

# ADELAIDE HIGH SCHOOL CIS FIVE YEAR REVIEW

## APRIL 2011 SUMMARY

Adelaide High School undertook the CIS Five Year review in February 2011.

### Accreditation History

A Preliminary Accreditation Visit was conducted in September 2004 and 'Candidate' status was granted to the school in October 2004. In November 2004 the school embarked upon the first phase of the self study by undertaking the community survey conducted by Endicott College. In February 2005 the main part of the self study began. An Accreditation Team Visit took place in March 2006 and CIS Accreditation was awarded in May 2006. A first Report on Progress and Planning was completed by the school in 2007. The Five Year Report was completed in January 2011 and followed by a Five Year Visit which is the subject of this report.

In January 2011 Adelaide High School completed the Five Year Report following the protocol of the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. The Five Year Report was prepared by the school in a professional, concise and systematic manner. Leaders were identified, teams were reconstituted and the writing of a descriptive profile for each of the 7 Report Sections took place. This was in fact a 'mini self-study'. Attention was paid to each of the recommendations, actions were documented, ratings were reviewed and consideration was given to future proposals.

The Five Year Visit took place over three days 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> February. The Co-Chairs have had experience as members of CIS Accredited schools and have been CIS members/Co-Chairs of other CIS school visits.

### SECTION A: PHILOSOPHY & OBJECTIVES (P&O)

Visiting Team Recommendation from 2006	School's 2010 Rating	Visitors' 2011 Rating
<b>1. That the Leadership Team seeks additional ways to increase student and parent involvement in any future revision of the Vision and Priorities Statement.</b>	Completed	Completed
<b>2. That the Leadership Team and staff explore ways to ensure that the sharing of best practice and its application to classroom settings be further encouraged.</b>	In Progress	In Progress/ Ongoing

In 2008 a review of the P & O took place in which all constituents of the school community were invited to participate. There was extensive involvement of staff, and the Governing Council. Parents were invited to give feedback on drafts of the P & O and specific involvement was sought from the Vietnamese Parents Association and Greek Parents Association. The views of Student representatives were also sought. In June 2009 the Governing Council, after suggesting amendments, approved and adopted the current statements of Philosophy and Objectives which comprises a Vision for the school, articulating; community '*Wellbeing, Learning and Culture*' and a school Priorities Statement which articulates specific attributes. The CIS Five Year Visitors found that

the school's philosophical statements provide a basis for all decision making, are the drivers of strategic planning and are generally known and understood by the school community.

It was evident to the Visitors that the school motto *non scholae sed vitae* plays an important role in guiding thinking, decision making and action in the school. Indeed looking to the future was a recurring theme in the discussions held with many members of the school community. Now that the school has a revised set of philosophical statements it will be necessary to devising methods by which it is able to gauge and measure its success in achieving both its Vision and Priorities.

In the Five Year Report submitted by AHS the school has identified a number of ways in which the sharing of best practice and its application to classroom settings has been carried out within the school. These include:

- Regularly placing the 'sharing of good practice' on the agenda of all Learning Area meetings.
- The comprehensive documentation of Learning and Assessment Plans.
- The development and sharing of Interdisciplinary Units.
- Learning focussed staff meeting.
- Celebration of good practice and exceptional teaching.
- Focus on teaching and learning on in-service training days.
- The use of Leading Teachers as mentors.
- Working with Universities on Teaching Practicum Programs.
- Teachers within each Learning Area participating in State-wide cluster groups.
- Professional development focussing on good practice in delivering the new SACE.
- Professional development focussing on good practice in the Middle School.
- Staff participation in utilising ICT as a learning tool.
- Attendance at workshops on good practice and feedback AHS teachers.
- Planned visits to observe good practice in other schools.
- Encouragement of informal peer observations within AHS.
- Develop documentation within each Learning Area that includes description of appropriate methodologies.

