Junior Secondary Philosophy

Our philosophy focuses on fostering the social, emotional and academic growth of our students. It is underpinned by positive, productive relationships, high expectations, a seamless curriculum and quality teaching that is explicit and engaging. We aim to nurture self-belief, increase opportunities and enhance learning outcomes for our Year 7, 8 and 9 students, instilling in them a love of learning.

Junior Secondary Implementation

Following extensive consultation throughout the state, the Queensland government committed to moving Year 7 to secondary school as a significant component of the Flying Start education reforms. In 2015, both the Year 7 and Year 8 student cohorts will commence secondary school at the same time. These reforms see the creation of the Junior Secondary phase of learning with a focus on Year 7, 8 and 9 as a distinct entity with specific characteristics, developmental needs and learning requirements.

The table overleaf outlines how Laidley State High School will respond to meet the needs of our Junior Secondary students, including the Year 7 cohort attending high school for the first time.

Consultation Processes

Our school has consulted widely to develop our Junior Secondary philosophy. Along the way we have built stronger cluster school relationships, remodelled our cluster transition processes and strengthened our capacity to respond to needs of Junior Secondary students. These processes have also enabled our school to explain our approach and listen and respond to parent feedback and priorities. Our school has:

- Established a Junior Secondary Implementation team
- Consulted and collaboratively planned with Laidley Cluster Principals and teachers
- Consulted with Regional Support team regarding facilities and HR processes
- Supported school leaders and teachers to attend Junior Secondary professional development
- Visited to other schools including Year 7 Pilot schools
- Conducted parent and student consultation during Primary school transition visits and the Year 5–7 Parent Information Evening
- Undertaken research into characteristics and effective strategies for Junior Secondary students
- Released secondary teachers to work in Primary schools to align strategies
### Distinct Identify

Junior Secondary students are supported to develop their own group identity within the broader school community, and have a strong sense of belonging and ownership of their school and their learning.

- **Junior Secondary Leadership Team** established in recognition of the special qualities and specific needs of students in the Junior Secondary phase of learning.
- **Calendar of Junior Secondary events** – parades, camps, excursions, social events, celebrations, showcases of student work etc.
- **Junior Secondary Student Council** - representatives and committees have clear roles to play in school governance.
- **Junior Secondary uniform and Student Planning Diary**
- **Purpose built and/or refurbished learning environments** including a new flexible learning area for art and science activities.
- **Designated eating areas and lunch time programs** for junior students.
- **Peer-mentoring** - to build relationships and support across year levels.
- **Junior Secondary group identity celebrated** whilst cultivating connections to the whole school activities and ethos.

### Quality Teaching

The learning and achievement of Junior Secondary students is supported by highly skilled teachers with pedagogical knowledge and practice appropriate for this age group.

- **Dedicated team of highly skilled Junior Secondary teachers** to design and implement curricular and extra-curricular programs.
- **Research-based school-wide pedagogical approach** to best meet the needs of young adolescent learners.
- **Seamless transitions from Primary schools** through ongoing consultation and cooperation with Primary colleagues to ensure continuity.
- **Seamless transitions to Senior Secondary school**
- **Targeted, individualised teaching and learning** with goal-setting, monitoring, extension programs and learning support.
- **Literacy and numeracy skill development** is a key focus for learning.
- **Special programs for target group students** - Gifted and Talented, Special Education, Learning Support and Indigenous students.
- **Full complement of Secondary school subjects**
- **Specialist teachers** for all subjects including LOTE, The Arts, Technology, Health & Physical Education and Instrumental Music.
- **Taster Program of elective subjects** offered in Years 7 & 8 with specialisation in 3 selected elective subjects in Year 9.
- **Access to specialist learning facilities** - laboratories, workshops, kitchens, technology suites and creative arts spaces.

### Parent and Community Involvement

There is a range of avenues to build the active and authentic involvement of Junior Secondary parents and community. Our community informs the Laidley SHS Junior Secondary model, which reflects local needs.

- **Parents and Citizens Association**
- **Involvement in Junior Secondary curricular and extra-curricular activities**
- **Attendance at celebration events and showcases** of student work - Year 8 Multicultural Day, Education Week presentations, sporting events.
- **Junior Secondary email account** for queries, suggestions and feedback regarding Junior Secondary implementation at Laidley SHS.
  Email: juniorsecondary@laidleyshs.eq.edu.au
- **Ongoing communication with parents** – reporting, Parent/Teacher interviews, ‘Meet & Greet’ BBQ, information evenings, established ‘points of contact’, newsletters etc.
- **Reciprocal partnerships** with parents, Primary schools, community organisations and other educational institutions.
- **Ongoing consultation and cooperation** to ensure the needs of our students and families are addressed.
### Student wellbeing

