



Architect's impression



# A New Era In Special Education

St Gabriel's School K-12 by 2024

## ST GABRIEL'S SCHOOL, CASTLE HILL – A NEW ERA IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

St Gabriel's School is an independent, primary, co-educational, Catholic special school registered and accredited (Years K-6) by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA). St Gabriel's was founded by the Congregation of Christian Brothers and is now governed by Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA). It is located within the Diocese of Parramatta in Castle Hill. Enrolments are drawn from a large area across the Hills District.

St Gabriel's School is part of Edmund Rice Special Education Services (ERSES) which includes St Edmund's College, a leading Catholic Special Education Secondary school situated in Wahroonga.

St Gabriel's enjoys a strong reputation in the community and has delivered best-practice special education especially in the area of communication since 1922. It will continue to deliver a quality Catholic Education in the Edmund Rice tradition. The School will also leverage the expertise, programs and resources used at St Edmund's College, a proven leader in the education of students with special needs in the secondary years of schooling.

### WHY SECONDARY EDUCATION?

St Gabriel's School will extend its existing offering beyond the current Kindergarten to Year 6 structure to an inclusive Kindergarten to Year 12 School. St Gabriel's is introducing two streams of Year 7 to Year 12, commencing at Year 7 in 2019, progressing to Year 12 by 2024. This will ensure that families who are seeking a Catholic education for their child with a disability will have the full range of K-12 options, inclusive of Life Skills and Work Placement.

Parent and community feedback have highlighted the lack of Catholic Special Education options in the Hills area. A recent parent survey strongly supports this initiative, with over 90% of parents of children in Years 4-6 indicating they would enrol their child in the secondary years should it be available.

### PROGRESS TO DATE

A feasibility study has been completed by the School into the educational options for the future provision of Edmund Rice education at Castle Hill. The study was supported by EREA, in response to a request by the ERSES Board to investigate future options for the school, in line with the school's new [Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020](#).

The scope of the study included the extension of the educational provision to Years 7 – 12. An application by the Principal and EREA to the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) to commence Year 7 in 2019 has been submitted.

Further consultation with staff, the leadership team, board and parents has taken place. A new Education Plan has been developed and a Master Planning exercise is currently underway, both to ensure that innovative and pedagogically sound facilities are built for the initial introduction of Year 7 in 2019 and the longer-term redevelopment of secondary and other facilities at the school.



## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO OUR COMMUNITY?

The benefits of extending St Gabriel's enrolment to Year 12 include:

- Ensuring continuity of enrolment into the secondary years of schooling given the lack of Catholic Special Educational provision in the area;
- Providing continuity of educational and pastoral programs through all years of schooling;
- Enabling the provision of a seamless, integrated curriculum;
- Enabling more extensive, flexible and effective use of specialist teachers in areas such as languages, music, art, physical education and technology;
- Supporting a more efficient and effective monitoring of student progress, including consistent data collection, assisting staff to know (both academically and pastorally) each student to a greater breadth and depth from Kindergarten to Year 12;
- Providing an opportunity for a stronger and more comprehensive sacramental program, in the context of the local parish (St Bernadette's);
- Offering a context for a more connected community through increased parent participation, leading to an even stronger sense of community where families feel welcomed and know that they belong;
- A sense of relief for parents knowing that the educational continuity is maintained and that enrolment for the secondary years of schooling is certain.

## WHAT WILL SECONDARY EDUCATION LOOK LIKE AT ST GABRIEL'S?

Our commitment will be to continue to promote and deliver an authentic learning and teaching environment where all students are welcomed, valued and provided with the support and encouragement they need, within a culture of high expectations.

St Gabriel's is committed to providing a happy and secure learning environment that celebrates the dignity and worth of all who work in and for the School community.

The underpinning philosophy of every student's enrolment will be inclusion into the school and wider community. We will work collaboratively with parents, carers and advocates of the students entrusted into our care thus providing a student-centred community.

In the secondary years students will follow a Blended Learning approach in the classroom to meet their specific needs through the Life Skills Syllabuses. It allows students to access the Curriculum at their individual levels, with a focus on lower and higher order levels of thinking.

Blended learning is a contemporary approach to learning, with student wellbeing at the centre, and that emphasises critical skills needed beyond Year 12 and into the workplace: Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking and Cooperation. The aims are always preparation for the workplace throughout the secondary years.



## SUBJECTS

Students at St Gabriel's will study the Life Skills Curriculum developed by NESAs, with a strong focus on Vocational Educational Training (VET) electives and Work Placement in Stage 6 (Years 11 & 12). With our strong links to our local community, students will be given opportunities to develop their vocational skills by undertaking work experience on a regular basis.

In Stage 4 (Years 7 & 8) students will complete the following subjects;



English Life Skills (including Literacy)

Mathematical Life Skills

Science Life Skills

History Life Skills

Geography Life Skills

Languages Life Skills

Technology

Visual Arts Life Skills

Music Life Skills

PDHPE Life Skills

Religious Education

Students will have a choice of electives in Stage 5 (Years 9 & 10) and a choice of subjects in Stage 6 (Years 11 & 12). These choices will be based on student interest and made in consultation with parents and carers about what will deliver the best educational outcomes for the child.

### Teaching Staff

Each class of 8-10 students will be taught by a qualified special educator, supported by a learning support officer.

