



Hutt Valley Christian School
(Year 1-12)

Prospectus

2008

www.wellingtonchristianschools.org.nz

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Introduction

Hutt Valley Christian School was formed by the amalgamation of Silverstream Christian School and Wainuiomata Christian College in 2008. The school is a small, independent Christian school for Christian boys and girls located in the Hutt City area, New Zealand. The roll is about 75 day students in years 1-12 who come from the Lower Hutt and Upper Hutt areas in the main.

The school originally started as Silverstream Christian School in 1974 located at the Reformed Church of Silverstream. A secondary school, Wainuiomata Christian College, was founded in 1991 on our own grounds. A bus linked the two sites. The schools were started by the Reformed Church community for the education of their children in a manner consistent with the teachings of the Bible. The two schools were merged on the current property at 106 Mohaka Street, Wainuiomata in 2008. Our longer term goal is to be based somewhere in the Hutt valley.

The school is owned and operated by the Christian School Association (Wellington District) [CSAWD], a registered charitable trust. A Board is appointed from the Association membership to govern the school and oversee the day to day management of the school.

Our Aim

Hutt Valley Christian School exists to assist parents in the fulfilling of the Scriptural requirement to educate their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). We believe the 'fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom' and base our entire curriculum on the reliable and solid foundation of God's Word, the Bible.

We recognise the primacy of the parents in the education of their children.

Mission Statement:

To equip, based on the solid foundation provided by a Classical and Reformed Christian education, our students to contribute to culture meaningfully and defend their faith intelligently for the rest of their lives.

The Benefits for Your Child

A Christ-centred education seeks to teach children to hold precious the truths taught in God's Word. In knowing the truth, they will then be able to understand the world around them in the correct way and thus live and think in a manner that is true to reality.

We base our instruction on the premise that the universe was created in six days by God and exists for His glory. Jesus Christ is the rightful Lord of all.

The specific benefits we believe our programme will give your child are:

- a biblical Christian world and life view,
- good communication and thinking skills,
- a thorough grounding in Scripture from an historic Protestant perspective,
- sound academic instruction aimed to equip them to serve God in this world,
- fellowship in a community of faith and learning,
- a deep appreciation for the heritage we enjoy from our past, particularly the strong Christian influence from Western Europe.

Our Curriculum Goals

“A Classical and Reformed Christian education”

REFORMED CHRISTIAN

In all its levels, programmes, and teaching, the schools operated by the CSAWD seek to do the following:

- Affirm the Sovereignty of God and the Lordship of Jesus Christ over all areas of life, recognising Him as the Creator and Sustainer of all things as they exist for His glory;
- Teach all subjects as part of an integrated whole with the Scriptures at the centre (2 Timothy 3:16-17) in order to equip the child for his calling in this world;
- Provide a clear model of the biblical Christian life through our staff and Board (Matthew 22:37-40) as this is essential to delivering a Reformed Christian curriculum;
- Encourage every student to begin and develop his relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20, Matthew 19:13-15), to live in a Godly fashion in church, family and society and to prayerfully seek to bring all these areas into conformity with God's will;

CLASSICAL

- Emphasise the fundamental rules of each subject¹, the ordered relationship of particulars² in each subject, and the clear expression of these³ for each subject;
- Encourage every student to develop a love for learning and live up to his academic potential;
- Provide an orderly atmosphere conducive to the attainment of the above goals.

¹ This is defined as the “grammar” of a subject.

² This is defined as the “logic” or “dialectic” of a subject.

³ This is defined as the “rhetoric” of a subject.

Our Statement of Faith

We hold to the historical confessional statements of the Protestant Reformation which accurately reflect the teaching of the Bible (hence the name Reformed). The particular ones we adhere to are the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563, the Belgic Confession of 1567, the Canons of Dort (1618-9) and the Westminster Confession of Faith of 1643.

