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Issue 04 | Term 2 - 2017 | \$12 Inc GST

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Editor's Note

Welcome to our fourth and biggest issue of *School News*. Our News round-up summarises the Gonski 2.0 situation, turning then to states and territories for highlights and issues in each. We welcome input from all states and territories for this section.

Reconciliation Week is marked by the 50th anniversary of the referendum that officially recognised First Nations people as part of the Australian population. While the wheels of change may move slowly, our Indigenous education section features a collation of resources, with advice on presenting Indigenous perspectives in your teaching.

School administration is well resourced with fundraising tips, library refurbishments for optimised learning, and a specialised look at SMS capabilities for timetabling ease, and using data to ensure no child slips through the cracks.

'The teacher's desk' tackles stress and teacher attrition, while education trainer, Adam Voigt, puts behaviour management on the table. We also look at how online PD connects teachers with new skills and research, and a community of like-minded peers.

For exciting adventures, our school camps feature explores taking that 'rite of passage' to new heights with overseas skiing escapades, outdoor recreation, or even a visit to prison!

We look at safety around school car parks, careful storage of hazardous materials, and getting kids on the

move with bike and scooter storage. School sports can come to you, with a variety of providers from soccer and indoor rowing, to inflatable football arenas and circus skills.

We hear from anti-bullying experts on programs that create real change. We revisit Dorothy Hoddinott from Holroyd High (88 percent NESB) for some smarts on engendering tolerance when a culture of hate persists outside her school gates.

Smart technology in the classroom takes teachers to a meeting point where digital natives thrive, and our school profile features Middle Park Primary School's focus on higher order thinking in their gifted and talented programs.

All work and no play makes for fidgety kids, so for playgrounds designed to facilitate fun, while supporting social cohesion in developing minds, turn to our property section.

I hope you enjoy reading this bumper issue as much as I've loved creating it.

Until next time - noli cedere cognoscere (don't stop learning).



Suzy Barry, editor,
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Multimedia
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School News is proudly published by Multimedia Pty Ltd
ABN 77-126-017-454

Ph: (07) 5440 5322 Fax: (07) 5604 1680
PO Box 1080, Noosaville BC Qld 4566
Email: mail@multimediapublishing.com.au

Education news from around Australia

Gonski 2.0 – bang for buck or “a shambles”?

Education minister, Simon Birmingham has said, “our reforms will make a difference because they are acting comprehensively on the David Gonski review handed down six years ago.”

As he speaks of “fair, needs-based, sector-blind funding” and repeats his mantra; “no special deals”, the Catholic Education Office has launched a national advertising campaign slamming the funding changes.

The Conversation published a largely positive article; ‘Gonski 2.0: the school funding plan we have been looking for’, by Grattan Institute’s Peter Goss, while the deputy leader of the opposition, Tanya Plibersek, is calling it “a shambles”.

Dr Goss wrote that the funding would be distributed more evenly across students regardless of state or sector. He said that the long-term indexation rate had been reduced so school funding aligns with a blend of wages and CPI after 2021, (a saving to taxpayers) and the timeline has been extended to 10 years. He said Catholic school deals had been “tweaked” in a way that could mean parents pay higher fees.

Who are the big winners and losers?

Dr Goss says winners include government schools in states that are currently underfunded, especially New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland and Western Australia; and underfunded independent schools. The biggest losers are Catholic schools, and any school that was over-funded.

In a doorstep interview after the meeting with state and territory education ministers in Adelaide, education minister Simon Birmingham was asked why “we have a revolt from every state and territory” if the changes represented “such a boom in funding”. The minister’s reply indicated that he understood the



states weren’t initially convinced, but hoped that states would work “constructively” with the federal government.

In a May 18 article titled ‘Coalition won’t reveal conditions attached to Gonski 2.0 until mid-2018’, *The Guardian* revealed that ahead of the education council meeting scheduled for Thursday May 25, the federal government had advised States they now would have to wait until 2018 to discover the full conditions that will be attached to new Gonski 2.0 funding.

“The revised timeline, to accommodate a second review by David Gonski on improving school performance, means that the first phase of extra funding will flow to schools before states have agreed to reforms that will be tied to the money.”

The federal education minister, Simon Birmingham, has refuted all suggestions Gonski 2.0 cuts funding from schools, citing the fact it increases funding by \$2bn over four years and \$18bn over 10 years compared with current

levels. A document sent to the states tells them to prepare advice for the Council of Australian Governments to enter a new national agreement on schools by June 2018.

The federal government intends to legislate Gonski 2.0 funding increases in 2017, with funding to flow from the start of 2018.

The Guardian reported that “states will have little bargaining power to argue against or seek modification to proposed reforms, as schools will already have started to receive funding increases that will then be tied to acceptance of them”.

Birmingham has also circulated a list of reform principles before Thursday’s meeting but insists the only condition being set at this stage is that states commit to not reducing their share of school funding.

Film project rewrites cyber-bullying stories

Films featured in the Rewrite Your Story youth program have brought home Gold from

the World Media Festival in Hamburg.

One of the award-winning films, *Zach*, was released last week for the first time publicly to coincide with the latest achievement.

“Zach’s story resonates with many teens, especially those who are targeted because they don’t quite fit the mould at school. We want to get young people talking about these issues, reinforcing a positive message about not letting others define you,” says Inman Grant.

Rewrite Your Story is centred around eight short films depicting instances of cyberbullying that are designed to be conversation starters — leading young people to discuss the serious implications and possible solutions to cyberbullying. The next three films in the Rewrite Your Story series will be released in the following months.

Australian students among the worst behaved in the world

Minister for education and training Simon Birmingham said the full Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Report from the OECD, the full Trends in Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the National Assessment Program Science Literacy Report all highlighted the need for action to shore up Australia’s high-performing education system and ensure it improved into the future to regain its place near the top of international rankings.

Minister Birmingham said the reports had identified discipline, engagement and ambition as being an important part in improving Australia’s education system, along with funding from the federal government.

“While well-resourced schools with highly capable and motivated teachers are central to success, we equally need policies and parents that empower teachers to expect high standards and adopt a zero-tolerance approach to bad behaviour.”



Australian Capital Territory

ACT state schools' enrolments trump the rest

Enrolments are shifting back to Canberra's public schools from the non-government sector, at a rate almost three times the national average, totalling more than 60 percent of students.

In high schools, 51.7 percent of students were in the public system and about 48 percent in the non-government sector. Private schools educated more than half the ACT's secondary students between 2011 and 2014 but the public system won a slight majority in 2015.

Overall public school enrolments grew by 13.8 percent in the past five years and 3.85 percent since 2016.

University of Canberra education policy researcher, Professor Louise Watson told *The Canberra Times* that a potential reason parents were choosing the public system could include concerns arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

She said, other possible reasons included "salaried wages being incompatible with high fees and transparent data about school outcomes on the My School website".

Is Canberra the restorative practice capital of Australia?



In 2016, the ACT Legislative Assembly committed to becoming a restorative city. The ACT justice system has been using restorative practices since 2005, bringing victims and offenders together to achieve better resolutions than were possible through the traditional legal channels.

The practice in schools is growing, with many using restorative practices to resolve disputes and conflicts. Many ACT schools are now routinely using strategies such as circle time and restorative conferences to respond to the issues that often arise between students and school communities.

Richardson Primary School and Narrabundah Early Childhood School are among those who are creating the platform for a restorative revolution across the nation's capital.

New South Wales

New canteen regulations for NSW



New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian told reporters she had too many sausage rolls and cream buns at the canteen as a child, and would have benefited from a new scheme aimed at promoting freshly made food to school children.