The Visitors were greatly encouraged by the improvements that have been made in identifying and sharing good practice throughout the school. The initiative has now been embedded within the culture of the school and is seen as an integral part of the school's program of continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

## SECTION B - CURRICUULM

The Visitors noted that there was a high level of enthusiasm amongst staff towards improving all aspects of teaching and learning. This enthusiasm was associated with what is now an embedded culture of sharing resources and good practices. There is a sense of pride amongst staff in striving to attain new levels of excellence individually and collectively, towards which end, a willingness to mentor others makes a major contribution. Interdisciplinary units and activities are widespread in the curriculum and teachers are very aware of their roles in spreading Internationalism.

Visiting Team Recommendation from 2006	School's 2010 Rating	Visitors' 2011 Rating
<b>1. The Leadership Team explore ways to ensure that a wide range of appropriate teaching strategies are used across the curriculum.</b>	In Progress	In Progress / On Going
<b>2. The Leadership Team ensure that ways to link whole school curriculum review to Professional Learning are investigated.</b>	In Progress	In Progress

The school has responded to Recommendation 1, by putting in place a range of strategies:

- The incorporation of new technologies in classrooms.
- Ensuring Learning Area action plans include methodology as a focus.
- Including methodology as a focus in Learning Area meetings.
- The sharing of good practice is a regular agenda item for a range of meetings.
- Spotlight sessions have provided staff PD.
- Staff induction and training for the new SACE, PLP and Research Project has further facilitated the use of various teaching strategies.
- The school has supported professional learning with release time, covering financial costs and providing laptops for all staff.

After discussions with staff and school leaders, and a review of the evidence which was presented, it is clear that great progress has been made on this recommendation.

Recommendation 2:

The 2006 Visiting Team commented that, '...the school generously supports professional development of teachers but this does not always appear to be linked to wider whole school curriculum goals'.

The school has responded by:

- Having the Leadership Team develop Professional Learning foci for the whole staff.
- The production of a Middle School DVD providing feedback from students to teachers.
- Providing the opportunity for staff to participate as members of a curriculum and professional development committee that will ensure a strong connection between curriculum and Professional Development.

In conversation with the Five Year Visitors, it was mentioned by several staff members that the CIS process has been an important element in driving Professional Learning.

## SECTION C – GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Visiting Team Recommendation from 2006	School's 2010 Rating	Visitors' 2011 Rating
<b>1. The Governing Council, possibly with the assistance of outside advisers, clarifies and refines the respective roles of the Governing Council and the Principal in line with CIS standards.</b>	Completed	Completed
<b>2. The Governing Council develops a policy manual that includes procedure for: a) Induction of new members b) The evaluation of its own performance.</b>	Completed	Completed
<b>3. The Council Chair revise the process for the appraisal of the Principal to incorporate an appeals procedure.</b>	Rejected	Agreed

The Principal of AHS is well regarded by the school community as a visionary leader who has created a highly effective school and brought many positive developments. The Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) will be appointing an Acting Principal to lead the school for the remainder of the school year. The present Principal has the option to return to his post at AHS in January 2012. If he chooses not to take this option a new substantive Principal will be appointed. The Chair of the Governing Council is a member of the appointment panel for the Acting Principal and if required for the appointment panel of the substantive Principal.

### Recommendation 1

The Governing Council utilised the services of the South Australian Association of State Schools Organisation (SAASSO) to provide governance training in 2006 and again in 2010. The focus of the training was on developing an understanding of the respective roles of The Principal and the Governing Council and an understanding of the Governing Councils alignment with (DECS) requirements.

### Recommendation 2

The Governing Council has a policy manual which contains its Constitution, approved by the Minister of Education and Children's Services and amended March 2008, a Code of Practice, revised May 2007, and a set of Standing Orders. These documents clearly set out the roles, responsibilities and expected conduct of the Council and demonstrate its relationship with, and alignment to, DECS. Induction and training of new Council members by SAASSO has been offered and accepted by all newly appointed members.

### Recommendation 3

The Five Year CIS Visitors accept the school's rejection of the Visiting Team's Recommendation concerning the appraisal of the Principal. The school thoroughly conforms to the DECS policy

through which the appraisal of the Principal is the responsibility of the Regional Director of Education.

