MOUNT ANNAN
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

2015 Stakeholder Research:
Summary Report for MACC Parent Community
CONTENTS

Research Summary ........................................................................................................................................4
Research Methodology .............................................................................................................................4
Legend .........................................................................................................................................................5
RESEARCH FINDINGS ..................................................................................................................................6
Key Recommendations ................................................................................................................................8
1. Build on Strengths ............................................................................................................................8
2. Increase Academic Focus ................................................................................................................8
3. Refine Communication Strategy ......................................................................................................8
4. Improve Change Management Process ............................................................................................9
5. Develop Leadership Process .............................................................................................................9
1. MACC stakeholders ..........................................................................................................................10
  1.1 Demographics of Online Survey Respondents ...........................................................................10
    Gender and Age .....................................................................................................................................10
    Respondent connection with MACC .................................................................................................12
    Gender and age of respondent children ..........................................................................................13
2. Decision Drivers ..................................................................................................................................15
  2.1 Decision process ............................................................................................................................15
  2.2 Factors that Influence Parents .......................................................................................................17
  2.3 Final Factors when Choosing MACC ..........................................................................................19
Overall Experiences and Awareness ......................................................................................................19
Strengths ..................................................................................................................................................19
EXPERIENCE & FEEDBACK .....................................................................................................................21
Strengths ..................................................................................................................................................21
Challenges ................................................................................................................................................23
Reputation ................................................................................................................................................24
Parent Expectations ...............................................................................................................................25
Parent Experience .....................................................................................................................................26
Parent Experience: from first connection through to enrolment .................................................. 26
Overall Perceptions .......................................................................................................................... 27
Organisation and Communication .................................................................................................... 28
Christian Environment ..................................................................................................................... 28
Education ......................................................................................................................................... 29
Extra-Curricular ............................................................................................................................... 29
Uniform ............................................................................................................................................ 29
Behaviour Management ..................................................................................................................... 29
Student Experience ........................................................................................................................... 30
Overall Perception ............................................................................................................................ 30
Stakeholder Experience at MACC – Overview ................................................................................ 31
Experience and sentiment (Survey respondents) .............................................................................. 31
Experience ratings ............................................................................................................................... 31
Christian ethos .................................................................................................................................. 32
Future sentiment ................................................................................................................................. 33
QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK ............................................................................................................... 33
As a Prep to Year 12 co-educational school in the Macarthur Region, Mount Annan Christian College (MACC) are continually seeking to excel in providing a Christ-centred learning environment that empowers each individual to live a life of purpose. To continue to achieve this to the highest standard, MACC commissioned McCrindle Research to conduct a comprehensive research project in 2015. The purpose of this project was to gain feedback from current and past stakeholders, including parents, staff and students, to understand the strengths, areas for growth and improvement, opportunities and community perceptions of the College. A key objective of the research was to equip MACC with clearer insights into how to further increase satisfaction and engagement of students, parents and the staff community. The research was conducted independently, and all responses have remained anonymous. The insights provided have been comprehensive and insightful, and MACC greatly appreciate the participation of all who were involved in providing feedback through this research process.

A summary of the research findings is provided in this report.

The research project conducted by McCrindle Research in August 2015 involved qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The qualitative phase of this project comprised of 5 focus groups with a range of stakeholders, including parents that will have children attending MACC in the future, current and past parents and staff. This was accompanied by a quantitative research phase, involving an online survey which was conducted in August 2015 to capture perceptions and responses from staff, student alumni and parents. There were 369 partial completes and 275 full completes of this survey.

The survey was developed by McCrindle Research and hosted in their survey infrastructure. All responses remain anonymous. The survey link was provided to MACC who distributed it to the school staff, parents and alumni.

The survey distribution and completion was as follows:

Email invitations delivered n=810; partial completes n=369 (45.6%); full completes n=275 (34.0%).
Survey responses by stakeholder category:

Invitations delivered (d) v Respondents (r)

1. Current Parents: d=464; r=213 (46%)
2. Future Parents: d=27; r=11 (41%)
3. Past Parents: d=218; r=53 (24%)
4. Staff: d=62; r=60 (97%)
5. Alumni: d=39; r=16 (41%)

LEGEND

Throughout this report the following icons are used to provide a visual representation of the comments made by key stakeholders.