The state government has released a new Healthy Schools Canteen strategy, which will replace the current "traffic light"

system that assigned green, orange and red categories to food depending on their nutritional value.

Under the new system fruits, vegetables, sandwiches, pastas and stir fries will make up at least 75 percent of canteen menus and "occasional foods" like pies, sausage rolls and pizza will be limited to the remaining 25 percent.

But even the junk foods will have to have a health star rating of 3.5 stars or higher, as assigned under the federal government scheme that rates packaged foods based on their overall nutritional profile.

Catholic schools launch selective entry

For the first time, Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS) will offer selective entry tests for students to ensure educational equity for gifted learners.

SCS' executive director, Dr Dan White, said the initiative began when he enlisted the help of teachers and parents to develop a comprehensive program that would advance the needs of SCS' gifted and talented students.

The outcome was the development of the Newman Selective Gifted Education program. In 2012, the first pilot schools were rolled out, with there now being 39 Newman Selective Schools in the Sydney Diocese.



Northern Territory



Building Better Schools

The Building Better Schools program will provide \$300 000 to every school in the Northern Territory over a four-year period commencing in 2017-18.

The program will provide new and improved school facilities that enhance students' education experience and facilitate quality learning outcomes.

School projects receiving funding include security upgrades at Wulagi Primary School, an upgraded preschool including ablutions at Pularumpi School, playground upgrades at various schools and upgrades to school pick up areas.

Minister gives disengaged students a wake-up call

An AAP article reported that Indigenous affairs minister Nigel Scullion never liked school as a kid, but the senator spent a May morning "rounding up sleepy children for their school day, playing truancy officer by knocking on doors and speaking to parents at Yirrkala in Arnhem Land".

"I'm here to make sure your kid gets to school. He doesn't like it, does he? Nor did I. I used to be a bit of a runner," Minister Scullion said. Every morning, youngsters in 75 Indigenous communities across the

nation are encouraged out of bed and into their classrooms as part of the government's truancy program.

Yirrkala School co-principal Katrina Hudson praised the scheme, stating attendance rates have recently risen from 50 percent to 70 percent. "Some weeks last term we were getting 75 percent, which in mainstream schools sounds low, but for this school it's a huge improvement," she said.

Queensland

Respect our staff, respect our school

"Violent or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated in our schools. It's not just a courtesy. It's the law," is the message being broadcasted to all Queensland schools in response to mounting concern about abuse and intimidation of school staff.

The 'respect our staff, respect our school' campaign aims to create safer and more respectful communities in Queensland state schools. Schools have reported the campaign raising awareness and 'starting the conversation' on why such a measure was deemed necessary.

The campaign is part of the Queensland Government's commitment to tackle the issue of

violence and continue to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all students and school staff.

Almost 100 schools to get a face lift in North Queensland

Minister assisting the premier on North Queensland and member for Mundingburra, Coralee O'Rourke said a state government school improvement program will deliver almost 100 school infrastructure projects across Queensland, with the improvement of school halls a priority.

"Special education facilities in ten schools will be upgraded, nine schools will have administration building upgrades and shade structures and covered outdoor learning areas are planned at 25 schools," Mrs O'Rourke said.

Queensland pulled pin on NAPLAN Online



Education minister Kate Jones was the first state minister to pull the pin on participation in the NAPLAN Online trial in this year, after Tasmania, New South Wales and the Northern Territory had already decided to take a "wait and see" approach. Over 100 Queensland schools had been expected to participate in the online national literacy and numeracy test.

At the time, she told the ABC that glitches would disadvantage students. Glitches included one question remaining on the screen the entire numeracy test, obscuring other questions and answers; and automatic correction of questions,

which meant that students were not actually being tested on their work, an ABC report stated.

"I'm not going to put one student at a disadvantage because the online tool isn't working properly," she told the ABC. "I think it's much safer and wiser to delay the implementation of NAPLAN online this year." She wasn't alone for long; by month's end, the trial had been abandoned, when other states followed suit.

South Australia

New Adelaide high school a STEM dream



The new \$100m Adelaide Botanic High School due to open from term one, 2019 will provide 1250 students from inner-city suburbs with greater access to high quality secondary schooling.

The school's core focus will be on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Students will use the latest scientific equipment, and have the chance to work with experts from the tertiary field to complete their SACE and plan future study and career pathways. The school's central location and connectivity to a large walking, cycling and public transport network will promote green, active travel for students and teachers.

Located adjacent to the Adelaide Park Lands, Botanic Gardens and the Adelaide Zoo, the school will be close to the universities, museum and state library, performing arts facilities, and green space, forming part of a broader educational and cultural precinct. Construction of the new school has officially begun. ►

◀ Govt to foot the bill for utilities

The South Australian government has announced that from July 2017, it will fully fund the utility bills for its public schools and preschools.

SA Education Minister, Susan Close, said, "our public schools and preschools will have more funds available for additional teaching resources, support programs and technology". Schools have previously received funding for a percentage of utilities bills, requiring them to use school funds to meet the gap.

Tasmania

Tassie schools forced to cut sports to fund disability support

In Tasmania an IQ-based system is used to allocate funding for students with disabilities.

State schools do not receive direct funding for students with IQs above 70. Disability advocate Kristen Desmond, said this could include some students with autism, cerebral palsy and attention deficit disorder. "What we are hearing is schools are pooling that resource and spreading it across students who are not funded, leaving everybody worse off," Ms Desmond said. Tasmanian Principals Association's (TPA) Malcolm Elliott said state schools receive state and federal funding and were having to dip into their budgets to pay for extra support, like integration aids and speech therapists. A May 17 announcement confirmed that additional specialists including speech pathologists and psychologists will be employed in Tasmanian government schools as part of a \$6.9 million state government budget commitment.

STEM creations in Hobart West

The students from Lansdowne Crescent Primary are extremely excited about the learning journey they are on. To date, they have built a 3D printer, and are now in the process of testing out its capacity to print.

In a film distributed by The Department of Education, Tasmania, the students and shared what they enjoyed most about building the 3D printer. They spoke of learning how to "do wiring" the challenges of learning something new, and overcoming of hiccups when things didn't work as they expected. Problem solving STEM fun at Lansdowne Crescent Primary!

Victoria

Uniform policies must respect cultural practices

The Melbourne twins who were ordered to unbraided their hair have been offered a "school uniform exemption" and may keep their cornrow hairstyle.

Helene Hiotis, the principal of Bentleigh Secondary College, said that she would work with the students' family so the girls could wear their "new braided hairstyle" to school. When the girls were initially cautioned, the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission had warned that some school uniform policies fail to respect students' diversity. "We are a welcoming school and I am absolutely comfortable with students expressing their cultural heritage," Ms Hiotis told The Age reporters. The school had previously tried to justify its position by saying that white students who have returned from holidays in Bali have also been asked to remove their braids. Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commissioner says there is a "clear difference" between students whose hairstyle connects them to their culture and those "who have gotten braids or cornrows on an overseas holiday".

Inquiry ordered over Victorian privacy breach

An inquiry has been launched into the events that led to personal, identifying details of vulnerable children being published on the Victorian Education Department's website.

The details remained there for 24 hours and in some cases from families where domestic abuse means privacy is vital. At the time, education minister, James Merlino, ordered an independent



Rescue greyhounds, Boots and Rush, calm and motivate students.
Photo: CSIRO

investigation. The department has apologised and the investigation continues.

Western Australia

Pet therapy in action

Boots and Rush – two rescue greyhounds – 'job share' the important role of helping to calm and motivate students. Speaking with The Sunday Times, learning resource centre teacher in charge, Julie Robinson, said having the dogs at the school had exceeded expectations.

