A document such as a Strategic Plan is a tangible sign of the optimism we feel as we move further into the twenty first century. The original founders of Fintonia faced many daunting challenges but took a positive and creative path in preparing young women of the nineteenth century for their life in the twentieth, even though they could not have anticipated that this would have involved two world wars and the Great Depression.

As we move further into the twenty first century, parents, students and staff are all focused on working together to ensure Fintonia continues to thrive, and most particularly, that we continue preparing our students to take their place as active leaders in our ever changing world.

Suzy Chandler
Principal

“It is always wise to look ahead, but difficult to look further than you can see.” Churchill
Our School

Fintona is an independent, non-denominational day school for girls, which is renowned for high academic and personal achievement.

Situated in the inner eastern suburb of Balwyn, we cater for girls from Prep to Year 12 and offer a co-educational early learning program for girls and boys. The International Baccalaureate is taught from ELC to Year 6. Fintona holds true to its motto Age Quod Agis - Do what you do well. From its commencement in 1896, Fintona has espoused the view that ‘girls can do anything’ and has encouraged students to be critical, independent thinkers empowered to take their place as active, effective citizens and leaders. With the extra attention we provide in a small school environment, our girls consistently achieve among the highest VCE and NAPLAN results in Australia.

Our Ethos

A Fintona student can be recognised as one who faces her life with the simple belief that to live is to learn. In every endeavour, she aspires to do the very best she can. She is able to learn and work independently, yet enjoys the opportunity for interdependent and collaborative work. She holds secure moral principles and beliefs, believes in a healthy body, whilst remaining attuned to the intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions of her being.

As a communicator she is poised and confident, is largely self-directed but will ask for help if needed. For her, the pursuit of excellence is assumed, not contrived, and she knows this innately. We hope that she accepts her limitations and believes that within those limits she can be inspired to make a difference. She nurtures a love of tradition and heritage whilst maintaining a positive vision for the future. She is protective and proud of the School’s reputation and her own and aspires to be truthful and kind in her interactions with others. Her outlook is optimistic and global, essentially because she is tolerant and believes in the inherent decency of all people. She tries to look upon others as individuals rather than a crowd, and is respectful of difference. Like all people, we hope she understands that she has her faults, yet she also reflects on her own behaviour. In all aspects of her life, she eschews what is vulgar and mean-spirited, and directs herself to what is good and noble.
Education

Fintona’s ethos will drive the focus of the educational strategies of the School. It will remain a small, caring girls’ school, which strives to consistently achieve outstanding academic results and seeks to provide a creative, flexible, independent education. Fintona’s educational ethos aims to foster adaptive thinkers and learners with a well-developed sense of social justice, which incorporates excellent opportunities for personal growth and development.

Strategies

- Ensure the individual needs of each of its students are carefully considered, whilst developing a cohesive and tolerant school community
- Seek a balance between tradition and innovation whilst setting a high standard of intellectual rigour for our students and providing opportunities for their self-expression
- Create an environment that fosters active participation, collaboration and engagement in learning for students and staff
- Develop a learning environment that will encourage students to become critical, independent and imaginative thinkers with a disciplined work ethic
- Provide rich and relevant curricula that addresses the diverse needs of the students, having critically evaluated educational initiatives developed by government, academics and researchers to inform school practice
- Ensure that technology is a relevant tool in a rich array of methods for delivering education

Fostering adaptive thinkers and learners
Pastoral Care

Fintona will maintain the tradition of pastoral care as a defining element of its education where students will be known and respected as individuals. Fintona is a community where teachers, students and their families work together and value each other. Pastoral care provides academic and emotional support and ensures a child develops a strong sense of responsibility, self-discipline, care and acceptance of the views of other people.

Strategies

- Provide a relevant and responsive program to equip students with personal and social skills for school and beyond
- Continue to provide professional pastoral care to act as a safety net for students, parents and staff
- Foster social awareness and encourage our students to be active members of the wider community
- Continue to provide an inclusive school community
- Foster an environment where social media is contextualised within a broader social framework

A community working together
Staff

Fintona staff will be committed, innovative practitioners of the highest calibre, and outstanding role models. The School will ensure that the conditions of employment are such that they enable Fintona to recruit and retain staff at the highest level. Fintona staff will be encouraged to be progressive educators and leaders who contribute to a vibrant, creative and continual educational dialogue.