Parents with future MACC students

Parents of current prep-infants students

Parents of current secondary school students

Current MACC staff
RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research clearly identified perceived strengths of the school, including the nurturing, supportive, caring, Christian environment as well as the innovation displayed through the use of technology and new teaching and learning methods. It also identified some areas for improvement to assist the college in positioning themselves for greater impact and educational effectiveness and greater satisfaction amongst key stakeholders.

The greatest strengths of the school identified by focus group participants was the supportive/caring staff who nurture children, as well as the community feel and a sense of being known. Parents also noted the passion and commitment of staff, MACC’s global outlook, and staff that were available and approachable.

Survey respondents saw the main strengths of MACC being the close environment of a smaller school, the community feel and the supportive teachers that nurture students. Parents also valued the new teaching approaches and technology use, as well as MACC’s Christian values.

MACC is most likely to be described as family friendly (68%), followed by caring (62%), nurturing (52%) and supportive (51%). More than 1 in 4 also selected innovative (37%) and visionary (27%) in their top 5 words to describe MACC.

The summary of the key stakeholder findings are here:

School of Choice: The research explored the decision process that parents go through in selecting a school for their child/ren. The results showed that MACC is regarded as a ‘school of choice’ for many, with half of MACC parents indicating that MACC was their first school of choice.

The key decision drivers that led parents to choose MACC were the community feel, reputation of excellence in prep/kindy programs, supportive staff, proximity to home and Christian ethos.

Opportunity to increase awareness about MACC: The research revealed that there was an opportunity to increase the awareness of MACC in the wider community. A number of parents heard about MACC through another parent promoting the college to them. While this is positive and valuable word of mouth recommendations, the research highlighted there was an opportunity to improve signage and other communications with the wider community.

Opportunity to improve communication processes: Feedback provided from parents and staff identified that there is opportunity to improve the feedback and communication processes between parents and the college. This includes forward planning and communication of events and key dates, college expectations and extra-curricular activities to enable families to plan around these events more effectively.
Prep and Kindy: Overall the quality of staff, leadership and programs was celebrated by participants and many considered MACC to be the community leader in this area of education. Parents appreciated the supportive, nurturing environment that developed children socially, spiritually and academically. The vast majority of parents indicated that they were delighted and had their expectations met through the prep and kindy programs and staff with parents identifying a key strength in their experience through the interview process.

Primary School: The primary school was building on the foundation of prep and kindy with many appreciative of the nurturing, Christian environment in which their children were developing. Academic achievement was noted by parents towards the later years of primary as of increasing importance.

The availability, commitment and approachability of teaching staff were noted with appreciation from many parents within the primary school.

Implementation of Open Learning: Feedback from parents included that they would value more communication around the implementation of the open learning style which operates in part of the school so that they could better understand it. Parents appreciated the smaller class sizes and saw them as desirable in the primary years, and also wanted to ensure their children had access to a range of subject options as they progressed through the senior years.

Secondary School: It was outlined by parents that staff engagement was strong and that it was a nurturing environment for their children. Parents also place significant value on academic performance, and believe that it needs to be a key focus of the school, whilst also providing extra-curricular activities that cater to a wide range of student needs.

Parents also wanted to be assured of consistency around discipline, uniform, overall leadership and communication processes including a feedback process, extra-curricular activities, along with ensuring teaching staff are focused in their areas of expertise.
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of key recommendations were made in the research report. These include:

1. **BUILD ON STRENGTHS**

   It was consistently noted that MACC excelled in creating a nurturing, caring and Christian environment that supported the development of the students. The community feel was embodied through dedicated and supportive staff who were approachable and committed. MACC was also regarded as innovative and leaders in the use of technology in education. These strengths can be further built on through internal and external communications.

2. **INCREASE ACADEMIC FOCUS**

   Whilst parents valued the nurturing environment of the school, particularly in the younger years, the increased focus on and importance of academic development and improving educational results was indicated by parents as an essential need as their child/ren progressed through primary and were preparing for secondary school.

   The need to raise educational standards and results was noted by parents who suggested that MACC take a lead role in raising the expectations on students to achieve their best academically at all stages of school life.

3. **REFINE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

   The topic of communication was noted throughout the project by participants who felt that the development of a refined and streamlined communication strategy could benefit MACC stakeholders. Parents and staff expressed the desire to hear more succinct, consistent and inspiring communication from the schools leadership, staff and administration. It was identified by participants that a multi-modal approach that refined online mediums such as MACC’s web page, social media, blogs, email communication, public and face to face communication into a streamlined, system package that could consistently be delivered upon through online, face to face and hard copy mediums across the prep, primary and secondary school.
Forward planning was appreciated by parents and staff in regards to hearing about quarterly events prior to the commencement of the term via email to ensure parents were available and informed and so that staff were capable of producing their best results.

