



ST ANDREW'S  
CATHEDRAL  
SCHOOL  
FOUNDED 1885

heart  
mind  
life

## Dr John Collier

BA, DIP.ED., DIP. BIBL.ST., ED.D, FACE, FACEL

Our Head of School, Dr John Collier, has had 49 years thus far teaching experience and is in his 31st calendar year as a Principal (Head of School).



Dr Collier regards working with young people as his life's work. He finds them immensely encouraging and vibrant. Each new year, as students are about to return to school, he is so excited by the resumption, he can't sleep!

Dr Collier is deeply interested in academic excellence, strong pastoral care, vibrant co-curricular programmes, modes, including within Christian education, of engaging young people in authentic and critical thinking, and the development of well-rounded young people who will become successful adults and active citizens. Indeed, these areas were the subject of his doctoral research.

He advocates a style of Christian education which is open and inclusive, encourages critique and thoughtful analysis, and permits respectful dissent. Dr Collier believes Heads of Schools should also be students themselves, and writers, who seek to contribute to the way in which education is conceptualised and delivered.

### School roles

- **Head, St Andrew's Cathedral School Sydney from the beginning of 2010.** St Andrew's is the central Anglican School of the Sydney Anglican Diocese, with approximately 1420 students K-12 and 330 staff.
- **Also Head, St Andrew's Cathedral Gawura School,** an Indigenous K-6 day school of 33 students on site in St Andrew's House.
- **Board member/Director of St Andrew's Cathedral School Foundation since 2010**
- **Director, Teaching Schools Alliance,** a hub of five Sydney schools in a cooperative program with Alphacrucis College as credentialling authority to train and nurture developing teachers on our own site.
- **Principal, St Paul's Grammar School Penrith, 1997-2009.** St Paul's is a P-12 Independent interdenominational

Christian School which grew to 1350 students. At the time of his departure, the academic results were the equal of elite schools in the northern suburbs and inner west of Sydney. Under his leadership, St Paul's was the first school in NSW to introduce the Primary Years Programme and Middle Years Programme of the International Baccalaureate.

- **Founding Principal, Thomas Reddall High School,** a government school in Campbelltown, south-western Sydney, **1990-1997,** appointed when there were no other staff, and no buildings. Thomas Reddall High School grew to 1100 students by 1996. He was amongst the first group of people appointed to government school Principalships through a merit selection process, and at the time of appointment, was the youngest government school Principal in the state (still in short trousers, he says!).
- **Leading Teacher (Deputy Principal), Elderslie High School,** Camden, 1989-1990. Leading Teacher roles were positions awarded for the first time in 1989 and, somewhat controversially, to those identified by the Department of Education as the 53 best teachers in the state. They were merit appointments designed to fast track these teachers, particularly in the areas of curriculum, assessment, teaching methodology, staff development and community liaison. Within the 53 choices of schools available to those selected, he was very fortunate in being placed in his first choice, Elderslie High School, which was then the academically top performing school, government, non-government or independent, in south-western Sydney. At the end of 1990, he was one of only two of the 53 promoted to the Principalship.

## Beyond school roles

- **Chair, AHISA (NSW/ACT) from 2011 - 2013.**

AHISA (Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia) is the peak body for Heads in the sector. In addition to advocacy and consultation with statutory bodies and politicians, leadership of this 120 school member group has included induction of new members to the Association (and often to Principalship itself), Chairing of meetings, leadership of the Branch Executive, and troubleshooting and pastoral advice for Principals.

As Chair at a time of political discussion over the Gonski reforms, involved in meetings with the Prime Minister, Premier and State and Federal Ministers for Education.

Also initiated a Coalition with successive Presidents of NSW State Secondary Principals' Council to lobby politicians, ACARA (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority) and the NSW Board of Studies on, respectively, funding for all sectors, and curriculum matters.

