

ESSE QUAM VIDERI



**CRANBROOK
SCHOOL**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029



Esse Quam Videri

INTEGRITY • TO BE, RATHER THAN TO BE SEEN TO BE

Our Vision

“To be a world-class school
which encourages and enables
all of our students to
explore, enjoy and fulfil
their potential.”

Our Values

Individuality

Respect

Excellence

International mindedness

Service

Preamble

Since the adoption of our refreshed Vision in 2013, Cranbrook has enacted a programme of judicious change. In the past decade, practice in the Junior School has been reformed; the IB Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme have been adopted in order to join with the Primary Years Programme to form an IB Continuum; the Year 11 and Year 12 Colleges have been instituted; and student numbers have grown from 1,415 in 2013 to 1,700 in 2023.

Facilities on the Bellevue Hill Campus have been refurbished or, in the case of MP2, revolutionised; levels of academic and co-curricular achievement have been lifted, and the decision to convert the School to coeducation has been taken.

We have developed sufficient technological agility to cope with external challenges such as COVID and generated the resilience required to handle three years of disruption resulting from construction and the temporary loss of space, peace and facilities.

Looking to the coming years, full realisation of both coeducation and the IB Continuum are sufficiently large operational challenges to occupy the leadership teams within the School for the period ahead: running a school at steady state, even without the stimulus and challenge of major whole-school initiatives, is complex work in its own right.

We do, however, need to articulate a wider agenda. This five-year strategic plan spells out our commitment to lift certain important issues to a higher point in our consciousness. Sustainability, for example, requires concentrated attention and should serve as a crucial element within our IB and Academic character. Our approach to Indigenous-related matters also needs to grow in scale and effect.

In coming years, we will increase academic rigour in the middle years, with a particular focus on literacy, as well as expanding our offering for high potential learners. We will refine our delivery of continuous reporting, as we appreciate the pedagogical power of timely, considered feedback for our students.

Continuing to work through the transition to coeducation for the Senior School, we will also continue exploring coeducation in the Junior School. We will complete our comprehensive whole-school cultural review, incorporating independent reviews of student culture and staff culture across all parts of the organisation.

All of these plans are made possible by the commitment and excellence of our teaching and support staff. Consequently, we will continue to focus on attracting, developing and retaining a diverse staff of passionate and dedicated professionals, across all areas of the school. And we will enable our staff to excel through the provision of a world-class campus, commencing the next phase of our Bellevue Hill masterplan with the design and construction of a technology and wellness focussed complex.

Encompassing these many diverse strands, this strategic plan will serve as a guidebook for our progression throughout 2024 and beyond, as we look forwards to the next chapter of our School's story.

Plan on a Page

The Cranbrook School Strategic Plan 2024-2029 provides an overarching strategic perspective for the next five years. Recognising that the School operates in a dynamic environment, some parts of the plan have an annual focus, and the plan as a whole will be reviewed and revised each year.

The plan includes annual action plans to identify and track key short-term projects across all parts of the school. It also includes incorporates two long-term projects the School is engaged with – the transition to a coeducational model, and the ongoing implementation of the International Baccalaureate. Beyond these two major endeavours, the School Executive and School Council have identified nine additional strategic initiatives. It is anticipated that over the five-year duration of the plan, some of these initiatives may be completed, others may evolve, and others may be added in coming years.