4. IMPROVE CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Staff and parents identified the opportunity to remain committed to achieving high standards of excellence across all areas of MACC and that this could be strengthened through increased consistency across a number of areas. Feedback included raising standards in uniform expectations and quality, responding to negative feedback, bullying policies, changes in fees and sibling discounts and a consistent policy around behaviour management for students. Change management and surrounding communication was also seen as important, such as when the school is implementing a new approach or program.

5. DEVELOP LEADERSHIP PROCESS

The respondents suggested the development of leadership processes that effectively support consistent management of feedback, conflict resolution, effective communication and streamlined change management. It was identified that the implementation of systems throughout prep, primary and secondary school could increase the flow of communication, the productivity of staff and the engagement of parents. Parents perceived that an improved forward planning method would benefit the school community.

Furthermore, in any community that has a strong relational network and base, the need for clear feedback and communication processes are essential. As part of the MACC community there are a number of overlapping relationships and networks, including in the leadership structure, which extend beyond the school environment, hence the need for clear processes for communication and feedback are needed.
1. MACC STAKEHOLDERS

1.1 DEMOGRAPHICS OF ONLINE SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Gender and Age

Q. What is your gender?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All respondents</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Females represented the majority of survey respondents (72%) compared to males (28%). These proportions were consistent across Parents, Staff and Alumni respondents.

Q. What age will you be in 2015?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>All respondents</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Alumni</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 20</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 35</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - 50</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 - 69</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70+</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under 18 10 - 20 21 - 35 36 - 50 51 - 69 70+
Almost 7 in 10 (67%) respondents identified as being in Generation X (36 – 50 year olds). 17% were Generation Y (21 – 35 year olds) and 14% Baby Boomers (51 – 69 year olds). Just 2% were Generation Z (18 – 20 year olds).

Q. Where do you live by postcode?

Survey respondents (361 respondents) indicated were they lived by postcode with 2567 ranked highest with 190 respondents (53%), 2560 placed second with 65 respondents (18%) and 2570 ranked third with 45 respondents (12%).

3 in 4 (74%) respondents identified as Christian. Those who indicated that they have spiritual beliefs but don’t identify with any main religion accounted for 13% and 5% do not identify with any religion at all. Just 1% identified with a religion other than Christianity (Hinduism) and
responses in the ‘Other’ category included Anglican, Pentecostal, Mormon, Jehovah’s Witness and Jewish.

Respondent connection with MACC

Q. What is your best point of connection with Mount Annan Christian College?
Please select the one that best describes your connection with the school.

- A parent that currently sends their child / children to Mount Annan Christian College: 59%
- A parent that will send or has enrolled their child / children at Mount Annan Christian College: 3%
- A parent that withdrew their child / children from Mount Annan Christian College: 15%
- Current staff at Mount Annan Christian College: 19%
- Student Alumni (former student): 4%

3 in 5 (59%) survey respondents were parents who currently send their child / children to Mount Annan Christian College. Staff accounted for 1 in 5 (19%) survey respondents and 15% were parents who withdrew their child / children at Mount Annan Christian School. Just 4% were student alumni and 3% parents who will send or has enrolled their child / children at Mount Annan Christian School.
Q. When did you first have a connection with Mount Annan Christian College?

For example as a parent this would be when you first enrolled or considered enrolling your child in the school.  
For example as a teacher when you joined the staff team.

The graph above shows the proportion of respondents who first had a connection with Mount Annan Christian College since 1999. More than half (55%) of the respondents who are parents first connected with MACC from 2010 onwards. Staff have a longer history with MACC with 54% first making a connection before 2007, over a quarter (28%) before 2003.

Gender and age of respondent children

Q. Please select the gender of the children in your household under the age of 18.

47% of the children of respondents under the age of 18 are male, 53% are female.
Q. Please select the age of the children in your household under the age of 18.

The graph above shows the proportion of children of respondents for each age 18 or below.