Strategies
- Maintain our focus on staff as the foremost tool in a first class education
- Create physical learning environments that are well-maintained, flexible, of an appropriate size and include modern, appropriate furniture and equipment
- Ensure the School is well-resourced in keeping with current educational best practice
- Create work and leisure spaces for staff that provide for collaboration and reflection and promote energy and creativity
- Encourage all staff to perform to the highest level by providing a supportive professional culture, opportunities for professional development and competitive salaries that reflect the qualifications, expertise and expectations of a Fintona staff member
- Recognise the value of a diverse staff and be aware of the necessity for maintaining an active succession plan and for providing professional pathways where possible
- Recognise and value the commitment of staff in a diverse range of curricular activities

Committed, innovative practitioners
Community

Fintona will foster strong relationships with parents, past parents, Old Fintonians and friends of the School. We will pursue engagement with the whole school community, the wider Australian and international community and develop a global outlook in staff and students. Students should use the benefits of their education, not only for personal advancement, but also for the benefit of the broader society. The School will develop creative partnerships and connections with a wide range of local, national and international individuals, groups and institutions to further its educational and social aims and raise the School’s profile both locally and further afield.

Strategies

- Continue to enhance communication avenues to ensure the whole community, including alumni, is kept appraised of school activities.
- Encourage Old Fintonians to give of their expertise to current students and develop and maintain social and professional networks.
- Foster partnerships with parents as an important aspect of the education of their children.
- Maintain existing exchanges both physically and through technology with sister schools.
- Augment existing programs that foster a national and international focus.
- Explore opportunities to engage actively with universities, government and other relevant institutions.

Fostering strong relationships
Environmental Sustainability

Fintona is committed to developing ways to increase the sustainability of the School buildings and grounds and using opportunities to continue to educate students to be sensitive to the environment and to practise sustainability both at School and beyond.

Strategies

- Develop an environmental sustainability plan that addresses: improved waste recycling, reduction of the use of paper, power and water; ensure waste disposal is consistent and effectively managed
- Continue to develop the School grounds in a sustainable manner in terms of water conservation, drought tolerance and heat protection for students both within and outside buildings
- Continue to educate students to be good environmental citizens regarding litter, recycling, water and conservation
- Seek collaborative partnerships for environmental initiatives

Practising sustainability at School and beyond
Fintona will pursue a prudent, efficient and professional approach to business management to ensure the maintenance of our reputation, competitiveness and best practice. Fintona will ensure the generation of revenue beyond running costs to fund capital works and educational initiatives.

**Strategies**

- Continue a conservative approach to managing the School finances to ensure a sound financial position
- Sustain an appropriate surplus to fund future capital improvements
- Maintain enrolment levels consistent with the financial and strategic plans of the School

- Ensure all operations, practices and protocols are maintained in accordance with relevant accounting standards and government regulations
- Pursue cost effective provisions of services to the School, whilst ensuring high quality delivery
- Pursue all applicable grants responsibly to enable development of facilities and services whilst ensuring their sustainability
- Where possible, engage with providers who display professional and sustainable practices

A prudent, efficient and professional approach
Buildings, grounds, infrastructure and future plans

Fintona’s buildings and grounds are harmonious and aesthetic spaces, which foster the academic and personal development of the learning community and reflect the School’s history, ethos and aspirations.

The School will continue to review, refresh and improve our facilities to allow for the effective delivery of our education. Decisions regarding refurbishment, re-assignment or design and construction of buildings must consider the optimal delivery of education and pastoral care in a safe caring environment with regard to the principles of sustainability.

Strategies

• The School will develop a Building Master plan, which will set the framework for future capital works for the whole School campus
• Capital works will be implemented in a fiscally conservative manner over a number of years
• Ensure existing infrastructure and planned developments are adequate for the future direction of the School
• Provide an overall ambience that is pleasant and has a sense of history and culture
• Preserve as much open space as possible
• Develop grounds where planting, pathways and piazzas link creative, innovative learning areas
• Continue the high standard of grounds and building maintenance
• Provide facilities to enable staff to work at the highest level
• Where opportunities present themselves, investigate the strategic acquisition of land surrounding the School to provide opportunities for future buildings

A sense of history and culture