**Student wellbeing is positioned as core business, and there is a whole-of-school commitment to ensuring a safe, supportive, inclusive and disciplined environment for all Junior Secondary students as they make the transition to a secondary setting.**

**Smooth Transition from Primary school, achieved through:**

- **Transition visits to Primary schools** to connect with primary students and their parents
- **Days of Excellence** - Program of ‘Challenges’ designed to extend talented Primary students and prepare them for entry to High School
- **Adopt a High School Teacher Program** – Junior Secondary teachers spend time in local Primary schools to consult with primary teachers, meet transitioning students and develop an understanding of their needs
- **Orientation Days** prepare students before arriving at high school – includes orientation sessions for Special Education students
- **Induction program** for students upon commencement at high school

**Ongoing monitoring, guidance and support:**

- **Close monitoring of student progress and wellbeing with targeted guidance and support** for junior secondary students through designated Deputy Principals, Junior Secondary Head of Department; Year Coordinators and Care teachers
- **Peer Mentoring Program** to foster a strong sense of belonging and affirm school standards and expectations
- **Personal and Career Development program** – cultivating positive attitudes and relationships, resilience, effective study habits, personal and career goal-setting and promoting school values of Ambition, Self-Belief, Perseverance, Integrity, Respect and Empathy.
- **School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support** – focus on explicit teaching of expected behaviours in line with our Behaviour Principles: Be Respectful, Be a Learner, Be Responsible, Be Safe; recognising and rewarding positive behaviour
- **Access to Student Support Team** – Guidance Officer, Chaplain, School Nurse, Youth Support Coordinator – who provide information, guidance, support and group programs

**Year 7 (2015):**

- **Year 7 Precinct** established with new and refurbished classrooms
- **Strong ownership of students** by a small number of Year 7 teachers ensures students feel valued, safe and well supported
- **2 specialist Core teachers share a Year 7 class** – one focussed on Maths/Science and the other focussed on English/History/Geography
- **Specialist teachers for other subjects** – including LOTE, Physical Education and taster program elective subjects
- **Home rooms for Year 7 classes** – with students moving to specialist facilities for elective subjects

### Leadership

**Leadership opportunities for staff and students are delivered through strong school leadership and a focus on support for Junior Secondary students.**

- **Focus on developing leadership skills** with students rotating through leadership roles at junctures throughout the year
- **Junior Secondary Student Council** representatives and committees
- **Junior Leadership in extra-curricular programs** - Sports captains, Instrumental Music Section Leaders etc
- **High Flyer Scholarship** and associated access to leadership development programs
Laidley SHS Strategic Priorities

Our school has a clear whole school plan to continue to improve our school and support our students to achieve their potential.

The Laidley SHS 2013 – 2016 School Plan identifies the following key priorities to drive sustained improvements in student outcomes:

- Expert Teaching
- A Strong Learning Culture
- Successful Transitions and Destinations
- A Positive and Productive School Community

Our Junior Secondary philosophy and implementation plan compliments:

- Our School Vision – “Aspiring Together...A World of Opportunities!
- Our 6 ASPIRE Values – Ambition, Self Belief, Perseverance, Integrity, Respect & Empathy
- Our 4 Positive Behaviour Principles– Learning, Respect, Responsibility & Safety

Our School Curriculum Framework and School Pedagogical Framework define the curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment and reporting principles and practices within our school.

Laidley SHS Performance Highlights

Our school is very proud of the achievements and improvements of our students, including:

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
Our school has a strong record of academic attainment and clear plans to further strengthen student academic achievement:

- Our school has performed in the top 25% of all Education Queensland schools in 2 of the past 4 years for OP Scores (OP 1-15)
- Our school was recognised in 2012 by Ian Rickuss (local State Member of Parliament) for achieving a high level of improvement in Year 9 Literacy and Numeracy performance on annual national NAPLAN tests
- Significant increase in the proportion of students transitioning to University upon graduation (Next Step Destination Survey shows consistent increase from 7% in 2008 to 26% in 2012)

VOCATIONAL PERFORMANCE
- Our school has performed in the top 25% of all Education Queensland schools every year for the past 4 years for vocational education performance (Certificate II or higher qualifications)
- 30% of Year 12 students attained a Certificate III qualification upon graduation

STUDENT SATISFACTION
- Students reported a high level of satisfaction with their school on the annual Education Queensland School Opinion Survey including better than Like schools in 32 of 33 questions and better than all State schools in 17 of 33 questions

STAFF SATISFACTION
- Staff reported a significantly improved and positive level of satisfaction with their school on the annual Education Queensland School Opinion Survey including better than Like schools in 23 of 39 questions

STUDENT BEHAVIOUR
- Over 30% of students excel on Level 1 or 2 of school behaviour level framework
- Decline in number of student suspensions has occurred every year for the past 3 years