Q. What is the status of your child/ren’s involvement with Mount Annan Christian College?
[Parents; n = 183]

Over 4 in 5 (84%) parent respondents’ child/ren are current students of MACC. 3% indicated that they only have child/ren who are past students and 13% have both children who are current and past students of the school.
2. DECISION DRIVERS

2.1 DECISION PROCESS

Q. How many other schools did you consider when choosing a school for your child / children?
[Parents; n = 222]

Almost a quarter (23%) of MACC parents indicated that they did not consider any other schools when choosing a school for their child/ren. A third indicated that they consider one other school (34%) or two other schools (33%) when choosing a school for their child/ren. 9% considered at least three other schools when choosing a school for their child/ren.

Q. Was Mount Annan Christian College the first school of choice to send your child / children to?
[Parents; n = 222]

Over half (56%) of MACC parents indicated that MACC was their first school of choice to send their child/ren to.

The number one influencing factor for parents when choosing MACC as a school for their child/ren were the reasonable school fees (50% identified this as extremely important). 46% of
parents identified learning support, 43% effective communication and 42% small class sizes as extremely important in their selection of MACC as the school to send their child/ren to.

Other factors that influenced parents to send their children to MACC included the community feel, the interview process, the proximity to where people live and the location of the college. They also outlined that the Christian ethos, the strength of the junior school including prep and that there would be no transitions between schools from prep to year 12. Also the creative and supportive education atmosphere and the fees helped them make that final decision to send their children to the college. Additionally parents identified that if they already knew friends or family attending the college they were a final factor in choosing MACC.

The feel of it, before you went it felt comfortable and like home, I've had people say it is a totally different feel. All the kids are waving at the teachers and saying, 'Hi'.

We were looking for supportive teachers. I wanted individual assessment too. I know my son is really advanced and he can get lost a bit because he knows a lot and can do a lot by himself but the teachers are very supportive.

The Junior School and the way they structured play ground – they weren’t playing with all the different ages in play time, location, peaceful, quiet.

Christian ethos.

My son was travelling a long way to another Christian school so this was better for his wellbeing and he was happier.

That community and Christianity just pours out of them.

**Q. Where was Mount Annan Christian College placed when you originally began considering schools for your child / children?**

[Parents; n = 220]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was our first choice</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was our second choice</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was our third or subsequent choice</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 in 5 (58%) parents indicated that MACC was their **first choice** when considering schools for their child/ren. 29% indicated that MACC was their **second choice** and 13% suggested it was their **third or subsequent choice** in school for their child/ren.

### 2.2 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE PARENTS

**Q. How important were the following factors when choosing Mount Annan Christian College for your child?**

[Parents; n = 210]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Slightly important</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reasonable school fees</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective communication</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small class sizes</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning support</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balanced academic and co-curricular education</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of buildings, classrooms and facilities</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is in a peaceful setting</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Annan Christian College’s reputation</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The innovative learning techniques</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral care of students</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education regarding safe Internet use</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close proximity to my home</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The growing nature of Mount Annan Christian College</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is a co-educational school</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra curricular sport</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing and Creative Arts program</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was recommended by a friend or family member</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The church that is supporting it</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous family member/s attended</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous family member/s attended</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number one influencing factor for parents when choosing MACC as a school for their child/ren were the **reasonable school fees** (50% identified this as extremely important). 46% of parents identified **learning support**, 43% **effective communication** and 42% **small class sizes** as extremely important in their selection of MACC as the school to send their child/ren to.

Friendships for their child, the K – 12 offering, prep program and sibling discount were the factors mentioned in the ‘other’ category by parents as influential in choosing MACC for their child/ren.

The factors that influence where parents send their children to school were considered by focus group participants and the responses are visualised in the image below. The larger words indicated more participants suggested that word.
The key factors that influence parents are the fees/overall cost and the education/academic results. Other notable factors included the location, class/school size, community feel, quality staff/teaching standards and reputation. Many parents did not express Christian focus or Christian environment as they did not consider any other alternatives and the school had to be Christian for their children to attend it.

When the parents in the focus groups compared other schools with MACC the strengths of MACC that were identified were the Christian practice at MACC, small class sizes in junior school and the community feel.

...MACC implements Jesus and Christianity into everything... They can get up and pray, it is a focus, they start the day off with it, it is genuine, not just once a month.

MACC wasn’t even on our radar at first but then we heard about it and looked. We liked the class sizes and the feel.

Affordable after school care and before school care. It should be subsidised ...

Affordability, in terms of high school what is going to be offered to give them the best job prospects.

