

Radford
College

*Cultivating Character,
Inspiring Excellence*

Strategic Plan 2026 - 2028



Acknowledgement of Country

Radford College acknowledges the Ngunnawal people, the Traditional Custodians of this Land, whose treasured cultures and customs have nourished and continue to nourish the Land on which we meet, play and learn.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present and express gratitude for their ongoing contribution towards education.

A message from the Board Chair and Principal

It is with a profound sense of shared purpose and excitement for the future that we introduce the Radford College *Cultivating Character, Inspiring Excellence Strategic Plan 2026–2028*.

This roadmap arrives at a significant moment in our College's history. Following extensive community consultation, including the invaluable insights gathered from our MMG Education Survey, this plan represents a collective vision.

It balances the proud traditions of our past with an agile, forward-looking framework designed to ensure our students thrive in an increasingly complex world.

Radford College believes that a quality education must shape a student's character just as much as their intellect, which is why we remain committed to weaving our values of *Truth, Compassion* and *Wisdom* into the fabric of our pastoral, academic and co-curricular programs so that young people gain the agency to lead with genuine purpose.

Alongside this stands our conviction that true success is neither a fixed endpoint nor a singular score, but a daily standard of growth; by cultivating an environment of high aspirations backed by robust care, we challenge every student and staff member to champion their 'personal best' in every arena, from rigorous scholarship to creative and sporting endeavours.

Over the 2026–2028 cycle, this strategic vision will manifest in tangible ways across our community. We will invest heavily in advanced pedagogy, innovative wellbeing initiatives and supporting staff workforce dynamics to ensure our learners are championed at every stage of their journey. Our focus remains firmly on delivering a holistic, values-driven education that prepares our young people to graduate as confident, capable global citizens.

A Radford education must be sustainable, purposeful and profoundly impactful. As we launch this plan, we extend our deepest gratitude to our staff, parents, students and Collegians whose dedication breathes life into our vision every single day.

We invite you to read through our strategy and join us in partnership as we cultivate the character and inspire the excellence that will define Radford College for generations to come.

Vicki Williams
Board Chair

Christopher Bradbury
Principal

A Radford education

From the very beginning, the vision for Radford College was clear: to establish a non-selective Anglican school committed to academic excellence and founded in a tradition of community service. Radford College distinguished itself from Canberra's two existing Anglican schools by offering co-education from the outset and extended the benefits of a high-quality Anglican education to the growing areas in the north of Canberra.

The school was designed to provide students with broad and balanced opportunities to develop:

'Skills of reception and communication; skills of enumeration and accounting; a love and understanding of nature and the environment; an appreciation of literature, music, drama, arts and crafts; an awareness of at least the fundamentals of contemporary scientific and technical knowledge; an awareness of cultures, customs and languages other than their own; an awareness of the history of mankind, especially of our own country and people including the Aboriginal inhabitants, and of our political and social system; an understanding of the individual self.'

Alongside academic and creative development, Radford also offers spiritual, personal and vocational guidance.

To help shape its lasting identity, inaugural Principal Jock Mackinnon invited students, parents and friends of Radford College to submit suggestions for a crest and motto. Twenty-six motto suggestions were considered before the final choice emerged: *Truth, Wisdom, Compassion*.

The selection reflected the belief that life is a pursuit of truth, that knowledge without wisdom is directionless and that compassion is what truly makes life meaningful. Alongside this, the crest took shape, incorporating key symbols: the Bishop's mitre, representing Radford's Christian heritage and an acknowledgement to Bishop Lewis Bostock Radford whom the school is named after; a book, signifying scholarly knowledge; the Southern Cross, symbolising service to the nation; the Radford 'R', reinforcing accessibility to education; and the Alpha and Omega, acknowledging Christ as the beginning and end of all things.

Thomas Bruce (T.B.) Millar, the Chair of the inaugural school board, saw Radford College as a place of excellence in learning and life, where every student would be nurtured as a whole person – compassionate, grounded in faith and prepared for the world. He envisioned a school community that welcomed all backgrounds, honoured individuality, protected freedoms and engaged with global challenges. Above all, he hoped Radford College would be a joyful, thoughtful place that lived on in the hearts of its students.

He spoke at the dedication service in 1984 and his words continue to resonate more than four decades later:

'We dedicate Radford to the objective of ensuring, so far as possible, that its students are cultured and compassionate human beings, grounded in Christian teachings and traditions, and who, at the conclusion of their school careers, are well prepared for tertiary education, for employment, and for living.'





Our strategic framework

The school of yesterday, today and tomorrow

Our strategic framework celebrates the foundations of the College and delivers a carefully crafted educational pathway that is a holistic endeavour cultivating academic excellence, nurturing human flourishing, developing responsible leadership and forging individuals of strong character. Our strategic framework recognises that true education extends beyond the confines of the classroom, encompassing intellectual, emotional, social and ethical dimensions.