**Additional Observations:**

AHS is at maximum enrolment and each year is oversubscribed with prospective students. The South Australian Minister of Education announced in 2010 that the school enrolment numbers will be increased by a further 250 students. The present facilities are not able to accommodate the proposed increase in student numbers. A number of alternative plans have been proposed that include the construction of additional facilities on the present campus and the construction of an additional campus. Planning restrictions placed upon the present heritage listed site and on encroachment upon park land, limit the possibilities of construction on the present campus. The delay in providing a solution to the dilemma of facilities versus student numbers has created a certain level of concern amongst the school community.

The Visitors commend the school for the extensive progress which has been made in linking whole school curriculum review to Professional Learning.

## SECTION D - STAFF

Visiting Team Recommendation from 2006	School's 2010 Rating	Visitors' 2011 Rating
<b>1. The Leadership Team explores ways to implement the sharing and application of good practice in the classroom.</b>	In Progress	In Progress

### Recommendation 1

The ways by which the school has encouraged the sharing of good practice to further develop excellent teaching and encourage high level learning have been documented in the Visitor's Observations to Section A.

In discussion with senior managers and teachers it was evident that these measures have been successful and that staff are keen to extend their skills. Adelaide High School is a learning focused school engaging both students and staff and the concentration given to student learning is a major strength of the school.

The Visitors were impressed by the lively and highly productive professional staff dialogue concerning curriculum design and content, curriculum delivery and student learning. Teachers and managers demonstrated great enthusiasm towards continuous learning improvement.

### Additional Observations:

AHS provides staff with a wide range of professional development opportunities. These range from those initiated by DECS, i.e. New SACE training, those identified as school priorities in the Annual Site Plan and Organisational Plan, and those initiated by staff as personal priorities. DECS has mandated that all full time staff must participate in 37 ½ hours professional development each year at their own expense. In return the school year has been shortened by one week. PD provision within AHS staff meetings and personal professional reading goes some way to fulfilling each teachers personal participation requirement.

Professional Development funding is provided to the school in a form of a small annual budget allocation from DECS. In order to provide a more appropriate level of professional development, the school diverts funds from its allocated budget and additional income to supplement the DECS funding.

Professional development is mostly provided utilising the expertise of AHS staff, through the sharing of good practice in the Eastern Region School Cluster, through professional associations and through outsourced expertise. The school operates a successful system of feedback to all staff by those who have attended courses and other professional development. Whilst the provision of professional development is fairly comprehensive, the school recognises that there is room for improvement in the management of its coordination and in its documentation.

By 2012 the school will have completed the introduction of a one to one laptop program. It will be necessary for the school to develop appropriate pedagogies and devise methodologies to ensure that this new technological resource is used as an effective learning tool in all Learning Areas.

There is a well documented performance management process based on state-wide approved guidelines. The school reports that they have moved some way into embedding this line managed process into the culture of the school. Some training has been provided to help senior and middle managers give feedback. The Visitors noted that implementation of the process was applied in varying degrees across the school.

## SECTION E – STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Visiting Team Recommendation from 2006	School's 2010 Rating	Visitors' 2011 Rating
<b>1. The Leadership Team in conjunction with Learning Support staff clearly articulate the referral process for identifying students with special needs and communicate this to all staff.</b>	Completed	Completed
<b>2. The Leadership Team clearly identify the career and tertiary education preparation process.</b>	Completed	In Progress

### Recommendation 1

Adelaide High School is supportive of students with individual needs and disabilities.

The Coordinator of Learning Support at Adelaide High School has responsibility for overseeing the operations of educational support for students with learning needs, the development of programs and support for gifted and talented students and the oversight of the Hearing Impaired Centre. Utilising DECS guidelines on the identification and support of students with learning needs and the provision of a Negotiated Education Plan (NEP) the school has created a clear, effective and well documented procedure to ensure that the needs of individual students are met as effectively as possible. The Visitors congratulate the school on enabling students to be involved in the development of their own NEP and that it is distributed and summarised for all teachers involved. A recently updated flow chart details the procedure of referral, identification and subsequent support of students with learning needs. The flow chart is printed in the staff handbook and dialogue between the Visitors and Learning Area teachers provided evidence that it is generally understood and practiced. The referral procedures include the participation of the pastoral care team, the House Team and Middle Management. This facilitates communication about individual student needs. The Coordinator of Student Support is viewed by staff as an advisor to teachers on the best ways to provide individual support, rather than as the actual provider of such support. In this role the Coordinator is able to support teachers and further facilitate communication.

