**Vision Statement**

The vision statement of NT Christian Schools is, ‘*We desire to be a Christian community, learning together to live life as God intended, offering hope for the world*’.

Mäpuru Christian School strives to be an active part of a much larger Christian community, learning together to live life as God intended, offering hope for the world.

The school strives to uphold Christian values in all school matters, within the curriculum and in all its dealings with students, parents and broader community. In doing so, the school aims to support elders, parents, students and teachers to practice an inclusive Christian theology where Yolŋu traditions, knowledge, languages, cultural practices and languages are respected. This vision includes:

- Supporting Mäpuru parents and community to live with dignity on their sacred ancestral estates as God intended.
- Supporting the teaching of, and respect for the sacredness and spirituality of the environment within an encompassing system of Yolŋu kinship.
- Actively supporting Mäpuru people to maintain their independent community lives, enabling them to do, to manage for themselves.
- Supporting the development of a broad inclusive Christian community in Arnhemland.
- Offering Mäpuru parents and community hope and stability in an ever-changing world.
- Offering an inclusive school curriculum, embedded in Yolŋu knowledges and Mäpuru’s micro-enterprises.
- Encouraging and supporting non-Yolŋu staff and family members to actively participate in community life, to learn a Yolŋu language and use Yolŋu kinship within the school and wider community.
Principal’s Message

In 2014 Mäpuru Christian School continued its journey to realise the vision of Elders’ past and present for a school that enables its children to live independent lives of dignity on their ancestral estates.

2014 was a year rich in deepening our understanding of how God works through and with the entire Mäpuru school community to develop and consolidate our journey together. The advice and wisdom of Mäpuru’s Elders and Yolŋu teachers was highlighted in a semester-long study and week long excursion during which the school and the whole of Mäpuru town together, followed the Mukarr ancestors’ songlines. Outcomes of this included another leap in literacy and ITC skills, for both students and teachers, alongside the mutual respect & recognition of the depth of knowledge of God within this rich Yolŋu world. Jackie Ɲuluwiḏi, Yolŋu Principal, reflected about our journey during a staff meeting:

“...I felt really proud that my sister (the balanda teaching principal) wanted to follow me, wants to be guided by my leadership and is working with Mäpuru families to understand our world and ways of knowing God... ”.

Another major highlight was a graduation ceremony to celebrate four years of successful study by the Yolŋu teachers who gained Certificates in Education Support. The entire extended Mäpuru community celebrated their delight in these achievements. We gave thanks to our Elders, family members and NT Christian Schools who supported this vision and worked as enablers and restorers of pride and dignity which in turn impacts positively on the lives of our students.

We give thanks that Mäpuru families continue to give their time, advice and knowledge openly and generously to guide the development of the school and actively participate in our curriculum, procedures and policy implementation. This active mutual respect, support and collaboration with parents and families is our foundation for improved student outcomes.

Chaplain Linda Marathuwarr
Ritharrŋu Elder

Chaplain Margaret
Bambalarra
Ritharrŋu Elder

Chaplain Wendy Wulnuwulŋu
Liya-dhalinymirr Elder
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School Profile

Mäpuru Christian School is located at Mäpuru, in a very remote area of North East Arnhem Land. The school is registered from Preschool to Year 10 and runs two classes, a Primary and a Secondary class. Students are graded according to their age-appropriate year level and only Indigenous students are enrolled. In 2014, there were no diagnosed Students with a Disability at the school. A total of 46 students were enrolled at Mäpuru Christian School at the time of the Commonwealth census in August 2014. No critical incidents took place at the school in 2014.

A complete profile of student age, gender and year level is provided in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Level</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 8</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
<th>Year 10</th>
<th>Year 11</th>
<th>Year 12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
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</table>
A summary of average student attendance is provided in the table below and is based on the NT Department of Education collection statistics.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
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<td>Feb</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>78.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>74.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description of how non-attendance is managed by the school**

Mäpuru Christian School teachers live within the community and the Yolŋu teachers live in three of the nine households. This forms tight knit family relationships where daily discussion with non-attenders’ families are an ongoing feature of the week, allowing us to discern reasons for student absence and discuss strategies to encourage students to return.

