



ASPIRE Visual Arts

Primary Campus Program Handbook

History and Rationale

Art Aspire provides students with a creative, supportive and engaging environment in which to develop artistic skills, confidence and individual expression. The program combines explicit instruction in artistic techniques with opportunities for experimentation, originality and creative decision-making.

Students will explore a variety of media, materials and artistic processes while developing their own artistic vocabulary and understanding of visual arts. The program encourages students to take creative risks, express ideas and emotions, and appreciate that art can be both a process of learning and a form of personal communication.

Goals and Purpose

The primary goal of Art Aspire is to develop confident, curious and capable young artists. Students will:

- build on existing skills while learning new techniques
- experiment with different media
- develop their own creative ideas and artistic voice
- work within competition timeframes
- showcase talents to wider audiences through art exhibitions and community projects
- critically respond to artworks and art movements
- visit galleries and participate in workshops

Key Personnel

2027 will mark Sandra McNeven's twelfth year teaching Art Aspire. Sandra majored in Fine Art as part of her Education Degree and has been a valued member of the Varsity College community for approximately 25 years, serving in a variety of roles including classroom teacher across multiple year levels, Science and Technology specialist teacher, Visual Art specialist teacher, and most recently, Visual Media teacher. Teaching Art Aspire, however, remains the highlight of her professional career.

Throughout her time at Varsity College, she has witnessed the school's growth and development firsthand and has maintained a strong passion for both education and the arts.

Sandra's teaching philosophy centres on providing students with opportunities to develop strong technical skills while fostering creativity, independence, confidence, and individual expression. She is committed to creating an environment where students are encouraged to explore their artistic potential, take creative risks, and develop their own unique voices as artists.

Program Overview

Art also provides students with a valuable means of expressing thoughts, feelings and experiences. Art Aspire offers a positive environment where students can explore ideas, reflect, concentrate and communicate through visual expression while developing resilience, independence and confidence.

The program will also introduce students to a range of artists, artwork and cultural practices. Students will be encouraged to form and articulate their own opinions, use appropriate artistic vocabulary, and understand how artists communicate ideas and perspectives.

Art Aspire aligns with the Australian Curriculum Version 9.0 – The Arts: Visual Arts, supporting students to explore and respond to artworks, develop practices and skills, create and make, and present their work. The program also develops General Capabilities including Critical and Creative Thinking, Literacy, Personal and Social Capability, Digital Literacy and Intercultural Understanding.

Extra-Curricular Opportunities

Young Archies Art Competition, Doyles Junior Competition, Mudgeeraba Show Arts and Crafts Competition, Gold Coast Show, HOTA or GOMA excursion and workshop, community projects and extra competition opportunities as they arise throughout the year.

Student Selection Criteria

- online application and submission of artwork portfolio (at least four samples) on USB.
- work must demonstrate student originality, range of skill through mediums used and creativity (no art class assisted artworks or AI generated artworks)
- digital artworks (not AI), stop motion animation, short film and photography, will also be accepted in the submissions.

Expectations and Commitment to Program Requirements

The ASPIRE Program is committed to providing and maintaining a high performing and supportive learning environment for all its students. Being a part of the ASPIRE Program is a privilege, and students involved in the program must value and respect their placement. To this end, ASPIRE students will endeavour to perform at the highest level across the Global ASPIRE Performance Areas:

Academic (classroom and extra-curricular)

- Maintain high academic standards. This is considered a 'B' grade across all relevant ASPIRE subjects.
- Maintain no lower than a 'C' grade in all other subjects.
- Submit all assessment, completed and by the due date.

Behaviour and Effort

- Maintain a very high standard of behaviour and effort across all subject areas.
- Respect teachers and fellow students at all times.
- Be punctual and prepared for all lessons.
- Display high levels of appropriate behaviour at all times, not only during ASPIRE lessons, but with all Varsity College staff (teaching and corporate services), contract and supply teachers.

Culture

- Students understand they bear responsibility as an ambassador of the ASPIRE Programs to be seen as a positive role model to others within the local community.
- Maintain a high level of school attendance in order to maintain learning standards.
- Active participation in competitions, events, activities and excursions related to the ASPIRE programs.
- Maintain high uniform standards in line with the Varsity College Appearance Policy.
- Be accepting and tolerant of all students.
- Show modesty and humility when interacting with students.

Maintenance of Position in Program

ASPIRE Programs operate a formal review process at the end of each term for students who consistently are not meeting Global ASPIRE Performance Areas as outlined in the Expectations and Commitment to Program Requirements. Grounds for review may include:

- Consistent lateness.
- Truancy, repeated detentions, after school detentions, suspension.
- Failure to submit assessment on a regular basis (monitoring and due dates).
- Failure to meet academic, behaviour and effort standards as outlined in the Expectations and Commitment to Program Requirements.
- Failure to meet the financial commitment of ASPIRE Program.

The ASPIRE Review Process for students consistently not meeting expectations is completed at the end of the term. The following procedures are then implemented:

- The students and their parents are contacted by either the ASPIRE Coordinator or the Head of Department where expectations of the program will be discussed. Specific targets will be identified and it is the student's responsibility to meet these.
- The student will be placed on probation for the following term. If students fail to meet their targets throughout this period, their enrolment in the program will be cancelled, and they will be placed in a mainstream class for the remainder of the year.

Application Process

The Varsity College ASPIRE Program applicants are required to:

- Complete the online ASPIRE Program Application which can be found on the Varsity College website.
- Upload all required documentation as required and submit by the closing date.
- Please note that incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- All applications must be received no later than the close date advertised on our platforms.
- You will receive further correspondence about testing dates and times once your application has been received and processed.

Upon completion of the application process, staff and specialist teachers will decide on the suitability of each applicant. Successful applicants will be notified by the school and the school's decision will be final.