The Visitors were pleased to see that students with learning needs and hearing impaired students are viewed as fully integrated members of the school community who are in receipt of individualised programs.

### Recommendation 2

The school has developed a comprehensive program to enable students to choose appropriate career and tertiary education pathways. Career and Tertiary education planning and advice have become an integral part of the school's learning program from Year 8 to Year 12. In Years 8 to 10 the pastoral care program utilises the Personal Learning Plan (PLP) to assist students in identifying their preferred learning styles, to reflect upon their skills in literacy, numeracy, communication, citizenship, personal development and decision making. The PLP also includes a compulsory work-experience element and the use of Transition Portfolios. Students produce an Action Plan to assist with subject selection and career planning. Subject strengths and areas for improvement are identified with the assistance of both ACER and NAPLAN testing.

The school operates a system whereby a number of staff, over a period of time, Y8 – Y12, are involved in assisting students and their families to make career or further education choices. This system has the advantage that all teachers become familiar with individual students strengths, shortcomings, learning styles, interests and predilections. The system also enables a large number of teachers to become cognisant of the various pathways that are available for students and the means and requirements to access those pathways. It is one of the roles of the Student Counsellors to provide specific expertise in this area. The counsellors have responsibility for careers and tertiary education counselling as well as pastoral/social/emotional counselling. The work of the counsellors is highly valued by students and parents. However concerns were raised by some students with whom the Visitors met that the counsellors' role was primarily concerned with pastoral/social/emotional counselling rather than career and tertiary education counselling.

Tertiary Education choices are informed by AHS Curriculum Handbook, support from the South Australian tertiary Admissions Centre, SACE website Defence Force career information and school staff.

Career planning for students not wishing to pursue tertiary education is assisted through Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses, Disability Employment Services, community agencies and specifically orientated career presentations.

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## SECTION F - RESOURCES

Visiting Team Recommendation from 2006	School's 2010 Rating	Visitors' 2011 Rating
<b>1. The school's Leadership Team and Governing Council continue their lobbying of DECS, Adelaide City Council and the Department of Transport and Road Safety to find a solution to the potentially hazardous situation of students entering and exiting the site, across the extremely busy West Terrace.</b>	In Progress	In Progress
<b>2. The school's ICT Committee continues to explore ways to improve the computer to student ratio.</b>	In Progress	In Progress

### Recommendation 1

Much work has taken place since the Visiting Team Report to improve road safety outside of the school and to reduce potential hazards. The school has worked closely with the South Australian Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, the Adelaide City Council and the Torrens Transit Bus Service, to review and improve traffic and pedestrian safety measures. Significant improvements have been implemented including the construction of larger traffic islands, the re-timing of the traffic lights, installation of speed humps, the widening of pavements and the construction of pedestrian fencing. The school bus stop has been re-located to the front of the school building. The school is continuing to work with the local authorities in both monitoring the current arrangements and implementing further improvements

The Visitors noted that at the end of the school day the student exodus was orderly and well supervised. Students waiting for school buses did not have to cross roadways, students waiting to be collected by private car waited in an orderly fashion by the dedicated car pick up point and students travelling home on foot waited patiently at the traffic light controlled crossing and were expertly supervised by staff. The Visitors congratulate the school on the way that it has so far significantly reduced the potential hazard associated with students entering and exiting the site, across the extremely busy West Terrace. The school has identified additional precautions that may be taken and are currently in negotiation with the various authorities to ascertain their feasibility.