Regular parent-teacher meetings discuss the effect of non-attendance on students’ learning with parents. This sometimes results in a group of mothers and grandmothers being employed to encourage whole family wake up calls to their neighbours, enabling timely breakfast preparation. Parents are also employed as Home-School Liaison Officers to facilitate return travel after school holidays or larger town events such as football matches, and escort children home to Mäpuru.

Teachers spend many after school hours building strong positive relationships with non-attenders and their families, working together with the school Chaplains. In order to build collaborative partnerships with families and students, the school actively works to develop innovative programs to capture the interest of school-age children. Programs include running an in-class shop, holding student markets, road rule lessons, 4WD as well as bicycle repair and maintenance, reading recipes and cooking, and individuals working alongside visiting trades people.

Parents in turn also support and are actively involved in Mäpuru Christian School’s programs in their best efforts to encourage every student at Mäpuru to attend daily.
**Staffing Information**

All teachers have a minimum of four years training and are registered with the NT Teacher Registration Board.

**Teachers (1.0 FTE):**

Dean McDonald: BEd/Arts

Linda Miller: Dip Teach; BEd; M Applied Linguistics

**Yolnu (Indigenous) Teachers (Assistant Teachers):**

Jackie Ŋuluwiḏi: Cert III and Cert IV Education Support

Roslyn Malŋumba: Cert III and Cert IV Education Support

James Burkiyalawuy: Cert III Education Support;

Rebecca Gamadala: Cert III Education Support;

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**Highlights of the school year**

**Highlights from the Students**

- The excursion following our ancestors, the Mukarr. We were so excited to learn that we wanted to stay at each place for a week!
- The Basketball court laid down in late 2014 is so good that children from Elcho are coming over for the weekends to play basketball with us.
- Learning to do lino cuts to make cards and sending them by post to our families.
- Learning to use the ipads to write and record stories.
- Having Nikki run a bicycle repair workshop. We all repaired old bikes from the tip and can ride to the creek to go fishing now.
- Running the class shop by ourselves.
Highlights from the Parents

- The cultural exchange to Melbourne between the Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies (CERES) and Mäpuru's Arnhem Weavers saw 6 Master weavers and 6 of Mäpuru's weaving apprentices lead weaving and Yolŋu culture workshops in late January 2014. We all enjoyed it and learned lots for our children's futures.
- Inclusive school/community meetings to discuss both school and community business.
- Students learning about their family connections and relationship to country that the Mukarr travelled through. We are very happy that students are learning so well.
- We are really proud that there is active involvement of Elders and Yolŋu teachers in school curriculum. The school is listening to our Elders and teaching the students literacy through our cultural knowledge in both Djambarrpuyŋu and English. The histories of Mukarr are important for our children to know for their children in the future.
- Our children are learning so much that we can now see that they will be able to take over from us in the future, for the school and community.

Highlights from the Teachers

- The highlights are everything, everyone is working together and sharing, especially community events and important times like funerals, we Yolŋu are respected and it is easy working together.
- Mukarr excursion learning on country together, we need more big trips and smaller trips. Next time, the Yolŋu teachers have learnt so much through this trip and our study that we can do more to organise excursions.
- Our graduation ceremony, led by our Elders, to celebrate finishing Certificates in Education Support. We were so honoured and proud.
- Our teaching teams are growing and Yolŋu teachers are becoming stronger, confident teachers in their professional practice.
- Seeing the Primary students who have moved up to the Secondary class keeping pace with the Secondary students because the Primary teaching team have laid a very strong foundation.
- Students' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are continuing to improve with purposeful, contextualised and inspiring educational programs towards achieving our school vision.
- Secondary students are ordering goods on the speakerphone for their shop, speaking more confidently in English.
- Balanda teachers greatly appreciate Yolŋu sharing and being generous with teaching us about your Yolŋu values and social protocols, teaching us about the depths and complexities of your world.
- Going to the Uniting Women’s Conference in Sydney, listening to women form all over the world and presenting our story too.
- Working with Elders to write stories for children to learn to read and write in school has encouraged us all, we are learning so much together.
- Both students and teachers are making great academic progress. We can see how using our first language for academic purposes is improving students’ progress in English.
Teaching and Learning

