

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL



PROSPECTUS

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INTRODUCTION



Mrs Meg Story
Principal

I warmly welcome you to Southern Highlands Christian School. Our co-educational School located in beautiful Bowral in the Southern Highlands, was established in 1983 with over 400 students from Preschool to Year 12.

Southern Highlands Christian School is a Christ-centered learning environment that provides an challenging, engaging and nurturing community, equipping students to flourish in the world.

We provide a distinctive and authentic Christian education that is based on a biblical worldview. We see partnership with parents as an integral part of this process, where together, we are committed to the development of each student's God-given gifts and abilities, enriching their learning experience in a supportive and challenging environment.

Parents choose Southern Highlands Christian School because they value learning, they seek the best for their child's wellbeing and they want to be part of a thriving and engaged community. We are committed to providing high-quality teaching that prepares young people to be life-long learners and equips them to take responsibility for and engage with the world in which we live.

We embed Christian values into our curriculum and throughout school life. Our goal is to help students understand and have a personal relationship with God. Our values of Christian character, a love of learning, excellence, respect, service and partnership seek to provide a foundation for life that will serve our students well, far beyond their time at our school.

I invite you to come and experience the difference at Southern Highlands Christian School. We look forward to showing you firsthand what sets Southern Highlands Christian School apart and welcoming you to our vibrant community.

OUR PURPOSE

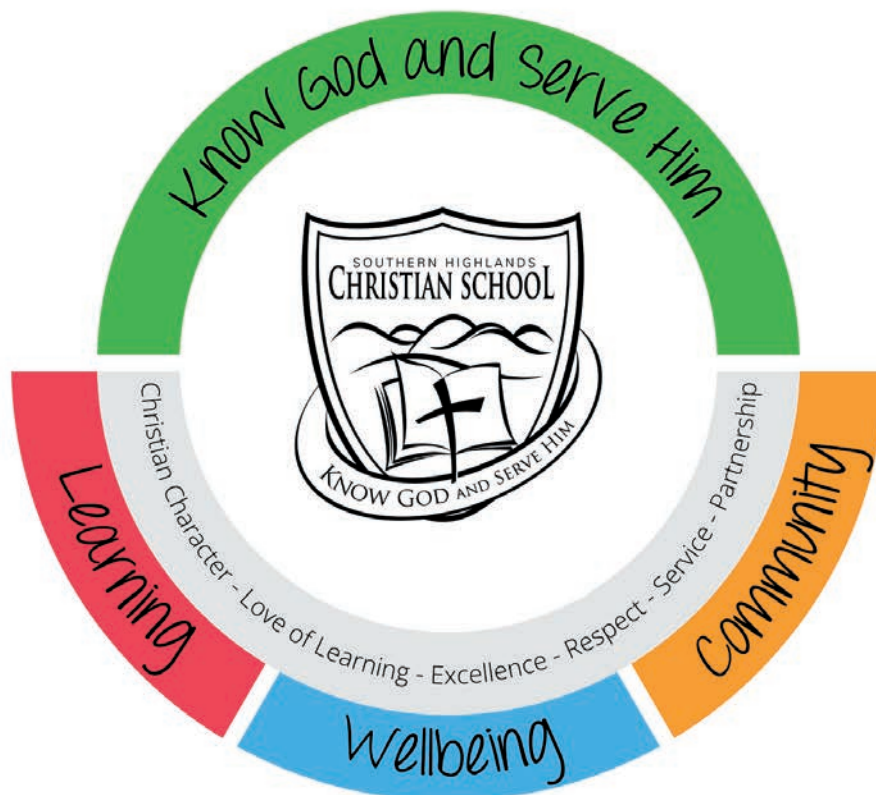


Why are we here

Southern Highlands Christian School is a *nurturing community* that provides challenging, engaging, *Christ-centered learning* to equip students to *flourish* in the world.

Values

Christian Character	Love of Learning	Excellence	Respect	Service	Partnership
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VISION & MISSION



Our Mission is to conduct a school which seeks to...

Offer biblically-shaped, Christ-centred, parent-governed education, Prep to Year 12.

Cultivate a Christian educational community characterised by thankfulness, prayer, loving relationships and service; a community which lives out the commandment – You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.

Support parents and guardians in the raising of their children.

Reinforce a strong learning culture within the School community, acknowledging that the Lord has given a rich store of very diverse gifts and abilities to its members.

Enable staff to teach from a biblical worldview shaped through the lens of Christ and using best practice pedagogy.

