



# 30 Years of Secondary Schooling

1984 - 2014

Our first Year 8s  
enrolled in 1984

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## From the Principal's Speech, Dr John Lyons, at the Feast Day Mass on 23 May 2014:

1. Bishop Bernard Wallace approved the formation of a new school in North Mackay in 1982.
2. The new school was named Emmanuel, meaning 'God with Us.'
3. Emmanuel Catholic School was to be administered by the Marist Sisters and the foundation principal was Sr. Joan McBride.
4. The Marist Sisters brought with them the qualities of Mary ... simplicity, compassion, prayerful dependence on God and attentiveness to the needs of others.
5. Father Joe Carroll was the chaplain of the school and was just as comfortable assisting the lollipop lady in the car park of an afternoon, as he was conducting theology discussions with staff members before school.
6. In 1991, the Marist Sisters handed over the administration of the school to lay staff and the first lay principal, Michael O'Brien.
7. 1984 was the first intake of Year 8's into Emmanuel College.
8. The three core teachers of those Year 8 classes were Mr Vince McSherry, Miss Kate Cowan and Mr Mark Senyard, who is still with us at Holy Spirit College to this today, some 30 years later.
9. In 1995, a renewal process recommended that Emmanuel College be discontinued and in its place two schools be established, Emmanuel Catholic Primary School for Preschool to Year 7 and a highschool for years 8 - 12.
10. A staff vote was utilised to decide on the name of this new high school and when the vote was a tie between Holy Spirit College and Shekinah College, Bishop Brian Heenan cast the final vote and chose Holy Spirit College.
11. In 1996, Principal Ruth Lang lead a staff of 8 new teachers and 15 Emmanuel staff members as Holy Spirit College was set into motion.
12. 1997 saw staff busily writing Senior Work programs, as they prepared for the College's first Year 11's in 1998.
13. At this time, the campus landscape was changing as \$2 million worth of construction took place to allow for the growing student population and many new subject offerings.
14. In 1999, Holy Spirit College farewelled the first cohort of Year 12 students, an excellent group of students who set the bar high for Senior classes to come.



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15. The year 2000 saw some significant changes in the structure of the College with the newly adopted system of Year Level Coordinators to serve as pastoral managers to specific Year Levels.
16. 2001 saw a change of leadership, with Principal Vince McSherry leading the staff at this time and a growth in the student population to 680.
17. After spending previous years focussing on building a strong Senior school, the College then focussed on fostering its middle schooling philosophies, introducing Integrated Learning in Year 8 to assist with a successful transition to high school.
18. In 2003, Dr John Lyons joined the leadership team of Holy Spirit College, bringing with him a strong focus on studentship.
19. The Year 10 Transition Program was developed, creating a pathway from Junior studies to Senior studies for year 10 students.
20. The Re-Shaping of HSC program was launched in 2004, with the first use of the new Senior Area and a complete refurbishment of the Year 10 area, the redesigning of the front entrance of the school and the construction of new classrooms.
21. At this time, enrolments in Year 8 alone reached 200 and the total school population was then at 800.
22. The new and current uniform was phased in, in 2007.
23. After many years of planning and almost 12 months of construction, the Multi Purpose Centre was completed and named the Father Bucas Centre.
24. The philosophy of good studentship and the Responsible thinking Program became a part of the language and culture of Holy Spirit College.
25. The Mackay Floods of February 2008 caused significant damage to the campus of the college and it took over a year to complete the refurbishment.
26. In 2009, the College celebrated 10 years of Senior Schooling ... a wonderful achievement.
27. The commencement of the Australian Curriculum and NAPLAN created a new challenge and opportunities for staff and students alike.
28. Recently, there has been much planning and preparation for the Year 7's who commence in 2015, including a new Re-Shaping project ... a dedicated year 7 Precinct.
29. The College today celebrates 30 years since its first group of Year 8's commenced at the College.
30. As we celebrate our wonderful past, we continue every day to create futures.