



2020 – 2024

# Strategic Plan

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## THE SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Nhill Lutheran School first opened its doors in 1977 in the Nhill Congregation's Gladigau Hall on MacPherson Street with an enrolment of 31 students. New school buildings were officially opened and dedicated on July 10, 1977, on land that was offered to the Parish.

In 1979 secondary schooling was offered and operated at Nhill Lutheran School until the end of 1990, when the school reverted to providing only primary school education.

The original section of the school building was opened in 1977, additional classrooms were added again in 1980 and 1985 as the school expanded. A new library, computer room and multi-purpose hall were opened in 2011 as a result of the Federal Government's Building Education Revolution (BER). The school is blessed with impressive outdoor facilities including an oval with cricket pitch and football goal posts; a large playground including a rock water feature; four hardcourts comprising of two tennis courts, a netball court and basketball court; a farm yard and more.

The school is located at 2 Mackay Street, Nhill, a rural town in western Victoria halfway between Adelaide and Melbourne. The town is located on main transport routes for road and rail.

Nhill Lutheran School began the 2020 school year with an enrolment of 68. The highest enrolment at the school has been 91 (in 1988 when primary and secondary were provided), and 82 (in 2005 – primary only). In recent years the enrolment has been: 2012 – 69, 2013 – 59, 2014 – 49, 2015 – 49, 2016 – 50, 2017 – 52, 2018 – 55, 2019 – 63.

Nhill Lutheran School is an integral part of the ministry of the Nhill Lutheran Parish. It is an agency of the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) and receives support and guidance from the LCA through Lutheran Education Australia (LEA) and Lutheran Education Victoria, NSW, Tasmania (LEVNT).

### **POPULATION FIGURES AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION**

Nhill is located in the Shire of Hindmarsh, in the Victorian electorate of Lowan and the Federal electorate of Mallee.

The following table shows Nhill population (ABS Census Data) and enrolment trends of NLS in 2006, 2011, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019:

	<b>Nhill (State Suburb)</b>	<b>Nhill (Urban Centre/Locality)</b>	<b>Nhill Lutheran School enrolments</b>	<b>0-4 year old</b>	<b>5-9 year old</b>	<b>10- 14 year old</b>	<b>Median age of Nhill</b>
<b>2006</b>	2550	1915	75	131	363		44
<b>2011</b>	2278	1872	69	106	131	142	46
<b>2016</b>	2184	1749	50	100	108	122	48
<b>2017</b>			52				

<b>2018</b>			55				
<b>2019</b>			63				
<b>2020</b>			68				

The census data indicates a decline in overall population and in the number of 0-14 year olds up to 2016.

The following article, published in The Age in October 2019, states the following: *But there are 27 suburbs - largely rural and regional suburbs that are expected to shrink in size, based on current trends in births, deaths and net migration. The West Wimmera region, which takes in Horsham and Nhill, is tipped to decline by about 20 per cent in the coming years.*

*Ms Murray said regional Victoria had a lot to offer, and a national settlement strategy, incentives around affordable housing and new job creation, as well as better public transport infrastructure, would encourage people to move to these areas.*

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/the-suburbs-set-for-population-explosions-over-the-next-20-years-20191005-p52xwf.html>

Nearby schools offering primary education and their enrolments (according to Myschools website data, as at 3/2/20):

	Year level range	Total enrolments
Nhill College	F-12	275
St Patrick's Catholic, Nhill	F-6	31
Kaniva College	F-12	192
Dimboola PS	F-6	105
St Peter's Lutheran, Dimboola	F-6	28
Jeparit PS	F-6	24
Holy Trinity Lutheran College, Horsham	F-12	526

# MISSION, PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS

## **Mission of the School**

Nhill Lutheran School provides a quality education in a caring Christian environment.

## **School Philosophy**

The Victorian Registration Standards ([sch 2 cl 16](#)) requires that all schools must have a clear statement of philosophy.

## **Statement of Nhill Lutheran School's Philosophy**

- We are committed to provide a Christ centered quality education for young Australians where the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning, teaching and human relationships.
- We are committed to growing a caring community of lifelong learners through an integrated framework of Christian attitudes and relationships, with each child knowing they are a special child of God.
- We are committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and have zero tolerance for child abuse.
- We are committed to offering our students the best education possible, and allowing each student to realise their full potential.
- We are committed to offering the best academic environment possible. To do this, we support each student's learning and ensure that each student can learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, and undue distraction.
- We are committed to caring for each student's emotional and pastoral needs. To do this, we have a pastoral care framework and provide support such as counselling services and education on resilience and mental health.
- We are committed to allowing each student to achieve in areas of their own interest. To do this, we accommodate each student's interests, allowing them to balance curricular and extra curricular activities, and encourage them to pursue their interests.
- We are committed to fostering leadership in all of our students. To achieve this, we have programs and activities which encourage each student to lead among their peers.
- We are committed to allowing each student to live a healthy and active lifestyle. To do this, we provide education on a healthy lifestyle, and encourage sporting and other recreational activities.