There is no vacation care – it’s only 3 days... it is difficult to get back from the city, I think after the school care needs to be a bit longer past 6pm. If you are trying to get out of the city at 5 and get back here by 6 to pick up the kids.
We felt that we fit here.

I felt more comfortable coming here.

2.3 FINAL FACTORS WHEN CHOOSING MACC

The final factors that influenced parents to send their children to MACC included the community feel, the interview process, the proximity to where people live and the location of the college. They also outlined that the Christian ethos, the strength of the Junior School including Prep and that there would be no transitions between schools from Prep to Year 12. Also the creative and supportive education atmosphere and the fees helped them make that final decision to send their children to the college. Additionally parents identified that if they already knew friends or family attending the college they were a final factor in choosing MACC. Parents with Secondary School students noted that the subject choices was a key factor for that age group.

OVERALL EXPERIENCES AND AWARENESS

STRENGTHS

In the focus groups participants were asked to identify the strengths of MACC and the image below shows their responses. The size of the words indicates the number of participants that identified the strength. The largest strength identified by participants was the supportive/caring staff who nurture children. The community feel was recognised as a key strength with the small school feel providing a sense of being known that parents appreciated. Other strengths included the passionate/committed staff, global missions/service outlook, available and approachable staff were also celebrated by the parents.
The online survey respondents identified the strengths of MACC as the close environment of a smaller school, the community feel and the supportive teachers that nurture students. Innovative new pedagogical approaches and the use of technology were also identified as strengths. Finally the Christian values, prep to year 12 on safe facilities and the desire to improve the quality of the student’s educational experiences were identified as strengths.

Q. Which of the following words or phrases best describe Mount Annan Christian College?
Please select your top 5 choices.

Mount Annan Christian College is most likely to be described as family friendly (68%). More than half of respondents also identified caring (62%), nurturing (52%) and supportive (51%) as terms they would use to describe MACC.

2 in 5 (41%) respondents would select professional in their top 5 terms to describe MACC. More than 1 in 4 also selected innovative (37%) and visionary (27%) in their top 5 words to describe MACC.
The larger the word, the more often it was mentioned by individuals.

EXPERIENCE & FEEDBACK

Strengths

Prospective parents of MACC identified strengths as the school being Prep-12, the Christian focus, the innovative use of technology and the caring staff. Parents described the importance of the Christian focus of the college in the development of their children. The family friendly environment was noted as a positive. Also the use of iPads in learning activities was utilising the latest technology that impressed parents.

I like the small school. The selling point was the prep to year 12, the facilities are amazing and most important is the staff caring about the kids – they are always around after school.

That it is from K to year 12. The change from primary to high school can be disruptive otherwise.

Ours is the same, Christian focus, family friendly.

The technology is very advanced with special iPad learning activities.
The parents of current students in prep to infants considered the **community feel** as a key strength of MACC. The strength of the teachers in these age groups was identified and celebrated based on their **approachability, teaching techniques and availability**.

Staff members noted the **community feel** as well as the emphasis on the outward mission focus of the school as strengths.

- The prep and kinder programs are second to none and the teachers are brilliant.

- Community feel and amazing teachers that are approachable.

- Pastoral care, the programs for the kids and the availability of teachers, they make themselves very available.

- I think the primary boss is the best boss I have ever worked under and pushes us to be the best that we can be.

- **Strong outward mission focus**.

- I think the strong sense of community.

The parents with students in the secondary school indicated that strengths of the college were the **staff** who were engaged and approachable. Also the staff created a **calm learning environment** that **integrated multiple subjects** in small classes. Opportunities to focus outwards were recognised by participants as positives of the secondary school.

- Staff engagement I think is really strong and they seem genuinely interested in the school and kids.

- I think the teachers are approachable, they get in contact with you or you can grab a couple of minutes from them.

- **Safe and calm learning environment**.

- **Opportunities for outward focus**.

- **Integrated curriculum** – use of multiple subjects to build the bigger picture.
Challenges

Survey participants identified one challenge is the size of the college, which places a limit on staff and student resources, and the number of programs than can be run. Respondents also provided feedback on the opportunity to improve the communication and management processes.

Some respondents also hoped to see assistance for families that are struggling financially, as well as ensuring the school fees overall are competitive and deliver appropriate value for money.

