Education • Partnership • Community

Chairo Christian School
Providing Excellence in Christ-Centred Education in Partnership with Families within a Caring Christian Community
The Chairo Story

Since 1983, many families have embraced Chairo’s approach to education, partnership and community. It all started with sixteen students at Drouin East. Another site closer to Drouin was added in 1995. A third campus commenced three years later near Pakenham, and then South Coast Christian College at Leongatha became our fourth campus in 2014.

Chairo is not simply a Christian school in name or because of our heritage. We strive at all times to be a community that honours God and seeks to make Him known in all areas of teaching, learning, experience and endeavour.

Our motto, Learning with God, is incorporated into the school logo. The graphic that the words surround depicts children holding hands, with the Bible and cross at the centre.

Our vision statement speaks of maintaining an uncompromising biblical foundation, encouraging students to reach their God-given potential, and reflecting the love of Christ. Our desire is that Chairo always has a clear vision that serves to consistently and effectively honour God.

Our mission is to provide excellence in Christ-centred education in partnership with families within a caring Christian community. We trust that this booklet will help unpack our mission statement and provide readers with an understanding of why Chairo exists and what we value most highly.

There were many good reasons to choose Chairo for the education of our children. However, our very first priority was to find a school that recognised the importance of helping parents in the task of teaching God’s Word and His ways, and that aimed to train young people to think about the world around them in the same way that God does.

LOUISE HOOD, PARENT
Christian Worldview

The terms Christ-centred education and Christian education are both used to describe the education provided at Chairo. It is an education delivered by teachers who are expected to demonstrate a Christian worldview in all matters, and who are therefore able to assist students as they develop a worldview of their own. The Christian Education National Welcome to Christian Education brochure explains:

- No form of education is neutral as it will always be providing a particular lens through which students see the world and their place in it.
- Christian education invites young people to see and understand the world through the perspective of God’s truth. The Bible becomes the lens through which students view what they are learning.
- Christian education is not just about a Christian way of understanding. It is also about a Christian way of living.

Education at Chairo is delivered via a broad range of subjects and experiences for boys and girls from Kindergarten through to Year 12. Although the Bible is central, we certainly do not ignore human discovery, current scientific understanding or society’s ‘hot’ topics. In fact, we seek to embrace all areas of life by equipping students to be biblically informed, academically rigorous and critically discerning.

Attending Chairo enabled me to develop and refine my worldview with strong Christian role models and within a curriculum framework based on Christian values. In these formative years, I think it’s vital that students are taught that faith is not a separate part of life, but is intertwined with all aspects of life. To achieve that, you need a school where the teachers, the curriculum, and the very values of the school itself, are reflective of the Christian faith.

DR TRISTAN BOONSTRA, CLASS OF 2003
Do not be conformed to this world, but continuously be transformed by the renewing of your minds ...

ROMANS 12:2 ISV
**Curriculum**

While the Australian Curriculum sets the expectations for what students should be taught, it deliberately doesn’t specify how the content must be delivered. Chairo is therefore responsible for organising rigorous, relevant and engaging learning to address the individual learning needs and interests of our students.

We believe that it is important to encourage students to examine the impact in all areas of life of: God’s creative work; mankind’s broken relationship with God; the redeeming love of God demonstrated through Jesus Christ; and God’s great plan of restoration and new life. As teachers develop curriculum and lessons, they consider how these major themes of the Bible—creation, fall, redemption and restoration—have an effect on the subject or topic being studied.

**Lifelong Learners**

At Chairo, we seek to develop life-long learners—people who want to learn and who know how to learn … young adults who will transition successfully to the next stage of life, whether that is voluntary work, employment, apprenticeship, vocational education or university.

We highly value resilience, dedication and perseverance. We highly value right motives, positive attitudes and healthy ambitions. We highly value faith in Jesus Christ, service to God and commitment to family.

Our desire is that Chairo graduates will contribute fruitfully to society as workers who are diligent and conscientious, leaders who are humble and trustworthy, friends who are faithful and wise, citizens who are caring and compassionate …
Working Together
We are passionate at Chairo about partnering with families and working closely together to ensure that the teaching and learning provided is as effective as possible. The premise on which Chairo was founded is that God requires parents to be responsible for raising their children, but that today’s busy and complex world means that most parents need help from like-minded people with particular training and skills.

How much time parents can give to helping out during the school day will vary from family to family. However, first and foremost, an effective partnership between school and home is built on a myriad of unseen actions, examples, attitudes, conversations and decisions.

Sometimes the partnership is more visible and can be seen at parent/teacher interviews, coffee and dessert nights, family picnics, musical productions, meetings and information evenings, prayer groups and morning teas … as well as within the classroom, and during camps, excursions and other special events.

