

# Introduction



Loreto  
Normanhurst

Four hundred years ago, our foundress Mary Ward faced the uncertainty and unrest prevalent in her society with courage and a fervent conviction that women in time to come will do much. She did so firm in the knowledge that women are a reflection of the Glory of God and to deny this is to deny the full humanity of women everywhere.

The sculpture of Mary Ward that stands in all Australian Loreto schools depicts, in stance and stare, a forward-facing and outward-looking approach to engaging with the world and seeking purpose and meaning. Members of the Loreto Normanhurst community demonstrate this same humble yet confident resilience. They too are compassionate warriors - instruments of justice and truth. They too are receptive to their contexts, creative in their problem-solving, constant in their sense of humour and hope. And they too come to find their authentic self, and gain the confidence to live it, by being educated in this community and formed in the values and spirit that were gifted to Mary Ward in 1615: sincerity, verity, felicity, freedom, and justice.

Seen often as a dangerous innovator, Mary Ward's bold move to educate girls for their times remains forever relevant in our times. The holistic education of our girls and young women prepares them to find their voice and speak it, within this community and beyond. It is a voice that is gentle and strong, a voice that speaks for those without a voice, and a voice that needs to be heard in all places where decisions are being made.

At Loreto Normanhurst we believe that the real task of every human being is to construct a sense of the meaning of life and to develop one's humanity. This is the true purpose of education. It is achieved through a twofold emphasis on quality learning and on quality relationships. The task of quality teaching, therefore, is to help people learn to live: to learn in order to live and to learn how to live.

A Loreto Normanhurst education – expressed through the Loreto Normanhurst Student Growth Model (LNSGM) – is naturally attuned to responding to the context of our times. Developed from 2000-2003 and implemented since 2004, the LNSGM establishes Loreto Normanhurst as a continually reinventing school. It connects our values and tradition with the context and needs of the modern day, anticipating the skills and dispositions required to meet the challenges of the future – even one that may appear to have no format. Fundamental to the LNSGM is the holistic development of each student: their spiritual, physical and emotional well-being. The key feature of the LNSGM is the FACE Curriculum (Faith, Academic, Community and Extra-curricular). A multi-disciplinary approach to learning assists students to reflect and to develop attributes and skills that can be applied by all students across all learning areas. This Strategy aims to further build on the success of the LNSGM, guided by its founding principles, to give fresh expression to the FACE Curriculum so that it is attuned to the needs of the coming 2020s decade.

Originally established in 1897 as a boarding school, we have maintained a strong tradition of boarding and grown around that. Today our boarding community is made up of students and families from the Sydney basin, regional and rural NSW, interstate and overseas. Being a boarding school adds a particular dimension to the personality of the Loreto Normanhurst community. Boarding is a significant contributor to the precious diversity of our community, while also supporting our deep commitment to ensuring all young women have access to the benefits of a Loreto Normanhurst education.

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We have run our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Program at Loreto Normanhurst for just over 10 years. It is a strong and well-established program, one which goes to the core of our School's purpose, mission and values and aligns with the School's commitment to Reconciliation with Australia's First Nations People.

As a whole school, ours is a community of rich diversity and this strategy aims to strengthen and further enhance diversity so that our students grow in empathy for others, build dialogue by sharing perspective and story, and are prepared to contribute to a future Australia and inter-connected world.

The African proverb that 'it takes a village to educate a child' is lived out in full at Loreto Normanhurst. Parents, teachers, grandparents, past students and past parents, partners and experts in respective fields all have a role to play in us achieving our purpose. This strategy aims to strengthen and cultivate those relationships that deepen the education and formation of our students. It also aims to explore the forging of new relationships so that we have the village our young people need to grow in these times.

We live in an era of rapid change. Over this coming decade and beyond our students will face enormous opportunities and challenges in their future lives in Australia and as global citizens. This generation of children and young people are likely to live long lives, and to experience long but punctuated and varied careers and vocations. The education they receive today needs to prepare them for this. In his message to launch the Global Compact on Education (September 2019) Pope Francis said that "never before has there been such need to unite our efforts in a broad educational alliance, to form mature individuals capable of overcoming division and antagonism, and to restore the fabric of relationships for the sake of a more fraternal humanity."

This 2023 Strategy aims to respond to our context and to build on the values and strengths of our school with its three Strategic Commitments to:

- live at the edge of innovation in the pursuit of excellence;
- actively amplify and expand the reach of our purpose; and
- serve as global citizens, learning from and sharing with others

In these Commitments the 2023 Strategy is reinvigorating the three Pathways of the previous strategy: a faith-centred school; a person-centred school; and an ecology-centred school. These three pathways capture a lot of the essence of Loreto Normanhurst and undergird the thinking of the 2023 Strategy. The next three years are vital, as we position ourselves for the long-term future of the school as set out in the recently completed 30 Year Master Plan.

I commend the 2023 Strategy to you as we work together to encourage our young women to do much, seeking truth and acting as instruments of justice

Marina Ugonotti

PRINCIPAL