INITIATIVE	OVERVIEW
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	We seek to proactively identify opportunities for improvement of the School, and to work collaboratively across all areas of the organisation to realise these opportunities for the benefit of our students.
TRANSITION TO COEDUCATION	We seek to smoothly and effectively transition the School to a coeducational model, commencing with the introduction of girls in Years 7 and 11 in 2026.
EMBEDDING THE IB PEDAGOGY	We seek to adopt the philosophy and pedagogy of the International Baccalaureate as our foundation for learning and teaching at Cranbrook, as an IB Continuum School.
BUILDING CAPACITY FOR CHANGE	We seek to become a dynamic and responsive organisation, able to thrive in an increasingly complex environment. To achieve this, we will adopt suitable practices, and develop organisational change expertise and experience within our teaching and operational staff.
FURBER COMPLEX PROJECT	We seek to deliver on the renewed masterplan, to design and construct a new built space on the southern part of the Senior School campus. The objective is to accommodate anticipated growth in students as well as meet the expanding requirements for specialist learning spaces.
EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION	We seek to provide rich and distinctive outdoor experiences in which students gain an appreciation of, and build connection to, the natural world. These environments and programs also provide young people an opportunity to develop personal attributes such as empathy, resilience and confidence through shared challenge and experience.
STUDENT DIVERSITY	We seek to support students not otherwise financially able to attend Cranbrook. This not only brings benefit to these students, but to the communities of which these students are a part, and to the Cranbrook community by enabling other students to enjoy a richer, more diverse milieu.
SHAPE OF THE JUNIOR SCHOOL	We seek to explore possible structures for the Junior School that would enable the evolution of the campus while maintaining the high quality of educational delivery, within existing financial and logistical constraints.
SKILLS-BASED CURRICULUM	We seek to reimagine the early years of high school to ensure an effective transition from primary, equipping students with the cognitive skills, personal capacities, values and mindset to be independent, collaborative, and reflective learners for the remainder of school and beyond.
FUTURE SUCCESS	We seek to ensure all of our students have the best possible opportunity to thrive in tertiary education and the workforce, by providing a range of different styles of learning through the final years of school, and relevant connections to the world beyond.
SUSTAINABILITY	We seek to improve the environment we are creating and the legacy we are leaving through the way we operate as a School and how we behave as a catalyst within our community.
INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT	We seek to act as an agent for change in working toward reconciliation, through authentic education of our students and effective use of the School's resources and influence to help 'close the gap' and improve the lives of young Indigenous people, both locally and on-country.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Continuous Improvement

We seek to proactively identify opportunities for improvement of the School, and to work collaboratively across all areas of the organisation to realise these opportunities for the benefit of our students.

As part of our aspiration to be a world-class school, we are engaged in a process of continuous improvement across all parts of the organisation. This process is driven by annual Action Plans that provide middle leaders across the School with key strategic priorities.

These are collected into four discrete annual plans to encompass all areas of the School:

- Head of School's Office Action Plan,
- Senior School Action Plan,
- Junior School Action Plan, and
- Operations Action Plan.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Transition to Coeducation

We seek to smoothly and effectively transition the School to a coeducational model, commencing with the introduction of girls in Years 7 and 11 in 2026.

At the outset of this strategic planning period, the School is already engaged in a major endeavour to prepare for and oversee the transition to a coeducational student body from 2026 (with girls in all years by 2033). Along with the introduction of girls, there will also be an increase in cohort size in the Senior School.

The preparation for coeducation is managed by a transition committee operating over numerous workstreams with specific timelines and objectives. Oversight is provided by a steering group, as well as the regularly updated coeducation transition dashboard.

The workstreams encompass diverse parts of the school, from admissions and communication to curriculum and teacher professional development. In addition to the recruitment of girls into Years 7 and 11 from 2026 we are also working with current students and staff to ensure a smooth transition. We are reviewing our current curricular and co-curricular offering, and extending where appropriate, as well as revising our opportunities for leadership and contribution to ensure equity. Having completed the core Senior School uniform review, we have now begun the process of reviewing Junior School uniforms and sports uniforms.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Embedding the IB Pedagogy

We seek to adopt the philosophy and pedagogy of the International Baccalaureate as our foundation for learning and teaching at Cranbrook, as an IB Continuum School.

As an IB Continuum School offering the Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP), our goal is to ensure that we embed the philosophy and the pedagogy of the IB at the heart of the student experience at Cranbrook.

Further embedding of the IB pedagogy across the school will be achieved through the development and implementation of a series of 'programme development plans' (PDPs).