## **Explanation of Enactment of Nhill Lutheran School's Philosophy**

Our philosophy is enacted through our teaching and care for students. Our philosophy guides our teaching, strategic plans and governance decisions.

To ensure that the current and prospective staff, students and parents understand the philosophy of our school, we publish this philosophy in our parent handbook.

## **Implementation**

Nhill Lutheran School has set up a series of compliance tasks on our [Assurance System](#), to ensure that key obligations under the Victorian Registration Standards are managed effectively.

## **School Aims**

Nhill Lutheran School supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian Democracy, including a commitment to: elected Government; the rule of law; equal rights for all before the law; freedom of religion; freedom of speech and association; the values of openness and tolerance.

As a Lutheran School, Nhill Lutheran School endeavours to achieve its Philosophy of Education through the following aims:

- Provide a curriculum that fulfils the requirements of the State and the Church for a balanced education;
- Support parents in fulfilling their God-given responsibilities to their children, so that children may know God and His saving love in Jesus Christ, respond in faith and grow in Christian maturity;
- Provide for an appreciation of, and support for, Christian family life;
- Provide training in worship and daily devotion;
- Provide a Christian environment that develops self-discipline and respect for others, and prepares students for responsible living and service in contemporary Australian society;
- Help children value themselves as unique children of God, and to strive for excellence in all areas of life, by giving them an holistic programme of education, that provides a firm foundation for further learning, and promotes development in all areas: academic, creative, emotional, physical and spiritual;
- Promote an appreciation of worthwhile cultural pursuits such as literature, music, art and physical education;
- To develop an atmosphere in which learning is valued, excellence is encouraged and honest effort is recognised and praised regardless of academic capabilities.

## **Our Key Values**

The school's Code of Conduct is underpinned by our overriding philosophy.

From this philosophy, the LEA Charter and the lifelong qualities for learners as

documented in 2005, we derive our key values of:

- love
- justice
- compassion
- forgiveness
- service
- humility
- courage
- hope
- quality
- appreciation.

This Code of Conduct provides guidance on the responsibilities of our school, our employees and any third party acting on our behalf.

Responsibility in this context means that each individual takes responsibility for their actions. High ethical standards flow from the concept of us being “responsible” for our actions. Each individual who is a part of our school is expected to take responsibility for their own actions. This is a key part of our operational process.

# SWOT ANALYSIS

## SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Strengths – Things the school does well. Aspects of your service that parents and students particularly like. Characteristics and/or activities that are unique to the school. Advantages of working in or using your school.

Weaknesses – Areas in which the school could be working much more effectively, or things the school could be doing better. Things the school feels it lacks that it needs to have in order to improve.

Opportunities – Times, conditions, situations, resources, positions, external factors, people etc... the school can use and take advantage of to improve its services.

Threats – External factors which could have a limiting effect on the school and its quality of services now or in the future.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well resourced</li> <li>• Ample learning spaces – inside and outside</li> <li>• Capable and enthusiastic staff</li> <li>• Culture of caring</li> <li>• Good parent support (P&amp;F, volunteers)</li> <li>• Good relationship with parish</li> <li>• Pastor</li> <li>• Good connections with other education institutions (Kinder, Nhill Schools, Lutheran schools)</li> <li>• Small school, small average class size</li> <li>• Support from LEVNT</li> <li>• Supportive and engaged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Logistics of a small school – staffing, organisational</li> <li>• Declining town and district population</li> <li>• Access to PD</li> <li>• Perceived lack of learning support</li> <li>• Previous/recent challenges to reputation – community gossip</li> <li>• Ageing facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff retention</li> <li>• Build positive staff culture</li> <li>• Partnership opportunities with community groups</li> <li>• Mission and ministry connection with parish</li> <li>• Recruitment of council members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declining population</li> <li>• Other schools in town/area</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Staffing</li> <li>• Funding</li> <li>• Fractured relationships</li> </ul>

<p>school council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sound, evidence based learning programs</li><li>• Low school fees</li><li>• Extra and co-curricular activities</li></ul>			
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# STRATEGIC PLAN

## GOAL 1: Nhill Lutheran School Learning Journey

### KEY GOALS:

- Investigate, choose and implement curriculum and learning initiatives that are evidence based and keeping with current methodologies.
- Update resources
- Develop student potential
- Ensure Nhill Lutheran School has up to date IT equipment and facilities
- Review, update and implement policies and curriculum
- Investigate possible partnerships with other Lutheran schools to enhance curriculum delivery

### KEY STRATEGIES:

- Investigate contemporary, up to date approaches to curriculum
- Develop NLS curriculum documents and school plans reflecting current content and methodologies.
- Improve the visual profile of learning experiences happening in the school.
- Create an updated inventory of resources
- Strategically identify, list and purchase, where able, appropriate and relevant resources for students and staff.
- Investigate furniture needs in all learning areas.
- Develop meaningful ways to engage and cater for children with learning needs
- Utilise resources of other educators, Lutheran or other, to support curricular and extra-curricular activities
- Investigate and identify best practice wellbeing initiatives for students and staff
- Possess up to date technology/devices to support student learning and enable staff productivity.