- **Chair, AHISA (NSW/ACT) Academic Committee 2004-2011,** dealing with the BOS and ACARA on all matters of curriculum and assessment, including Chairing termly meetings with the President and Chief Executive of the NSW Board of Studies (now NESAS).
- **Member of AHISA National Board 2011-2013,** governing the association of 430 independent schools in Australia.
- **Solo Representative of AHISA at the ICP (International Confederation of Principals) Board meeting in Cairns, 2013,** attempting to manage professional development and networking for Principals across the globe.
- **Member (Observer status) of the Board of the Association of Independent Schools (AIS) NSW, 2011-2013** serving as a board of governance for provision of services to the independent sector, including curriculum, financial, legal and industrial advice.
- **Member of AIS Committees:** Election Strategy; Professional Development; Employment Relations; and Great Teaching Inspired Learning; former member of AIS Languages Committee.
- **AIS and AHISA Mentor** for emerging leaders (those aspiring to Principalship) in schools.
- **Chair 2017-2020 and Vice Chairman Independent Sporting Association (ISA), 2006-2007, 2010-2015,** which, along with GPS, CAS and AHIGS constitutes the Saturday Sport associations in the independent sector. The role of Chairman is part of the Executive on a Board of Directors of this 19 member Association.
- **Chair of IB (International Baccalaureate), Heads' Group for NSW/ACT, 2018-2020.**
- **Sole NSW school representative** invited to appear before Commonwealth Government Parliamentary Committee Enquiry into the Status of the Teaching Profession, 2019.
- **Former Chair of Head Masters' Conference (HMC) Education Research Group,** targeting current educational research of high value to Principals.
- **Initiated and Chaired Collegial Group of Principals of new government schools in NSW 1992-1997** and instituted conferences, visits to one another's schools and joint lobbying of the Department of Education Finances Directorate and the Director - General over appropriate resourcing of new government schools. This developed into pastoral support of some new Principals who were struggling with aspects of establishing their schools.
- **Recipient of NSW State Secondary Principals Council Travelling Fellowship 1996 and 1997** to visit and study 19 new high schools in NSW, Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania, and subsequently developed a kit on commencing new schools for the NSW Department of School Education.
- **Member of the Issues in Education Committee and Anglican Education Commission of the Sydney Anglican Diocese since 1994,** contributing to development of Anglican policy to support education in government and independent schools, and from 2019, Deputy Chair, **from 2020, Acting Chair, then Chair.**
- **Leader of review teams** to inspect and report, according to normal Sydney Anglican Schools Corporation evaluative cycle, on St Luke's Anglican Grammar School, Dee Why, Richard Johnson Anglican College, Oakhurst and Arndell Anglican College, Pitt Town.

- **Member of Australian Christian Forum of Education and Teachers' Christian Fellowship of NSW;** Executive Member of TCF 1997-1998.
- **Member, Sydney Anglican Diocesan Synod, since 2011.**
- **Member, Diocesan Standing Committee Governance sub-committee from 2020.**
- **Member of Chapter** of St Andrew's Cathedral and Lay Canon of the Cathedral, which has ultimate responsibility for St Andrew's Cathedral School.

## Sabbatical leave professional development 2003

Three weeks in Toronto, Canada, studying Anglican Schools in Canada and spending time with Professor Michael Fullan, international authority on school change processes and building quality into teaching.

## 2012

One month spent visiting Anglican Schools in England, particularly studying English methods of tracking student engagement and achievement, and building school culture;

### Conference attendance:

- International Professional Development Conference for school leaders;
- British Christian Education Conference;
- Two short courses at Regent College in Vancouver, Canada.

## 2015

- Seven weeks in Scandinavia and Europe attending the International Principals Confederation Conference in Finland on quality education, visiting schools and meeting with principals and education system leaders.
- Australian Institute of Company Directors course.

## 2016

- EurECA (European Association of Christian Educators) International Conference in Lisbon, Portugal.

## 2018

- Visited leading academics in England and held discussions with Director of Education for the Church of England.

