At Clermont State High School we aspire to make the transition from primary school to high school as seamless as possible, as we combine the holistic care for the individual student delivered in the primary context with the increased opportunity for the gradual specialisation of learning within the secondary school environment.

While Clermont State High School has the advantage of being a small rural high school where all students are well-known by their peers and teachers, the introduction of Junior Secondary provides us with the timely opportunity to reflect upon our current practices and to align them, where necessary, to the needs of our youngest learners.

In 2013 approximately 75 students will form the Junior Secondary cohort at Clermont State High School. With the transition of Year 7 to high school in 2015, the number of Junior Secondary students is predicted to increase to 110. Due to an increasing degree of transience resulting from the rationalisation of mining operations in the area, some fluctuation in these predicted numbers is likely to occur.

The Junior Secondary Model at Clermont State High School has been developed through a collaborative consideration of the six guiding principles outlined below. It will be subject to further development and refinement in consultation with all stakeholders over the next two years.

1. Distinct Identity
2. Quality Teaching
3. Student Wellbeing
4. Parent and Community Involvement
5. Leadership
6. Local Decision - Making

1. Distinct Identity

At Clermont State High School we acknowledge the need of young adolescents for a supportive learning environment within which each can develop a genuine feeling of belonging and connection with significant others. We also acknowledge that a reevaluation of school organisation and teaching approaches are necessary in order to maximise the achievement of learners in the Junior Secondary phase.
• **Identification of staff to undertake Junior Secondary leadership positions**

Two staff members have been selected as Junior Secondary Coordinators for 2013. These staff members have a passionate interest in the learning needs of early adolescents and the drive to guide the students through this stage of their education and to lead professional learning with staff, in conjunction with the School Leadership team. The Junior Secondary Support Team consists of the Junior Secondary coordinators, Guidance Officer, Youth Support Coordinator, Chaplain and Head of Department who will have Line Management responsibilities for Junior Secondary. Two Junior Secondary Captains have been appointed as leaders of this phase in 2013. It is envisaged that additional leadership roles will be developed for students in Years 8&9 in 2014 and beyond.

• **Opportunities for Junior Secondary teachers to share professional practice**

During 2013 ongoing opportunities will be provided for all teachers of Year 8 and 9 students to share professional practice in the area of Junior Secondary, supported by the School Leadership Team and the Junior Secondary coordinators. Where possible, teachers in the core subjects of Junior Secondary will be allocated to the same staffroom to foster a sense of collegiality and facilitate the sharing of professional practice.

• **Junior Secondary events placed on school calendar**

During 2013 a number of events have been planned for our Junior Secondary students and these will be progressively added to the school calendar and advertised to parents and members of the broader community in a timely manner to maximise parental participation.

• **Designated Junior Secondary spaces that Junior Secondary students can own and feel comfortable in**

Work is currently underway to refurbish two classrooms as dedicated learning spaces for Junior Secondary students to undertake learning in their core subjects. When completed, they will provide welcoming, contemporary learning spaces. In 2013 a designated space in the school grounds will be provided for Junior Secondary students. The designated space will be located in the vicinity of the Junior Secondary home rooms and the office of the Junior Secondary Coordinators. The space is also in close proximity to the Year 12 common room to facilitate interaction between the Junior Secondary students and their senior mentors.

• **Shared understanding and commitment by school and community of the philosophy, purpose, approach and benefits of Junior Secondary**

During 2012 the P&C association has been kept abreast of the school’s work on the development of a model for Junior Secondary education. Information sessions and forums for the parents of Year 8 and 9 students, to be held early in 2013, will facilitate opportunities for a shared understanding of the Junior Secondary philosophy.

• **School organisational structures and practices that address the needs of young adolescents**

Progressively from 2013 teachers of the core subjects of English, Maths, Science and History will teach at least two of these subjects to the same classes of Year 8 & 9 students, subject to staff capability. We recognise that such an arrangement facilitates the development of strong relationships and increases opportunities for the academic and affective needs of young adolescents to be met. A weekly assembly dedicated to celebrating the achievements of our
Junior Secondary students will be held. This assembly will be conducted by the Junior Secondary coordinators and Junior Secondary captains and attended by form teachers, members of the School Leadership Team and support staff. This time provides ongoing opportunities for staff and students to celebrate successes, develop a sense of belonging, promote high expectations and address issues specific to students in this phase of learning. Celebration of student achievement will also be published in fortnightly school newsletters and the weekly community newsletter. By 2015 when Year 7 moves to high school, students in the Junior Secondary Phase will have their own distinct uniform when those in the Senior Phase transition to a more formal school uniform.