"A lot of the kids come and pat the dogs when they're feeling anxious. The year 12s certainly do before they've got tests," she said.

"The dogs teach us all quite a bit actually – that sometimes it's OK to just sit, pat them and take five minutes for yourself. "It has reminded everybody that you need to be happy at school. Everyone has a big smile around these dogs...it's added that feel-good factor."

Is anybody out there?

Year five and six students at Dalkeith Primary School are working closely with senior research fellow Kevin Vinsen from the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research (ICRAR) and artist Loren Kronemyer on encrypting their own messages to send into space.

"As part of our broader approach to science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education, we constantly strive to create a learning environment that will inspire and increase students' interest in STEM fields," deputy principal Tamara Doig said.

The school's partnership with ICRAR has been facilitated by CSIRO's scientists and mathematicians in Schools program, which partners industry professionals with teachers to deliver engaging STEM education in schools. Together with ICRAR, negotiations are underway with the European Space Agency to see if the students' messages can be sent into space via deep-space tracking stations located just outside of Perth. ■



Scientist Kevin Vinsen with students Annabelle Davis and Matthew Maliszewski.

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The role of the school in resisting racist culture

After three years of quarrelling, the Turnbull government has failed to pass the proposed amendment to section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act. Had the law passed, it would have become lawful to "offend and insult" others on the basis of race, but not to "vilify".

How does this debate serve as a backdrop to the education of young people in our schools? How do you engender an environment where school policy prohibits race-based bullying when the 'grown-ups' in wider society are debating their right to racially insult?

A year ago, we heard from Dorothy Hoddinott AO FACE. As the principal of Holroyd High, Ms Hoddinott leads a school with substantial Muslim enrolment, where 88 percent of students are from a non-English speaking background.

I wanted to explore how racism interacts with Australian schools, and considering the current anti-Muslim sentiment, I asked: "How do you help a Muslim child rationalise the naked Islamophobia circulating in the press and on social media?"

Ms Hoddinott said that first and foremost, "schools must be defenders of our children's rights – Muslim children have the same rights and responsibilities as everyone else."

"You have to show children that school is a safe place for all children, and they have to *feel* safe and confident. A big part of that is fairness; you have to create an environment where children know they will consistently be treated fairly."

She says the way a school arranges its behaviour code will affect the culture of the school, and a child-centred approach – "one that is focussed on the development and growth of the children" – can create an



Dorothy Hoddinott

atmosphere where students feel their wellbeing matters. The result? "The child understands that the school is there to help and support them and not inhibit them."

"You must be strenuously anti-racist," she stated. "The school must consider racial slights very seriously, and address them in the context of bullying."

While all racist or prejudice-driven harassment is unacceptable, Ms Hoddinott sees the racial

harassment of children as particularly problematic and "jumps on it immediately".

"This is something over which children, who are powerless anyway as children, have no control. They have no control over the colour of their skin. A child also has no control over the family religion; they don't develop that agency until they are much older."

Rather than simply following the department-issued positive behaviour framework, Ms Hoddinott says they "talk kids through" conflict: "We use a process of restorative justice that we embarked on with Marist Youth years ago."

"We found we had a great deal in common with Marist Youth in the way we dealt with difficult children." Marist Youth emphasises that education in schools is largely about relationships, which can develop conflict and require resolution, forgiveness and healing.

Ms Hoddinott explained that restorative justice "removes the judgement of the child. It encourages them to take responsibility for their act, and then attempt to 'mend' the situation".

Critical thinking in a 'post-truth' world

While all groups can experience racism and prejudice, Ms Hoddinott said "it is alarming to people in the Muslim community that they are constantly denigrated in the media". Her experience is that while mainstream media reporting has been relatively restrained, social media, which is "uncontrolled and not subject to any law", has been a source of distress for many Muslim students and their families.

Physical harassment is also a reality for Muslim Australians: Ms Hoddinott told of female students wearing hijab being harassed on the way home from school, including one incident where a man attacked a girl with his umbrella, trying to enforce removal of her hijab, and somewhat ironically, shouting that she was being repressed by men.

With this sentiment in the school's surrounds, I was curious how Ms Hoddinott dealt with prejudices coming from home. She acknowledged that attitudes coming from home "are entrenched" and can therefore present considerable challenge to the anti-racist school environment.

She said, “if your school culture is openly anti-racist, and the school has strong policies and takes action to put them into practice, then parents can make their choice. If they believe the school is not functioning to their wishes, they can take their children elsewhere”.

Ms Hoddinott’s approach is “to answer unreason with reason”. “As students reach high school, their capacity to reason improves, and reason and prejudice don’t sit easily together,” she noted.

This is where the teaching of critical thinking is paramount. Ms Hoddinott says the media might be restrained, but they are out of balance, and Muslim families feel targeted by reports about sexism or oppression of women through hijab, when sexism in other groups goes largely unreported.

In the face of this narrative constantly circulating on social media, she said: “School must be a place where you can talk through all that with children, and teaching critical thinking is an important part of that, so students can differentiate between what is real and not real.”

Ms Hoddinott says the key is to teach children not just to accept everything they read regardless of the source: “With so many young people getting their news from social media, they must acquire the skills to determine what’s valid and what’s not, what’s commentary or opinion, or what’s actually ‘news’”.

Ms Hoddinott added that, although “bias recognition” is underemphasised in the curriculum, “sensible teachers will teach those skills to students, because not all parents can articulate in a way that encourages critical thinking”.

In the traditions of Socratic dialogue, students can learn to critically analyse both the content, its origins, and how the input interacts with their own underlying beliefs; instead of “a simply emotional response to things,” she advised.

Resilience built on trust and hope



As schools cannot extinguish all bigotry, Ms Hoddinott says resilience must be encouraged at school – she added that “George Brandis did us no favours in 2014 saying people had ‘a right to be bigots’”. A supportive school environment, she said, “creates a strong basis so you can then deal with the outside world”.

And with this statement, Ms Dorothy Hoddinott crystallises the clamour of voices advocating for all minority groups. Education must suit the students, and this is felt keenly by our Indigenous students, many of whom struggle in the face of a curriculum and style of learning that may not align with their competing cultural priorities.

Ms Hoddinott says cultural training has been instrumental in the inclusivity of their school culture, where any given class has a high population of students with English as an additional language. Teachers are trained to clarify vocabulary or concepts to allow the students to access content that may be assumed knowledge in a mainstream white Australian cultural context.

Not all additional language learners are newcomers. For many Indigenous people, English is the sixth or seventh language. According to the Menzies School of Health Research report, ‘Cultural Responsiveness and School Education’, teachers are not required to undergo Indigenous cultural training to work with Indigenous students, often resulting in poor cultural competence, and “a mismatch” between the middle class European dominated teaching force and the home lives of

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Indigenous Education discussion invariably revolves around “closing the gap”, which, (in their article, ‘Racism hits Indigenous students’ attendance and grades’, published on *The Conversation*), researchers, Dr Nicholas Biddle and Dr Naomi Priest of the Australian National University, described as the target of eliminating disparities in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians “within a generation.”

They said that while numerous programs and initiatives are “clearly well intentioned” with many “based on solid evidence and evaluations”, they have been “far from successful in achieving our goals for Indigenous education”. Why is this so? They wrote: “This may be in part because Indigenous education policy, at least at the national level, is mostly silent on the difficult issue of racism and discrimination.”

The researchers used data from the *Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children*, also known as *Footprints in Time*, and revealed that Indigenous children who have experienced racism before the age of ten have “substantially worse maths scores and perceptions of their own academic ability than those who haven’t”.