## 2021

- Acting as Dean of Education at Morling College, auditing Masters degree courses in education and planning for the future, including initial work on establishing a Research Institute.

- Serving as senior executive consultant at the Pacific Hills Christian Schools Excellence Centre, researching and writing for publication in the field of Christian education.

## Academic qualifications and honours

BA DipEd (Sydney University), Diploma of Biblical Studies (Moore Theological College), Doctor of Education (University of Western Sydney).

**Doctoral Thesis (2008) on the Role of Leadership in Developing New Schools, Academic Excellence, and School Culture and Ethos, and Christian Education.**

**Fellow of Australian College of Educators and the Australian Council for Educational Leaders.** These are the ultimate honours for educators in Australia, from the peak professional bodies.

**Winner of the Alan Laughlin Medal (2012) from the Sydney Branch of the Australian College of Educators,** for school leadership.

**Winner of the J.T. Laing Award for Principals' Leadership (2014)** from the Principals Australia Institute.

**Winner of Australian College of Educators Wyndham Medal (2018) for contribution to education in NSW** (the first independent School Head to be recognised in the 25 year history of the Award).

## Earlier career highlights

- Executive Member of History Teachers' Association of NSW (Metropolitan South-West).
- Member, Board of Secondary Studies (now NESAs) Ancient History Syllabus Committee, 1981-1983.
- Liverpool Area Regional History Curriculum Committee Chair.
- Regional History Adviser to the approximately 50 schools in the Metropolitan South West Region.
- Part-time Board of Studies History Assessment Adviser, visiting schools to advise on assessment programmes.
- HSC Marker for Modern/Ancient History 1981-1988.
- Convenor of Metropolitan South West Leading Teachers' Cluster Group.
- 2005, nominated by the National Institute for Quality Teaching and School Leadership for a Principal's Excellence Award.

## Summary of schools in brief:

49 years thus far in eight schools, initially as an English and History teacher, then as a Head of History in two government schools, as one of the first cohort of Leading Teachers (Deputy Principals

appointed through a merit selection process as change agents responsible for curriculum staff, development and community liaison), and then as Principal in four schools over the last 30 years.

**Lurnea High School,**  
Liverpool West, 1973-1979  
(English and History Teacher)

**Leumeah High School,**  
Campbelltown, 1980  
(English and History Teacher)

**Busby High School,**  
Liverpool West, 1981-1985  
(Head Teacher History)

**Macquarie Fields High School,**  
Campbelltown, 1986-1988  
(Head Teacher History)

**Elderslie High School,**  
Camden, 1989-1990  
(Leading Teacher)

**Thomas Reddall High School,**  
Campbelltown, 1990-1997 (Principal)

**St Paul's Grammar School,**  
Penrith, 1997-2009 (Principal)

**St Andrew's Cathedral School,**  
Sydney, from 2010 (Head of School)

**St Andrew's Cathedral  
Gawura School,** (Indigenous), Sydney,  
from 2011 (Head of School)

- Married to Kate for 41 years (so far). Three adult children, all married, and so far seven grandchildren and one 'grand-dog'.
- Passions and hobbies: authentic Christian education, excellence in schooling, history, bushwalking, international politics, theology and jazz (John maintains the last part of Revelation 5 is a picture of Heaven as an eternal improvised jazz concert).
- Other Association Memberships: Church Missionary Society, Jazz Action Society (NSW), National Maritime Museum, Renault Car Club of Australia.

## Publications



## Books

- Collier, J., (2021), *Scandals, Skirmishes and Scallywags*, Bennetts Printing, NSW.
- Collier, J., (2021), The contribution of schools to forming a Christian identity in Miner, M., and Stevens, M., (eds.)

*Identifying as Christian in an alien public arena*, 1AP, Charlotte, NC.