### MEASURES:

- Completion of NLS curriculum documents
- Ensure displays and communication of learning are present
- Completion of inventory of resources
- The School will possess necessary furniture needed for learning and other tasks
- Individual Learning Plans for students with learning needs
- Liaise with key educators and experts to ensure NLS programs are enhanced
- Review behavior support and wellbeing in the school. Implement

social and emotional learning program.

- Communicate with other schools, IT personnel to explore what devices/technology are needed.

## GOAL 2: Nhill Lutheran School Personnel

### **KEY GOALS:**

- Staff welfare, development and management
- Train and develop staff in employment requirements
- Train and develop staff in educational initiatives and programs implemented by the school
- Oversee staff wellbeing, including pastoral care
- Staff retention

### **KEY STRATEGIES:**

- Develop plans for professional development for staff
- Introduce authentic performance management for staff
- Update record keeping of professional learning
- Review and refine pastoral care of staff

### **MEASURES:**

- Staff PD plans created focusing on AITSL standards and school strategic direction
- Regular performance management practices in place
- Proactive planning in regards to PD and educational initiatives
- Record keeping and notification system
- Survey staff re wellbeing and pastoral care

## GOAL 3: Nhill Lutheran School and the Community

### KEY GOALS:

- Strengthen relationship with Church/Parish
- Strengthen connection with Kindergarten
- Actively seek links with community groups and agencies
- Improve communication and positive experiences within NLS community.
- Collaborate with Parish Pastor and others to explore worship opportunities for staff, students and families, including possibilities such as messy church, kids club or a holiday program.
- Maximise impact and interesting appearance of printed material and other media
- Increase opportunities for wider community to access NLS
- Actively promote NLS in new and engaging ways
- Retain sufficient enrolments for no less than four classes with the possibility of enrolment growth

### KEY STRATEGIES:

- Increase Parish's awareness of mission opportunities at NLS
- Ensure visibility of school at congregations
- Forge a close relationship with Nhill Kindergarten
- Build links with community groups through Service Learning and Project Based Learning (PBL)
- Create Facebook page and update website
- Provide experiences and activities for positive interaction between home and school
- Collaboration with Pastor

### MEASURES:

- Explore opportunities for the school and Parish to connect
- Profile of NLS lifted in congregations, displays in churches
- Parish members invited to be involved at NLS
- Community groups visited by school or vice-versa
- Curriculum plans developed incorporating Service Learning and PBL
- Articles and information for families in newsletter, website, social media
- Additional worship and engagement opportunities explored

## GOAL 4: Supporting Nhill Lutheran School

### **KEY GOALS:**

- Transition from School of the Parish to School of the District
- Ensure capable people serve on School Council to strengthen governance
- Maintain and build connection between school and LEVNT, LEA
- Maintain and build connections with other support organisations such as ISV
- Explore opportunities to access funding possibilities

### **KEY STRATEGIES:**

- Adhere to new constitutional and regulatory requirements
- Provide governance training for School Council members
- Collaborate with relevant LEVNT, LEA, ISV (and other) personnel
- Determine if/when funding opportunities are needed and consistent with school strategic direction

### **MEASURES:**

- Constitution and associated documents finalised and implemented
- Governance training for Council members
- Clear links established with support organisations
- Funding opportunities grasped

## GOAL 5: Nhill Lutheran School Assets/Environment

### KEY GOALS:

- Investigate future development of school grounds and facilities
- Maintain facilities and improve where necessary
- Ensure first impressions are favourable
- Explore avenues through which NLS can remain financially viable
- Maintain and update technological capabilities for student learning and for administration purposes
- Investigate the development of a quiet outdoor meditation space

### KEY STRATEGIES:

- Explore and review fee structures, including incentives
- Actively pursue government and community grants
- Explore and develop fundraising opportunities
- Create a master plan document
- Future proof the school buildings and facilities
- Develop proactive maintenance schedule
- Develop IT plan for rollover of devices and other technology

### MEASURES:

- Communication of fee structures to families in a responsible and sensitive manner
- Principal to ensure time is dedicated to grant applications, and Council to seek grant opportunities
- Master plan developed after consultation with architect
- School buildings and facilities designed and equipped for current and future learning needs
- IT plan developed
- Improvement of outdoor spaces
- Maintenance schedule developed