Ms Hoddinott said, “alienation of cultural groups is usually aligned with failure at school”. Her view is that social cohesion is created by the provision of certain things to all people, regardless of race, religion, gender, or any other

factor. These are “trust, hope for the future, and pathways to achieving that future”.

“Trust is established for students when schools demonstrate that you **can** put your trust in the school, and you **can** be successful, that there **are** pathways to the future for you, that you will **not** be rejected by society. Then, social cohesion is much more likely,” Ms Hoddinott asserted.

“Schools can reject children, and those children can then become cut off from mainstream society.”

“Children do need to be able to deal with failure; they don’t need to be propped up so far as to get a false view of what they can do, but I think we should be thinking in terms of success for **all** children at school,” she added.

How do you respond to racism at a grass-roots level in an era of political upheaval, and of increasing mistrust of minorities? Perhaps to be “strenuously anti-racist” is the key. Enrolments haven’t waned at Holroyd High. Their strong academic results, and community perception that it offers a safe and happy place to learn continue to draw enthusiastic enrolments from all cultural groups.

School leaders looking to create a culture of tolerance might consider staunch devotion to equality and inclusivity in policy, and an unswerving dedication to acting on these policies. It seems to be working out just fine for Holroyd High. ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter





Adam Voigt opening Rosebery Primary School, Darwin as its inaugural principal.

Adam Voigt says leadership and school culture intertwined

The photo you can see with this story is a favourite of mine. It's the day, in fact, the moment, that what I describe as my "life's work" came to fruition. It was the day I opened Rosebery Primary School in Darwin as its inaugural principal. It was a moment that signified the middle of a steep learning journey. Before it, had come thorough and diligent planning, and after it, was to come treacherous and enthralling implementation.

I remember my words at that first assembly quite well. I spoke about the different things to the 300-odd students and their families would notice about our school. We were a co-teaching school, we had a policy of not burdening students with traditional homework tasks, we

were co-located with a middle school and we had no library – instead taking age appropriate resources to where the kids were learning.

So, I began with proudly highlighting difference, and therefore said my first "good morning" ... differently. Instead of the standard principal fare of my greeting being returned with a slow, sombre "gooooood mooorning, Mr Voigt" I insisted that our way of saying good morning would be enthusiastic and followed by two claps. I bellowed "good morning, everyone" (insert <clap clap>), and was returned a rousing "good morning, Mr Voigt" <Clap Clap>, in surprising unison.

When I left Rosebery Primary School and continued to live locally while I founded Real Schools, I discovered that none of my staff, students and families that I bumped into thanked me for my original co-teaching methodology. Nor did they care about the homework or the library absences. All I encountered was

grinning representatives from all three stakeholder groups sneaking up behind me in the freezer section of the supermarket to snigger "good morning, Mr.Voigt" <Clap Clap>.

So, this photo also signifies my deep interest in school culture and the leadership of it as being central, critical even, to genuine school improvement and measurable success. Most of us believe in school culture as being important, but when asked to define it, a distinct case of Dennis Denuto (think the lawyer from 'The Castle') embodies us and we start to use words like vibe and atmosphere and feel.

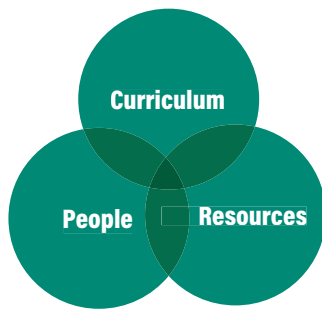
school culture, to my mind, is best defined as a set of behaviours – those we encourage and those that we tolerate. Both, whether we like it or not, are the sum of our culture. These behaviours are enormous in number and cannot be addressed formally, although many have tried. We've spent precious time identifying values that mean little more than the banners and letterheads

they are spread across. But with respect as the most common of the Australian school values, why then are so many schools struggling with it? It's behaviours that count.

In preparing for the opening of Rosebery PS, and certainly since, I've thought deeply about how to create a culture where the right behaviours are encouraged, celebrated and recognised, and also where undesirable behaviours are starved of oxygen. In simple terms, it's about school leaders choosing to think a great deal more about **how** they are leading than **what** they are trying to lead.

To reflect on the process of building this culture, I became convinced that I needed some guidance and structure. Having always believed strongly in the value of a model to drive behavioural consistency, I set about designing one. Knowing well that the best model for unity and balance, an obvious ambition for a new school, was a three sphered Venn diagram I thought

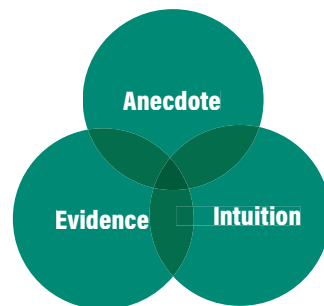
about my three most important domains and devised this model:



Content with the balance of brilliance and simplicity of my model, I began to list the actions in each domain that would reflect my commitment to each – and then I realised my error. I was writing down only what I would do and not at all how I would do things. This model was driving the what and not the how of school leadership. Start again, Voigt.

Deeper reflection about what really matters when we seek to positively influence the behaviours within our cultures led me to a different model, and

three entirely different domains of leadership practice:



Anecdote reminds me to think hard about context and the stories or tales that the very real people in my school community tell when they are in informal settings. I imagine myself as a fly on the wall at dinner tables, barbecues, campfires, supermarket queues, hairdressers and especially in my own car park and staff room. I became determined to impact the quality of these conversations and to have them positively framed by the positive interactions that all stakeholders in the school experienced, every single day.

Anecdote, therefore, is more than story. It's about the depth and quality of the relationships we're cultivating at school.

Evidence is about proving the effectiveness of our work. No school leader should adopt another program or embark on another action cycle without clear determination to prove the value, or otherwise, of that venture. As Professor John Hattie reminds us, "know thy impact."

Intuition connects to a very clear and desirable future skill – that of cognitive load management. In effect, it's about not just finding information but knowing which sliver of the vast information tracts available to us is relevant. Further, this is about using the right knowledge to challenge convention and tradition. We need more school leaders willing to do just that.

Models like these though, are tools of reflection – and not accountability. Nobody at Rosebery Primary School knew of my model. I didn't need it

being used for judgement or for appraisal. It was for me. I could reflect using it, by plotting my work, my defaults over periods of time ranging from a conversation to a semester.

My model was not about perfection or about feeling bad if I wasn't perfect. It was about adjustment and small steps. Mostly it was about behaviour; the very foundation of school culture.

Finally, I encourage you to build your own model and to avoid the temptation to steal mine. Sure, reflect upon it and weigh its relevance to you, but know that my model was for opening a new school – which is unlikely your current challenge. Model theft is the easy way out. Designing your own – for your own place, your own challenges and your own future aspirations – might just be the most powerful thinking piece you can embark upon. ■

By Adam Voigt,
Founder and Director,
Real Schools

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Photo: The Alannah and Madeline Foundation

Education, social skills, and empathy to combat bullying

Bullying culture is widespread in Australian schools, yet policies are handed down to schools, only to be scrapped, causing confusion and impeding progress. The recent dumping of Safe Schools was a disappointment to many, while others see it as an opportunity to widen the scope and include other victim groups in a new generalised response.

One thing is certain; too many young Australians are feeling unsafe at school, and with the double-edged sword of increased connectivity, the threat comes home with them. Why does bullying cross both cultural and economic lines? Is it just human nature to bully another into submission, despair, or even suicide, or is there more to it? What is bullying?