Curriculum:

Mäpuru Christian School follows a community negotiated multi-lingual and bi-literacy curriculum that realises the educational goals of its community alongside their vision of Yolŋu Christian education. The Australian Curriculum alongside the NT Curriculum Framework (2009) forms the basis for all learning programs. The school is developing its working knowledge of the Australian Curriculum. Mäpuru Christian School’s curriculum goal is for students to become successful learners who are not only confident and creative individuals but active and informed citizens whose futures radiate the hope of dignity and independent lives.

Year 9 and 10 students also participate in VET programs when offered at Mäpuru.

Pedagogy:

Pedagogy at Mäpuru Christian School utilizes evidence based teaching and learning pedagogies that close the gap between the learners’ current achievement levels and targeted outcomes.

English as a Second Language pedagogies alongside bi-literacy pedagogies are utilized enabling students to learn in, through and about English as they study the range of Learning Areas across the curriculum.

Literacy approaches include Walking Talking Texts alongside Do – Talk - Record methodologies. These approaches support the strong partnerships that Mäpuru adults have expressed as a non-negotiable practice of the school, that the non-Indigenous teachers
Teaching and Learning

don’t take over and move so fast that it leaves the Yolŋu teachers behind. These approaches form part of a planning process at MCS, enabling Yolŋu teachers to be thoroughly skilled to plan, prepare and teach alongside the classroom teacher. This has been invaluable, enabling the Yolŋu teachers to mentor the new teachers to the school and to carry the teaching and learning program enabling students to continue making progress when teachers have left the school.

As a Yolŋu Christian School, Yolŋu pedagogies are used to deliver a range of programs including Indigenous Language and Culture programs. This includes multilingual and bi-cultural instruction for conceptual and literacy development in students’ first language Djambarrpuyŋu, bridging English language and literacy skills to deeper levels of academic understanding and proficiency. To this end, classrooms are a working partnership between Yolŋu and Balanda teachers.

Numeracy Programs include a strong emphasis on real life, directed investigations in the Mäpuru living and working context. Teachers are utilizing the Talking Namba resources and finding them most valuable.

Note: The term Assistant teacher is not used at Mäpuru. Instead we refer to our co-teachers as Yolŋu teachers, a respectful term acknowledging the depth of knowledge and experience these teachers bring to their classroom practice. Mäpuru’s Yolŋu teachers do much more than ‘assist the teacher’. They are expert teachers in their own right, teaching the non-Indigenous teachers and striving to complete formal teaching qualifications.

Stronger Futures National Partnership funding

Mäpuru Christian School has been included in the Stronger Futures in the Northern Territory National Partnership (2012-2022). This National Partnership has two funding elements relevant to Mäpuru - ‘Additional Teacher’ and ‘Quality Teaching’. Following on from the ‘Additional Teacher’ element, Mäpuru Christian School has continued to employ a full-time additional teacher in 2014, which maintains the school as a 2 teacher school. The provision of this additional practitioner is critical to the ongoing progress of students at the school as it provides for more manageable class sizes and academic groupings which better caters for individual student needs.
Activity under the ‘Quality Teaching Initiative’ element has focused on the provision of literacy and numeracy support to target individual learning needs. All teachers have attended systemic professional learning activities pertaining to whole school literacy approaches as well as the moderation of students literacy assessments. The use of ICT pertaining to literacy and numeracy programs and catering to individual student progress was a feature of on-site professional learning at Mäpuru in 2014. This activity was particularly focused on the use of iPads in aiding best-practice teaching and learning. Appropriate professional development activities to support the meaningful integration of ICT in the classroom was also a feature at the school in 2014. Indigenous staff have continued to be formally trained, as well as mentored, supported and included in professional development activities, and this will continue to be a feature of QTI activity into the future.

In 2014 Mäpuru Christian School submitted an Expression of Interest in the ‘Teacher Housing’ element. This is currently being assessed by a Priorities Committee and funding will be determined and prioritised on a needs basis over the next 5 years.