2. Quality Teaching

At Clermont State High School we acknowledge that effective Junior Secondary teachers must have the capacity to engage and support learners in the early years of high school. They must also hold high expectations of students underpinned by strategies to assist students to fulfil those expectations.

- **Identify staff to undertake Junior Secondary leadership positions**

In a small rural high school such as ours, the vast majority of teachers will have at least one Junior Secondary class. Where possible, within staffing constraints, teachers who demonstrate the passion and the ability to inspire young adolescents will be encouraged to teach more of their timetable within this phase of learning. Steps will be taken to recruit teachers with expertise and interest in early adolescent learning, as substantive vacancies arise, ahead of the move of Year 7 to high school in 2015.

At Clermont State High School effective relationships between all staff and students, including those in the Junior Secondary phase, are emphasised. All staff are encouraged to seek to engage students in active learning rather than passive reception of knowledge.

Teaching and learning approaches accommodate the diverse skills, abilities, and prior knowledge of young adolescents, cultivate multiple intelligences, draw upon students’ individual learning styles, and utilise digital tools. Learning experiences capitalise on students’ cultural, experiential, and personal backgrounds encouraging new concepts to be built on knowledge students already possess. Direct teaching approaches, including Explicit Instruction, are central to effective teaching at Clermont State High School.

- **The school has in place a professional development program that is responsive to the needs of Junior Secondary teachers**

Throughout 2013 significant professional development in the area of Junior Secondary education will be sourced for all teachers, given that every teacher in a small rural high school such as ours will teach at least one Junior Secondary class. A monthly, after school meeting dedicated to the discussion of issues relevant to Junior Secondary education will be scheduled and attended by all staff.

- **Engage teachers in the visioning and planning of the Junior Secondary model to build their knowledge and understanding of Junior Secondary**

In 2013 all teachers at Clermont State High School will participate in comprehensive professional learning around each guiding principle of Junior Secondary. Such learning will be led by the
School Leadership Team and Junior Secondary coordinators, with input from external agencies sourced.

- **The Junior Secondary curriculum and pedagogy supports the school’s common language of learning, an understanding of how adolescents learn, common strategies to promote thinking skills and some common habits and expectations for learning.**

Planning is underway to develop a comprehensive, school-wide common language of learning with clearly defined expectations for all students, including Junior Secondary learners. This will be made explicit to all stakeholders in 2013.

- **Pedagogy drives the curriculum structure**

  Junior Secondary teachers will continue to develop their understanding that positive and caring relationships are central to learning and improved student achievement. A school-wide pedagogical framework, based on Explicit Teaching, will underpin curriculum delivery in 2013 and beyond.

- **School structures and practices provide Junior Secondary teachers with opportunities beyond non-contact time for regular professional dialogue around improving pedagogy and assessment practices.**

  Regular meetings will be facilitated between Junior Secondary teachers of core subjects and their upper primary counterparts from our feeder schools and Central Highlands cluster schools, where practicable, to share unit plans, student work samples and assessment practices to moderate learning against criteria. Such professional dialogue is intended to assist in the development of common understandings that enhance both the students’ transition to Junior Secondary and quality teaching practices. Opportunities for peer observation and work-shadowing will be provided to teachers and professional learning teams will be established to facilitate collegial coaching.

- **Student achievement and improvement in the Junior Secondary years**

  Early in 2013 performance targets will be set using NAPLAN and subject achievement data in the areas of English, Maths and Science as the benchmark against which ongoing achievement and improvement will be measured. This information will be communicated to all Junior Secondary teachers along with the expectation that continual improvement in student outcomes will occur,

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### Numeracy

**Subject Achievement Targets**

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#### 3. Student Wellbeing

At Clermont State High School we acknowledge the strong links between enhanced wellbeing and academic achievement for students in the Junior Secondary phase. Student wellbeing can contribute to improved academic achievement by increasing motivation to participate and achieve, reduce the incidences of absenteeism and decrease the incidence of problem behaviour at school.

