

Christian school 10 years old

13 December 2018 - By Mick Jensen - Ashburton Christian School (ACS) has come a long way since its establishment almost 10 years ago and further expansion plans are on the way.

The school has just received news of its international school status and next year will begin the process of applying to become a full high school.

ACS opened with a roll of 27 and the equivalent of two full time teachers in February 2009. It now offers scholastic and religious teaching to 120 children, has a staff of 12 and also a waiting list.

The school was integrated in 2011 and its operation of the school handed over to a board of trustees, who are under the proprietorship of the Christian Schools Trust (CST) in Christchurch.

CST are also proprietors for Middleton Grange, Rolleston Christian School and Aidanfield Christian School.

In 2012 the school was approved to extend classes to Year 9 (2013) and Year 10 (2014).

ACS

sits on the site of a former cherry orchard on Albert Street and was the vision of Rosemary and Keith Towshend, who called public meetings in 2005 and initiated the formation of a local christian schools trust.

Today

there are six classrooms on site, as well as an extensively refurbished homestead, junior and senior playgrounds and a hard-court area.

Two

further pre-fabricated classrooms were opened earlier this year, one fitted out as a science laboratory and the other for the Mind Plus programme.

Recently three more "gifted" classrooms arrived on site.

One will be used for future assemblies, another for the international school and a third for multiple purposes.

ACS

principal Tim Kuipers, who has been in charge from day one, said he was pleased that the school had grown and expanded its Christian education.

He

said he was even happier there were mature systems and a curriculum in place "that provided a quality Christian environment and education that developed each child's character and God-given gifts and abilities".

Mr Kuipers said ACS would apply to expand through to Year 13 from April next year.

That

process would likely take two to three years and relied on Ministry of Education approval and also consultation with other schools.

The school had the capacity to start a high school on its current site, he said.

Ashburton Christian School principal Tim Kuipers with students Shayla Kuru, 14, Hannah Kuipers, 15, and Jayden Butler, 14, who have all been at the school since it opened in 2009.

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