



Founded 1982

THE HILLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

From the Principal March 13 2009 - Our Non-Denominational Character

In the last newsletter readers will recall that I wrote about our co-educational character and the benefits of this over single sex schooling. In this edition, I take another central ideal of the School and that is education is best offered within a non-denominational context. This does not mean, however, that Hills is value-free. Rather we aim to teach and develop in each student those humanitarian values which are fundamental to a modern democratic society – Australia.

We do this in a number of ways-

- through our mission and core educational beliefs,
- our written policies and the curriculum we offer,
- the way our school community is organised and led,
- the behaviours we condone and reward, and
- the relationships which are established between members of our community.

The Hills Grammar School has a shared responsibility for teaching values with parents, the local community and wider society.

Our students acquire values through their experiences at home, at school and in other social contexts and for this reason The Hills Grammar School cannot and must not be value-free. We aim to foster in each student those universally acknowledged humanitarian values that are common to all societies while being sensitive to the varied cultural backgrounds of our students, staff and families.

Our school works with a clear purpose to help each of our students to acquire values that will support- a love of deep learning (scholarship), a personal belief system and ethical standards (personal development), positive relationships and civic responsibility (citizenship) – the School's Mission.

While The Hills Grammar School is neutral in its religious stance and therefore does not promote any particular religious belief, it is acknowledged that religion is important in the lives of many of our staff, students and families as a basis for fostering ethical standards, social responsibility and moral values in their personal lives.

In keeping with this recognition Hills has formally adopted a framework of universal values which are humanitarian in nature and underpin all of the School's policies and programs.

VALUES FRAMEWORK

- 1. Accountability** taking personal responsibility for all actions in an open and transparent manner
- 2. Honesty** acting with sincerity and seeking the truth
- 3. Service** recognising and responding to the needs of others with care and compassion
- 4. Integrity** acting in accordance with the principles of moral and ethical conduct
- 5. Respect** valuing ourselves and treating others and the environment with consideration and dignity
- 6. Tolerance** acknowledging and understanding others' differences and accepting diversity
- 7. Fairness** acting in a manner which is socially just and protects the rights and privileges of all in a free democratic society
- 8. Excellence** seeking to accomplish one's best

In undertaking its role of forming these values in our students, The Hills Grammar School provides a wide range of opportunities through the academic and pastoral curricula as well as its co-curricular program. The learning experiences provided help each student to develop his or her capacity for moral reasoning and judgement by recognising the values that are operating in the social issues which confront their state, nation and global society as well as those operating in their daily life.

In addition to their place in the formal programs of the School, values permeate the total life of the School. A conscious effort is made to ensure that the School's values are reflected in the way in which it operates.

All relationships in our school community reinforce values – students with students, teachers with students, teachers with teachers and other staff members, and staff with parents and other community members.

The School Community Code of Conduct which has been established recognises the importance of relationships and is outlined in the Redbook-

At all times, in public places and within the perimeter of the School or at school organised functions, behaviour is expected to be in accordance with this code of conduct-

- *I will respect every student's right to quality education.*
- *I will be regular in my attendance, punctual to class and properly prepared for lessons.*
- *I will be honest and considerate toward others.*
- *I will be polite, act safely and show respect to all persons and property.*
- *I will take pride in myself and my school.*

Values are also formed by the modelling teachers provide through the personal and professional standards they set, through the teaching / learning methods they employ in their classrooms and by the way the whole school is organised and managed – by the way students are grouped, methods of assessing and reporting, ways of communicating, processes of student welfare and discipline and so on.

As leader of the School, my role as Principal is very important in establishing high standards and fostering positive values in all members of our community. Values permeate the whole atmosphere of the School and are reflected in all that we do and say. As a non-denominational school the expression of our core values influences the tone of our School and its effectiveness as an educational institution.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Hippo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'R' at the beginning and a period at the end.

School Principal