Promote the value of biblically-shaped, Christ-centred, parent-governed education to the community of the Southern Highlands and beyond.

So that:

- The Lord Jesus Christ is seen to have his rightful place at the centre of all aspects of School life.
- His Word is seen to be the final authority for all policies, programs and procedures.
- The hallmarks of Christ-likeness are on display.
- The responsibility of parents and guardians for the education of their children is honoured.
- Learning is characterised by wonder and awe, enthusiasm, diligence and purposeful endeavour, in line with the gifts and abilities of each member.
- Teaching is characterised by wonder and awe, enthusiasm, diligence and purposeful endeavour in order that students are robustly prepared to impact the prevailing culture as servants of Christ.
- Southern Highlands Christian School is a blessing to the community of the Southern Highlands and beyond.

THEN & NOW

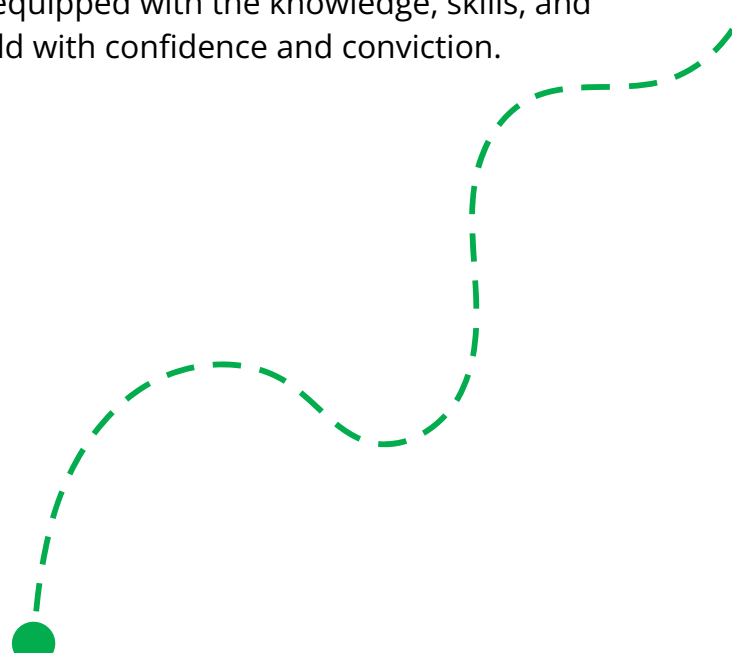


HISTORY

Southern Highlands Christian School (SHCS) has a rich history rooted in the vision and dedication of its founding families. Nearly four decades ago, a group of Christian families envisioned a school that would provide a robust Christian education, equipping young adults for a lifetime of learning and faithful servanthood. From humble beginnings with one teacher and seven students in the Bowral Baptist Church hall, SHCS has grown significantly, thanks to the considerable investment and commitment of these pioneering families. The school's journey is marked by God's provision, community spirit, and a steadfast commitment to integrating faith and learning, creating a nurturing environment where students can thrive academically and spiritually.

Where We're Going

Our vision for the future is to remain a beacon of academic excellence and spiritual growth, preparing students to be real-world ready and to make a positive impact in their communities. We are committed to continuing the legacy of our founding families by nurturing, equipping, and guiding our staff, students, and their families in their understanding of the Christian faith. We aim to foster an environment where exploration and engagement are key to learning, ensuring that every student is equipped with the knowledge, skills, and faith to navigate the challenges of the modern world with confidence and conviction.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



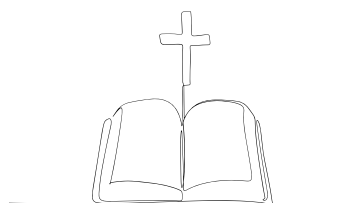
Many concepts are fundamental when considering the development of students within a Christian School. At SHCS, excellence starts with education guided by God's word, relying on its truth to understand the purpose of learning - a life lived in honour of God. We acknowledge that nurturing our students in wisdom and character requires growth that is simultaneously intellectual, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual.

A part of the beauty of God's creation is the balance of "unity in diversity". Our deep hope is to see our students as image-bearers of God, known to us by name and nature, increasingly understanding their unique life experiences, distinctive gifts and abilities, as well as their learning strengths and challenges.

At SHCS, our professional team of Christian educators are trained to be sensitive to this diversity and engage students in learning at their own pace. We nurture differences and allow diversity to flourish through rich learning experiences.

