

## Parents and families

A Lutheran school works as a team with parents.

Lutherans believe that God has given parents and caregivers the prime responsibility for the education of their children. Lutherans provide schools to assist parents in promoting their educational and spiritual growth. It is vital that each home and the school work together for the welfare of students on the basis of shared aims and values.

A Lutheran school holds itself accountable to parents for the progress and welfare of students. It provides structures for constant communication between the home and the school. It encourages parents to get involved in their children's schooling and to participate in school life in the variety of ways that are available.

## Community responsibility

A Lutheran school is part of the greater community.

Lutherans understand that their schools operate in a larger system where they make their own special contribution and offer choice and diversity.

Lutherans accept the responsibility they have to comply with government regulations pertaining to the schools. They appreciate and accept financial assistance from governments for the establishment, maintenance and operation of the schools, provided that it does not compromise their distinctive nature. The church commends government assistance that enables more families to use the schools and which helps them to provide programs for those with special needs.

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# What is so special about a Lutheran School?





## The Lutheran school system

Each Lutheran school belongs to a well organised system with a long and distinctive tradition.

Lutherans were the first Protestants and trace their origins back to the Reformation of western Christendom in the sixteenth century. With some seventy million members, the Lutheran church is still the largest Protestant denomination in the world. As a church with an emphasis on Biblical literacy and Christian education it has supported the provision of Christian schools from its beginnings.

The long tradition of Lutheran schooling has been part of this country's history too. Lutherans have operated schools in Australia since 1839. Currently there are a total of 85 Lutheran schools and these are located in every state and territory of the Commonwealth except the ACT. The church operates 45 early childhood centres as well. All these schools and centres are owned by the Lutheran church and are incorporated into a system with support structures at national and regional levels.

The Lutheran church also has its own tertiary institution, Australian Lutheran College, which provides special training for Lutheran teachers in order to promote a distinctive ethos in its schools.

## Basic understandings

A Lutheran school is based on some solid understandings about people and life.

God's word, as revealed in the Bible, is the authority for living and learning in each Lutheran school. Its central message is that of the gospel, the good news that our acceptance by God does not depend on our own worth or achievements but on his unconditional commitment to us as evidenced in the life and death of Jesus. Lutherans believe that through the process of Christian schooling God's Spirit is active in the lives of the community leading children and families to know and trust in God.

In a Lutheran school each student is seen as a unique person created by God. He made them and loves them and provides each of them with dignity and worth. All of them have their own talents and needs as well as the potential to live useful and fulfilled lives in the world.

Lutherans believe that all positive knowledge and learning is a great gift of God for the growth and welfare of human beings. Each school considers it important to develop a spirit of service in its students so that in their lives, studies, relationships, ambitions, values and attitudes they reflect a commitment to living useful lives for the good of others.

## A special environment

A Lutheran school provides a caring environment.

While there is a major focus on teaching and learning, each school strives to offer far more than that. When a family joins a Lutheran school they become part of a community which strives to be a secure place which offers warm, caring relationships and a safe environment. A Lutheran school sees each student as being unique with their own particular gifts and needs. The approach is not to ask what students and their families can do for the school, but what the school can do for them.

Lutheran schools have developed a special vision for themselves which is based on the teachings of the Bible. As a Christian learning community each school aspires to provide a culture and ethos permeated by the core values of love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, service, humility, courage, hope, quality and appreciation.

## A good education

A Lutheran school embraces high standards of teaching and learning.

Each school strives to provide an education of excellence. It recruits and hires well qualified, professional teachers. It incorporates into the learning program the curriculum requirements and guidelines set in place by the relevant state authority. It caters for a wide range of abilities, including gifted and talented students as well as those with learning difficulties. The teaching program emphasises key competencies, stimulates thinking skills and integrates technology into the curriculum. Each Lutheran school strives to provide a quality learning experience for all its students.

A Lutheran school is also committed to a wide range of quality co-curricular activities in areas like sports and the arts.

## Christian growth

A Lutheran school promotes Christian growth and development.

Each school integrates Christian understandings into all its teaching. The Lutheran system has also developed its own Christian Studies curriculum to provide students with a knowledge of Christian beliefs and teachings based on the Bible. Each school intentionally employs teachers who are able and active in supporting students in a Christian approach to life.

A Lutheran school provides regular worship including daily devotions. There is a commitment to encourage and nurture the Christian faith in each individual student.