There is considerable agreement that parental involvement in education has a positive influence on learning. By working closely together, teachers and parents can help develop positive attitudes to learning and ensure that students achieve to their full potential. Partnership between school and home, and good two-way communication, provides support and encouragement to students and sends a message that education is important.

I will always treasure the partnership that we experienced between home, church and school, which still continues today for our children and their children. The positive Christian input from the school into the lives of our children cannot be overstated. The values and Christian principles taught at Chairo are very important and they reinforced what we believed and tried to live at home.

ROSS BREADEN,
PARENT & GRANDPARENT
Partnership With Families

With Families
Teach me your ways, Lord, that I may walk in your truth ...

PSALM 86:11 ISV
**Governed by Parents**

Many schools are run by the government, or by particular churches or denominations. However, Chairo is governed by a Board whose members are Chairo parents, with the Executive Principal, Campus Principals, Business Manager and other staff members being responsible for day-to-day operations.

Chairo is a non-denominational school that was started by a small group of parents from a range of different Christian churches. These pioneering parents wanted to influence the direction and content of their children’s education, and knew they needed the help of professional Christian educators. Their passion and vision for Christian education continues to impact every aspect of school life at Chairo.

**Access for Families**

Chairo is a low-fee independent school, with discounts for multiple children and bursaries available for eligible families. We aim to make Christian education as accessible as possible for all families who seek it and are keen to partner with us.

Many families are also able to testify that a Chairo education is worth their effort and sacrifice—whatever that means for them—because of the many benefits. For some, it means not sending their children to the closest school or to school with the neighbour’s children, and perhaps using our bus services from outlying areas. In some cases, families have even relocated so they can enrol their children at Chairo.
To experience my most impressionable years in a loving Christian environment at Chairo provided me with a strong foundation for the rest of my life.

HANNAH CLEAL,
CLASS OF 2012

Chairo set me up really well for my future. The teachers cared about the students as individuals and taught us to be independent learners.

KIRSTEN BRYANT,
CLASS OF 2009

Through a combination of quality teaching and extra-curricular opportunities, Chairo moulded me into a confident individual ready for life after school.

LAURA SCOLLER,
CLASS OF 2014

What I appreciate most of all from my time at Chairo is the brilliant teachers who instilled in me knowledge, faith and character, and whom I still have great relationships with.

GAVIN BROWN,
CLASS OF 2006

My education at Chairo played an essential role in how I treat others. I learnt how to honour and respect those in authority, and how to accept and value others.

HANNAH CLEAL,
CLASS OF 2012

Chairo provided a great environment for me to learn and grow, with supportive teachers and great friends to live life with. Christian education is a great blessing to many people.

SAMUEL WENTWORTH,
CLASS OF 2016
Community Matters
We believe that education is delivered most effectively in the context of a caring Christian environment where community matters and relationships are nurtured: where there is a unified community of love and learning between parents, children and teachers. As we come together in partnership at Chairo, we join with other families to become a close-knit community.

We support and respect one another as we learn and develop. We celebrate our successes, share in each other’s joys, and encourage one another in all our efforts. Likewise, during tough times, we care for one another and build each other up. We notice when someone is hurting and make an effort to help. We uphold each other in prayer and show genuine care.

This partnership extends the act of simply supplying education to being a community where care, support and encouragement are demonstrated to students, staff members and parents. We work hard to ensure that we reflect a community that is pleasing to God and reflects the love of Christ.

There are many benefits of being part of a caring Christian community like Chairo—from the pastoral care of students by staff members to student-to-student mentoring, and from families helping each other out in practical ways to the weekly parent prayer groups that operate at each campus.

The greatest benefit of our kids attending Chairo has been that what we’ve taught at home has also been instilled into their lives at school. Chairo provides a caring environment, where our kids are loved and nurtured by teachers who share our values and faith perspectives. It’s a complete approach to education, catering for academic, spiritual and emotional needs. We’re so thankful to Chairo for partnering with us to help contribute to the development of our children. 

BRONWYN RODGERS, PARENT
... clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Be tolerant with one another and forgive one another ...

**COLOSSIANS 3:12–13 GNB**
**Student Wellbeing**

All Chairo teachers provide pastoral care for students. The system of class, core or homeroom teachers presenting short devotions, and opening each day in prayer, helps develop teacher/student relationships that assist with the provision of such care.

However, assisting and supporting young people through the issues they face can often be complex and time-consuming. We are blessed to have experienced, wise and compassionate chaplains who spend time with students and refer them to specialists when necessary. The chaplains are ever-ready to listen to students and provide practical advice and encouragement. In addition, students have access to in-house counselling services.