- **Implementing whole school programs such as peer support and mentoring programs**

For the first time at Clermont State High School, a Social and Emotional Wellbeing program will be introduced across the school from 2013. This program is designed to address the affective needs of our students, including the Junior Secondary cohort. Elements of the Social, Emotional Learning Framework * will be progressively incorporated into the Year 8 and 9 program. Our Social and Emotional wellbeing program will be delivered via a dedicated, 35 minute lesson each week by classroom teachers and members of the School Leadership team, where practicable.

The Social, Emotional Learning Framework (SELF) is designed to support student transition into the secondary education setting as well as establish positive relationships, values and encourage students to be active contributors to the junior secondary and wider community. The program incorporates service learning to connect student learning to life and foster a sense of social responsibility with a global perspective. Students are empowered in decision making, conflict resolution and measured risk taking by providing experiences for students which improve their global understanding and are critical in raising awareness, addressing world issues and developing students as world leaders.

In Semester One 2013 a peer mentoring program will be established to train Year 11 students with leadership aspirations to take on leadership roles as peer mentors. It is envisaged that these students will begin working with Year 7 students in their final semester of primary school through orientation activities, a reading program and other school activities. The Year 7 students will continue to be supported during their first semester of Junior Secondary by their mentors who will guide them during their transition to high school and provide them with ongoing support.
A buddy program designed to support Junior Secondary boys by connecting them with a senior male student will be established in 2013. The male student mentors will assist their younger peers to become acculturated into the values of the school. Support provided may include academic assistance in the form of after school tutoring, peer conflict resolution and general advice and guidance on emerging issues. The male student mentors may also be instrumental in organising lunch time activities of interest and relevance to boys in the Junior Secondary phase to develop a sense of connection.

- **Providing ready access to a home-room teacher; giving one teacher responsibility for mentoring and pastoral care of a subset of students within the broader group.**

From 2013 students in the Junior Secondary phase will be assigned a form teacher who will stay with the class throughout their time in the Junior Secondary phase, subject to relocations through the teacher transfer process. Where possible, the form teacher will also deliver the Social and Emotional Wellbeing program. These strategies are designed to ensure that each Junior Secondary student is well-known and supported by a consistent, significant adult.

- **Establishing a supportive, caring and inclusive school community that fosters school connectedness.**

From 2013 a weekly, before-school meeting of the whole staff will be dedicated to the discussion of issues impacting on student welfare. Concerns raised concerning Junior Secondary students will be followed up by the coordinators and referred to the relevant support personnel in the school, as necessary. Student engagement and wellbeing will be reviewed regularly by the Junior Secondary coordinators. Parents will be contacted by the Junior Secondary coordinators as concerns are identified, and appropriate interventions will be put in place, 

- **Establishing an environment that is physically safe**

Junior Secondary students will occupy a designated space within the school, including areas for play during the breaks. A dedicated space co-located with the Year 12 students will assist in the provision of a supportive physical space where students are ‘looked out for’ by our seniors.

- **There is active participation of parents and other caregivers in children’s learning, with channels for communication open between the child’s home and school.**

The Junior Secondary coordinators- as the first point of contact between home and school - will regularly liaise with the parents of students in Junior Secondary to provide positive feedback and to advise of any concerns. Parents and caregivers will be invited into the school on a regular basis. Parent/teacher interviews are conducted formally twice per year, and upon parent or teacher request at any other time. Parents are issued with four school reports each year.

- **A transition program for Primary – Junior Secondary acknowledges and addresses the anxiety of students transitioning from primary school to Junior Secondary**

The Junior Secondary at Clermont State High School is planned to meet the developmental, social and educational needs of early adolescents by providing learning experiences that are responsive to those needs. We aim to provide a seamless, positive transition from our feeder primary schools into the Junior Secondary phase of learning by ensuring that students are engaged intellectually and that school activities are connected to the real world and their own experience. We aim to nurture our young adolescents in an equitable, inclusive and supportive environment that focuses on optimising opportunities for each student to reach his/her potential.
From 2013 the transition to high school program will begin during Semester One, and will include activities such as regular visits to primary feeder schools by Junior Secondary coordinators and Junior Secondary School Captains; participation by upper primary students in significant high school events e.g. Sports Days, Academic award ceremonies, Anzac Day ceremonies etc.; High school visits by Year 7 students and their teachers; Orientation Days; regular parent/student information sessions related to topical issues such as anxiety associated with change, peer relationships, organisational differences, teacher/student relationships, expectations associated with student learning, homework, Responsible Behaviour Plan etc.