These plans are informed by internal collaboration with teaching staff, and by feedback from formal IB programme reviews. At present, they encompass:

- building the strength of the IB programme by raising awareness of its benefits and celebrating the success of our IB cohorts,
- enhancing our framework for planning and collaboration, within and between teaching departments,
- refining curriculum delivery to create connections and engage students,
- leveraging digital tools to streamline processes and provide useful, timely student feedback, and
- expanding the Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) model to make it a foundational part of the Diploma Programme, and a framework for student activity in earlier years.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Building Capacity for Change

We seek to become a dynamic and responsive organisation, able to thrive in an increasingly complex environment. To achieve this, we will adopt suitable practices, and develop organisational change expertise and experience within our teaching and operational staff.

Compared with the experience of previous generations of educators, successful schools today find themselves under increasing pressure to respond to changes in the competitive, legislative, social, commercial, and pedagogical environment.

Becoming a more dynamic and responsive School will be achieved through:

- adopting an iterative strategic planning process that reviews and revises all significant initiatives on an annual basis to enable the organisation to respond to changing opportunities and threats,
- ensuring ongoing continuous career progression and succession planning at the senior leadership level of the School,
- developing a methodology for managing change initiatives, and
- providing opportunities for staff to develop their skills in managing internal change processes.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Furber Complex Project

We seek to deliver on the renewed masterplan, to design and construct a new built space on the southern part of the Senior School campus. The objective is to accommodate anticipated growth in students as well as meet the expanding requirements for specialist learning spaces.

Within the context of a growing school, a transition to coeducation, and an evolving mix of student subjects, a review of the Cranbrook master plan was conducted. This review identified the need for a new built space that will accommodate a range of functions, including specialist science laboratories, technology workshops, a drama and dance space, health and wellness centre, additional general learning spaces, and car parking.

To deliver on these requirements, a multi-phase design and construction project will be initiated in the southern part of the campus, adjacent to the present Furber building and across the present Furber court.

The project will commence with a design brief being drafted, working with architects and the relevant educators within the School. With approval of the design brief, an architect will be engaged.

Delivering the next phase of the School's ongoing master planning, this state of the art building will position the Bellevue Hill campus for future growth and the admission of girls.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Experiential Education

We seek to provide rich and distinctive outdoor experiences in which students gain an appreciation of, and build connection to, the natural world. This also provides young people an opportunity to develop personal attributes such as empathy, resilience and confidence through shared challenge and experience.

Engaging with outdoor experiences and the natural world provides a valuable counterpoint to contemporary urban schooling. Experiential outdoor education offers a range of benefits, such as developing personal and interpersonal capabilities through shared challenge and experiences; gaining a greater appreciation for the natural world, both from a global sustainability perspective, as well as being a source of personal wellbeing and spiritual connection; applying disciplinary skills to authentic real-world problems, from scientific study of the natural world to the creative expression inspired by nature; and enjoying respite from devices, social media and other aspects of contemporary lifestyles.

Moving forward, Cranbrook requires a clear educational strategy to determine the best suite of educational experiences for the School, that augment our urban classroom context. This strategy will be informed by a review of past and present experiential education at Cranbrook; best practice in outdoor adventure activities, authentic cultural engagement, and location-based service opportunities; and a review of relevant literature and best practice in this area.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Student Diversity

We seek to support students not otherwise financially able to attend Cranbrook. This not only brings benefit to these students, but to the communities of which these students are a part, and to the Cranbrook community by enabling other students to enjoy a richer, more diverse milieu.

While the transition to coeducation addresses a key lack of diversity within the student body, Cranbrook remains geographically and socio-economically homogenous. We believe that a more diverse cohort of students from different backgrounds, bringing varied experiences, will not only benefit those students by providing them with access to the resources of the School, it will also enrich the learning of all students by providing a wider range of perspectives.

Given that the primary barrier to access for Cranbrook is student fees, this could be achieved with financial assistance in the form of scholarships or bursaries. These would be means-tested to help ensure that they authentically increase diversity of the cohort.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Shape of the Junior School

We seek to explore possible structures for the Junior School that would enable the evolution of the campus while maintaining the high quality of educational delivery, within existing financial and logistical constraints.

As the growth of the Senior School continues with the introduction of girls into Year 7 and Year 11 in 2026, it is timely to look at the best structure of the Junior School to strengthen the identity of Cranbrook as a holistic P-12 student experience, maintaining a healthy ratio of Junior School students to new students in the Year 7 entry pool. In recent years, there has been increasing demand for entry into the later years of the Junior School.