A widely-accepted definition published by the Victorian government is: "bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social

or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear." Advocates say it is important that the community understands the difference between unpleasant behaviour, or rudeness/meanness and bullying. Behaviour is bullying when it is repeated; where harm is intended, and where there is an imbalance of power, socially or physically.

Industry views

The role of social skills in combatting bullying

Christine Sully, director of Incursions R Us, an organisation offering anti-bullying incursions around Australia says no child is born a bully and "inability to control emotions triggered by deeply ingrained experiences or other life challenges can result in anti-social behaviour".

"Anti-bullying education needs to show young people how to master their emotions, and teach practical ways to self-regulate back into the 'learning focus calm zone'."

"With our training, we are focussed on education around 'social smarts' as the foundation of any effective anti-bullying culture." Ms Sully says teaching 'expected' and 'unexpected' behaviour is paramount. "It should also be noted that victims almost always struggle with social skills," Ms Sully added.

Cyber-bullying: online social smarts

Ms Sully says that if the perpetrator is outside the school, the matter is escalated to involve police and the legal system.

"Penalties are harsh now for cyber-bullying, which is why it's important all children are trained in safe cyber practice."

"The facts are children as young as seven have their own YouTube channels and partake in programs like Music.ly."

Ms Sully acknowledged the value of the tools to develop confidence, and to practise performing arts and presenting skills, but says with 'fame' comes attention, and it's not always positive.

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"I know of an eight-year-old with a popular YouTube channel who was celebrated at school for her work by many; she was also victim of bullying and negativity, which made her want to shut down her Channel."

Ms Sully said the situation was dealt with head on, and the eight-year-old stood before her class, explained her love of presenting and filmmaking as "her special smarts" and shared her dream of becoming a filmmaker.

The situation was punctuated by a collaborative class video, which was shared safely and responsibly with family and friends. Her courageous resolution embraced what Ms Sully sees as the three qualities students must master to handle bullying at school and in the future: "logic, resilience and social smarts."

While in this case, the teacher had a real-life example to play with, Ms Sully said, "teaching these skills through roleplay can be effective and engaging for students".

"Schools must have a clear, logical, holistic effective system and set of social rules in place," she advised. "They must encourage the students to follow procedure, to support each other, to communicate with their teacher."

Shifting bullying culture

Oscar Yildiz JP is the CEO of Bully Zero Australia Foundation (BZAF) and a troubled personal history has brought him to dedicate his energies to the national charity.

"We've saved 93 people from potential suicide; that's 93 people who came into this world with hope, and almost left it in the



Photo: Bully Zero Australia Foundation

clutches of despair. To me that's worthwhile, yet, we are still destined to achieve all of this with absolutely no government funding."

"Starting out, we wanted to create an environment where we were no longer needed," Mr Yildiz said, "but it seems that where there is human interaction, there will be bullies".

Educating the community

Mr Yildiz' motivation is deeply personal, and he says educating community members to intervene is vital. Growing up on a farm in a

small South Australian town, Mr Yildiz was physically bullied, and it was allowed to continue: "I'm genuinely lucky to be alive; I was beaten up regularly by five guys so badly that I have partial deafness from the repeated ongoing blows."

"It's so ingrained in the culture that many adults don't even understand what bullying is, or the effect it has on victims."

So, what can be done? He says, "education and change at a grassroots level, and a clear, sound, and inclusive policy, which is well-understood by all."

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◀ “Parents must know the policies, and boundaries must be consistently enforced, after all, ‘the standards you walk past are the standards you accept’.”

What works?

“Delivering face-to-face awareness programs to students and staff, clearly defining what constitutes bullying behaviour.”

Schools also need support to respond: “Victims’ families often say, ‘the school didn’t care’, but, in many cases, the school *did* care, they didn’t have the available resources required to deal with the situation.”

“A single bullying situation consumes numerous resources; phone calls, meetings with parents, meetings with victims, perpetrators, and bystanders.”



**Christine Sully (R) and Anjali Senguptu (L),
Melbourne Resilience Leading Educators.**

Get parents involved

Mr Yildiz says parents need to take responsibility: “These are all learnt behaviours, bullies are not born, they are made - and definitely not at school.”

Mr Yildiz says most young children who bully are copying behaviour modelled to them outside school. “Ignoring this behaviour in a school setting issues a ‘green light’; they need to be told: “No, that’s bullying!” He says we must

contextualise these corrections, by actively teaching empathy as a curriculum priority he recommends: “The best way to get people to change is to make them *feel* things.”

Mr Yildiz says students need to understand the impact of bullying behaviour: “When we go into schools, we don’t hold back, we say it how it is. Of course, we customise it to the cultural needs of the school community, but we make it clear that bullying is a serious business.”

In the impending absence of Safe Schools, Mr Yildiz says he hopes governments will fund programs that support LGBTIQ students, as well as the broader range of victim groups plagued by inescapable bullying: “We’ve offered broad-spectrum anti-bullying education in schools for years; I’m hoping our national charity may be funded to build on the comprehensive effort we have managed without government help.”

Breaking the cycle of violence

The Alannah and Madeline Foundation was set up in memory of Alannah and Madeline Mikac, aged six and three, who were tragically killed at Port Arthur in 1996.

General manger programs, Linda Barry said, “the foundation’s

Great leaders support teacher wellbeing



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key objectives are to care for children who have experienced or witnessed serious violence; reduce the incidence of bullying, cyber bullying and other cyber risks; and, advocate for the safety and wellbeing of children”.

Mrs Barry explained that trauma occurs when an event is so frightening it causes a prolonged alarm reaction, where the body is primed and pumped with chemicals and enzymes such as adrenaline, and cannot easily calm down to a base state.

She says that trauma can occur from many things, including episodes of community-based violence, exposure to war, but more commonly, through domestic neglect and abuse.

“Children who live with domestic violence grow up in an environment that is

unpredictable, filled with tension and anxiety, and dominated by fear. These children are forced to worry about the future; they try to predict when it might happen next and try to protect themselves and their siblings.”

She says trauma creates an altered neurological state in any person, however children are far more vulnerable as their brains are not fully developed. “Children and young people’s reactions to domestic trauma can range from ambivalence and sadness to self-blame or even terror,” she continued. Behaviours ranging from poor concentration and withdrawal, to disassociation or aggression can result from exposure to domestic violence.

“We know that children imitate behaviours they observe. If they observe violent or bullying behaviours at home there is a

high degree of probability that they will copy that behaviour,” Mrs Barry explained.

She cited a study titled ‘Violence in the home leads to higher rates of childhood bullying’ conducted by the University of Washington in 2006 that showed “children who were exposed to violence in the home engaged in higher levels of physical bullying than youngsters who were not witnesses to such behaviour”.

“Parents are very powerful role models and children will mimic the behaviour of parents. They may think, ‘If mum or dad can do this, perhaps I can also do this to make a point or to get my way.’”

Mrs Barry says schools can be one of the most important protective factors for vulnerable children, and central to this is the relationship between the

child and teaching staff. “Having teachers trained and supported in understanding the impacts of trauma and ways to manage bullying behaviours can decrease incidences of violence within the school community and support individuals to flourish”.

“Schools generally are doing a terrific job, despite the crowded curriculum. Policies and practices focusing on wellbeing produce environments where bullying does not flourish. We recommend that schools implement values education, social and emotional learning, conflict resolution and respectful relationships as much as possible, and we stress the importance of leaders and all staff modelling the behaviours they want to see demonstrated by students.” ■

*By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter*

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Cyber-bullying is pervasive, but that doesn't mean we should accept it

Oscar Yildiz JP

Bully Zero Australia
Foundation



Bullying has long been a problem within schools, and it has been sad to watch bullying morph into a new phase as technology has advanced. Cyber-bullying is now a very real issue for many young – and not so young – people, and brings a new face to our ongoing battle against bullying in all its forms.