### Recommendation 2

In the five years since the CIS Accreditation Team Visit there has been significant improvement in the school's IT provision. A fibre-optic backbone provides two Local Area Networks and a high capacity wireless LAN. All students, with the exception of those in Y12, have a laptop computer. The current computer : student ratio stands at 1.1 : 1 A number of rooms are equipped with data projectors and there is an increasing number of interactive white boards being installed. A wide range of learning software is available for staff and student use. In Semester 1, 2011 the school will be implementing a newly acquired student management software, 'Daymap'. The school is also developing a Moodle site and intends to offer online courses and an increasing range of course specific Wikis.

The Visitors wish to congratulate AHS on the emphasis it has placed upon developing IT as a learning tool and on the development of its learning technology infrastructure.

**Additional Observations:**

In reviewing the evidence presented by the school, the Visitors had some concerns that although annual budget provisions are made for the regular maintenance of plant and equipment, no long term budget provision is made for planned/ scheduled renewal and replacement of major plant items. It is strongly suggested that AHS continues to work with DECS to create long term strategic budget planning to ensure that major items of plant and equipment are included in a schedule of planned renewal and replacement.

## SECTION G – STUDENT & COMMUNITY LIFE

Visiting Team Recommendation from 2006	School's 2010 Rating	Visitors' 2011 Rating
<b>1. The Leadership Team investigates strategies that improve communication with parents.</b>	Completed	In Progress / Ongoing

Over the past three years the school has placed great emphasis on improving communications with parents and the wider school community. Within the school's Five Year Report is a detailed list of ways in which communication is carried out. This is an impressive list and worth replicating in this report.

### Publications

- School Brochure
- Regular newsletters
- Annual information booklet to families
- Yearbook
- Curriculum handbooks for each Year Group and SACE
- Uniform Brochure
- Consent Books
- Regular updates to the web site
- Updated parental contact details

### Meetings, Presentations & Functions

- Invitation for parents to assemblies and sports presentations
- Invitations for parents to course counselling interviews
- Invitations to parents at Personal Learning Plan presentations Year 8, 9 and 10.
- Parent attendance at Research Project presentations
- Y7 Parent information night
- Year 8 Parent Acquaintance afternoon
- SACE information night
- Parent seminars
- Parent information sessions for specific activities and sports
- School community meetings
- Use of interpreters for parent home languages
- Improved publicity for school functions and events

### Parent Committees

- Governing Council.
- Sub- committees of Governing Council involving co-opted parents
- Greek Parents meetings
- Vietnamese Parent meetings
- Joint school parent specific focus meetings

### Student Performance/ Achievement

- Parent / Teacher interviews
- Specific letters

- SMS message system.
- Individual communications and parent meetings
- SACE & Middle school alert system
- Assessment plans.
- Phone calls / e-mail

#### Community

- Aboriginal Education Teacher and Aboriginal Community Education Officer working with indigenous parents.
- Vietnamese Community Education Officer and Bilingual Services Officer
- Open night
- Annual public meeting to approve school fees.

AHS utilises the services of professional designers in the production of its printed and media resources. The high quality of these publications reflects the excellence that the school espouses to in all that it does and is strongly aligned to the school's Vision and Priorities. Parents with whom the Visitors met expressed satisfaction with the school's communication about school programs, activities and progress of their children.

## COMPONENT TWO

### MAJOR POSITIVE FEATURES

- The school's revised philosophical statements provide a basis for all decision making, are the drivers of strategic planning and are generally known and understood by the school community.
- The commitment of Adelaide High School to using the accreditation process as a tool for ongoing reflection and identification of commendable practice and areas for improvement
- Adelaide High School is a learning focused school engaging both students and staff and the concentration given to student learning is a major strength of the school.
- The extensive progress which has been made in linking whole school curriculum review to Professional Learning
- The H&PE Learning Area's 'Turn Your Health Around' program which has made comprehensive use of interdisciplinary units, and had a school wide impact.
- The encouraging progress in the delivery of English language and ESL.
- The significant developments that have taken place in the use of ICT as a learning tool, an administrative tool and to aid communication with the whole school community.
- The work undertaken in expanding Vocational Education and Training and the impact of the Work Education Team.
- The lively and highly productive professional staff dialogue concerning curriculum design and content, curriculum delivery and student learning.
- Teachers and managers demonstrate great enthusiasm towards continuous learning improvement.
- The inclusive philosophy that enables students with learning needs and hearing impaired students to be viewed as fully integrated members of the school community who are in receipt of individualised programs.
- The support provided for students with learning needs and the involvement of students in the development of their own NEP
- The efforts of the school to significantly reduced the potential hazard associated with students entering and exiting the site, across the extremely busy West Terrace
- The emphasis the school placed upon developing IT as a learning tool and on the development of its learning technology infrastructure.