There are also a number of organisational and educational benefits to exploring delivery of a single-year 'K minus 1' programme, creating closer ties between early learning and the Junior School. Given this complex set of opportunities and demands, considerable effort will need to go into identifying and exploring a range of potential ways forward.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Skills-Based Curriculum

We seek to reimagine the early years of high school to ensure an effective transition from primary, equipping students with the cognitive skills, personal capacities, values and mindset to be independent, collaborative, and reflective learners for the remainder of school and beyond.

In their final years of high school – and beyond that in tertiary study and the workforce – there is often a concern that some students lack key foundational skills, ranging from basic self-study skills to the ability to manage a project, from a capacity for self-reflection to the competencies required for working productively in groups. While these are all skills expected of students in later years, there is often little supported, explicit teaching of these skills in earlier years of high school. In those earlier years, we can work harder to establish strengths in generalisable skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, academic research, leadership, and project management, as well as nurturing traits like resilience, initiative, curiosity and empathy.

Drawing on and the experiences of other schools, we will develop a more skills-based pedagogy in Year 7 that foregrounds transferable skills and IB fundamentals rather than disciplinary content, with explicit teaching of skills through experiential activities.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Future Success

We seek to ensure all of our students have the best possible opportunity to thrive in tertiary education and the workforce, by providing a range of different styles of learning through the final years of school, and relevant connections to the world beyond.

The final two years in the Senior School are a point of transition from a broad compulsory schooling system into a more specific, vocational context, usually in the form of tertiary education. To be successful, young people will need the capacity for independent study, for self-reliance, and for sustained engagement with projects, as well a strong interest in a particular field of endeavour.

To this end, the School has developed individual Year 11 and Year 12 colleges, which provide spaces for independent study, as well as a focal point for programmes that support learners and engage them around post-school options.

Our ambition is to develop further initiatives to improve post-school outcomes for our students. These outcomes may include successful transition into first-year university, completion of a tertiary qualification, or successful entry into the workforce.

In order for these initiatives to be evidence-informed, research is required to provide a quantitative picture of where graduates are and how they are doing – in their first year out, toward the end of their tertiary study, and as they enter the workforce.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Sustainability

We seek to improve the environment we are creating and the legacy we are leaving through the way we operate as a School and how we behave as a catalyst within our community.

As a School and as a community we do not stand apart from our environment, either locally or globally. Each choice we make as a School has implications with regard to sustainability. These may be small or large, depending on the nature of the choice, but as a society we are increasingly aware of these implications. We need to understand our impact, and work to improve it where we can.

Our choices include being cognisant of sustainability issues when developing and operating the buildings and facilities on our campuses; when planning and implementing our programmes of teaching; and when providing amenities and services to our community – from superannuation for staff to catering for students.

We can also look beyond our gates for ways to create positive impact around sustainability. This might include incorporating sustainability criteria when selecting providers, partnering with sustainability initiatives in the local area, inviting other schools to be involved with our student initiatives, or advocating for more sustainable options within either the Cranbrook community or the wider education community in Sydney.

To inform our actions in this area, we will review our current footprint, and work towards developing a sustainability plan.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Indigenous Engagement

We seek to act as an agent for change in working toward reconciliation, through authentic education of our students and effective use of the School's resources and influence to help 'close the gap' and improve the lives of young Indigenous people, both locally and on-country.

Our obligation and opportunity within the Indigenous space exists on three discrete paths – the authentic education of our students with regard to our First Nations people, culture, history and experience; the support and extension of those students we have who identify as Indigenous; and the effective deployment of the School's resources and influence to help 'close the gap' and improve the lives of young Indigenous people, both locally and on-country.

Given the range of potential areas of focus, and means of achieving various objectives, it is important that work is done to clearly map the landscape of possibility. This will involve identification of Cranbrook's strategic objectives in this area, and prioritisation of suitable investment in those projects that will deliver the greatest advantages.

To this end, the first step in this initiative will be the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to act as a guiding document for the delivery of tactical initiatives in the years beyond this.



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