**Student Support**

We aim to deliver educational programs that cater for individual differences and needs, whether that involves providing additional learning support or opportunities for academic extension. We are also committed to providing a curriculum for students that is relevant, functional, and age and skill appropriate. Academic objectives are tailored to individual student abilities, thus providing meaningful development programs.

In addition to having teachers at Chairo who are trained to differentiate for individual students within the classroom, we also have a dedicated team of support staff who work closely with specific students, becoming significant adults in their lives and making a real difference in their learning, development and confidence.
Educating the Whole Child
At Chairo, we take academics seriously and continually strive to give our best to God and deliver excellence in Christ-centred education. Our NAPLAN and ATAR scores, together with student performances in a range of state and national competitions, demonstrate that Chairo students consistently obtain exceptional results.

Our 2015 VCE results (for example) are quite indicative of what happens each year. Approximately one quarter of students achieved ATAR scores of at least 80, with 10% scoring 90 or more and the dux scoring 98.3. First round tertiary placement offers were received by 100% of graduates, with 65% receiving their first preference.

We also seek to educate the whole child and to provide a rounded educational experience that recognises individual differences and learning styles, and that helps all students achieve to the best of their God-given ability. It is pleasing to see Chairo graduates successfully undertaking training and further study, including in courses that require high ATAR entry scores, and following a wide range of career paths.

For all students, an education at Chairo should mean having an understanding of the world and their place in it, being engaged in the educational process, being equipped with knowledge and skills, and being empowered to contribute positively to society.

Chairo has a real focus on preparing all students for future careers, service and ministry, and provides opportunities to develop and pursue personal skills and passions through a caring and nurturing environment. Being surrounded by caring Christian staff members created a highly supportive and encouraging environment where I felt genuinely cared for. I am so thankful for having a Christian education where people are free to help and challenge each other to grow in their faith.

JOSH BATTERSBY, CLASS OF 2014
Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

PROVERBS 22:6 NIV84
Student Opportunities
Our curriculum is designed to promote the academic, spiritual and social development of students, and to prepare them for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. Students are provided with a wide range of curricular and extra-curricular experiences designed to extend their learning, and to help them discover and develop their God-given gifts and passions.

Programs such as soar (Student Opportunities that are Academically Rewarding) present students who exhibit high academic potential with the opportunity to work on particular topics with like-minded peers. The soar program utilises three components to deliver gifted and talented education: special days for large groups, workshops for small groups, and holiday programs for selected students from various schools.

Passionate Teachers
Teachers at Chairo are passionate about what they do, which they see as a calling or ministry as well as being an important and worthwhile professional career. They are committed to teaching to the best of their ability, and to giving their students every opportunity to achieve excellent results.

Chairo is committed to developing students who are lifelong learners and we are excited to see our teachers doing likewise. Teachers are encouraged to extend their skills by accessing opportunities for professional development and further study. Many undertake study units through the National Institute for Christian Education, where they reflect on their teaching practice and build their capacity to teach from a Christian worldview perspective.
Enrolling at Chairo

If you like what you have seen and heard about Chairo so far, but have not yet visited one of our campuses, we encourage you to book a personal tour for your family. You will be able to see classes in action, talk with some teachers, explore the grounds and facilities, and ask lots of questions.

A tour and subsequent discussions will also help ensure that we understand each other’s expectations, beliefs and priorities. Children are welcome on tours; in fact, make sure you bring them along!

You can book a family tour online at chairo.vic.edu.au, or by emailing enrolments@chairo.vic.edu.au, or by phoning any of our campuses. A member of our friendly enrolments team will also be happy to explain the enrolment process, which involves both a written application and interviews.

Drouin East (Kinder – Year 4)
435 Lardners Track
03 5625 4600

Drouin (Years 5–12)
76 Balfour Road
03 5625 4600

Leongatha (Prep – Year 10)
101 Horn Street
03 5662 4355

Pakenham (Kinder – Year 12)
585 Bald Hill Road
03 5942 5632

Postal Address: pO Box 93, Drouin, Victoria 3818
Explore news, photos and videos on our website.

We love the caring environment at Chairo. The school addresses the individual needs of each child, and affirms and encourages their spiritual growth. The emphasis on Christ-centred worldview in each subject has helped our children integrate their faith into their educational experience, which has given them a great foundation for the whole of their lives. Chairo has been a great blessing to our entire family.

GRAHAM AND SUE TOOHILL, PARENTS
To choose Christian schooling is to deliberately intend for one’s children to be consciously different and other-centred in how they understand the world and their places and task in it.

DR RICHARD J EDLIN,
THE CAUSE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Drouin East
Kinder – Year 4

Leongatha
Prep – Year 10

Drouin
Years 5–12

Pakenham
Kinder – Year 12

www.chairo.vic.edu.au