Our Board and Executive Team lead the effort to challenge teachers to be more intentional in curriculum design to respond to student learning needs and achieve learning outcomes. Ultimately, we aim to guide students in both their academic learning and their spiritual formation.

SHCS is part of a broader community of schools under the umbrella of Christian Education National (CEN). Together, we strive to ensure that parents and students experience a nurturing community at SHCS that provides a challenging, engaging, Christ-centered learning environment, equipping our students to flourish in the world.



LEADERSHIP TEAM



Meg Story
Principal



Michelle Whary
Head of Junior School



Michael Neate
Head of High School



Shane Negen
IT Manager



Geoff Stedman
Business Manager

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY



SHCS is committed to education that recognises the whole of life formation; which is Christ honouring and biblically grounded, driving a high-quality, engaging learning experience. The School is passionate about the growth of each student, seeking to develop their capacity for achievement from Prep to Year 12, and the 21st Century skills of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, character and citizenship.

Preschool



Engagement through exploration

Early stage 1 (Kindergarten)



Willingness through wonder

Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)



Determination through discovery

Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)



Enthusiasm through engagement

Stage 3 (Years 5 and 6)



Awareness and attainment

Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8)



Identity and innovation

Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10)



Attitude and awareness

Stage 6 (Years 11 and 12)



Creativity, courage and conviction

PRESCHOOL



"Sing to Him a new song; play skilfully, and shout for joy."

Psalm 33:3

We know that starting school is a major life transition for children and their families, which can be both exciting and challenging. Research highlights that when families, schools and communities work together in positive and collaborative ways, a child's capacity to achieve their learning potential and wellbeing is significantly enhanced. As such, we regard open, positive communication and family involvement as key to our School's vision and mission. We believe God has given parents/guardians the primary responsibility to raise their children, and our commitment is to support you in this task by providing your child/ren with a high-quality education centred in Christ.

With our high-quality ratios of child-to-educator in Prep, and consistency of the same educators every day, our aim is to help children settle in and develop a sense of security and belonging quickly, while practising their social skills, developing new friendships, meeting new challenges, building resilience and learning about the love of God.

It helps our children to not only navigate the world they live in, but to make sense of it as well. This cannot just be developed through direct verbal interaction with adults, it is honed through solo, parallel, imaginative, adult-directed and interactive opportunities of play. Children really need such opportunities within a warm, safe and nurturing environment, including adventures in nature, without restrictions on time or freedom to enable the harmonious development of their cognitive, physical, social, emotional and spiritual abilities.

We align our learning strategies and programs with research and evidence-based practices, grounded in an understanding of children's natural sense of awe and wonder. We aim to equip them through their journey of wondering, exploring, questioning, interacting, reflecting and praying.

The Prep program provides consistent school-like daily routines and lessons. The students wear a school uniform, they pack their lunch and carry their backpack into class each day. Our Prep space is designed to stimulate children's interest through exploration, creative play, group work, music, drama and problem solving focusing on communication, early numeracy and literacy, gross and fine motor skills, as well as scientific concepts. Additionally, children extend their creativity with a specialist teacher in Music.

JUNIOR SCHOOL



"But Jesus called the children to Him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

Luke 15:16

In addition to Preschool, Junior School includes Kindergarten to Year 6. SHCS offers a nurturing environment with a special family feel, working in partnership with families.

Children are immersed in the knowledge of the love and power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His plan for our lives. Stimulating and nurturing each child's uniqueness, we foster a love of learning in the early years of your child's education. With a strong phonics approach, and a structured mathematics program incorporating hands-on activities, we encourage children to work at their own level. The children work both in class groups with their own highly qualified teacher, and in stage groups with a team of educators. They benefit from being exposed to the experience, gifts and talents of all teachers throughout Junior School. Students from Kindergarten to Year 6 benefit from having specialist teachers in subjects like Music, HSIE, Sport, and more.

The early years of Junior School provide a fun environment for students to settle into the routine of school life, working in partnership with parents/guardians in many ways throughout the School. From Years 3 - 6, children are encouraged to take the next step in their development towards independence.

Our aim is for each student to learn who God is, about the world He has created, and about themselves and their place in His world. We support each student in the growth of their individual learning skills through instructional and cooperative educational programs. All are nurtured and have individual needs met as they take on the challenge of building on their skills and knowledge to achieve their personal best.

Our Junior School Faculty Curriculum encompasses all the requirements set by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority. Students are encouraged to develop their knowledge and skills and use these in service to God and others. Our Junior School children engage in a variety of activities that provide a solid foundation of academic, creative and social skills.

