



FREE REFORMED SCHOOL ASSOC. (TAS.) INC.

administering the
JOHN CALVIN SCHOOL

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ABN No 32 415 227 180

Principal's Report to the FRSA (Tas) Inc at the Annual General Meeting on 23 March 2026

Prepared by Daniel Coote

Dear Association Members,

The year of our Lord, 2025, was a year of celebration. We commemorated 60 years of Reformed Christian education at John Calvin School Launceston, making us one of the oldest Christian schools in the state.

At the 60th Anniversary commemorative dinner I was privileged to speak briefly on the legacy and importance of our school. I provide an extract of that address here, as it summarises the sentiment around our school.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, please join me in commending our MC on his tremendous work evening. Our brother is an example of a former JCS student who passionately supports the mission of the school and has continued to contribute as an adult, through various committees and now currently as a board member. He has also been instrumental in bringing together tonight's celebration. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for all you give to the school, and for your enthusiasm for what God is doing in and through JCS. God bless you, brother.

As a member of the John Calvin School family who has been part of God's work in this school for a third of its life, I have many fond memories, but I look around the room and see so many whose involvement matches or exceeds my own. I am not an exception, I am the norm. We have staff still in the school, now well into their third decade of service, that's half the life of the school. And the other day I was

speaking with a staff member who was part of the first class to graduate from JCS, they were an adolescent donor, then member of the association, a parent and staff member, and they now have one of their children working at the school. The term legacy, comes to mind. That long-term involvement in and dedication to John Calvin School and Reformed Christian education. That commitment to ensuring God's work in this place carries on, no matter what challenges come our way.

It is amazing to stop and think about the number of multi-generational families that still passionately support the school, what it has achieved, what it has become, and where it is heading. I am so blessed and privileged to be a part of the JCS story, as a temporary custodian of the Principalship, seeking to be a faithful leader in pursuit of our mission to nurture God's children in God's ways.

At this celebration dinner we have been blessed to hear stories from our history, to reminisce over the good times, and the triumphs in difficult times. Not to celebrate the accomplishments of people, but to celebrate the faithfulness of our God. Tonight we have remembered chapters of God's story here in Launceston, and it is Him that we are here to honour and glorify.

What we do at JCS is different. There are not many independent schools that enrol students like we do, let alone Christian schools. And because it's different, it faces some unique challenges. In a pluralistic society afraid of objective truth, to have a school who knows the truth, who seeks to faithfully share the truth, means we are constantly engaged in spiritual warfare. Satan loves nothing more than to water down theology, to compromise scriptural standards, and to blind us to God's holiness and glory. If Satan can make us casual about our relationship with God, casual about our spiritual disciplines, and if he can toss us to and fro with every wind of teaching or every societal fad, then he takes our eyes off our holy and faithful God.

And so, as a John Calvin School family, we are more than just brothers and sisters, we are fellow soldiers. We are united together, through Christ, and engaged in a cosmic battle for the hearts and souls of God's people. We are not just a school, a reasonable alternative amongst many viable options. We are a stronghold; a headquarters; a garrison; a training ground for the soldiers of the cross. For many years, and by God's grace, we have been equipping God's covenant people to fight with the armour of God. And the unity of the faith, the clarity of our doctrine, and

the support and involvement of our churches and church families is what makes us strong.

In speaking with an elder statesman who knows a little more than me about being 60, the implications of old age were discussed and the phrase ‘use it or lose it’ was mentioned. I think this phrase is pertinent for our school’s 60th celebration, and our focus on the future. If we don’t recognise what God has given and what He calls us to do with it, using His gifts to honour him and spread his fame, then we are at risk of losing it, or getting lost ourselves. Athletes, soldiers, or just ageing average joe’s, we need to use it or lose it. Apathy=atrophy. Apathy, the lack of enthusiasm interest or concern, results in atrophy, the gradual decline in effectiveness or vigour due to underuse or neglect.

Our physical capacity, our mental acuity, our spiritual readiness and discernment – use it or lose it. The strong bond between church, home and school – use it or lose it. Free access to God’s word and opportunity to work with it daily – use it or lose it. God’s abundant gifts to the JCS community – use it or lose it. Our beloved John Calvin School – use it or lose it.

Looking around this room I see so many who are committed to and passionate about the future of JCS, and there are many more who couldn’t join us tonight. We have much to be thankful for, we have much to fight for, and we have much to fight with.

When equipping His servant Joshua to lead and to fight, God says:

“Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success[a] wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:6–9)

Dear JCS family, be strong and courageous. Be careful to meditate on God’s word day and night, not swerving from it. Be strong, and very courageous, for the Lord our God is with us.