We draw from these documents the following guiding principles:

- God has created all things out of nothing, therefore there is nothing in all the universe that can be understood correctly apart from Him.
- Man was created in the image of God and directed to exercise dominion over the world in obedience to Him.
- Man sinned against God and thus became blind to the true meaning of the creation and the Law of God.
- The Christ of Scripture restores man to fellowship with God, and renews the mind unto a right knowledge of God, self and the world.
- The significance of Christ's redemptive work touches all things.
- Christ claims the whole of life, and therefore the Christian view cannot be blended with other systems of human thought.
- The Bible as God's written Word is man's only infallible authority, the only key to the knowledge of God, self and the world.
- God has commanded parents to nurture and educate their children in the Lord. In order to fulfil this responsibility Christians should establish Christian schools.
- Christian Schools function directly under the authority of Jesus Christ. They are not ecclesiastical institutions.
- The purpose of Christian education is to inculcate the truth in order to equip the child for his calling in this world.

We are committed to a "young earth" view of creation believing that the days of Genesis Chapters 1-3 are just that, days of normal length. We believe the creation week occurred in the recent past of about 6,000-10,000 years ago.

Who Can Come to Hutt Valley Christian School?

The CSAWD owns and operates Hutt Valley Christian School, an independent, biblical Christian co-educational combined primary and secondary school.

Hutt Valley Christian School is open to students from homes where at least one parent is a confessing Bible-believing Christian. We welcome families who wish to provide their children with a specifically Christian education. We believe it to be our Christian duty and privilege (Westminster Confession of Faith XXVI.1,.2) to assist Christian parents fulfil their duty in this matter. Hence we accept enrolments from like-minded families.

The process for enrolment involves the following steps:

- Submission of an enrolment form to the school. This should be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from the spiritual overseers of the family from the fellowship or church group they attend.
- Following a satisfactory interview with the Headmaster and a Board Member, parents are asked to commit to a Parent-School Covenant which forms the basis of the relationship between the family and the school for the duration of their time at Hutt Valley Christian School.
- The Board must formally approve the enrolment based on the report from the interview. The outcome of this will be conveyed to the family. The Board of Directors reserve the right to refuse certain applicants and to decline to re-enrol students who prove unsuitable or whose parents fail to keep their side of the Parent-School Covenant.
- The enrolment is not secured until the family pays the agreed first instalment of tuition fees.

Interested parents can contact the school to visit and meet with the Headmaster.

The Parent-School Covenant and other information is available on our website at www.wellingtonchristianschools.org.nz.

An enrolment pack can be obtained from the Administration Assistant at:

Hutt Valley Christian School
PO Box 43-127
WAINUIOMATA 5014
Phone (04) 564-8552 or fax (04) 564-9305
E-mail: admin@wellingtonchristianschools.org.nz

Applications should be sent by post to the school. Parents will be contacted to arrange an interview. **All new enrolments are provisional for one term and reviewed annually thereafter.**

Mutual Expectations

PARENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- support the discipline and instruction of the school and uphold the school and the individual teachers before their children. It is implicit in the act of enrolling and sending their children that full authority to teach is being granted by parents to all teachers at the school. Where any school procedure is disagreed with, teachers should be consulted privately so that matters can be discussed and resolved,
- continue as active and regular worshippers of God (along with your children) at a fellowship where there is spiritual oversight of the family. Should this change, parents are expected to inform the Headmaster and discuss the implications of this for their childrens' education,
- inform the school of any absences either by telephone or written note,
- support school policies by helping to ensure that their children's dress and behaviour are in accordance with requirements,
- take an interest in their children's studies by discussing them with them, and overseeing homework where necessary,
- read and sign their children's diary daily,
- encourage in their children a concern for others, and a responsible attitude towards the rules of the school and society in general,
- provide adequate study facilities and conditions for their children in the home,
- participate, where they can, in fundraising activities, working bees etc,
- fulfill their obligations under the Parent-School Covenant including those associated with payment of tuition and other fees associated with their children's education. **Tuition fees are to be paid by automatic payment at regular intervals (monthly, fortnightly, or weekly) and the Treasurer is to be notified as soon as possible if there is a problem in keeping this commitment.**

PARENTS CAN EXPECT THAT THE SCHOOL WILL:

- provide capable and concerned teachers,
- provide adequate facilities and maintain a safe environment,
- contact them where there are serious learning or discipline problems,
- provide opportunities for them to be heard and be involved,
- provide clear guidelines regarding academic requirements for their children,
- provide a Christian environment for their children of care and integrity.