Preschool
Preschool students are integrated into the Primary class activities.

Standardised Testing
Students took part in NAPLAN testing. The result were not statistical reliable because of the small sample size. More information is available form the Myschool website http://www.myschool.edu.au

Pastoral Care and Well-being Programs
Mäpuru Christian School adheres to the policies and protocols of NT Christian Schools regarding pastoral care. The Yolŋu teachers represent the diversity of households at Mäpuru. Under the wisdom and guidance of the three community matriarchs, these teachers communicate daily with families about their children. In reality, the entire school community is family, non-Indigenous teachers as well. It is a very close community where there is an abundance of care and acceptance, and open communication. Because of this, pastoral care and well-being form an integral part of the entire school day at Mäpuru Christian School.

Parents and community
Mäpuru consists of nine households. The Yolŋu teachers are drawn from three of these. Mäpuru Christian School is making every attempt to include adults from all households whenever further paid work is available through our afternoon electives and school maintenance programs. Family members are very keen to be involved.

Mäpuru Christian School has representation (and sometimes 100% of adults) from every
household at every school council meeting and school assembly. Parents continue to express their joy at the reading and writing progress their children are achieving.

Elders are enthusiastic to share their knowledge of histories, ancestries, country, languages and their journeys with God, and to have these documented and included in the school’s literacy programs. We only have to ask for help and our Elders are at the school or our homes ready and responsive. During 2014, these Elders and Mäpuru community led a seven day whole community excursion, as a research project to enable deep level learning for our students. This resulted in the strongest reading and writing performance by students in the short history of our school. It also resulted in school community cohesion, personal and community pride, resilience and tangible excitement about the interaction of culture, literacy and schooling. Students displayed an increased enthusiasm for all learning, both in school and engagement in school and community life.

Finance and facilities

Income received in the 2014 calendar year is listed below.

- **Private** $5,887
- **Recurrent** $1,020,447
- **Capital** $343,800

Capital improvements to the school over the past 12 months include the following;

- **Concrete basketball court**
- **1 set of stainless steel cupboards and benches:**

These expand our ‘verandah kitchen’ which is an applied literacy and numeracy, alongside, health, food preparation and butchery area

- **Maintenance and repairs included:**
  - insulating, lining and installing fans on the verandah kitchen roof

The school buildings consist of two blocks. The current condition of school buildings and facilities is as follows;

- Block one, built in 1990, has now been repaired to a reasonable standard. In 2015 fly & security screening will be upgraded
- Block 2 built in 2007, is in good condition.
• A student toilet block was included in the 2007 building program which consists of a male and female section containing a single pit toilet and single shower room each. This is in good condition.
• One 3 bedroom house for teacher accommodation is in excellent condition.
• One 1 bedroom house for teacher accommodation is in excellent condition.

Capital for expanding teacher housing to allow for employment of a balanda teacher with a family has been applied for under the Stronger Futures Teacher Housing program.

**School self-assessment**

Mäpuru Christian School has continued to focus on the key areas in the School Improvement and Renewal Framework of ‘Community and Culture’ and ‘Teaching and Learning’. Self-assessment in the areas of ‘Leadership’ and ‘Christian Identity’ have been completed in 2015.

**Community & Culture**

Activity continues to take place in developing governance and engagement strategies to ensure community members are strongly included in decision making processes regarding curriculum, new projects and school infrastructure needs.

The embedding of local cultural knowledge and values into the school curriculum is continuing.

**Teaching & Learning**

Mäpuru Christian School continues to be supported in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum, with a particular focus on catering to multi-age year levels.

Appropriate assessment tools for speaking, listening and numeracy continue to be developed. An ongoing focus for the school is supporting students with English as an additional language/dialect and developing appropriate reporting mechanisms for students in this area.

Another strong focus for Mäpuru Christian School is the training and development of Yolŋu teachers in their Education Support certificate courses.
Endorsement

This report is endorsed by:

Linda Miller
Principal, Mapuru Christian School

Debra Twartz
Chief Executive Officer, NT Christian Schools