

Trinity Grammar School – An overview of Council’s plans and priorities July 2018

Since its formation on 5 June 2018, School Council has established a clear set of priorities for the 12-month term to June 2019. This is designed to ensure we address the issues that have caused unrest in recent months, while ensuring the School can operate in the way we all expect. Some of the work ahead of us calls for the input of parents and other parts of our School community.

A framework to guide our priorities

In setting our agenda for the year ahead, Council is working towards three core priorities:

- *Achieving excellence and harmony in the daily functioning of the school...* to ensure 2018 is a great success for all our boys;
- *Unifying our community...* to restore trust and positive involvement among students, parents, staff and the wider community; and
- *Preparing for 2019 and beyond...* to position the school to achieve its vision and mission.

As a School community, our obligation to the boys cannot be overstated. For this reason, Council will prioritise support for the Headmaster and the School’s executive team to ensure the School functions as it should. This includes making available, where needed, additional teaching and wellbeing support. And, within the next 12 months, the Junior School play area will be rebuilt, and stage one of a cycling criterium road at the Marles playing fields will be undertaken.

Opening the lines of communication

Effective communication is critical if we as a School community are to work to a common view of what we want for our School. With that in mind, Council has established a special-purpose Engagement Committee chaired by Nichola Lefroy which, with the input of Councillors and members of the TGS community, will focus on creating open and ongoing dialogue around the key priorities and opportunities ahead.

Listening to and learning from the wider TGS community will be an important part of this process, particularly as Council turns its focus to important initiatives such as the proposed governance review (see below). We’ve made a good start on this front over the past month following meetings with the Parents’ Association, Old Trinity Grammarians’ Association and Staff Association, the Archbishop, staff, current and previous School Captains, and parents from all year levels of the school community.

We encourage all members of the school community to provide feedback or questions to Council via our email address at schoolcouncil@trinity.vic.edu.au.

Better accountability for Council

Reflecting on recent events, the School constitution appears to have two main flaws:

- there is no simple way for Council to be held accountable by the wider TGS community; and
- there is no obligation on Council to engage with the TGS community.

As such, Council has formed a special-purpose Governance Committee to assess options to address these issues as well as explore other reform suggestions. The Governance Committee, chaired by Chris Braithwaite, will comprise of Councillors and other members of the TGS community. Its initial work will involve studying the constitutions of like organisations and seeking input from subject-matter experts.

In term 4, we plan to host specially-convened forums where the wider School community can consider proposed changes aimed at addressing the above-mentioned issues. When appropriate community support for the proposed reforms is attained, these will be adopted as part of a new constitution – hopefully before the end of term 1 of the 2019 school year.

Reviewing student cohort numbers beyond 2020

The increased size of the School is a source of concern for many parents and the wider School community.

There have been increases in the Year 5 and Year 7 cohorts (as two key entry points into the school) since the 2015 school year. The overall effect is a 33% rise in student numbers for each of those year levels, with 100 boys in Year 5 and 200 boys in Year 7. While the full impact of these changes has yet to flow through the entire School, it will result in a school size of approximately 1620 (plus ELC) students.

It is important to note that student numbers have increased at various other times in the past, including a rise from approximately 1,015 to 1,300 (plus ELC) students over a period of eight years during the 2000s.

Before the end of term 4, Council is committed to seeking the views of the TGS community regarding the optimal cohort sizes for both the senior and junior schools, and we will consider the most effective way(s) of garnering that input.

It must be noted that invitations for places at the school in 2020 were made in the period prior to new Council commencing and the quantum of these invitations was set at the same levels as 2018 and 2019.

Cotham Road development on hold

Given the events of the past few months and the subsequent appointments of an interim Council and the 11th Headmaster, the proposed development works known as the Centre for Creativity and Innovation on the corner of Cotham Road and Charles Street have been put on hold.

Council takes the view that, in the absence of a thorough review of the optimal school size as well as detailed risk analysis, it is not appropriate at this time to enter into a significant level of borrowing to fund the development. In arriving at this decision, Council noted that plans for the Cotham Road development include creating 24 new classrooms, as well as art, design & technology, IT and maths faculty spaces.

The School is fortunate to have accumulated new land holdings in recent years. Over time, this will enable the creation of new facilities to further enrich the learning environment for our students. To that end, securing appropriate zoning and planning support via the School's recent masterplan work will be of longer term benefit, notwithstanding that the masterplan may need revising based on the outcomes of the school size review.