- There are clearly identified processes to identify and allocate resources to students requiring intervention and support

The Junior Secondary coordinators will serve as the first point of contact for students requiring intervention and support. They will refer issues to school-based support personnel including the Guidance Officer, Special Needs and Learning Support teachers. Youth Support coordinator, School Chaplain and also to external agencies, as necessary.

- The school’s Junior Secondary curriculum builds the foundations for success by embedding personal and social competencies within lessons across the Junior Secondary year levels

Personal and social competencies will be incorporated within the curriculum throughout the Junior Secondary years. Steps will be taken to ensure that these competencies are developed sequentially from Year 7 to Year 9.

4. Parent and Community Involvement

At Clermont State High School we acknowledge the importance of parent and community involvement in the education of young adolescents, and we recognise the importance of retaining such involvement in the Junior Secondary years in order to provide parents with strategies to help them support their child’s learning so that increased student engagement and improved academic outcomes are realised.

- Promote parent participation in school events and provide opportunities for families to observe student learning and celebrate student achievement

During 2013 and beyond regular Open Days will be held at the school so that parents can sit in on Junior Secondary classes to gain a first-hand understanding of what it is that students are learning. Information sessions in conjunction with Open Days will be held for parents to be provided with information concerning subject content, pedagogy and assessment practices. Parents will be actively encouraged to take on roles in the school as volunteer tutors/classroom assistants, student mentors, excursion helpers etc. A number of informal social functions will be hosted to promote a welcoming atmosphere with the aim of putting faces to names and breaking down potential barriers that may preclude a high level of parental involvement.

- Use multiple communication channels to communicate with parents including email, SMS, telephone, web portal and letters

During 2013 the school will undertake a concerted effort to reach out to all parents using a wider variety of platforms. Our school website is undergoing an upgrade to make it a more informative and accessible resource for parents. Other communications from school to home will include
electronic newsletters/ letters/ regular phone calls home to celebrate student success. Input from parents on significant issues impacting Junior Secondary education will be regularly sought to capture the views of all parents, not only those randomly selected through annual School Opinion Surveys. Parents of Junior Secondary students will be invited into the school on a more regular basis and more timely notice will be provided to increase the likelihood of attendance.

- **Provide programs and opportunities (e.g. literacy workshops, guest speakers) for parents to build their capacity to support their child’s learning**

A number of opportunities will be provided to engage parents with their child’s learning in 2013. Topics for discussion could include aspects of the Australian curriculum, unpacking criteria sheets, student learning goals etc.

- **Actively seek and develop a wide range of community partnerships aimed at meeting the needs of Junior Secondary students e.g. youth and mental health-related organisations, sporting clubs, local businesses, education institutions( universities, TAFE, training programs**

Clermont State High School enjoys the support of a wide range of local organisations who support the school in our endeavours. Opportunities to create new partnerships and to expand existing ones will be explored in 2013 and beyond. Opportunities will also be sought to increase the level of Junior Secondary student participation in community events including Australia Day, Anzac Day and local festivals and celebrations. In this way students can be recognised for their community spirit and present a positive image of the school to members of the wider community.

5. **Leadership**

At Clermont State High School we acknowledge that the introduction of Junior Secondary provides leadership opportunities for both teachers and students. By providing opportunities for distributed leadership, teachers involved in Junior Secondary education are given a voice to contribute to decision-making and to effect desired changes. Likewise, by providing Junior Secondary students with service-based leadership opportunities that have the capacity to impact their lives beyond school, they grow as individuals in their capacity to exert influence and inspire others.

- **School leaders develop and communicate a shared vision, philosophy and structure of Junior Secondary**

During 2012 school leaders have worked on the development of a Junior Secondary model suitable for the school’s context. Awareness-raising activities have involved all staff and the P&C association. This will continue to evolve throughout 2013 and beyond.