- Collier, J., (2018), *Pupils, Pimples and Parents. Being a Prophetic Voice to the Community as Head of School*, Bennetts Printing, NSW.
- Goodlet, K., Collier, J., and George, T., (eds.) (2017), *Better Learning*, St. Mark's National Theological Centre, ACT.
- Collier, J., (2017), The uncommitted and a school's Christian stance in Goodlet, K., Collier J., and George, T., (eds), *Better Learning. Trajectories for educators in Christian schools*. St. Mark's National Theological Centre, ACT.
- Collier, J., (2017), Finding an effective model of Christian proclamation in schools in Goodlet, K., Collier J., and George, T., (eds), *Better Learning. Trajectories for educators in Christian schools*, St. Mark's National Theological Centre, ACT.
- Goodlet K. and Collier J. (eds), (2014), *Teaching Well. Insights for Educators in Christian Schools*, Barton Books, ACT. As well as co-editing, contributed four pieces to the book, which was launched in late February 2014, but went into its fourth print-run in May, comprising around 4,000 copies so far. The book has been set as a text for 14 courses at Excelsia College (formerly, the Wesley Institute) in teacher training units, and is already in use in Tanzania, New Zealand, England, the USA, Malaysia, Norway, Denmark, Holland, France, Switzerland and Germany.
- Collier J. (2014), Our mission: transforming the lives of students, in Goodlet, K. and Collier, J., *Teaching Well. Insights for Educators in Christian Schools*, Barton Books, ACT.
- Collier J. (2014), Church and School, in Goodlet, K. and Collier, J., *Teaching Well. Insights for Educators in Christian Schools*, Barton Books, ACT.
- Collier J. (2014) The icing or the cake? Current research on the impact of schools with a Christian ethos, in Goodlet, K. and Collier, J., *Teaching Well. Insights for Educators in Christian Schools*, Barton Books, ACT.
- Collier J. (2012), Models of Christian Education in Frame, T. (ed), *Ministry in Anglican Schools: Principles and Practicalities*, Anglican Schools Australia, Barton Books, ACT.
- Worked with a small working party for two years on writing. Cairney, T., Cowling, B. and Jensen, M. (2011), *New Perspectives on Anglican Education*, Anglican Education Commission, Sydney. This book extensively quotes preparatory papers written by him as part of the book's development.

## Refereed Journals and Monographs

- Collier, J., (2022), *The attrition from Christian faith of our graduates while at university: why does it happen, and what can be done about it?*, under review by journal.
- Collier, J., (2018), *Christianity in the Public Arena*, on-line conference papers, Excelsia College, August.
- Collier, J. (2013), Gawura (the Whale): an indigenous school within a school. *Journal of Christian Education*, 55, 1, 51-58.
- Collier, J., Models of Christian Education in *Teach*. 7 (1), 2013. This is a reworked version of what appeared in Frame (ed), *Ministry in Anglican Schools*.
- Collier, J., *The Role of the Principal: A Multi-faceted Role in Teach*. 6 (2), 2012.
- Collier, J. & Dowson, M. (2008), Beyond transmissional models of Christian education. One school's initial attempt at recasting values education. *Journal for Research on Christian Education*. 17 (2), 199-216.
- Collier, J. (2007). A manifesto for Christian education. *Issues in Christian Education Series*, The Center for Human Interaction Learning and Development. Sydney: Australian College of Ministries. (ISBN 1740580087)
- Collier, J., & Dowson, M. (2007). Applying an action research model to improving the quality of Christian education – one school's experience. *The Journal of Christian Education*, 50(1), 27-36.
- Collier, J. (2006). *Enhancing academic outcomes in senior high school*. University of Western Sydney, Bankstown, Higher Degree Conference on-line publication. (ISBN 174 108 1270)
- Collier, J. (2006). *Encouraging high performance from the first cohort in a new school*. Canberra: Australian College of Educators, Occasional Papers No. 9.
- Deece, A., Dinham, S., Brennan, K., Collier, J., & Mulford, D. (2003). The leadership capabilities and decision making of the secondary head of department. *Leading and Managing*, 9(1), 38-51.

