



## REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD MAY 2022

### PURPOSE OF THE NETWORK

Anglican Schools Australia (ASA) is a Network of General Synod and membership is open to all Australian Anglican schools. ASA is a collegial body comprising a diverse range of schools – urban, regional and rural, low through to high fee, single sex and co-educational, independent and systemic, day tuition and boarding. Overall, there is a strong commitment to the socially disadvantaged through the provision of bursaries and scholarships, Indigenous education initiatives, community service and extension of the offering of each school's activities into local communities and parishes. Each school is governed by a School Council at the local level, is fulfilling its Christian, academic and pastoral mission, is well managed financially and is meeting the needs of the school and wider community.

ASA is recognised by the General Synod of The Anglican Church of Australia under Part V of the *Strategic Issues, Task Forces and Other Bodies Canon 19, 1998* as a Network. Our purpose is as follows:

The Network, giving honour to God, putting God first and working within God's will, seeks to:

- Provide a forum at National level for Anglican schools to facilitate discussion particularly on spiritual, moral and values related issues as they have a bearing on education.
- Be an effective network of the General Synod of the Anglican Church.
- Achieve recognition of Anglican schools as part of the mission of the Anglican Church.
- Engage with the Commonwealth Government, national Anglican agencies, other national education bodies and industry groups on matters which affect the Church's mission through Anglican schools.
- Be a forward-looking, dynamic organisation aiming to develop a strong unity of purpose among Anglican schools.
- Report to General Synod on major matters discussed at the Network.

## ANGLICAN SCHOOLS

There are over 160 Anglican schools (and affiliated schools) located in 19 Dioceses across Australia. Our schools educate more than 160,000 pupils. Anglican schools are the third largest schooling sector in Australia, after the government and Catholic schools.

## GOVERNANCE

The work of the Network is managed by an elected Management Committee comprising school Principals, educational administrators and school Chaplains. Generally the Committee meets four times per year, with additional meetings held by teleconference as required. Due to continued health and travel restrictions associated with the COVID-19 global pandemic, all meetings in 2021, including the Annual General Meeting, were held via ZOOM. The increase from two to three-year terms for members of ASA's Management Committee has provided ongoing stability during these testing times.

October 2021 witnessed the departure of three Committee members: Ms Kerry Robertson, State Representative for Western Australia, who retired as Principal of Frederick Irwin Anglican School (2011-2021) and Chaplains, The Reverend Matthew Shorten and The Reverend Helen Creed. We thank them for their service to the Management Committee and for their commitment to Anglican schooling. The Committee welcomed Mr Benjamin Lomas (WA) and Chaplains The Reverend Hans Christiansen (VIC) and The Reverend Gillian Moses (QLD) as new members. Membership of the current Committee is noted below:

### Management Committee 2022

President	Mrs Judith Tudball
President Elect	Mrs Debbie Dunwoody
Immediate Past President	Dr Mark Sly
Chief Executive Officer	The Reverend Peter Laurence OAM

### State Representatives

Canberra & Goulburn	Mrs Fiona Godfrey
New South Wales	Dr David Nockles
Queensland	Ms Sherril Butterworth
South Australia	Mr Tim Browning
Tasmania	Dr Rob McEwan
Victoria	Mr Adrian Farrer
Western Australia	Mr Benjamin Lomas
Chaplain	The Reverend Hans Christiansen
Chaplain	The Reverend Gillian Moses

## NATIONAL OFFICE

The ASA office is located at the Anglican Schools Commission (ASC) in Perth. It is led by the Chief Executive Officer, The Reverend Peter Laurence OAM. He oversees a team of dedicated staff who serve the needs of both ASA and the Perth-based ASC. ASA staff include: Chief Financial Officer Irene Clarke, Director of Communications Aila Dann, Executive Assistant Hazel Cole and Finance Officers Asher Dukic (to August 2021) and Kerry Campbell.

ASA's work is facilitated through subscriptions paid by member schools, as well as surpluses generated through the annual conference and general revenue. The ASC continues to underwrite some of the costs associated with running the national Network, for which we are most grateful.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

The Management Committee continues to act within the current ASA Strategic Plan (developed in 2016), which affirms our core purpose as being to support and serve Anglican schools in fulfilling their Christian Mission. The Strategic Plan is delivered through three core activities which contribute to the Christian life of Anglican schools:

- Collegiality and Collaboration
- Research and Development Initiatives
- Advocacy and Alliances

Management Committee's scheduled Strategic Planning Workshop for developing the next iteration of the Network's Strategic Plan was initially postponed for 12 months from June 2020 to June 2021 because of ongoing disruption and lockdowns triggered by the global pandemic. Continued disruptions and uncertainty throughout 2021 caused the workshop to be rescheduled to November 2021 and then to June 2022. Once developed the plan will guide ASA's growth over the next five years. Feedback from a survey distributed to member schools will inform the Committee's discussions and decisions.