There was also some feedback around the quality and expectations around uniform. Finally, the importance of academic achievement was noted, with parents wanting high quality and experience of teaching staff in order to provide the best academic opportunities and development for their child/ren. There was some feedback from participants, including staff, that MACC is a strongly networked community so at times there can be a lack of clarity around who to speak to about certain issues, or what the appropriate pathways are for feedback. For example, as a number of staff are related and there are also strong relationships between the church and school, it was expressed that there was a need for clearer processes and assurance of confidentiality when certain issues were raised.

Profile

Participants in the focus group identified a couple of ways that MACC had been active in the community. These included participating in an ANZAC day march this year and also the year 12’s attendance at an agricultural show.

Local newspapers were identified by participants as an area to increase awareness through frequent advertising and celebration of the year 12’s graduation and academic results – including on the school website. Also advertising at Narellan town centre was suggested by participants. Some parents also indicated that they were happy to be involved at community fairs to promote the school and help run a stand as volunteers.

Several parents commented that MACC was not a school they would have considered sending their children to due to lack of awareness until their friends recommended it to them.

Location

The strengths of the location was the safety for children due to its setback nature from the main road, however to increase overall awareness, some visible signage could assist in increasing awareness.
Communication

Current parents identified that communication was an area for improvement at MACC. Participants desired more consistent and proactive communication using fewer online mediums. This would assist parents in knowing what extra-curricular activities were happening, as well as how to best assist their children with their homework.

The need for educational excellence and solid academic results were identified as an area of priority for parents. Some parents also commented on the need for consistent procedures and processes around discipline and bullying situations.

The thing I thought of with communication is that they are innovative but if kids are struggling with it, it is difficult for me to know how to help with homework because if he doesn't know, I don't know. I have to go online and YouTube it but I still can't figure it out. With better communication we will know how to help the kids.

Consistency of communication... using different (online) communication tools.

Parents of secondary school students outlined the importance of academic results through secondary school, and to achieve this they value experienced and specialised staff in the secondary school. They also highlighted the importance of having effective processes for providing feedback.

Parents discussed the uniform and expressed a desire to see improved quality of uniforms that were not as expensive, and that there would be appropriate stock levels maintained at the uniform shop.

Reputation

Parents of children that will attend the college in the future could not describe any bad remarks they’ve heard about the reputation of the college. Participants noted that they promoted the college in regards to the technology implemented at the college and the servant nature of the students in the senior school.

I've never heard anything bad.

I also tell people about the technology aspect of the school.

The older kids once had all the umbrellas for the younger kids. I want my kids to turn out like that.

Current prep and infants parents described MACC as the best school in the area from prep to year 3. The grounds of the college were mentioned as a positive including the sporting field, the
location back up off the main rain and the agricultural plot. One participant stated that overall the school as a whole has a good reputation.

From prep to year three I would say this is probably the best school in the area...

I work at a (different) secondary school and I heard a comment about us (MACC) having fantastic grounds and we kept talking and they said they had heard of MACC and they said we have a really good ag plot.

I don't really hear anything bad and negative. You might hear about a family has left. I think the school as a whole has a good reputation.

Parent Expectations

Parent’s expectations were informed by reports of the good history of the college and great results they had heard about from other parents.

We wanted to get him into a Catholic or Christian school. We researched all these other ones and then had the interview at MACC and we were really happy. It is prep to year 12, the price is up there but it isn’t the highest.

We knew someone who had been to MACC before and I think one of them is in year 12 still and they have great results and are all saying it is great.

Current prep and infants parents expected security and safety for their children due to the location back up off the main road in combination with the Christian focus of the school. Looking forward, they would like to see an increase in academic results and educational expectations, and appreciate smaller class sizes.

Participants expected a quality education in a caring Christian environment that would assess and nurture their individual child’s academic and social development. They also desired extra-curricular offerings in a safe environment. They expected MACC staff to be friendly, approachable and have a range of levels of experience.

Parents also expressed a desire for a clear process to be able to provide feedback to the school and receive follow up communication from any feedback they provided.

I chose the school for the small numbers but now it is so small that year 3 has one class with 30.

One of the reasons I chose the school was based on the security.
Whilst the nurturing environment remains important, the focus for parents as their children enter secondary school increasingly becomes on the academic performance. The expectation was that at a private school you would have **good teachers** using **innovative teaching methods that incorporated technology** and that would help students **attain strong academic results**. There was an expectation that sporting competition would be strong when offering sports scholarships.

They do all the nurturing in primary but in high school I want good educators.

**PARENT EXPERIENCE**

Parent Experience: from first connection through to enrolment

The experience of those who have decided to send their children to MACC was positive due to **the community feel** they received from the research phase right through to enrolment.