### Allied Health Team

The Allied Health Team including Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist, along with the School Counsellor will continue to work alongside students and teachers in the classroom, and work directly with families and external providers to improve student outcomes.

### School Hours

Primary School K-6: 8.45 am – 3.00pm. Supervision from 8.15am.  
Secondary School 7-12: 8.30 am – 3.10pm. Supervision from 8.00am.

## WHAT INTERACTION WILL OCCUR BETWEEN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY-AGED STUDENTS?

Students in Years 7-12 will have different school hours and play/break times to the primary aged students. Existing facilities will be shared at separate times with students gathering together for special events and assemblies fortnightly.

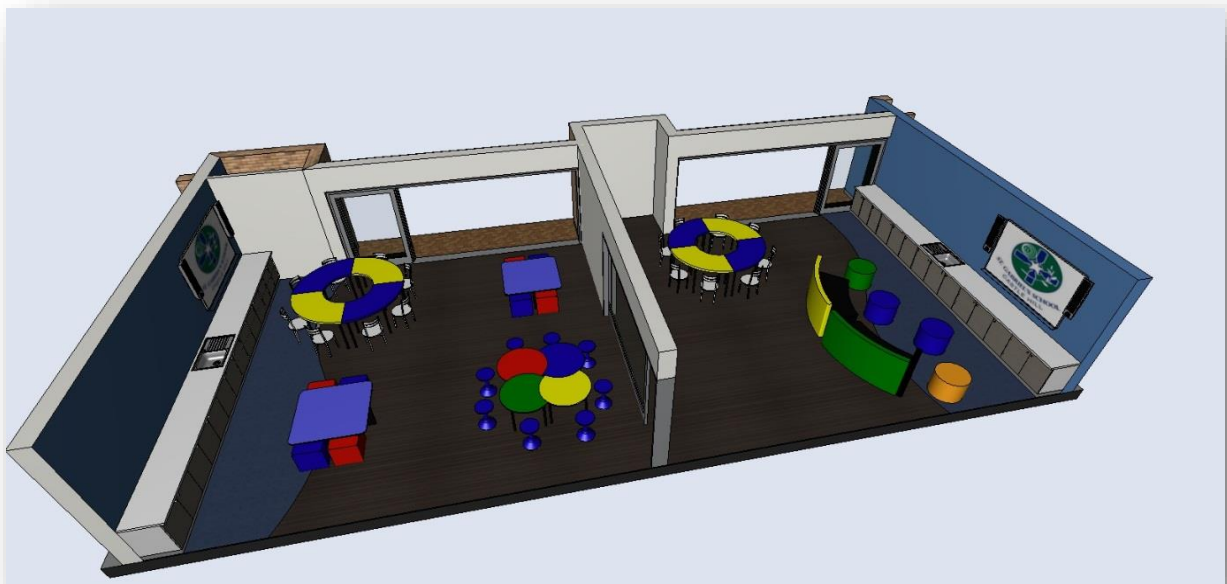
## WHAT FACILITIES WILL BE REQUIRED?

In 2019, Year 7 students will learn in modular classrooms with complementary learning spaces and student and staff amenities whilst we build the new facilities. These will be located in the current staff carpark and situated around a quadrangle with access to the new playground area. This temporary facility will be secure and will allow students to access current learning facilities at St Gabriel's such as Art, Music and the Library as well as the Front Office and sick bay.

The new secondary facility will be built where the current Brother's residence is situated. It will be a two-storey purpose-built educational building with its own outdoor space located near the parent carpark. Please see the below architectural impressions.



Typical classrooms



## WILL THERE BE CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL UNIFORM?

St Gabriel's will work with the parent community in 2018 to determine the most appropriate and suitable uniform for students in the secondary years.

## WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR ENROLMENT FOR CURRENT STUDENTS?

Register your attendance at the information evening on **Tuesday 8 May** by clicking on the following link <https://www.trybooking.com/VESV>

Application via Intention To Enrol form will need to be submitted to Mrs Jo Biggs, Registrar by **Friday 18 May**. [Please click here](#).

Please note, if your child receives Assisted Transport a new application will also need to be submitted at a date to be confirmed.

## WHAT IS THE PROCESS IF MY CHILD IS NOT CURRENTLY ATTENDING ST GABRIEL'S?

Register your attendance at the information evening on **Tuesday 8 May** by clicking on the following link <https://www.trybooking.com/VESV>. At this meeting you will receive an Enrolment and Information pack.

Please submit your completed application form, including a cognitive assessment (no older than 2 years) and diagnosis reports to confirm eligibility, to the Registrar with a \$110.00 non-refundable application fee by **Friday 18 May**.

Upon offer, a non-refundable acceptance fee of \$300.00 is required to secure your placement. This fee will be deducted from Term 1 2019 fees.

Further information can be obtained by contacting Mrs Jo Biggs, School Registrar at [enrol@stgabriels.nsw.edu.au](mailto:enrol@stgabriels.nsw.edu.au)

## WHAT ARE THE FEES AND CHARGES FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION AT ST GABRIEL'S?

The fee for Year 7 2019 will be \$4,455. Please refer to the schedule of fees. [Please click here](#).

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We look forward to seeing you on Tuesday 8 May to further discuss this new development.



Jon Franzin  
Principal