## MAJOR AREAS FOR ATTENTION

- Consideration should now be given to developing methods by which the school is able to gauge and measure its success in achieving both its Vision and the School Priorities.
- The Governing Council should ensure that periodic review of the guiding statements of Vision and School Priorities is placed in the school calendar.
- The school is encouraged to continue providing opportunities for teachers to develop and share good practice in teaching and learning.
- It would be advantageous for the school, through a process of community dialogue, to create a school-wide definition of international learning / international mindedness.
- Continue to identify and implement appropriate teaching strategies across the curriculum that facilitates effective learning.
- Continue working with DECS to resolve the issue of the provision of adequate student learning and leisure space.
- Complete those further changes in linking whole school curriculum review to Professional Learning which it has indicated are needed.
- Continue to provide professional development opportunities that will enrich the repertoire of teaching strategies
- Continue to develop interdisciplinary curricular themes
- Continue to empower teachers to utilise a wide range of appropriate teaching strategies across the curriculum.
- The Governing Council is encouraged to develop methods by which it may periodically evaluate its own performance.
- The Governing Council is urged to work closely with DECS to resolve the issue of facilities and student numbers in a timely manner.
- The school should look towards reviewing the processes and practices associated with the management of professional development with a view to improving coordination and documentation.
- Develop appropriate pedagogies and identify successful methodologies to make the most effective use of new learning technologies and to ensure that these technologies are used as an effective learning tool in all Learning Areas.
- The School takes steps to ensure that the performance management system is applied to all staff in a consistent manner and that the outcomes are linked directly to professional development and the improvement of teaching and learning.

- The school should look to strengthening the Student Counsellors' role in providing support for students in career and tertiary education counselling and ensure that all students are aware that this is one of the roles of the counsellors.
- It is strongly suggested that AHS continues to work with DECS to create long term strategic budget planning to ensure that major items of plant and equipment are included in a schedule of planned renewal and replacement.
- Continue to review the effectiveness of the school's communication with parents and the wider community and ensure that publications are kept up to date.

## CONCLUSION

The Visitors were extremely impressed by the commitment of the Adelaide High School to using the accreditation process as a tool for ongoing reflection and identification of commendable practice and areas for improvement. In addition to the Five Year Report the school also carried out a 'mini-self study' in which the self study teams and learning area teams wrote a descriptive profile using the accreditation indicators and standards as a guide. The Visitors commend the school for addressing all of the improvements recommended in the initial March 2006 CIS Team Visit. It was a real pleasure for the Visitor's to spend time with such a strongly learning focussed school community. Many of the developments that have taken place over the past five years have enhanced the whole school program and profile and ensured that the school has continued to seek excellence in all aspects of its operation.

The Visitors were highly impressed with the school atmosphere and the overriding ethos in which wellbeing, learning and culture form an integral part of a rigorous and vibrant learning community. The staff is clearly very talented, professionally dedicated and willing to make extra efforts on behalf of the students. There is a very good atmosphere of student-staff relationships and both students and staff are focussed on high quality learning. The leadership of the Principal is outstanding.

Staff, students, parents and Governing Council members who met the Visitors during their stay were articulate and most welcoming in their approach of embracing the CIS accreditation process. The school has clearly been guided by, and used very positively, the recommendations of the Visiting Team Report. The Visitors found a number of areas for which the school is to be commended. These are documented in the section entitled 'Major Positive Features'.

There are many areas in which a great deal of progress has been made a number of these will be seen as requiring ongoing development. In addition there are areas that have arisen throughout the last five year period which now require further consideration. These issues are documented in the section of the report entitled Major Areas for Attention

The Visitors strongly recommend to CIS that the School be granted continued accreditation.