We liked the feel of a smaller school. You didn’t feel like a number, they **genuinely care**. The reception are really helpful and lovely too.

**First Connection**

There was a number of first points of connection with the college. Parents used **the ‘My School’ website** to research the school to find out about the key information regarding the school including NAPLAN results. Also **the influence of friends who had children at MACC** was identified by participants. Parents then commented about the smooth process to contact the school and arrange an interview.

I used the My School website.

My friend was also school shopping and she was telling me which ones she was looking at and she texted me and she said to look at MACC.

My friend had kids at MACC and so we looked there and it was just around the corner and we changed to MACC.

**Interview and enrolment process**

Parents described the comfortable and responsive nature of the interview process. They experienced a warm welcome and appreciated a fast response on the day regarding their child’s acceptance to MACC.
When my son felt comfortable, [the Principal] asked if he could write any letters and he wrote down some letters. They weren’t intimidating, my son was comfortable and so passed the test.

Current prep and infants parents described the enrolment process as a warm and positive experience that won over parents who were undecided about which school to enrol their child in. The interview process particularly was noted as a smooth and friendly experience that made parents and children feel comfortable through the personable process. Also parents commented that the interaction between the prep and kindergarten helped parents to feel that their child was going to have a smooth transition into the college.

Parents of current secondary students identified that the first recommendation often came through a friend or through the church. Parents then said they would go online to do further research and visit the school. Parents commented that students were able to fit into the school quickly and begin to develop quickly.

My child fit straight in, they just flourished and are doing exceptionally well.

Overall Perceptions

The overall impression of prospective parents was that they were very happy and they were passionate promoters of the school to their peers. They have a sense that their high expectations were being met. They anticipated their child’s commencement at the college and looked forward to building on the good relationship with MACC that was formed through the welcome, interview and enrolment process.

I highly recommend it to people. There are people at my church who are thinking of changing their kid's school.

We are very happy, (MACC is) everything we hoped it would be.

The parents of children in prep and primary noted the commitment of the staff and appreciated their approachability and availability. The nurture provided by friendly staff and the school leaders have been meeting parents expectations for their child’s social development. Some parents are happy with the way the teachers were dealing with bullying and social issues.

Participants noted there was opportunity to improve the process of identifying when children could be challenged further academically. Parents reinforced the need to have highly experienced teaching staff.
My child’s needs are being met because the teacher is incredible. She will come and tell me if there was an issue between people and the teacher dealt with it.

The level of commitment from the teachers. It is more than just a job for them. All of the teachers we know at a personal level.

On the showcase the teacher’s commitment was evident.

I want individual assessment. I know my child is really advanced and can get lost a bit because he knows a lot and can do a lot by himself but the teachers are very supportive.

**Organisation and Communication**

Participants identified a key area for improvement was in the college’s communication. Problems were identified in the inconsistent communication regarding upcoming extra-curricular offerings such as soccer try outs or school events like the showcase.

I work so when activities are on I need to know at least a month before. Sometimes that just give us a few days’ notice and I need time to organise this stuff. They don’t give you enough time to prepare for stuff that is going to happen. They mentioned it in the newsletter and then a note went out three days before.

Parents identified the need for communication processes to improve particularly around issues such as finances, hardships and scholarships.

**Christian Environment**

Parents expressed that they felt the Christian environment was suitably nurturing their child’s spiritual development. Parent’s identified the pastoral care of children by the staff as a key strength of the college. The school church services were positive according to parents and the songs were age appropriate and involved the younger children as well. Parents identified with the Christian values and stories that were taught even if they were not Christians themselves.

They sing songs that are appropriate for the age levels. You can see that the little kids are still really involved as well.

I’m not from a Christian background and I was really concerned and wondering if we were going to be conflicted because my wife is Christian but I’m not. My child comes back with beautiful stories.
Education

Overall participants experienced the college’s priority of the Christian nurture of their children over their academic development at the college. The nurture of younger children was seen as a priority of parents in the first few years at the college and they felt the college was excelling in this area. There was a greater need to prioritise academic development as their child progressed through their primary and secondary years.

The education path that would be great, here’s the next 12 years of school, what are the streams these ages can go into. Maybe year 4 is too young to talk about careers but I think it would be helpful to talk about it.

My important thing is that we are all paying to go to a good school to get a good result – a good education in senior school is my highest concern.