Acknowledging our recent history and the feedback from our stakeholders through the consultation process, our Strategic Intent is to refocus rather than replace. It's to build on the strengths so our educational delivery is consistent and deliberate. It's to fix what needs fixing. It draws inspiration from our past and wants the future to be a better version of what we know and love.

We believe that true preparation for life after school transcends the pursuit of a singular academic rank; instead, it is found in the deliberate cultivation of practical wisdom and the building of a robust internal foundation for wellbeing. By fostering the core virtues of *Truth*, *Compassion* and *Wisdom*, we empower our graduates to become resilient global citizens who possess the agency to strive for their personal best and the empathy to lead with integrity. Ultimately, our goal is to ensure that every Radford student departs with a sophisticated 'structure of knowing' and the essential self-care literacy required to flourish in a complex world, ensuring they are not merely prepared for university, but are equipped to lead lives of profound purpose and contribution.

Our *Strategic Plan* captures the school's belief in the potential of every student to achieve their personal best. It is a testament to the school's dedication to providing an exceptional education that fosters academic excellence, nurtures human flourishing, develops responsible leadership and forges individuals of strong character.



Our values

At Radford College, our core values of *Truth, Compassion* and *Wisdom* are not just words; they are living principles that guide our community's actions, decisions and character. They are foundational to our mission of fostering the holistic growth of every student, preparing them for a life of purpose and integrity.

Truth

Truth signifies a profound commitment to integrity, honesty and authenticity. It is the pursuit of knowledge and understanding, guided by a sincere desire to discover what is real and just. In the classroom, it is the intellectual honesty to engage in rigorous inquiry, to challenge assumptions and to accept evidence, even when it is uncomfortable. In our relationships, it means acting with sincerity and transparency, building trust through reliable and ethical conduct. Truth empowers students to think critically, to stand up for what is right and to live with personal integrity. It is the bedrock of a moral compass, encouraging students to be authentic in their identity and interactions.

Compassion

Compassion is at the heart of the Radford community. It is the ability to empathise with others, to understand their struggles and to be moved to action by their pain. It goes beyond simple sympathy; it is an active and heartfelt concern for the wellbeing of others. This value is expressed in the way our students and staff support one another, through acts of kindness, service and generosity. Compassion teaches students to look beyond themselves, to connect with the wider world and to contribute positively to the lives of those in need. It is a powerful force that builds a nurturing, inclusive and supportive environment where every individual is valued and cared for.

Wisdom

Wisdom is the culmination of knowledge and experience, applied with discernment and good judgement. It is not merely about accumulating facts, but about understanding how to use that knowledge to make wise decisions that benefit oneself and others. At Radford, we strive to equip students with the ability to navigate life's complexities with insight and a moral sense of purpose. This means teaching them to reflect on their experiences, to learn from their mistakes and to seek understanding rather than just information. Wisdom is about cultivating a sense of perspective and a deep appreciation for the interconnectedness of all things, enabling students to act with prudence and foresight in an ever-changing world.

Our commitment

Cultivating character

In our pursuit of educational excellence, we recognise that intellectual growth is only one part of a complete education. The core of our next *Strategic Plan* is a renewed commitment to character education – the intentional development of the virtues, dispositions and ethical frameworks that guide how our students navigate the world.

At its essence, character is the ‘moral compass’ that remains when the classroom lights go out. It is the bridge between knowing what is right and having the courage to act on it. In an era of rapid technological change and global uncertainty, the ability to think critically must be matched by the resilience to persevere and the empathy to lead with kindness.

The three pillars of character development

Our approach to cultivating character is built upon three fundamental dimensions of the human experience:

- 1. Performance character:** This focuses on the ‘will to excel.’ It includes virtues such as grit, self-discipline and curiosity. By fostering these traits, we empower students to view challenges not as obstacles, but as opportunities for growth.
- 2. Moral character:** This is our ‘social conscience.’ It involves the development of integrity, honesty and justice. We aim to graduate students who do the right thing – not for reward or recognition, but because it is the right thing to do.
- 3. Civic character:** This addresses our ‘communal responsibility.’ It encompasses empathy, service and citizenship. It encourages students to look beyond themselves and contribute meaningfully to their local and global communities.



Why character matters

The modern world demands more than just technical proficiency. Employers, universities and communities are increasingly seeking individuals who possess 'soft skills' – which we prefer to call essential virtues.

- **Resilience in the face of setbacks:** In a high-pressure environment, character provides the emotional scaffolding necessary to bounce back from setbacks.
- **Ethical decision-making:** As students encounter complex digital and social landscapes, a strong character acts as a safeguard against peer pressure and ethical shortcuts.
- **Purposeful leadership:** True leadership is an act of service. By cultivating character, we move students from a mindset of 'What can I get?' to 'What can I give?'