HIGH SCHOOL



*"I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well."
Psalms 139:14*

High School is an exciting part of life with young people developing in so many ways, finding opportunities to build identity while fostering stronger relationships, and tackling the difficult questions of life while building knowledge and understanding of the world around them. At SHCS, we do this in a thoroughly Christian context, endeavouring to support families as they raise their teenagers, giving students a secure environment in which to learn and to be challenged in faith, service, and academic development.

Caring for Each Child

Each student attends a Pastoral Care morning meeting for encouragement, God's word, and shared activities. Stage Coordinators support the welfare of their year group, while Chaplains assist students in navigating life within a Christian context. Teachers provide academic and personal support as needed.

Working with Families

The family is integral in the education of their children. We partner with families in this great responsibility, providing strategic training for all stakeholders within our SHCS community.

Academics

A sound, positive culture of learning and academic achievement exists among staff and students. We also offer extra challenges such as Da Vinci, Model United Nations, Debating/Public Speaking and Chess interschool competitions, as well as Science enrichment opportunities. Our students undertake Biblical Studies from Year 7-12 exploring the centrality of Jesus in history and in our lives. We offer a wide suite of HSC subjects across all faculties, creating bespoke subject lines that reflect the skills and interest areas of each cohort. In Year 9 and 10, electives such as Textiles, Design & Technology, Visual Arts, Drama, Food Technology, PASS and Commerce provide opportunities for students to extend their skills in areas of interest.

Students are strongly encouraged to participate in activities beyond the classroom, including School musicals and drama productions, vocal ensembles, orchestra, sports, gala days, competitions, community service, peer support, and many other options.

CHAPEL, ASSEMBLIES & EVENTS

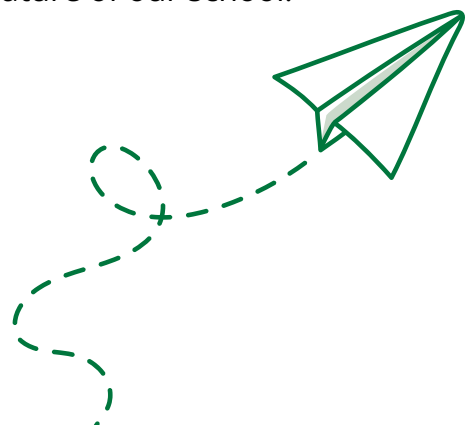


At our school, we believe in fostering a strong sense of community and belonging among our students, staff, and families. One of the key ways we achieve this is through our chapel services, assemblies, and whole school community events.

Our *Chapel Services* are a cornerstone of our school's spiritual life. Held fortnightly for Junior School and weekly for High School, these services provide a time for reflection, worship, and community building. Students and staff participate in meaningful and inspiring services led by our chaplain and guest speakers. These gatherings offer a chance for everyone to pause from their busy schedules, connect with their faith, and find encouragement and support from one another. The themes explored in chapel often align with our school's values and mission, reinforcing the importance of community and respect.

In addition to chapel services, our *Whole School Assemblies* play a vital role in bringing our community together. Assemblies serve as a platform for celebrating achievements, sharing important information, and fostering school spirit. At formal assemblies, students have the opportunity to showcase their talents, whether through musical performances, drama, or public speaking. Assemblies also provide a space for recognising the hard work and dedication of both students and staff, with awards and accolades being presented for various accomplishments.

Whole School Community Events are another highlight of our school calendar. Events such as Country Fair, Bush Dance, Trivia Night, Mother's Day and Father's Day Celebrations and more, are designed to bring together students, parents, and staff in a spirit of camaraderie and celebration. They offer a wonderful opportunity for families to engage with the school community, build relationships, and create lasting memories. Whether it's a sports day where everyone can participate in friendly competition, a multicultural night showcasing the diverse backgrounds of our students, or a fundraising event supporting a worthy cause, these events embody the welcoming and community-based nature of our school.



CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS



The Australian Curriculum confirms that *creative and performing arts* offers students the opportunity to study all subjects in the primary years of schooling and to specialise in High School. This includes Dance, Drama, Music, and Visual Arts. These subjects enable students to learn how to create, design, represent, communicate, and share their imagined and conceptual ideas, emotions, observations, and experiences.