The internet is a valuable tool for education, for engagement and most importantly for communication, but no child should be fearful of logging on and worrying that a hurtful message or content is waiting. Cyber-bullying is a growing problem, and while the government, teachers and students continue to determine how to combat it, I believe a vital element to the solution is also parents. Those within the school system need to work in conjunction with parents to create a united front and play an active role in reducing cyber-bullying.

The prevalence of mobile phones within schools heightens the opportunities for students to spend an increased amount of time on social media, and unfortunately it is on these platforms that much of the cyber-bullying takes place. Less overt than traditional forms of schoolyard bullying, it is apparent



that combatting cyber-bullying is hampered, in part, by the attitude that the issue is 'too difficult'.

This was reflected in our recently conducted survey on Cyber-bullying, which found that 70 percent of parents admit they have no idea what their child is doing online and, despite the large number of applications and protective software, only 50 percent of parents know of the options available, with many unsure on how to even install or use the software.

I find these statistics startling, especially when you consider that 70 percent of Australian parents say they have lost control of their children's social media pages, while it is on these platforms that the highest increase for cyber-bullying has been seen. This form of bullying often happens out of school hours but snowballs

into additional forms of more 'traditional' bullying during school.

While programs like Bully Zero have been shown to be effective in schools, both parents and teachers need to be actively looking for signs of cyber-bullying so that we can work together to address it, and, in time, hopefully eradicate it. Children and adolescents are not adults, but we are – so we should not expect them to have the wisdom or skills to deal with the issues of bullying. As those responsible for helping these young people grow, it is our responsibility to educate ourselves in how we can guide and console them if, or when, bullying issues arise.

So, what can you do?

- Develop a real understanding of bullying and social media.
- Students should understand the consequences of bullying as perpetrator or victim.
- Actively listen and empower children to talk about bullying behaviour and encourage them not be afraid to speak their mind.

- Speak openly and honestly with your students about bullying.
- If you become aware of bullying in any form, deal with feelings first and reassure your support.
- Speak with parents about your school's bullying policy and encourage open and collaborative communications. ■

About Bully Zero Australia Foundation

Bully Zero Australia Foundation is a not-for-profit charity with DGR status and as of April 2016, the fastest growing charity in Australia. Bully Zero is a certified provider of cyber safety programs nationally by the Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner. Bully Zero is passionate about establishing a zero-tolerance culture of bullying and are committed to working to empower, educate and prevent all forms of bullying on a national scale.

Oscar Yildiz JP (CEO) – Executive Director, Bully Zero Australia Foundation
Oscar juggles life as a Moreland City Councillor, JP, CEO, husband and father. Oscar has twice served as Mayor, has won the Australian Small Business Championship Award, and has taught at Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Institutions. Oscar works tirelessly to ensure the Foundation's vision, mission and strategic plan are delivered.



Teaching with Indigenous resources

Teaching Aboriginal content is especially difficult if you are non-Aboriginal. Very little in your education or experience has prepared you for an in-depth knowledge of Aboriginal peoples and cultures. Much of your knowledge about Aboriginal people is too often derived from popular myths or from a media which sensationalises, distorts or omits Aboriginal issues.

Your Aboriginal study materials should have a contemporary focus, yet too many people still think in 'traditional' terms: for example, 'a half-naked man performing a corroboree', which perpetuates those exotic and dated stereotypes inherited from a colonial past.

The resources and support materials you select must value the diversity of Aboriginal cultures. They should recognise contemporary Aboriginal input, the cultural diversity of Aboriginal communities and present them as living, dynamic and changing cultures. Avoid older resources (before the 1990s) that contain text that is demeaning to Aboriginal people and their cultures or perpetuate the 'other' and traditional view.

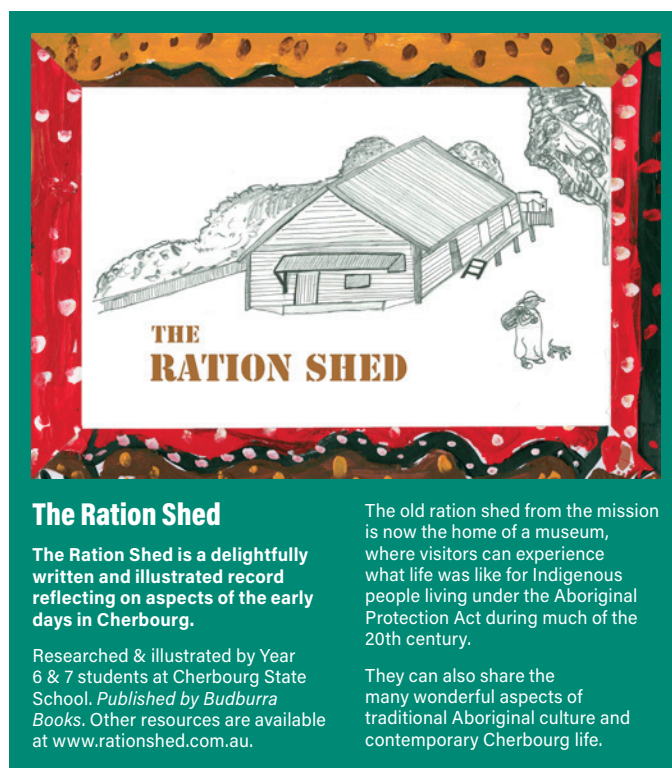
When you decide which resources to use, do the following checks:

Authenticity

Is the material accurate: truthful, exact and free from error?

Before 1990, a lot of materials produced contained stereotyped and generalised information about Aboriginal people.

Since then there are numerous resources and materials available which were written by, or in consultation with, Aboriginal people.



These contemporary resources contain information about particular groups or communities and reinforce the diversity and complexity of Aboriginal life. They convey a more authentic and accurate view of Aboriginal peoples and their cultures.

Balance

Does the material refer to Australian history as a shared history?

Resources and support materials for Aboriginal studies must value the diversity of Aboriginal cultures. They should give voice to Aboriginal opinions and points of view besides those of non-Aboriginal people.

There should not be any judgement of viewpoints, however subtle, and if there is it should be pointed out as a learning exercise (e.g. when discussing media sources).

Aboriginal participation

Have Aboriginal people participated in the development of the materials or reviewed and approved them?

It is important that materials and resources recognise contemporary Aboriginal input as a vital part of presenting Aboriginal culture and the cultural diversity of Aboriginal communities. Ideally a short biography of contributors acknowledges the status in their community and the authority that qualifies them to speak.

Be aware of resources, including recent publications, which make little or no reference to Aboriginal peoples, their perspectives and contributions. Simplistic information can be misleading. Teaching students to recognise such issues when using resources is crucial to developing critical skills.

Accuracy and support

Does the material use appropriate terminology? Has it been endorsed by Aboriginal education or community groups?

Some Aboriginal people may be upset if a resource includes material of a secret or sacred nature, which is not intended for public knowledge. This can include images of ceremonies,

artwork, and names and photographs of people who are now deceased.

Consult with the local Aboriginal community to ensure you are using appropriate resources.