Our strategic commitment

Cultivating character is not a standalone subject or a series of posters on a wall; it is the 'oxygen' of our school culture. Over the course of this *Strategic Plan*, we will integrate character development into our pastoral care programs, sporting fields, performing arts and daily interactions.

We believe that by focusing on the heart as much as the head, we are not just preparing students for exams – we are preparing them for life. We want every graduate of this school to be defined not just by what they have achieved, but by who they are.

'Intelligence plus character – that is
the goal of true education' –
Martin Luther King Jr.



Inspiring excellence

Excellence is often mistaken for a final destination or a perfect score. In our *Strategic Plan*, we define excellence not as a static achievement, but as a continuous, lived commitment to surpassing one's previous best. It is the restless pursuit of quality in every endeavour, from the performing arts stage and the sports field to the way we treat one another in the corridors.

To inspire excellence is to create an environment that gives rise to a sense of mastery and striving for the highest peaks. Excellence requires hard work, commitment, persistence, discipline and focus. It requires curiosity and exploration. It is about fostering a culture of high expectations paired with high support, ensuring that every member of our community – students and staff alike – has the tools and the motivation to reach their full potential.

The three pillars of defining excellence

Our framework for excellence is built upon three fundamental dimensions that drive personal and collective growth:

1. Academic rigour: This is the 'intellectual standard.' It goes beyond rote learning to emphasise critical thinking, mastery and deep inquiry. We challenge our students to engage with complex ideas and to take pride in the craftsmanship of their work.

2. Holistic growth: Excellence is not confined to a report card. It includes artistic expression, physical well-being and social-emotional intelligence. We believe that true excellence is found in the balance of a well-rounded life.

3. Marginal gains: This is our 'incremental progress.' It encourages the habit of continuous improvement. We teach students that excellence is the result of small, disciplined actions repeated daily – the extra minute of practice, the third draft of an essay and the courageous question in class.



Why excellence matters


In a world that is increasingly competitive and automated, the pursuit of excellence is what distinguishes an individual. It is the hallmark of a professional, leader and lifelong learner.

- **A foundation for confidence:** Achieving excellence in a specific area builds the self-efficacy needed to tackle new, unknown challenges.
- **Combatting apathy:** By setting high standards, we protect against the ‘culture of mediocrity.’ Excellence provides a sense of purpose and reason to engage deeply with the world.
- **Contribution to society:** We do not pursue excellence for vanity; we do it for utility. The more excellent our skills and character, the more effectively we can serve our families, industries and nation.

Our strategic commitment

Inspiring excellence requires more than just celebrating the top performers; it requires a systemic belief that every student is capable of excellence. Over the duration of this *Strategic Plan*, we will invest in evidence-based pedagogy, high-quality teaching and robust feedback loops that help every student identify their ‘personal best.’

We are committed to being a school where excellence is the standard, not the exception. We want our students to graduate with the habit of excellence so deeply ingrained that it becomes their natural way of being in the world.



**‘We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit’
– Aristotle.**



Our strategy

Academic growth and attainment

To foster a dynamic teaching and learning environment built on excellence, ambition and growth, empowering every child to reach their full potential.

- Implement an evidence-informed Radford Learning Framework (Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12) that defines expectations for teaching, learning and assessment.
- Embed academic rigour by supporting students to reach strong standards in literacy and numeracy, by setting and achieving high expectations.
- Leverage and build our status as an International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme World School.
- Optimise the application of technology and analytics to track and tailor opportunities for growth in student learning.
- Offer an inspiring, challenging range of academic enrichment activities.
- Develop a 'Future Readiness Program' that supports student preparation for life in areas such as financial literacy, emotional intelligence, entrepreneurship and global citizenship.



Our strategy

Pastoral care and wellbeing

To maintain an emphasis on outstanding pastoral care, prioritising student wellbeing and creating an environment where all students can thrive.

- Implement an evidence-informed Radford Wellbeing Framework (Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12) grounded in best practice.
- Meet all statutory child safeguarding requirements in creating a culture where staff and students are aware of, and engaged in, safeguarding.
- Actively cultivate the dispositions of optimism, resilience, grit and compassion for others in interactions and learning experiences.
- Embed a culture of human flourishing, cultivating lives enriched with purpose, meaning and wellbeing.
- Provide staff and structures that support all students by creating an ethos of exemplary behaviour, openness and mutual support.



Our strategy

Character and leadership

To strengthen our commitment to developing students' intellectual, moral and civic character, and empower them to put these into action through performance character, the determination and agency to live out their values.