At SHCS, we nurture our students' talents in both Visual Arts, with their work being showcased at local exhibitions, and Drama, highlighted by our annual SHCS Production. Music is also an area of excellence at SHCS. Many of our teaching staff are accomplished musicians who not only support the school's established musical groups but also enjoy making music together with students in a social setting. Throughout the year, students have multiple opportunities to perform in concerts and other events, both within the school and in the wider community.

Learning musical instruments is very popular at SHCS. Our suite of music studios is in constant use as we have more than 100 students learning from our experienced tutor team. Regular showcase events allow our students to develop performance skills and build into our strong music culture.

Music in Junior School Classes

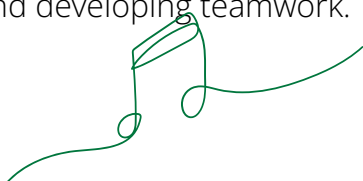
Students from Kindergarten to Year 6 have one Music lesson each week, led by an experienced music teacher. During their time in Music, the students learn to perform on classroom instruments such as percussion, ukulele, xylophones, and keyboards and to sing a varied repertoire of songs. They also create short compositions and listen and respond to music.

Junior Instrumental Program

For Year 3 students, the Junior Instrumental Program runs in Term 3 and 4, enabling them to master the violin, flute, clarinet, or cello free of charge. This program is exclusively available to Year 3 students at SHCS and offers a fantastic opportunity for them. We often see students choosing to continue with private lessons after mastering their instrument during the initial two terms.

Music in High School Classes

In Years 7 and 8, music is an integral part of the curriculum, where students learn about music through composing in a range of topics and styles, listening, and performing. From Year 9 onwards, students can choose music as an elective. These elective music classes are very popular and provide a creative and encouraging environment to nurture students' talents. Students enjoy playing in small groups, learning arranging skills, and developing teamwork.



OUTDOOR EDUCATION & MISSION



Outdoor Education

At SHCS, we believe that learning extends beyond the classroom walls. Our Outdoor Education program is designed to provide students with hands-on experiences that foster personal growth, teamwork, and a deep appreciation for God's creation. Through a variety of activities such as hiking, camping, and mountain biking, students develop essential life skills including resilience, leadership, and problem-solving.

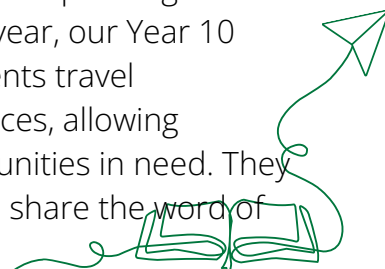
The program is carefully structured to challenge students at different year levels, ensuring that each experience is age-appropriate and enriching. By stepping out of their comfort zones and into the natural world, students gain a sense of accomplishment and confidence that translates into their academic, spiritual and personal lives. Our dedicated staff, who are passionate about outdoor education, guide students through these adventures, creating lasting memories and instilling a lifelong love for nature, respect for God's creation, and a sense of growth and accomplishment.



Service and Mission

Service and mission are at the heart of the SHCS values. We are committed to nurturing compassionate and socially responsible individuals who are eager to make a positive impact in their communities. Our service and mission programs offer students numerous opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations about faith, both locally and internationally. From participating in community service initiatives to supporting international missions, students learn the value of empathy, generosity, and serving others above themselves. These experiences not only broaden their perspectives but also help them develop a strong sense of purpose and responsibility.

Our Year 9 students explore the impact of homelessness in our local area as well spending time in the city to partner with not-for-profit organisations working in this area. Every year, our Year 10 students embark on an interstate service and mission trip, while Year 11 students travel internationally for their service and mission trip. These are invaluable experiences, allowing students to immerse themselves in different cultures and contribute to communities in need. They also offer a profound spiritual experience, as students have the opportunity to share the word of God and bring more people to know and love Jesus.