The 2021 Conference (12-13 August), our first ever Virtual Conference, was an organisational triumph for the Melbourne Conference Organising Committee. They chose 'Intersection' as their theme. Delegates were informed and inspired by a number of keynote speakers. The closing Service of Worship was deeply moving, an act of celebration of our Anglican schools, albeit in a virtual way. The Conference provided collegiality and fellowship at a time of need, especially with NSW, Victoria and the ACT in lockdown during the Conference.

In 2021 The Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Reverend & Right Honourable Justin Welby, bestowed the Lambeth Lanfranc Award for Education & Scholarship upon our CEO, The Reverend Peter Laurence OAM. Reverend Laurence received the award for his achievements in making an Anglican education accessible for thousands of Australian families, through establishing and expanding a national network of low-fee Anglican schools; and for his dedication in representing Anglican schools nationally, including his leadership in the development of work on Anglican Identity in schools.

The Management Committee carefully considered the financial impact of the global pandemic on schools in setting its membership levies for 2021 and 2022. Accordingly, it was decided to freeze membership levies at the 2020 rate for both years. Schools experiencing greater financial hardship were able to receive levy waivers as well as financial support to attend the annual conference.

## **NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

ASA's National Conference is our key annual event. Held each August in a different state or territory, the three-day Conference is a gathering of Principals, Chaplains, senior staff, Chairs of School Council and other governors who come together to listen to guest speakers and discuss issues of common interest.

### **Perth Conference**

Our 2022 Conference is being organised by the Western Australian members of ASA. They have chosen 'Lifted in Spirit' as the theme, which could not be more appropriate for the times. We are privileged to have secured the Archbishop of York, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Stephen Cottrell, as one of the Keynote Speakers at the Conference.

ASA continues to offer financial support for conference attendance for schools who may not have the financial ability to register delegates. ASA offers some limited bursary assistance for conference attendance.

**ADVOCACY**

The President and CEO continue to advocate for and on behalf of Anglican schools. Implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has continued to be an important focus.

The President and CEO continue to liaise with the Federal Government to advocate on behalf of Anglican schools. While ASA is regularly consulted by Government and approached by Senate Committees for comment as a key peak body within education, ASA is careful to express views in areas where there is broad agreement across Member schools.

On other matters, the CEO meets regularly with key Anglican agencies and Church leaders. The President and CEO also meet a number of times a year with colleagues involved in independent schooling across Australia, as members of Independent Schools Australia's (ISA) National Consultative Group.

**COMMUNICATION**

The main forms of communication continue to be ASA's website, the online magazine ASA News and ASA's Facebook page. ASA News is distributed to all Anglican schools, dioceses and related Anglican entities and continues to experience a broad readership. Key contacts in Anglican schools receive ASA News directly. It is available on the ASA website, and each story is released individually via the ASA Facebook page.

The ASC's Director of Teaching & Learning has continued to review and develop the Religious Studies Curriculum (Pre-Primary to Year 12). Sample units are available to all ASA schools from the ASC website (password protected). The focus of unit development over the last 12 months has been on Aboriginal Spirituality and Climate Change.

**FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

A key focus for 2022 is the development of ASA's Strategic Plan for the next five years. In addition, the Management Committee and Chaplains' Consultative Committee will

- Continue to run the ASA Student Celebration, to enable ASA to celebrate and involve our students in the annual conference. The Student Celebration was developed to provide schools with an opportunity to showcase their community service, mission and service-learning projects to the wider Anglican schools community;
- Continue the development of new online units of work for use by Religious Studies teachers in Anglican schools across Australia; and
- Foster partnerships with other Anglican schooling entities beyond Australia.

**PLANNED 2022 MEETING DATES**

The Management Committee plan to meet at least four times in 2022. The Annual General Meeting is held within the annual Conference to ensure the maximum number of delegates can attend.

<b>Meeting Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Management Committee Meeting	4 March 2022	ZOOM
Management Committee Meeting and Strategic Planning Workshop	2 - 3 June 2022	Melbourne
Management Committee Meeting	14 August 2022	ZOOM
Annual General Meeting	16 August 2022	ZOOM
Management Committee Meeting	7 October 2022	Melbourne

The Chaplains' Consultative Committee traditionally meets in Melbourne in late May or early June prior to ASA's Management Committee meeting. The date and location of this meeting in 2022 are to be confirmed.

**CONCLUSION**

The start of 2021 heralded great hope that the worst of the global pandemic was behind us; however, this past year has presented ongoing disruption with continued lockdowns and a great deal of uncertainty. While it has been an intense year in many ways, I am reminded that intensity is not such a bad thing. It can help us to do things efficiently and effectively and ultimately we are stronger and wiser for the lived experience. On a positive note we have learned to put the needs of others before our own, knowing that serving others brings intrinsic joy, happiness and hope.

Mrs Judith Tudball  
PRESIDENT