What encouraging words. What a beautiful calling. What an amazing God who has so abundantly blessed us over many years, and who guides us into the future. May He equip this generation, and the next, to take up the fight for God’s work in and through John Calvin School. Let’s use it, not lose it!

With that encouragement I commend to you the Lord’s work at JCS in 2025, briefly summarised in this report.

To God alone be the glory!

1) Student information

Students at beginning of 2025	126 (3 guest students for Term 1)
Students at beginning of 2026	111
Students at end of 2025	119
Student mobility in 2025	- 4%
Tuition enrolments in 2025	26 (20% of student population)
Tuition enrolments 2026	14 (13% of student population)
Male/Female makeup in 2025	64 male (51%) / 62 female (49%)
Male/Female makeup 2026	55 male (50%) / 56 female (50%)
School-wide attendance *	93.88% (2024 - 88%)
Students with regular attendance >90%	82% (2024 - 65%)
Attendance by year level	
Kindergarten	94%
Prep	92%
Year 1-2	94%
Year 3-4	94%
Year 5-6	95%
Year 7-8	94%
Year 9-10	89.3%
* School attendance is monitored daily, before 9:15am, and contact is made with parents/guardians if a child has not arrived at school and no explanation has been received.	

Periods of non-attendance are followed up by the school to ascertain the reason for non-attendance and to negotiate measures to facilitate school engagement and/or attendance.

Class size comparisons	2025	2026
Largest single class size	17	16
Smallest single class size	6	5
Average single class size	9.9	9.25
Largest combined class size	22	23
Smallest combined class size	13	14
Average combined class size	17.5	18.5
Year 10 Graduates = 7		
Post School Destinations		
Launceston Christian School	1 (14%)	
Launceston College	1 (14%)	
Newstead College	3 (43%)	
Apprenticeships	2 (29%)	
Year 6 Graduates = 6		

a) Student learning

i) Curriculum

In Kindergarten we provided play-based learning experiences in accordance with the 'Belonging, Being & Becoming Early Years Learning Framework 2.0' (EYLF). The National Quality Standards for early years education and care also guide the review and improvement agenda in the Kindergarten.

[EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf \(acecqa.gov.au\)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/eylfs/eylfs-2022-v2.0.pdf)

[National Quality Standard | ACECQA](#)

In Foundation (Prep) to Year 10 we continue to implement the Australian Curriculum (AC), which stipulates exploration of the following learning areas:

- English,
- Mathematics,
- Science,
- Humanities and Social Sciences,

- The Arts (Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music and Visual Arts),
- Technologies (Design and Technology, Digital Technology),
- Health and Physical Education,
- Languages (predominately French)

[Australian Curriculum version 9](#)

John Calvin School also provides instruction in the following:

- Bible Knowledge
- Church History
- Bible text and Psalter familiarisation/memorisation
- Our Year 9/10 learning program also offers a suite of optional subjects aligned with the Australian Curriculum, senior secondary or vocational pathways, including:
 - Art, Commerce, Drama, Digital Technology, Food Studies, Introduction to automotives, Introduction to metal work, Introduction to construction, Introduction to psychology, Photography, Science Extended, STEM, Textiles, and Woodwork.

All learning areas at John Calvin School are taught through a Reformed Christian worldview. Parents are encouraged to view the Christian worldview statements under ‘curriculum’ on the school website as an indication of the underpinning of teaching and learning with scripture.

[John Calvin School | Curriculum \(jcs.tas.edu.au\)](http://jcs.tas.edu.au).

ii) Assessment and reporting

Implementation of greater functionality within our school management system TASS, will allow for improved data sharing with students and parents.

Full reports on student learning are sent home at the end of term 2 and 4, with other interim reports issued in term 1 and 3. Reports assess against the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards, translated to easily understandable language for students and parents.

A critical element of student progress is strong parent–school communication. We strongly urge parents to make use of formal meeting times as well as informal communication with the teachers.

iii) Standardised Testing program

Formal testing against recognised standards helps the school identify teaching and learning strengths and challenges. This data informs the differentiated teaching and learning programs and helps set improvement targets at the individual student, class and whole–school level.

Kindergarten uses the Kinder Development Check at the beginning and end of the year, Preschool language screener and Reading Readiness screening tool, as well as the Grammar and Phonological Screener (GAPS).

Prep use the Letters and Sounds progress checks and DIBELS to check student achievement and progress in literacy, as well as the SWST at the end of the year.

The Year 1 phonics check is a screener used to identify any reading/spelling challenges.