- **Encourage a model of distributed leadership and provide support and feedback to aspiring leaders within the Junior Secondary program**

All staff have been provided with the opportunity to express interest in taking on leadership roles within the Junior Secondary context. The Developing Performance process also facilitates the identification of teachers aspiring to be leaders within the Junior Secondary school. Targeted professional development opportunities will be provided for those appointed to these roles in 2013 and beyond.
• Assist teachers to engage in Junior Secondary reform by increasing their knowledge and understanding of young adolescent learners

In 2013 all staff will take part in professional reading associated with the needs of adolescent learners. Relevant literature will be sourced by the School Leadership Team, who will lead the discussion of emergent issues in the dedicated, monthly Junior Secondary meetings

• Create a professional learning culture across the school aligned with the Junior Secondary philosophy

Electronic files of Junior Secondary resources will be compiled. These will be accessible to all staff for perusal and reflection, with insights gained incorporated into pedagogy.

• Support students in taking on leadership roles

At Clermont State High School all students are provided with the opportunity to nominate for student leadership roles including Senior and Junior School captains, House captains and Student Council representatives. Students with leadership aspirations are encouraged to nominate themselves and peers who they believe to be fine role models for others. A democratic, yet rigorous selection process ensures that quality candidates are selected. In 2013 and beyond, formalised opportunities will be provided for student leaders to further develop their leadership skills. Such opportunities could include leadership camps, motivational speakers, and mentoring by leaders within the Clermont community. Regular meetings are held between student leaders and members of the School Leadership Team. In 2013 the Junior Secondary coordinators and the Junior Secondary captains will also participate in these meetings.

Our Junior Secondary captains will be involved in activities such as helping to run school assemblies and significant school ceremonies; performing community service such as helping with Meals on Wheels, interacting with elderly residents at the local Aged Care Facility and helping out at local kindergartens and play groups and organising lunch time activities for their peers in the Junior Secondary cohort.

The Student Council at Clermont State High School provides an avenue for students who wish to make an active contribution to the life of the school to seek office. As councillors, students are able develop leadership skills, organise activities for the benefit of their fellow students and support worthy causes. Students are elected by their year level to represent them on the council. A snapshot of the skill development opportunities for our student councillors include the following: organising and running meetings; organising and publicising events (e.g. school dances/ free dress days/ fundraising initiatives for various charities); canvassing the views of their peers on issues impacting students and presenting those views to the School Leadership Team; devising activities to increase student enjoyment of school e.g. lunch time competitions; assisting Junior Secondary students with the transition from primary to secondary school and creating opportunities for students to feel a sense of belonging and connectedness with the school

• Give students the opportunity to take on new challenges, build self-awareness and self-management, experience success, and mentor and serve others

Students in the Junior Secondary phase come to high school with a wealth of interests and talents. The Junior Secondary coordinators will be instrumental in identifying those interests and talents and devising tailor-made opportunities for students to use their expertise for the benefit of others in the school and community.
6. Local Decision-making

At Clermont State High School we acknowledge the importance of proactively involving parents and our local community in shaping the development of our young adolescent learners.

- **Establish local consultative mechanisms for regular review and refinement of the Junior Secondary program**

  Staff from our feeder and cluster schools will be invited to act as ‘critical friends’ for our Junior Secondary program. Advice provided will be incorporated to ensure that our program remains responsive to the needs of Junior Secondary students.

- **Encourage community input into decision-making and policy development**

  Parent forums will be held once per term to provide parents with opportunity to give feedback, share their views and actively participate in decision-making. This will include policy development that affects the junior secondary school. Parents will also be provided with the opportunity to express their views via written surveys/phone calls etc.

  Additional partnerships with local community businesses will be sought and forged to create work placement opportunities also provide resourcing to enhance the social, financial, intellectual and spiritual capital of the Junior Secondary School. Monthly P&C meetings also provide opportunity for parents and interested community members to have a voice in decision-making and policy development. In 2013 a recruitment drive will be undertaken with the aim of increasing P&C membership and broadening representation.

  Opportunities for students to be involved in decisions that impact upon them are provided through the student council representatives. The student council play a key role in consulting with their peers to provide feedback and ascertain student opinions on matters that affect the Junior Secondary school. Student forums to participate in local decision making often take the form of a survey or voluntary meetings.

- **Offer Professional Learning opportunities for parents and community members to develop capacity to engage in decision-making processes**

  The School Leadership Team and the Junior Secondary coordinators will hold workshops for parents on issues relating to Junior Secondary education. Topics covered may encompass tips for parenting young adolescents, appropriate use of social media, helping students to establish time management and study routines. Parents will also be canvassed to ascertain topics of interest to foster a sense of genuine connection and partnership with the school.