When the open learning teaching style was mentioned, some parents commented that they didn’t have clarity around the purpose of it.

Extra-Curricular

In regards to extra-curricular activities parents mentioned activities such as languages, sports and music as additional offerings they desire their children to experience. There was a need for increased awareness of what extra-curricular activities were offered at the college and for consistency of programs being offered.

We don’t get told what they are.

There were observations made about the limited sporting opportunities available for secondary school students. A parent recognised that the delivery on commitments was an issue with extra-curricular activities at the college.

Uniform

Parents desired to have uniforms which were better quality and more durable, so that there wasn’t added expense of replacing items.

Behaviour Management

Parents identified the need for consistency in the treatment of students regarding inappropriate behaviour. Parents appreciated when both students and parents were spoken to.
Student Experience

Overall student experience

Parents described the student experience very positively with the overall group of children seen as very good. Students that experienced bullying were mostly cared for and the situation was often resolved. There was a suggestion to have more play equipment for the Junior School children.

They are just a very beautiful group of kids and I don’t think that is a coincidence.

I think the kids are wonderful.

The behaviour is very good here.

More play equipment for the Junior School.

Subject Availability & Post-school Pathways

The parents understood the range of subject availabilities was limited and appreciated upfront communications about this. Parents also desired subject selection guidance for their children in navigating the best pathway.

Similarly, parents desired assistance and guidance for their children in selecting subjects based on desired university courses and with ongoing preparation to equip students to enter the workforce. Suggestions included attendance at university open days, and practice of interview skills.

Overall Perception

The overall impression of parents with children in prep and primary is that the college is exceeding parent’s expectations during the first few years of education due to the staff nurturing the children in this early phase of academic, social and spiritual development. Parents appreciated the commitment, availability and approachability of the staff.

Parents have a desire to see increased academic expectations from the later primary years. They also noted the need for consistency in communication and in delivery of extra-curricular activities.

Parents were appreciative of the warm welcome the leaders and other staff offered at enrolment. Parents acknowledged that the nurturing environment was developing quality young people in terms of character but have higher expectations for the delivery of education outcomes.

The participants indicated that the staff were nurturing and caring of their students, and desired to see staff maximised in their areas of specialisation.
STAKEHOLDER EXPERIENCE AT MACC – OVERVIEW

EXPERIENCE AND SENTIMENT (SURVEY RESPONDENTS)

Experience ratings

Q. How would you rate Mount Annan Christian College across the following areas?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>5 (Excellent)</th>
<th>4 (Moderate)</th>
<th>3 (Poor)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral care</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of technology</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive community</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities and resources</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing children's potential</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in school leadership</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership direction</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall performance</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective management</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic performance</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing value for money</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing arts</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest rated aspect of MACC is the pastoral care with 64% indicating that they would rate it as excellent or good. Other intangible aspects of MACC rated highly include the supportive community and the development of student potential.

The tangible aspects rated most highly by respondents were the use of technology (62%) and the facilities and resources (55%) at MACC.
Mission and service of the school were identified as the values that have most been reflected in respondents’ experience of MACC with 87% indicating that they at least somewhat agreed this reflected their experience. 4 in 5 (80%) respondents indicated that integrity, fairness and compassion are values that were at least somewhat reflected their experience of MACC.

At least 4 in 5 respondents also agreed that innovation and creativity (82%), diligence and discipline (80%) and lifelong learning (80%) are values that have been reflected in their experience of MACC.

Christian ethos

Q. What is your perspective towards the Christian connection and ethos of Mount Annan Christian College?

Half of respondents really like that MACC has a Christian connection (51%). 22% suggest that they are supportive of MACC’s Christian connection and 1 in 10 (10%) have reservations about MACC’s
Christian connection. No one indicated that they are opposed to MACC having a Christian connection.

FUTURE SENTIMENT

Q. Thinking about the future of school education delivered by Mount Annan Christian College, how do you think these elements will change in 3 years’ time compared to today?

The elements of the MACC respondents most expect to be at least somewhat better in three years’ time are the facilities and resources (64%), quality of teaching (58%) and curriculum delivery (59%). 53% also believe the school’s reputation with be at least somewhat better in three years’ time.

QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK

At Mount Annan Christian College we value your engagement, input and feedback. If you have any questions, would like to discuss any aspect of your child’s education at Mount Annan Christian College, please do not hesitate to contact our team:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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