- Collier, J., Dinham, S., Brennan, K., Deece, A., & Mulford, D. (2002). Perceptions and realities of the work of the secondary head of department. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 30(2), 17-26.
- Collier, J. (2001). Establishing culture, ethos and market niche in new state schools. *Leading and Managing*, 7(2), 151-162.
- Dinham, S., Brennan, K., Collier, J., Deece, A., & Mulford, D. (2000). *The secondary head of department. Key link in the quality teaching and learning chain*. Canberra: Australian College of Education Occasional Papers No. 2.

## Other Journals

- Collier, J., (2022), People you will meet: an (occasional) typology of council, staff and parents, *Independence*, (47), (1), in press.
- Collier, J., (2021), The last phase of Headship – Walking out with dignity or waddling away as a lame duck?, in *Independence* (46), (2)25-26.
- Collier, J., (2021) Managing change in a Christian community, in *Christian Education Matters*, Issue 6, p.20-23, The Excellence Centre, Pacific Hills Christian School.
- Collier, J., (2021) From the coalface, it's time to go, in *Independence* (46), 1, 39-40.
- Collier, J., (2020) PISA envy uncalled for and unbecoming in Australia, *Australian Teacher Magazine* 16, 3.
- Collier, J., (2020) Some things I have learned as a Principal – Part 1 in *Independence*, 45(1), 32-37.
- Collier, J., (2020) Some things I have learned as a Principal – Part 2 in *Independence*, 45(2), 36-38.
- Collier, J., (2018), Early Termination. Are we all Interim Heads?, *Independence*, (43). 1, 4-6.
- Collier, J., (2017), Establishing a new school, *Independence*, 42(1), 27-29.
- Collier, J., (2017), The head and Christian education, *Christian Teachers Journal*, 25, 1, 8-10
- Collier, J., (2016) School development toolkit: strategies to enhance senior secondary outcomes, *Independence*, 41, (1), 4-11.
- Collier, J., On the Death of a Student, *Independence*, 38 (2), 2013.
- Collier, J. (2007), Christian perspectives. *Independence*, 32(1), 4-7.
- Collier, J. (2006 March,). School security. *Teacher*, Australian Council for Educational Research, 39-40.
- Collier, J. (2004). Towards high achievement in Year 12: A principal's approach to monitoring and intervention. *The Practising Administrator*, 26(2), 10-13, 41.
- Collier, J. (2003). Flexible hours and extended days. *The Practising Administrator*, 25(4), 28-30.
- Collier, J. (2002). Developing internal and external accountability. *The Principal's School Leadership Program, International Exhibition Specialist Conference Papers*, Sydney, 35-42.
- Collier, J. (2001). Following a standard. *Nexus*, 34(3), 1-4 and 34(4), 5-8.
- Dinham, S., Brennan, K., Collier, J., Deece, A., & Mulford, D. (2000). *The secondary head of department. Duties, delights, dangers, direction and development*. Sydney: University of Western Sydney, Nepean.
- Collier, J. (1997). *Starting a new school*. Department of School Education (NSW) Kit.
- Collier, J. (1996). New schools on the block. A beginner's guide to success. *Principal Matters*, 8(3), 30-33.
- Collier, J. (1996). Teaching. A sacred or secular activity? *Nexus*, 28(14), 4-5.
- Collier, J. (1994). Starting a new school – reflections three years down the track. *Principal Matters*, 5(4), 4-7.
- Collier, J., Fowler, V., Kalgovas, K., Levins, G., O'Kell, S., Tan, L., et. al.(1986). *Let's visit Liverpool and Campbelltown*. National Trust of Australia.
- Collier, J., Wasson, L., & Whitby, G. (1984). *Present approaches to the past*. Liverpool Area History Curriculum Committee, Department of Education (NSW).
- Collier, J., (1983). Setting up 2 Unit general ancient history for the first time. *History Teachers Association of NSW*, 4, 24-27.
- Collier, J., (1983). The Amarna period of new kingdom Egypt. *History Teachers Association of NSW*, 4, 28-37.