- Develop a Character Education Program forged through ethical decision-making, goal striving and empathetic engagement aligned to our values.
- Deliver a broad range of co-curricular opportunities that spark our students' passions, nurture their talents and inspire them to be leaders of the future.
- Strengthen service learning and social responsibility as a visible part of school life.
- Deepen global citizenship through meaningful local and international engagement.
- Provide leadership development and opportunities for all students across their years of schooling.
- Embed partnerships with the wider community into our students' education to develop mutual, long-term benefits.



Our strategy

Professional practice

To develop reflective practitioners who are committed to the ethos and aspirations of the school, and to be committed to supporting staff professional growth and achieve organisational objectives.

- Drive the Radford Institute to support excellence in educational innovation, quality teaching and learning, character and leadership.
- Attract, develop and retain outstanding staff who are passionate about the growth and development of students.
- Commit to offering a compelling employee value proposition grounded in purpose and growth through strategic workplace planning, staff wellbeing and investment in career development.
- Build staff leadership capability through deliberate development, professional supervision and coaching.
- Foster a culture of continuous improvement through structured performance and development frameworks.



Our strategy

Community building

To deepen partnerships through the Parents and Friends Association, the Foundation and our Collegians network to enhance meaningful participation in building the College community.

- Nurture a vibrant Anglican identity that underpins our community, encouraging students to explore faith, develop compassion and embrace a commitment to service and ethical living.
- Enhance family connection through strong communication and parent education programs.
- Engage alumni networks to support mentoring and expand professional networks for students and graduates.
- Support community involvement in fundraising efforts and collaborative initiatives that celebrate our shared commitment to student success.
- Foster an enduring partnership with First Nations peoples in the spirit of reconciliation embodied in Radford's history and reflected in our Reconciliation Action Plan.



Our strategy

Financial stewardship and development

To strengthen governance and risk assurance practices to ensure compliance while upholding safeguarding, security and safety standards.

- Deliver financial sustainability through disciplined planning and strategic investment.
- Develop a new Master Plan to ensure our spaces meet the needs of our community now and into the future.
- Improve operational effectiveness to support quality and continuity.
- Grow philanthropic capacity to expand opportunity and accelerate strategic priorities.
- Strategically renew our ICT and digital infrastructure to empower the delivery of teaching and learning.





Our graduate outcomes

To translate the core values of *Truth, Compassion and Wisdom* into tangible graduate outcomes, Radford College seeks to define the 'Collegian' as an individual who has moved beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge toward the embodiment of character.

The following graduate outcomes represent the standard to which we hold our community and the promise we make to our students for their life beyond the College gates.

1. Truth (To be truthful)

The commitment to integrity, intellectual honesty and the pursuit of objective reality.

A Radford graduate who embodies Truth is one who seeks clarity in a complex world and remains steadfast in their personal principles.

- **Intellectual integrity:** Graduates demonstrate the courage to follow evidence where it leads, acknowledging multiple perspectives while maintaining a rigorous standard for factual accuracy and logical consistency.
- **Authenticity and accountability:** They possess the self-awareness to be true to themselves. This includes the strength to admit errors, learn from failure and take full ownership of their actions and their consequences.
- **Ethical discernment:** In an age of information saturation, the graduate is equipped to distinguish between opinion, misinformation and truth, applying a critical lens to everything they consume.

2. Compassion (To be compassionate)

The active practice of empathy, kindness and service to others.

A Radford graduate who embodies Compassion understands that their education is a tool for the benefit of humanity, not just personal advancement.

- **Empathetic engagement:** Graduates possess the emotional intelligence to listen deeply to the stories of others, particularly those from different cultural, social or economic backgrounds.
- **Servant leadership:** They view leadership as an opportunity to serve. Whether in their careers or local communities, they prioritise the needs of the vulnerable and work toward the common good.
- **Social justice advocacy:** Beyond simple kindness, the graduate is committed to identifying and challenging systemic unfairness. They act as 'upstanders' rather than bystanders in the face of prejudice or exclusion.

3. Wisdom (To be wise)

The synthesis of knowledge, experience and reflection to make sound judgments.

A Radford graduate who embodies Wisdom moves beyond 'knowing' to 'understanding,' applying their skills with a sense of long-term responsibility.

- **Reflective practice:** Graduates do not just act; they reflect. They understand that wisdom is forged in the quiet space between experience and reaction, allowing them to remain calm and thoughtful under pressure.
- **Holistic decision-making:** They consider the ethical, environmental and human implications of their choices. They understand that a 'successful' outcome is only truly successful if it is sustainable and morally sound.
- **Lifelong curiosity:** Recognising that wisdom is a journey rather than a destination, the graduate remains a humble learner. They stay curious about the world, seeking to grow in understanding throughout every stage of their life.

The Radford promise: We do not simply graduate students who are prepared for the workforce; we graduate citizens who are prepared for the world – individuals who lead with truth, act with compassion, and live with wisdom.





Radford College



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