Year 1–10 students engage in a standardised testing regime early in Term 4 each year, including testing on numeracy, reading, grammar and punctuation, spelling and vocabulary.

Data from John Calvin School students is compared to nationally acquired data to provide statistically robust comparisons with other students. The majority of our standardised testing is conducted online, yielding immediate data to work with. Data is analysed by teachers at the beginning of each new school year, to help them target their teaching and learning to their new class cohort.

iv) National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

(1) NAPLAN is conducted annually in Year 3, 5, 7 & 9. John Calvin School performs well compared to National minimum standards, Australian averages and other similar schools.

(2) John Calvin School performance in NAPLAN can be viewed at <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>

(3) A summary of results from the past 2 years are provided below. Student achievement levels are reported as ‘needs additional support’, ‘developing’, ‘strong’ or ‘exceeding’. The table below indicates the average score for our cohort, and the percentage of student at the ‘needs additional support’ level.

Summary of 2025 data

	Reading	% NAS	Writing	% NAS	Spelling	% NAS	Grammar & Punctuation	% NAS	Numeracy	% NAS
JCS Year 3	438	8.3	447	0	423	16.7	399	33.3	429	8.3
Similar school	419	8.8	421	4	405	8.2	408	13.9	415	6.3
All students	402	10.8	414	5.7	405	10.8	408	16.9	405	9.4
JCS Year 5	594	0	507	0	549	0	601	0	552	0
Similar school	526	0	503	5.4	502	2.6	526	2.5	511	0
All students	492	7.5	480	9.4	487	8.8	497	12.1	491	7.8
JCS Year 7	598	0	568	8.3	616	0	634	0	607	0
Similar school	577	0	576	0	559	1.2	575	0.2	577	9.8
All students	538	8.9	538	11	542	7.6	539	13.4	544	9.5
JCS Year 9	513	16.7	536	16.7	549	0	560	0	560	0
Similar school	601	1.6	615	0.9	584	2.1	590	3.7	598	1.3
All students	567	9.8	575	11.5	569	7	559	13.7	572	10.2

% NAS; Percentage of students at a standard that indicates they need additional support according to the minimum Australian standard.

Summary of 2024 data

	Reading	% NAS	Writing	% NAS	Spelling	% NAS	Grammar & Punctuation	% NAS	Numeracy	% NAS
JCS Year 3	446	0	440	0	407	0	412	5.6	422	0
Similar school	413	11.5	415	5	397	10.3	398	16.6	409	8.1
All students	404	11.3	4416	5.6	401	11.2	409	16.1	404	9.7
JCS Year 5	526	0	498	14.3	500	14.3	501	0	494	0
Similar school	506	6.1	492	5.4	486	8.7	500	7.4	491	5.9
All students	492	8.7	485	8.7	486	9.5	498	10.4	489	8.6
JCS Year 7	570	0	567	0	570	0	563	0	569	0
Similar school	537	9.6	535	8.1	530	9.5	529	12.7	528	9.8
All students	535	10.2	540	10.4	540	7.9	537	13.2	540	9.4
JCS Year 9	585	14.3	596	0	599	0	558	14.3	597	0
Similar school	565	10.9	571	9.6	587	4.3	547	15	555	10.4
All students	565	11.1	574	11.6	568	7.9	555	14.6	565	10.4

% NAS; Percentage of students at a standard that indicates they need additional support according to the minimum Australian standard.

v) Teaching and Learning enrichment

In addition to the class-based teaching and learning programs the school seeks to enrich the student experience through a variety of additional initiatives or programs. For example:

(1) Student Representative Council (SRC)

SRC members are elected by their peers and must provide a written submission regarding their plans for the SRC and their capacity to make a positive contribution. Engagement with the SRC helps to develop leadership and committee skills, good communication and a servant heart. The SRC work with the input of their peers and in collaboration with staff representatives to positively impact the school culture and student experience. SRC members are also expected to represent the school at formal functions and events.

(2) Assembly program

Whole-school assemblies are conducted at the beginning and end of each term, as well as on special occasions. These are conducted by school leaders or individual classes and their respective teachers in

turn, providing students with the opportunity to develop their public speaking skills. Secondary students engage in Pastoral Care sessions each day, with content focussing on the current school theme, topics of interest and relevance to adolescents, and goal-setting and growth.

