



## Victory Christian College

When Victory Christian College, a Prep to Year 10 coeducational school, set out to expand to Year 11 in 2013 and then Year 12 in 2014, it knew it was heading into new territory.

Most VCE students in the area attend Bendigo Senior Secondary College, a dedicated VCE school with 1900 students – the largest school of its type in Victoria.

By contrast, Victory Christian College has an enrolment of 290, including 22 Year 10 students in 2012.

For the College, the time was ripe to expand. ‘One of the visions of our school has always been to eventually have years 11 and 12,’ said the school’s Principal Anne Marie Rodgers. ‘Our recent rapid growth has enabled us to do this. But, of course, we had never done this before.’

So, where to start? In September 2011, a core team of the school attended Southern Cross training in Melbourne.

‘Expanding to VCE is a big cultural change for our school,’ said Ms Rodgers. ‘The four-day training with Southern Cross showed us a process that helped us develop our guidelines.’

The core team from Victory Christian College comprised the Principal, the Business and Facilities Manager, the Head of the Secondary School, the IT/Marketing Manager, and an Administration Officer.

‘We knew the transition to years 11 and 12 would impact across the school,’ said Ms Rodgers, ‘so I was keen to have a cross-section of staff at the training.’

The Southern Cross training program took the team through a step-by-step process in which it created a charter that identified timelines, milestones and opportunities.

A turning point was the realisation that everything involved in the transition – such as budgets, operations, staffing, marketing and facilities – hinged on one factor: subject selection.

‘Everything came back to which subjects we would be offering,’ said Ms Rodgers. ‘That was the breakthrough for us. The Southern Cross program kept us focussed on that, and made sure that we were very intentional and strategic in our planning for the transition.’

The school then researched possible subjects for the first intake of Year 11. In late 2011, it asked Victory Christian College students from the past five years, most of whom had attended Bendigo Senior Secondary College for their VCE, about their choice of Year 11 subjects. The College also examined five years of data from other regional schools, and analysed statewide information from the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority (VCAA).

In September 2012, the foundation group of Year 11 Victory Christian College students chose from 14 of the most popular VCE subjects (plus a handful of VET subjects offered off-site).

In February 2013, these students, and their teachers, became pioneers, taking Victory Christian College into a new era.

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– Anne Marie Rodgers, Principal