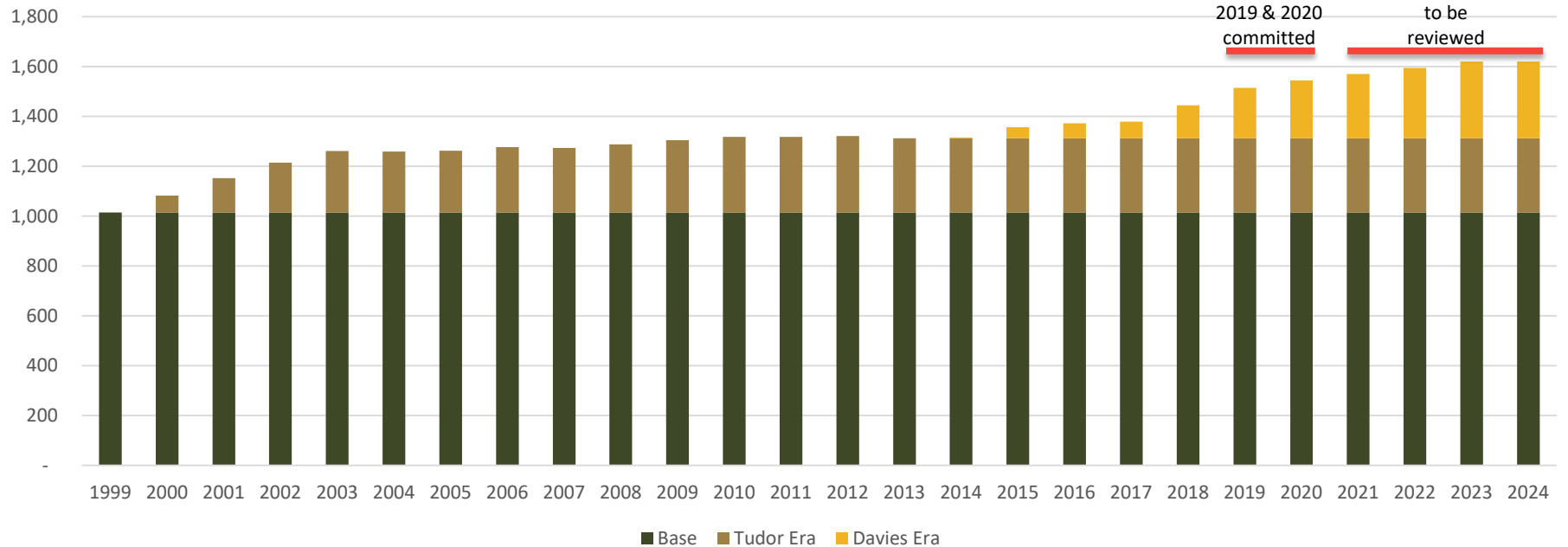
Recruiting our 12th Headmaster

The appointment of Trinity's 12th Headmaster is clearly an important task and, for that reason, we intend to establish in term 3 a special purpose committee which, with the input of recruitment specialists, will oversee a broad and measured process with a view to identifying the highest quality of applicants. Work for this will commence as soon as practicable, with the aim of having our 12th Headmaster in place for the commencement of the 2020 school year. In the meantime, we're fortunate to have the services of Phil De Young, an experienced and highly respected leader whose term with Trinity extends to the end of 2019.

Working together

As an Interim Council, we thank you in advance for your support and input as we work to guide TGS through a critical period. With considered feedback and constructive dialogue across the School community, our aim is to ensure that Trinity continues to be a place where our boys can grow into capable young men and fulfil their potential across every aspect of their lives.

Total student numbers



School size by year level

		2019 & 2020 committed		to be reviewed			
	2014	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Prep	38	40	40	40	40	40	40
Year 1	39	42	42	42	42	42	42
Year 2	44	42	42	42	42	42	42
Year 3	45	48	48	48	48	48	48
Year 4	50	48	48	48	48	48	48
Year 5	75	100	~100	~100	100	100	100
Year 6	78	75	100	100	100	100	100
Year 7	155	200	~200	~200	200	200	200
Year 8	155	175	200	200	200	200	200
Year 9	153	175	175	200	200	200	200
Year 10	165	175	175	175	200	200	200
Year 11	159	170	175	175	175	200	200
Year 12	159	155	170	175	175	175	200
	1315	1445	~1515	~1545	1570	1595	1620