(3) Whole-school / special events

Each year a number of whole-school events are organised. These events provide opportunity for students to showcase their God-given talents and to work together to achieve common goals. Some events are held each year, while others are held every 2 years. In 2025 these activities included:

- Whole school art exhibition;
- Drama presentations
- Learning extravaganza
- Swimming, cross-country, Futsal and athletics carnivals, including relevant interschool activities;

5) Inter-school activities

A number of inter-school activities throughout the year enabled our students to test their abilities against students from other schools. These activities included swimming, cross country, futsal and athletics with other Christian schools. Year 9-10 students also teamed up with Newstead Christian School to compete in the Science and Engineering Challenge.

6) Excursions/Incursions

Class teachers utilise excursions, usually on a termly basis, to enrich the learning program and build student connection and well-being. Secondary classes tend to integrate their excursions to explore multiple learning areas in the one excursion. A variety of organisations or guests visit the school each year to enrich the learning program or help to deliver specific content. Teachers take great care in vetting excursion or incursion programs for suitability, and proactively equip students for what they might encounter with a secular experience or visitor.

7) School camps

In Primary school, school camps are sometimes organised from Year 3 up, depending on the cohort and preferences of the teacher. We are increasingly utilising multiple day trips to get students out and about as an alternative to camps. Year 7–10 students engage in a school camp in term 1 to build connections and challenge themselves outside of their usual environment. Year 10s also join John Calvin Christian College from WA in July to tour Canberra and the Snowy Mountains snow fields. Year 10s also enjoy a finishing camp in the days prior to their graduation to add a cherry to the cake of their schooling experience, and to add finishing touches to their speeches for the graduation ceremony.

8) Community service

We take opportunity to engage in community activities and community service, including ANZAC Day, tree planting, Clean Up Australia Day, the City Mission and other local not-for profit organisations. We receive regular positive feedback about the engagement of our students with the community, and we are pleased that they represent Christ and the School appropriately.

9) Personal Learning Project and Work Placements

In 2025 the school continued to offer an open-ended approach to learning for Year 9–10 students, with the Personal Learning Project in Term 3 and 4. Students were guided to select a learning project of interest and to engage rigorously with this topic, ending in a learning extravaganza to share the outcomes. We frequently receive positive feedback about our students and their diligence.

10) Pathway Planning

At the end of each year, Year 7–9 students are engaged in a week of activities related to pathway planning. This is more than career advice and research, it is focussed on helping students consider God's plan for their lives, God's gifts to them and what opportunities lie ahead for them to serve Him faithfully in all contexts.

Students use the MyFuture, and TASC resources to plan their next few years of educational engagement, and engage with guest speakers who share their stories of being led by God on various paths.

We greatly appreciate the willing participation of community members who come in to share.

11) Home Reading program

Throughout the school, students are encouraged to engage in reading at home as well as at school on a regular basis. Reading to others, with others and listening to others read is an integral part of a child's language development. In the primary school regular reading is supported by class-based home reading programs. The secondary students are also encouraged to read with engaging reading activities in their English class and other subjects. Reading is held in high esteem at the school, as it is a key skill for exploring and understanding God's Word.

12) Student support team

In 2025 our student support structures and processes continued to improve, with a diagnostic screening program more fully implemented which is helping us apply learning supports in a more systematic way.

The school is required to report annually on students receiving reasonable adjustments to the learning program or environment through the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data for students with disability.

<https://www.nccd.edu.au/for-parents-guardians-and-carers>

Our student support is applied according to a three-tier approach. Tier 1 is additional support in the classroom. Tier 2 may be small group or individual support in the classroom or a nearby space. Tier 3 is specialist support on an individual or small group basis usually separate from the rest of the class.

We are blessed by the calibre of our teacher assistant team who provide essential support for student progress.

Where external services are required, the school facilitates this in collaboration with parents and students, with strong partnerships with local agencies bearing fruit for many of our families.

2) Staff

a) Staffing arrangements

Staffing arrangements are publicised in the Parent Handbook. I refer you to the 2025 edition on the school website for further details. (<http://www.jcs.tas.edu.au/documents/JCS%20Parent%20Handbook.pdf>).

b) Staff composition

	2025	2026
Teachers	12	14
Teacher and Resource Assistants	6	7
Administration	3	3
Made up of:		
Male	5	5
Female	16	18

c) Teachers:

	2025	2026
Kinder	Hannah Coote (BEd)	Hannah Coote (BEd)
Prep	Joanne Hart (BEd)	Joanne Hart (BEd)
Year 1 / 2	Evelin Sutcliffe (BBA–marine resources, M.Teach) Courtney Graafland (BEd)	Y1 Mark Fitzpatrick (BA, Psych + Hist; GradDip Ed.) Y2 Evelin Sutcliffe (BBA–marine resources, M.Teach)
Year 3	Amy Eilander (BEd) / Sjaan venderHeide (BEd)	3–4 Alyce Plug (BComm; MEd)
Year 4	Ross tenHaaf (BSc, M.Teach)	
Year 5–6	Nick Gunnink (BEd)	Nick Gunnink (BEd)
Primary	Cassie Kroeze (BEd)	Cassie Kroeze (BEd)
Secondary	Samuel DeRuijter (BHM)	Ross tenHaaf (BSc, M.Teach)
	Laurence Huizinga (BEng, M. Teach)	Laurence Huizinga (BEng, M. Teach)
	Dini Plug (BEd, BA–Cont Arts)	
	Danielle Thompson (BEd)	Danielle Thompson (BEd)

	Emily Alaimo (BSc; BForSc, M.Teach)	Emily Alaimo (BSc; BForSc, M.Teach)
	Stephanie Jonker (BA, M.Teach)	Stephanie Jonker (BA, M.Teach)
	Daniel Coote (BHM–Hons; M.Ed Leadership)	Daniel Coote (BHM–Hons; M.Ed Leadership)
Student Support	Lisa Taleghani (BEd, MSocSc(Cnslg&Psychpy))	Currently vacant

- i) Qualifications – All teachers are registered with the Tasmanian Teachers Registration Board (TRB). Teachers are supported to progress from provisional to full registration through a process of mentoring, observation and coaching.
- d) 2025 Administration
- i) Chelsea Lyons (Wed, Thu, Fri); Monica Kooistra (Mon, Tue)
- ii) Karen Wielstra, Business Manager/Association Secretary;
- e) 2025 Teacher Assistants/Resource Assistants
- i) Chandell Dekker, Ingrid Mulder, Sonya VanWinden, Sarah–Jane Groenewold, Rachel Boersma, Inger Bakker, Danielle Thompson.
- ii) Wilma Veldhuis and Chelsea Lyons (Resource Aide – Library)
- f) Staff attendance
- i) Staff absence due to personal leave was 3% in 2025. We have a number of relief staff available to help as required. Part–time staff make themselves available for relief work, and all staff demonstrate flexibility and a willingness to help as they are able.
- g) Staff development framework
- i) All staff are required to participate in the staff development process, engaging in reflection, goal setting and professional development. Our co–coaching structures facilitate this and help to build greater collaboration and professional conversations. Interaction with staff from other Christian schools is also a valued part of staff development, as well as engagement in various teacher association activities.

- ii) In 2025, engagement in professional development included:
- (1) Independent Schools Tasmania Leaders workshops on lifting literacy and Tasmanian mandate.
 - (2) Orton–Gillingham training for primary teachers
 - (3) DECYP Qualiteach modules: Multitiered systems of support, structured literacy, and direct explicit instruction.
 - (4) Student support training with online modules from NCCD.
 - (5) Student support training in intervention programs MiniLit and MaqLit.
 - (6) Teacher Registration Board – provisional to full registration process engagement
 - (7) Job–alike sessions with teachers from other local Christian schools.

h) Volunteers

Community involvement in the school enriches the education experience. Parent–helpers are a valuable resource that greatly assists the teachers to support the learning of each child. Involvement in the school is dependent on the volunteer having ‘working with vulnerable people (children) registration’, as well as other requirements from time–to–time, as the circumstances require. For information regarding RWVP registration see:

<https://www.cbos.tas.gov.au/topics/licensing-and-registration/work-with-vulnerable-people>

3) Review and Development

a) School Improvement:

In 2025 the school continued to implement the Teaching and Learning component of the FRSA TAS strategic plan, particularly focusing on implementing strategies to meet the state government’s ‘Lifting Literacy’ mandate, improving student support processes, and increasing opportunities for parent and community engagement in the school.

b) Strategic Planning:

The Board continues to focus its energy on achieving strategic objectives in its current plan, with a primary focus of preparing to relocate a great school to a

great new location in coming years. The Board plans and tracks priority actions each year in the areas of governance and leadership, risk and finance, teaching and learning, people and culture, and facilities and infrastructure.

In 2025 the Board engaged an external consultant to review our school leadership structure, in order to guide a sustainable model for a school of our size and type. The results of this review are being considered by the Board at present.

c) Office of the Education Regulator–Non–Government Schools Registration Board:

The school is currently registered through until 2026, and is busy completing an updated submission for March 31. A key priority for all school is the implementation and monitoring of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

<https://www.childsafety.gov.au/system/files/2024-04/national-principles-for-child-safe-organisations.PDF>

Thank you for your commitment to Reformed Christian education at John Calvin School. May all glory be to God alone.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Coote', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Daniel Coote