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- attend regularly and punctually,
- act honourably as befits one privileged to be a child of the covenant of God (I Cor. 7:14),
- strive to be a *genuine student* by making their education their *own* project, admitting their ignorance, not allowing themselves any excuses for not learning, and focussing on the details,
- attend with interest to the material to be learned,
- reproduce in their own minds the truth to be learned in each lesson,
- behave sensibly and in accordance with school requirements,
- use their God-given talents and abilities to the fullest,
- display a respectful obedience and manner to those in authority,
- fulfil assignments, meet due dates, and participate fully in school activities.

STUDENTS CAN EXPECT THAT:

- teachers will care and pray for them,
- teachers will be interested in them as people,
- the school will provide them with as much help and guidance as possible,
- the school will establish clear guidelines for work and behaviour and be consistent and just in its supervision of them.

Academic Curriculum

Grammar Years (Primary and Intermediate)

Our school offers a preparatory programme designed to lay a foundation of knowledge and skills that will be built upon in subsequent years of schooling. We are unashamed by our emphasis on memorisation and rote learning in the early years as we believe Dorothy Sayers' insight on this point is particularly valuable:

"The Poll-Parrot [*grammar years*] stage is the one in which learning by heart is easy and, on the whole, pleasurable; whereas reasoning is difficult and, on the whole, little relished. At this age, one readily memorizes the shapes and appearances of things; one likes to recite the number-plates of cars; one rejoices in the chanting of rhymes and the rumble and thunder of unintelligible polysyllables; one enjoys the mere accumulation of things."

Our programme therefore "cuts with the grain" and takes advantage of the nature of the child at this stage. We seek to inspire a love for discovery and develop good work habits in these early years. As the student matures we introduce more higher level expectations as they transition into the next stage of development known as the "Logic Years".

Subjects taught in the "grammar years":

- **Bible**
We aim to cover the entire Old and New Testaments by the end of Form 2 so that students are familiar with all the major people, events, history and geography of the Bible. Scripture memorisation is required.
- **English**
Starting with phonics-based reading instruction, our students are taught spelling and grammar with an emphasis on correctness. The students also are expected to apply these skills in writing. Students are introduced to the classics of children's literature aimed at developing their appreciation for good and beautiful writing.
- **Mathematics**
We lay a solid foundation for mathematics work in future years including memorisation of times tables and maths facts. The emphasis is on mastery of the basic skills by the end of Form 2.
- **Science**
Students are introduced to the wonders of God's creation. We seek to develop a delight in God's work of creation. To this end we add field trips, guest speakers, and as much "hands-on" experience as possible. In Forms 1-2, the Cambridge Lower Secondary Programme (Checkpoint) syllabus is followed with a continued emphasis on creation by God.
- **History**
Students are exposed to history with a major emphasis on the way people lived in the ancient times, the middle ages, and in the "modern" period. This is integrated as much as possible throughout the curriculum. New Zealand as well as world history is studied.

- **Latin**
Students are exposed to some Latin vocabulary and basic grammar in the early years. Some translation is involved in the Form 1-2 level. We do this because we believe Latin offers many benefits from an educational perspective. Just to name a few: a better appreciation of English grammar, a richer vocabulary from exposure to the classical roots of the English language, and improved skill in logical reasoning.
- **Technology**
Presently students at Form 1-2 attend a 2 hours/week programme offered by Wainuiomata Intermediate. There is an additional fee of \$80 for this. Attendance is optional.
- **Physical Education**
Students are taught basic skills and games.

Logic Years (Forms 3-4)

Continuing the "cutting with the grain" approach, we take advantage of the natural argumentativeness of students in this age group and seek to develop their ability to reason well. The subjects taught at this level are the traditional ones with the inclusion of Formal Logic. Bible is taught with an emphasis on the logical basis of the basic doctrines of the Christian faith. Wherever possible students will be interacting with great literature and the great ideas. Our core curriculum in science and mathematics in particular is modelled around the Cambridge International Examination Lower Secondary Programme.

Particular subjects taught at this level are: Bible, English, Mathematics, Science, Formal Logic, History, and Physical Education.

