

Gilson College

Shaping our Future

Mernda Campus - Strategic Direction 2024-2028



Growth in a nurturing environment

Supporting student growth at Gilson College, Mernda Campus is more than just about classroom learning and academic development. The college is part of Adventist Schools Victoria, and more broadly Adventist Schools Australia, a system of schools that have been developing quality christian education for over 100 years. In Victoria, there are five Adventist schools currently educating more than 3000 students.

Originally purchased by Adventist Schools Victoria in 2012, the campus here opened as part of Gilson College in 2013 with just 47 primary students. This small start was a sign of great things to come, and thus began an exciting journey to develop the campus and support it to become a thriving part of Gilson College and the Adventist Schools Victoria system.

Aligning with all Adventist Schools in Victoria, we help each child to see their God-given potential. We focus on developing our students' understanding and resilience spiritually, academically, socially and physically within a nurturing, christ-centred environment.

We are proud to demonstrate an attitude of lifelong learning and support our students to achieve their very best. With strong results in both literacy and numeracy, students have also been recognised for their achievements across all areas of college life.

It is with hope, security and excitement that we look at our future objectives for the next five years of our College story!

Bible-based Christ-centred & Service-oriented

The Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education is Christ-centred. We believe that Jesus is the ultimate example of 'love in action' and He wants us to do likewise. As such, Adventist Education is a vital ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and is committed to sharing God's transforming love. We believe that Jesus relates to us on a personal level, presenting His character as the ultimate example. His love and grace are the foundation of our relationship with Him. Therefore, Adventist Education seeks to reveal Jesus and nurture all "...to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8 CSB).

Adventist Education strives to be transformative. It seeks to impart more than academic knowledge through the balanced

development of the whole person: spiritually, academically, socially and physically. It seeks to develop a life of faith in God and a respect for the dignity of all people. It nurtures thinkers rather than mere reflectors of others' thoughts (White, E. Education 1903). It promotes loving service rather than selfish ambition; it embraces all that is true, good, and beautiful.

Our schools and early learning centres are thriving, nurturing learning communities where Jesus is central, and where our students can become all that God intends them to be.

Adventist Education in Australia
— Our Purpose, 2021

Our Context

We embed our faith into all aspects of the curriculum and school life, as our purpose is to transform lives through Adventist education.

OUR VISION

Transform lives through Adventist Education

OUR MISSION

Nurture for today. Learning for tomorrow. Character for life.

OUR MOTTO

Nothing Without God

CORE VALUES

Our **core values** reflect our desire to be a christ-centred, thriving community where lives are impacted as we reflect God's character. We strive to be:

<p>Respectful "We think about others"</p> <p><i>Love one another warmly as Christians, and be eager to show respect for one another</i> - Romans 12:10</p>	<p>Responsible "We own our actions"</p> <p><i>No matter what you do, work at it with all your might.</i> - Ecclesiastes 9:10</p>	<p>Resilient "We bounce back"</p> <p><i>Be strong and brave! Don't be afraid and don't panic; for I, the LORD your God, am with you in all you do.</i> - Joshua 1:9</p>	<p>A Learner "We learn and grow"</p> <p><i>For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope." - Romans 15:4</i></p>
---	---	--	---

Strategic Direction

During the next five years, our College will continue to develop its plans and foundational framework to support future growth.

Our strategic vision is to be a campus of choice with a thriving, Christ centred community of 500 students by 2028.

This strategic direction is shaped by our context and the core domains that form a quality adventist school; Adventist Identity, Learning and Teaching, Leading School Improvement and Partnerships.

Strategic Direction Areas of Focus

Quality Practice	Build Community	Invest in our Future
------------------	-----------------	----------------------

Quality Practice

We are committed to combining innovation and best practice to achieve excellence in holistic Christian education

We are proud to provide holistic education from Foundation to Year 12, where students are supported to achieve their potential. Our christian values are central to all elements of our professional practice, modelled by staff who are dedicated to their students and Adventist education. By continually striving to improve our practice in learning and teaching, students will be supported and challenged to grow using high impact, evidence-based teaching practices.

We know that high quality practice includes more than just teaching practice. By focusing on excellence and improvement for all students and staff, we endeavour to provide high quality holistic education in all aspects of college life which is celebrated with families and the wider community. This includes an ongoing commitment to Child Safety, where we take active steps to ensure all members of the community are safe on campus.

Over the next five years, the quality practice of the college will be shaped in the following ways:

- Establish clear processes and expectations for the way we do education here at Mernda.
- Create and embed a pedagogical framework.
- Establish robust staff development structures and support.
- Develop capacity of teachers' pedagogical skills through coaching.
- Strengthen the effective use of data to guide practice and improve student outcomes.
- Improve transparency with families to communicate learning achievement and growth through effective assessment.
- Continue to develop a risk-aware and safe working environment for the school community, informing staff of best OH&S practices.
- Maintain a Child Safe education and focus, including ongoing training in mandatory reporting training and first aid.

Build Community

Our Christ-centred community of students, staff and families provides support for one another to achieve their best.

We aim to enrich our nurturing christian community, promoting our Adventist identity within the local community. The college will provide intentional opportunities for students and their families to get to know Jesus through our education programs and partnerships with our campus church. By focusing on the effective application of our Positive Behaviour for Learning and Restorative practice framework, the wellbeing of students is better supported as they develop respect, responsibility, resilience and a learner mindset. Cultivating leadership skills equips students with the values and skills needed to engage in the broader community with 'character for life'.

Over the next five years, the College community at Mernda will be fostered in the following ways:

- Promote our Adventist identity in the local community.
- Apply PB4L and Restorative practices effectively throughout our College community to support wellbeing.
- Strengthen partnerships between the college, families and the campus church.
- Cultivate student leadership development opportunities.
- Reset our marketing campaign, to ensure enrolment growth and strengthen our identity by forming greater connections with the local community.
- Continue to develop processes ensuring timely and easily accessible communication with the school community, including ongoing opportunities for parent, staff and student feedback.

Invest in our Future

We are driven by a desire to continuously develop and improve our school.

Quality practice and strong communities are supported by strategic, purposeful and participative leadership which focuses on student safety, growth and achievement. The College is committed to continuous business improvement, managing resources with careful stewardship to deliver the College's goals and vision.

Over the next five years, the College governance will be developed to support learning in the following ways:

- Continue to improve our financial position to ensure sustainable growth, progressive academic options and co-curricular opportunities.
- Maintain legal and regulatory compliance (Child Safe, OH&S, Curriculum).
- Ensure clear collection and maintenance systems for NCCD evidence and data.
- Focus on student and staff development to ensure best practice when setting budgets and prioritising resources.

Over the next five years, the College infrastructure will be developed to support learning in the following ways:

- Implement the next steps in the site Master Plan, including completion of the fit-out of the Middle School building, construction of a Multipurpose Centre and the establishment of an Early Learning Centre on the College site.
- Develop grounds and sporting facilities.
- Complete major civil infrastructure developments, including road and pedestrian safe access.
- Establish ongoing maintenance schedules to support health and safety.
- Upgrade Information Technology, including a complete network upgrade, improved security and fire safety services.