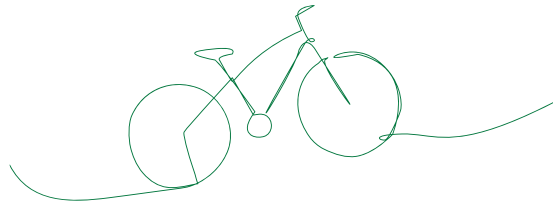


SPORT & LIBRARY



Sport

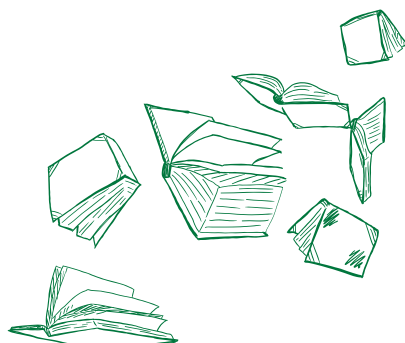
Set on over 7 acres of land in the beautiful Southern Highlands, SHCS offers plenty of outdoor space for all our students. Our facilities include two track-sized event ovals (one with cricket nets), a basketball court, two tennis courts, and a full-size gymnasium. Students enjoy a variety of sports and activities, including general play, netball, basketball, hockey, tennis, soccer, mountain biking and more, both during designated sports times and wet weather play. Each class has Physical Education lessons that focus on skill development, health, fitness, and most importantly, fun! All students are encouraged to participate to stay active. Additionally, many of our students pursue sports in an extra-curricular capacity, excelling as dancers, ballerinas, gymnasts, equestrians and more.



Library

The Southern Highlands Christian School Library strives to create a rich and welcoming environment for all members of our SHCS community. We offer a wealth of resources in both physical and digital formats. The space features individual and group study areas, as well as an amphitheater and board room.

Our carefully selected resources are designed to foster a love of reading and lifelong learning. As students grow and mature, they are encouraged to develop increasing levels of discernment in their reading choices.



FEES & BURSARIES



Fees

For the most up to date fee schedule please view our website.

Tuition fees cover all textbooks, study guides and workbooks, all compulsory camps, excursions, incursions, transport and sporting activities,

Access to technology required in the classroom

- K-2 - ipad in the classroom
- 3- 6 - Chromebook in the classroom
- 7-10 - Chromebook for use in classroom and home.

Not included are uniforms, fundraising activities, repair or replacement of damaged, lost or stolen books or technology, external education programs and optional outdoor education trips such as Duke of Edinburgh, Mountain Bike camp, Ski camp, service and missions trips. This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Every attempt is made to minimise extra costs through fundraising and other initiatives.

Bursaries

The Southern Highlands Christian School Bursary Fund is designed to support families seeking a Christ-Centered Education for their children at SHCS.

Places at SHCS supported by the Bursary Fund are limited. The school does not receive any financial support from a church or any other benefactor apart from parent fees and government support.

A bursary in a Christian school context is not just a financial aid but a manifestation of Christian values, aiming to nurture and educate students in a way that honors God and serves the community.

SCHOLARSHIPS



Scholarships: Empowering Future Leaders

We believe in nurturing the potential of every student. Our scholarship program is designed to provide financial assistance to students who demonstrate excellence in academics, music, or Christian character. By offering these scholarships, we aim to support students in their educational journey and help them flourish in a Christ-centered learning environment.

Scholarship Categories:

1. **Academic Scholarships:** These are awarded to students who have consistently achieved high academic results. Applicants are assessed based on their performance in school assessments, scholarship testing, and their academic portfolio, which includes achievements, awards, and certificates.
2. **Music Scholarships:** These scholarships are for students who have shown a passion for music and have been learning an instrument from a qualified music teacher. Applicants are required to demonstrate their musical proficiency through external examinations or school music results and participate in an audition process.
3. **Christian Character Scholarships:** These are awarded to students who have a personal relationship with Jesus and are actively involved in their church community. Applicants are assessed based on their involvement in church activities, their testimony of faith, and their contribution to the Christian culture at SHCS.

Eligibility and Application Process:

Our scholarships are open to both current SHCS students and students from other schools. Scholarships are awarded for a two-year period and are reviewed annually. Students are welcome to apply for additional scholarships every two years.

For more information on the scholarship categories, criteria, and application process, please visit our website.

ENROLMENT



Join us as a student

As a general rule, students applying to enrol in Kindergarten must turn 5 years old on or before 30th April in the year of commencement.

Step 1: Register your interest

Our Enrolments Registrar would love to speak with you, please email: enrolments@shcs.nsw.edu.au or call 02 4861 1781

Step 2: Tour our school

Private Tours are available year round so you can experience the difference firsthand and make an informed decision about what is best for your family.

Step 3: Submit your documentation

Once you are ready to commence the formal enrolment process, please head to our website to submit a completed copy of the application form and supporting documentation.

Step 4: Attend interviews

Our Principal prioritises meeting new families and having the opportunity to explain our school's overall approach to education and answer any questions you may have.

Following a successful interview with the Principal and relevant Heads of School/Preschool, there will be a standard academic assessment to determine each student's learning strengths.

If you have any questions on the above process, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We look forward to meeting your family soon.