External resources to help you teach

Here are a few links to online resources that can help you gain a deeper knowledge and prepare lessons or assignments:

- **Respect Relationships Reconciliation (3Rs)** provides study resources designed to support teacher educators incorporate Aboriginal content in initial teacher education (ITE) courses. It helps with strategies for teaching and understanding Aboriginal people. See www.rrr.edu.au for more details.
- **Kinship online learning module videos** provide you with a deeper understanding of the richly complex Aboriginal kinship system by learning about the components of moiety, totem, skin names, language and traditional affiliations and individual identity. Available at www.sydney.edu.au/kinship-module/
- **Indigenous Studies: Australia and New Zealand** is a free Open 2 Study online course that explores Aboriginal and Māori history, society, culture, language and demography. Former students praise it for its bite-sized modules and ease of understanding. Check here for dates: www.open2study.com/courses/indigenous-studies. ■

By Jens Korff

First published on www.creativespirits.info

How to keep new teachers in the job?



Even the first ten minutes of episode one of the SBS documentary, *Testing Teachers*, is enough to see what teachers are tasked with even to gain, (let alone maintain) the attention of a class.

Last year, the Australian Education Union sought to raise awareness about overwhelm and overload for teachers with their World Teachers' Day theme of 'valuing teachers, improving their status', and education experts such as Professors Stephen Dinham and John Hattie have repeatedly asserted that the best way governments can show they are valuing teachers is to ensure they are properly *supported* in the classroom. Professor Hattie emphasises that the 'single biggest determinant' of student success within the school environment is the teacher.

With life uncertain for so many students outside the classroom, for many teachers, it's all they can do to provide the only stability, predictability, and consistency a particular child may experience that year.



Each time an incident of bullying or antisocial behaviour occurs, there is paperwork. For each student with learning difficulties, there is procedure and paperwork. Governments change, and the procedure is altered, freshened up, given a new name; a new form is devised and distributed for use by teachers. The extra compliance requirements are communicated in a long staff meeting after a long day of teaching. As work piles up,

teachers are expected to deliver the full curriculum, approved by public servants, many of whom have never encountered a student in the wild.

There's no allowance made for public holidays, nor pupil free days, not to mention downtime for teachers and students. To many teachers, it must seem they are viewed as a different species from the workers outside the classroom. While teachers may

be in a league of their own with resilience, sense of humour, and bladder control (rivalled only by night nurses), this cannot go on.

More than 50 percent of teachers leave within the first five years: we've read the statistic often enough, but what a devastating blow to our schools that we are losing the chance of half of the potential quota of experienced teachers, almost systematically, to other professions – easier

professions. And what of those who stick it out, those last-warrior-standing types who gallantly serve in the face of mounting expectation? Where will it all end? When students are left with the frazzled shells of their educators, nurturing a small spark of the enthusiasm and humanity that once burned bright in the eyes of those who would change the world?

Dramatic, you say? Yes, according to teachers, principals, and para-professionals working in schools, it is quite dramatic, and is resulting in the teacher attrition we are desperately trying to avoid.

Ahmet Latifoglu of the Melbourne Graduate School of Education wrote in a *Sydney Morning Herald* article in January 2016, "the education system suffers when there is not a long-term pay-off from its investment in novices who depart early. There is also the human cost when new teachers leave soon after devoting time and resources to build their careers. Finally, there is a national economic impact; the departure of talented maths and science beginning teachers may lead to negative ramifications for Australia's economic growth."

He cites "excessive workload", "student behaviour" and a lack of support as reasons new teachers are leaving the profession so soon after they begin.

A quick Google search reveals article upon article about teacher attrition, asking the same questions and eliciting the same responses from experts. Early career teachers need support; teachers need more appreciation, respect and money; student behaviour is out of control, and parents are not supporting the teachers enough to manage their children; burnout, overwork, too much reporting, too many standardised tests.

Merryn McKinnon and Dr Lynn Walker of the Australian National University wrote an article published by *The Conversation* called, 'Teachers are leaving the profession – here's how to make

them stay'. They echoed Hattie, Dinham and countless others in their bid to have 'teacher support' recognised as vital. They say the economic cost of teacher attrition alone should be getting our attention, when every new teacher costs the government \$40,000 to train, yet, 20 percent of them don't even register as teachers, and we lose 50 percent of the remaining 80 percent within the first five years.

These statistics stand on the backdrop of population growth. "As the population of school students is set to increase by 26 percent by 2022 – a growth rate of 32 percent in primary schools and 18 percent in secondary schools – more teachers will be needed to teach these students," they wrote.

Every new school year brings articles about teacher stress to the media. In February this year, Professor Robyn Ewing from the University of Sydney, who researches teacher attrition, was quoted in an ABC News article titled simply: 'Why do teachers leave?'. Professor Ewing told the ABC that we don't realise just how big the problem is. While ABS figures indicate an average of 5.7 percent of teachers left the profession in 2014, Professor Ewing cautioned that these figures refer to registered teachers, not practising teachers. "In actual fact we have evidence to suggest that we are going to have a teacher shortage," the ABC article quoted.

The SBS documentary, *Testing Teachers* was indicative of what can result from mentorship and support. Teaching for Australia has plucked some (admittedly high achieving) novices and placed them in our most challenging schools, but they haven't just left them there to sink or swim, there has been intensive mentoring, and the teachers have prevailed. I wonder what would happen if all new teachers received this level of support. ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter

Mentor support key to graduate teacher success

Paul Geyer, chief executive officer of Principals Australia Institute (PAI) says research has revealed teachers are under pressure. Australian governments are paying attention, while OECD has determined that teacher support must underpin future policy.

"Continuing diligent mentoring and support for new career teachers throughout their first year, and beyond, is critical," he said.

"Issues for new career teachers include heavy workloads, lack of administrative support, difficulty with student behaviour, and little scope for participation in decision making." With feelings of self-doubt and being overwhelmed all too common among graduate teachers, what can be done? Mr Geyer says PAI's Graduate and Grow program focusses on the mentors with good reason: "Great leaders will nurture and support graduates as they grow into their role, and explore their own capabilities as they put their learning into practice."

"PAI's Graduate and Grow workshops are designed for principals and school leaders and take a professional development approach to graduate teacher support. They provide expert guidance in how to support beginning teachers and boost teacher retention.

"Workshop participants receive the Graduate and Grow kit, which is a practical resource for school leaders to share with graduate teachers."

"Graduate and Grow drills down into the day-to-day tasks, processes and concepts that teachers encounter, and takes a close look at how school leaders can support beginning teachers with these. It also suggests positive and productive ways the teachers can approach their new routines and responsibilities, particularly at key beginning stages such as a teacher's first day, first week, first month, and so on."

Topics include teacher wellbeing, forging connections with other staff, student behaviour management, engaging with parents and caregivers, handling sensitive issues, and observing, reflecting upon, debriefing about, and receiving feedback on classroom practice.

"A robust and sustained mentoring system with experienced teachers supporting new career teachers is very important, and Graduate and Grow provides guidance for both mentors and mentees on how to do this effectively. If these factors are carefully managed, teacher retention will be boosted."

"By supporting new career teachers, valuing their contributions, and drawing upon the expertise of more experienced teachers, the profession overall will be strengthened." ●



Online learning for busy teachers

Every state and territory issues specific requirements for professional development (PD) for continued registration of teachers.

Amid constant discussion about 'better teachers' and sliding PISA results, teachers are feeling the pressure to skill up. A concurrent discussion rages about the lack of support for teachers and the escalating workloads of school-based educators in this country. Further learning with a tertiary institution can offer mentorship and support, as well as access to all that research that is getting university professors so excited.

With plenty on offer, teachers can improve their practice, and make their job even more rewarding and satisfying as they implement new skills in areas such as special needs education, classroom management, or technical skills like presenting for student engagement, the use of Wikis for group work, or simply mastering the interactive white board.

Discussion about '21st century learning' and teaching 'digital natives' raises questions of how to ensure experienced teachers are not disadvantaged by a lack of technical expertise, leading to frustration with interactive technology.

