



Foundation Office

For the Whole of Their Life

St Philip's Christian College, Cessnock
Senior School Building – Official Opening
30/07/21

Welcome to all for attending.

If you go to the school's webpage, to the tab 'Our Story' then to the page 'Vision and Values' you will find the school's vision statement. This is the future we see for SPCC Cessnock, and all our schools. This is what we want for all our students.

If you look at the final point within the vision statement it says:

6. Every student has access to excellent learning resources and is taught in **the best learning facilities we can provide.**

This is well and truly what we have here – 'the best learning facilities we can provide'. So today we celebrate this achievement and the work of the many people involved in its construction:

Thank you to:

North Construction, our builders. SHAC Architects, our architects. The Commonwealth Bank, our bankers. The AIS Block Grant Authority providing grants from the Commonwealth Government. The many suppliers and sub-contractors. Planning authorities. The school community, our parents and students. The staff and executive involved in planning the building. The St Philip's Foundation Office, in Newcastle and the Board of St Philip's for approving the construction.

The construction cost was just shy of \$8.1 million and the BGA funding \$1.3 million (Government Funding), plus over \$260,000 in furniture not included in the construction cost.

Length of build was around 11 months, and was one of the two 2020 COVID construction buildings for St Philip's, the other being SPCC DALE Gosford.

Fun facts:

Prior to turning sod on site in January of 2020, the dam was drying up and the site was a dustbowl, as soon as construction started, El Nina was ushered in with plenty of rain!

More than 40,000 hours of work from tradespeople, architects, engineers and builders went into the construction of the Senior School.

Each Colourbond sheet on the roof was just over 30m long – spanning from the Eastern side of the building to the West on Wine Country Drive.

There are 308 power points in the building.

In the roof structure alone, there are 65 tonnes of steel.

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99 concrete trucks delivered 750 cubic metres of concrete from the footings in the ground, to the ground floor slab, to the stairs and columns; and all the way up to the first-floor suspended slab - the school was incredibly patient and gracious with all the extra traffic!

The Design Brief asked for - Adaptable indoor and outdoor spaces ranging from small, medium and large for flexible use for individuals, large and small groups. Space to reflect the maturity of students at this age and level; to create an adult learning space.

The best learning facilities we can provide: This building is exceptional! It is state-of-the art! It incorporates the latest educational thinking around how Senior School facilities should be designed to enhance the pedagogies used (i.e., our teaching and learning approaches) and maximise the engagement of students. It houses the Senior School reception and SS Executive Staff Offices. Combined Senior Student and Staff Common room areas. 8 Flexible Classrooms spaces down stairs. Upstairs is a stunningly modern space that any university would be proud to have. This large facility provides Senior Students a comfortable and attractive space to learn in that is flexible to accommodate a variety of learning modes.

I want to come back to our vision statement as the last statement might talk about 'The best learning facilities we can provide' and this is what is largely done for the students and staff. However, the vision statement is made up of six statements. The first five are what we are working towards every day.

This is what we are building into the lives of our students every day. We are building:

FAITH >> 1. Every student develops a personal faith in Jesus Christ and is empowered to live with purpose, integrity and joy.

ACHIEVEMENT >> 2. Every student achieves their God-given potential and is well equipped to make a significant contribution to society.

EXCELLENCE >> 3. Every student benefits from innovative and effective learning experiences taught by skilled and dedicated teachers.

COMMUNITY >> 4. Every student enjoys a safe and secure learning environment wherein they feel connected and affirmed.

RESPECT >> 5. Every student contributes to a culture of respect, dignity, care and concern for others.

Even though today we celebrate the achievement of point 6 of the Vision Statement, in part (**6. Every student has access to excellent learning resources and is taught in the best learning facilities we can provide**), we know that the bigger part of achieving our vision lies ahead and is the everyday, ongoing, work of students and teachers.

Blessings,

Graeme Irwin

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