

*“Choosing to come to Overnewton Anglican Community College means joining a distinctive school. It is a caring and cooperating community comprising students, staff, parents, friends, old Collegians and the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, dedicated to providing affordable educational opportunities to its students. Overnewton places special emphasis on the development of a sense of respect and commitment to others, the thirst for knowledge and a love of learning. Membership of the community carries with it expectations of family commitment and parental involvement.”* College Ethos Statement.

As an Independent School, Overnewton College is able to mould, shape and deliver a learning environment for its students that the College believes best suits the needs and aspirations of its students and families. From the time of its foundation, Overnewton Anglican Community College has desired to provide an education where the concept of family is at the centre of its ethos.

From the first day Overnewton College opened, families have had to give physically of their time to their child’s education. In 2013, each of the 1461 families of the College contributed an average of 73.7 hours of their time across the year. Given that over 400 families were required to give just 56 hours, because they had been in the College for more than ten years, this is an impressive statement about how much more our families contributed in support of their children’s education.

To analyse the effect of this a little more deeply, the amount of time contributed just to the areas of first aid, lawn mowing, working bees, watering, office admin and the canteen was the equivalent of the work of 14.9 full time staff. If we include the range of other areas to which families contribute, the significance of the reduction in the salaries line- item in the College budget each year, because of the family contribution scheme, becomes very clear.

But the greatest benefits of the family contribution scheme are not just in the pragmatic saving to the bottom line for the College.

Every child at Overnewton College knows that their parents are walking their educational journey with them. The message that they receive from seeing that their parents are prepared to give of themselves rather than just their money is that education is valued by their whole family in a personal way, and that learning is worth the time it takes.

At Overnewton, every parent is welcome onto the College grounds, and enjoys access to teaching staff and administration in a way that few other schools can provide. The supporting partnership that this enables for each child’s learning is immense.

