising circle work techniques. Maintaining restorative practices as an ongoing agenda item at every meeting provided a critical opportunity for staff to reflect on successes but also express concerns. The restorative practices working group also incorporated interactive professional development activities into staff meeting time, in order to maintain staff access to relevant training and support staff in the implementation process. The team were highly responsive to staff and training was based on the needs and gaps staff and the working party identified.

The majority of training activities provided opportunity for staff to practise using restorative language, restorative chats, scripts and scenarios for conversations with students, while being mentored and supported by their peers. The College's approach was consistent with Blood & Thorsborne's (2005) change management process where professional relationships are strengthened through open and honest communication allowing for the challenge of established practices. The activities staff were engaged in reflected the Endeavour Way in Action, particularly where staff showed forgiveness towards each other in the learning process.

Over time, the focus at the College became proactive and the need to respond reactively decreased significantly as a result of reduced behavioural concerns and increased levels of responsibility and self-control being reflected in student behaviour. The College deliberately changed Pastoral Care structures to allow for more proactive work to be done. Year Level Coordinators became highly accomplished restorative practitioners, mentoring and leading the teachers associated with their year levels, in a restorative approach. Village communities took on activities in extended care group time that used the

Which way? The Endeavour Way:

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Endeavour Way values as a focus, camp programs changed to reflect restorative practices and incorporate the Endeavour Way, and the Peer Support program involved Year 11s teaching Year 8s about the school's values and conducting circle work activities. These changes embodied the Endeavour Way and stayed true to the College's gospel focused mission.

Connecting with Students

As part of the strategic plan for implementation was the use of the 2012 Year 8 cohort as a focus year level. As this cohort moves through the College, they will graduate in 2016 as the first group of students to fully experience The Endeavour Way thus realising the hope of becoming a truly restorative community. This timing will coincide with Endeavour welcoming their first Year 7 students into a secondary school fully restorative context.

This focus cohort experienced a vastly different transition program. The Year 8 program changed from a simple tour and basic orientation, to the addition of a full day immediately prior to the commencement of the school year. The transitioning Year 8s aren't simply told about the Endeavour Way values; rather, using circle work methodology, they experience them first hand, and have the opportunity to identify with the values personally and to invest in the community. This transition program serves several important purposes. For the Year 8 students and a group of their core teachers, this is a critical experience of the concepts of circle work, the Endeavour Way and values education.

This transition day significantly builds social and emotional capacity by allowing the opportunity for students to work with and meet the other students who form half of their core class and the opportunity for teachers to start building their relationships with students. Students experience an early sense of belonging and the College has noted a significant increase in student and staff engagement as a result. These outcomes reflect Hansberry's assertions that

“Relationships and cohesiveness naturally build and student behaviour improves as the class comes closer into community with each other, sharing and aligning values. Curriculum and social and emotional learning can be delivered in Circle Time because of the high levels of engagement and interaction.” (Hansberry, 2013)

The transition program is supported with a second transition day during the year, to promote a further understanding of the Endeavour Way and specific restorative practices such as the conferencing process. Once again values education plays a key role in this and in 2012 the College was awarded a grant from the Association of Independent Schools in South Australia to support planning and implementation of this second transition day as a cross-curricular values education project.

As this focus cohort transitions into future year levels, the College has already implemented and continues to plan future creative applications of the Endeavour Way to support the learning, wellbeing and spiritual needs of the students. As the College moves forward it will be challenged by the need to keep promotion of the Endeavour Way engaging and relevant to future cohorts. The College is utilising consultation processes and authentic student participation in order to make this a meaningful experience for the community.

Which way? The Endeavour Way:

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Five years into the journey, the College is buoyed by high levels of student and staff engagement and daily evidence of the new identity and cultural change they set out to achieve.

Connecting to the Future

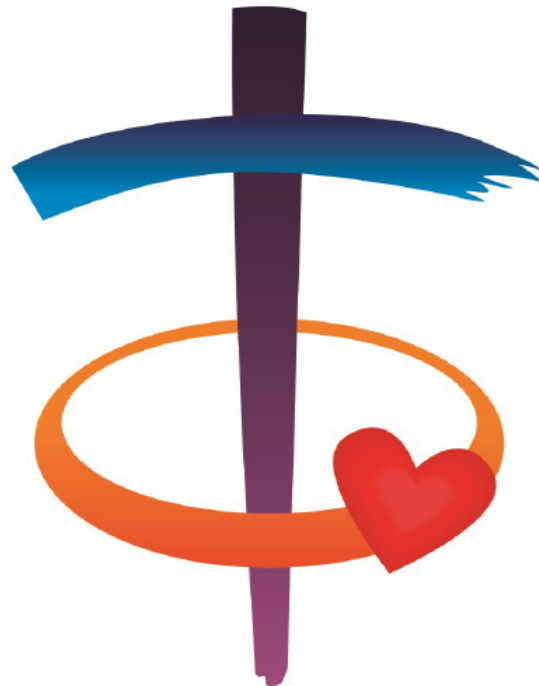
The College's journey is not yet over, and frequent review and attention to The Endeavour Way and its associated practice and policies is required in order for the school to sustain long term cultural change. At this stage, Endeavour has firmly anchored restorative practices and values education in theology in a way which has strengthened the school community. Endeavour implemented and enacted a planned change management process; took on supplies that would sustain them on the journey, and charted their own course through some challenging times, creating a new identity and culture which is consistent with everything the College has always stood for. Students and staff live in Grace every day and every day a process of Love, Courage, Forgiveness and Hope, is reflected in this community in a way that truly is The Endeavour Way...

"I will bless you with a future filled with hope—a future of success, not of suffering.¹² You will turn back to me and ask for help, and I will answer your prayers.¹³ You will worship me with all your heart and I will be with you" Jeremiah 29:11-13 (CEV)

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APPENDIX 1



the endeavour way

love / courage / forgiveness / hope

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COURAGE – it's about accepting that it takes COURAGE to own our behaviour, take responsibility for our actions and share our experiences with others.

FORGIVENESS – it's about showing FORGIVENESS and acceptance towards ourselves and others with grace.

HOPE – it's about resolving issues in a way which brings HOPE to our relationships and instils faith in our capacity to fulfil our God-given abilities.

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APPENDIX 2

Which way? The Endeavour Way:

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the endeavour way in action

living in Grace

LOVE

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- + **Acting** respectfully towards all people and property
- + **Accepting** others and valuing their differences
- + **Valuing** the school as a place of learning

COURAGE

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