Rhetoric Years (Forms 5/6/7)

Students in Form 5 are taught Rhetoric which aims to develop skills of godly and persuasive communication and draws together the previous years. Students are expected to prepare a research based thesis in Form 5 and orally deliver this to an audience of staff and their peers.

Cambridge IGCSE examinations are used to provide students with an internationally recognised qualification reflecting their degree of achievement. Presently, students are prepared for external examinations in English Literature, Mathematics, History and Combined Science. Rhetoric and Bible are internally assessed courses.

Form 6 and above students can select courses out of a few of Cambridge AS level courses (English Language and Thinking Skills) and Correspondence School provided NCEA Level 2/3 courses. Tutoring by our staff is provided to students doing correspondence courses. Apologetics (the defence of the Christian faith) is a compulsory course aimed at preparing the student for the contradictory philosophies and world-views that they will meet in the "public arena" of secular New Zealand life.

Outdoor Education

We believe that education should be for the whole person. Part of our programme seeks to immerse students in the beauty of God's creation.

Students in the Primary and Intermediate years will attend a camp (held every three years) of two or three days duration which will emphasis the diverse and beautiful aspects of the New Zealand flora and fauna.

Students in Forms 3-5 will be involved in a major hike in the Rimutaka Forest Park. The aim here is to encourage students to test themselves by meeting some of the challenges tramping in hilly terrain presents and by learning to live and work with their classmates.

Students in Forms 6-7 will go on a two or three day experience such as canoeing down the Whanganui River or doing the Tongariro Crossing to further build on their experiences.

These activities will require additional funding over and above the normal tuition fees. Students are expected to participate in fundraising activities to reduce the cost to families.

Extra-curricular Activities

The size of the school limits the range of sports that can be offered at present. We have an arrangement with Wainuiomata High School for our students to join their school teams. Most students are involved in sports through local clubs. We have our own Netball teams involved in the school competitions and participate in local Christian school athletics and swimming competitions as well as inter-school cross-country events.

We have entered teams into the Wellington Speaking Union inter-school debating competition.

We run a series of competitions in areas such as Netball, debating, speech and drama, volleyball and so on within the school based around the four Houses (Calvin, Farel, Knox, and Zwingli). Each family is assigned to a House for the duration of their time at the school.

We celebrate Reformation Day (October 31) each year and parents and supporters are invited to participate with us in this. This is the anniversary of Martin Luther's famous act of nailing his 95 Theses on the door of the Wittenburg Church in 1517 - the event which sparked what is now known as the Protestant Reformation.

All students in Forms 3 and up are required to deliver a devotion to the senior school student body possibly once or twice a year at the regular senior school assembly. This gives students confidence to speak in public and develops their ability to handle the Word of God.

All students are expected to participate in the school choir and may be called upon to perform for special occasions.

Endorsement

Wednesday October 10th 2007

It was my considerable privilege to spend three days recently in Silverstream Christian School and Wainuiomata Christian College. I am currently enrolled in a PhD programme with Macquarie University, Sydney, investigating classical education in general, and classical and Christian schools in particular. As your schools are the only ones in New Zealand where a classical approach is offered, it was a wonderful opportunity to observe classes and discuss the specifics of classical education with staff and management.

Although this was a short visit, yet in both schools I was impressed by the high standards and expectations set for the children, and by the warm and friendly atmosphere in all classrooms. My congratulations to Martin and all the staff for their commitment and expertise. There is genuine evidence of the intention to train children to “Love the LORD your God with all your heart, and all your soul, all your mind and all your strength”.

The more I read about classical education, the more I am convinced that it is the only worthwhile approach to prepare children faithfully in accordance with scriptural principles and in such a way that they grow to fulfil their God-given potential. After nearly 40 years in education I grieve at the constant watering down of curriculum content, and the godless policies our educational authorities impose on our schools. The heart of schooling is being torn out.

It is a joy then to know that there is at least one community willing to make a stand for something better – much better. May I offer you my congratulations for your stance and encourage you to remain firm in your conviction that classical education really does offer both teachers and learners the richest and most God-honouring preparation for life.

Best wishes to you all for the future.

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