Another shift in the 'schoolscape' is the rise in diagnoses for students with special needs. Whatever the reason for this, the increased awareness has initiated research, and spawned training opportunities for teachers who would like to be more effective in achieving learning outcomes with these students.

How do you integrate the needs of fidgety kids in class? What is considered best practice for autism spectrum disorder? How do needs for students on different points on the spectrum differ? Plenty can be learnt on the job through contact with students who present with special needs, yet mapping this data to solid research concepts adds another



Online learning provides social and professional connections with support for professional development

dimension. This mix of practical and theoretical learning serves to cement new concepts, and add them permanently to your tool-kit.

With a school schedule that spills over into evenings and weekends, and few hours allocated for PD, the challenge is both how and when?

For many teachers, the answer is online learning with all its benefits, but also challenges. Dr Derek Alexander Muller is a respected educational physicist; he researches the science (physics specifically) of learning. His view is that no matter what technology is tipped to replace teachers, it doesn't. The wireless was supposed to beam experts into classrooms, but students learn better if the person is in the room. Video was supposed to replace textbooks, but both serve curriculum requirements side by side.

He says the role of teachers has stayed the same, regardless of the technology used: "The fundamental role of a teacher

is not to deliver information. It is to guide the social process of learning. The job of a teacher is to inspire, to challenge, and to excite their students to want to learn."

Just as video has been harnessed to serve the school teacher, technology has been harnessed to serve the lecturer, and with results that support vibrant and nurturing online learning communities. Universities offering online education recognise the need for interpersonal contact, and the benefits collaborative learning can offer.

Often courses will consist of both online learning and intensive face-to-face periods, where practical skills can be demonstrated, practised and assessed. These intensives also provide opportunity for students to share ideas, observations and anecdotes from their own teaching practice. Universities will host forums and discussion boards, acting as 'tutorials'. These online sessions allow students to request guidance from tutors and

lecturers, and engage in tutorial style discussions that encourage critical thinking, enhancing intellectual engagement.

With strong awareness of the benefits of interactive learning, universities will create ways to unite the dispersed course group. Innovative strategies such as optional weekend sessions can provide added networking opportunities and face-to-face support from lecturers and peers, outside of your online or classroom setting.

These 'residential' or 'intensives' facilitate expansion of your multidisciplinary network and allow you to meet like-minded students.

Topics may include new content, or a review of course materials. Some sessions may involve expert speakers and discussion panels. They can provide industry insights and networking opportunities.

Before embarking on an online course, ensure you have the time to complete the recommended hours, both online contact hours and self-study requirements. You will need to be able to work independently, and your equipment should be reliable. A computer dying on you while you are completing an online exam could jeopardise your results.

Online education can be a rewarding exercise in independent achievement, with more than the course content on offer. Tapping into an online learning community gives you access to likeminded teaching professionals well beyond the confines of your own school's staffroom. Online learning with a university provider offers a well-resourced and reliable professional development opportunity. While you can expect to be supported by academic staff with feedback, academic counselling and engaging instruction, self-motivation is key to your success. ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter



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TORRENS UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

Supporting innovation and change in schools



Professor Tim Moss

Classrooms are dynamic environments in which teachers innovate to enhance student learning. There are many innovations available to teachers, and much literature on educational innovation.

Often the difficulty is knowing how to innovate in a way that is right for who you are as a teacher and for your students. To address this, Torrens University has launched a suite of postgraduate education courses tailored to the realities of classroom life.

These courses, designed for professionals in mainstream education, give teachers and school leaders a set of skills, tools, and processes to identify opportunities and develop strategies for innovation, and to test them in practice. Each subject is co-designed with innovative school-based practitioners, meaning that the courses are informed by contemporary practice and move beyond a purely theoretical approach to change.

Participants in Torrens University's postgraduate innovation and change courses (Graduate Certificate and Master of Education) learn about different approaches to educational change and innovation, critique the role of technology, and are supported to understand the impact of educational innovation within their classroom. The courses take a 'practice-first' approach: the central focus is teachers in their classrooms.

For those who choose to complete the Master of Education (Innovation and Change) course, additional subjects address important issues such as interpreting and understanding education data. This course also allows participants to undertake a major

Each subject is co-designed with innovative school-based practitioners, meaning that the courses are informed by contemporary practice and move beyond a purely theoretical approach to change.

research or applied innovation project in their own classrooms and/or schools, drawing together their learning across the course and using this to make change happen.

Graduates complete the course with a deeper understanding of their own practice, and the kinds of innovations that are effective in their settings through examining their practice and current theoretical perspectives. They will also develop an extensive portfolio of evidence that shows their capacity to plan for, implement, and lead school and classroom-based improvements, and monitor the impact for teachers and students.

In this way, the courses reflect a new approach to postgraduate education, designed to enable participants to share, critique, and extend their current practice and knowledge in a supportive environment that reflects the needs and realities of teachers and school leaders. ▲



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For more information please contact: Professor Tim Moss, Program Director, Education. Email timothy.moss@laureate.edu.au or Phone: +61 3 8199 3123.



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Class Dojo: what if you were last?

Adam Voigt

Founder and director
of Real Schools



Adam Voigt offers another perspective on the effectiveness of class dojo style behaviour management approaches. Many are convinced points systems get results, but are they improving learning



Picture this if you will... It's time for your school's staff meeting.

Folk wander in at 3.45pm-ish, after another day of facilitating the growth of batches of 25 or so resistive young people. Jarryd (damn those J names with their multiple potential spellings) has just had another one of those days and you're feeling particularly weary, perhaps even a little frustrated, angry or ineffective.

You reach for a coffee, but the four-litre can of International Roast has run out, and nobody has bothered to either bin it or order a new one.

You're going to need to get through this meeting on

Don't have time to absorb the whole article today?

Here are the big points:

- Project our practices over ourselves first
- Think about your systems – are they collaborative
- Competitive systems do have a place, it's just not a classroom
- Match systems to your intentions for equity
- Avoid appealing to the problem

peppermint tea or another \$2.50 IOU to the staff fridge for a Coke Zero. Sigh.

The meeting begins with the principal pulling up their own version of Class Dojo onto the SmartBoard. You see everybody

rated on how "good" they've been in the classroom and, of course, Mary-Ann is leading with 315 points. Mary-Ann is always in front.

You've even heard she goes around to the boss's place for

drinks on most Friday nights. It figures – goody two shoes, Mary-Ann. How come there are never any J names on her class lists?

You quickly scan for your own score next and see a rather disappointing 11 beneath the cute, grinning fluffy monster that you chose as your avatar. He really seems incongruent with the number corresponding to him now. Really? 11?

Is that where I'm at now? Geez, well at least I'm not the only one, I'm a better teacher than Barry at least. Where's Barry's avatar? Oh, you've got to be kidding me! Barry is on 37?! How could that possibly be right? Barry's basically a cabbage with a teaching qualification from the stone age.



This is unbelievable!

You check for a few other scores now, mainly for those you consider peers and equals. Joanne is on 51, Lee is on 48 and somehow Craig the PE teacher has made it to 72 (probably because he spends all day playing kickball with the kids). PE teachers!

Back to the real world now. The questions I ask you with this picture in your head are:

- Is this likely to produce positive reflection on your performance? How did this make you feel?
- Is this conducive to group morale?
- Is this serving to help those who need the most help?
- How does this approach sit against intentions for equity and differentiation?
- And the most important question is clearly ... Why on earth would you do this to your students?

Now, before I send too many folk up in arms about how positive their experience is with points systems like Class Dojo and others, and that it's all about

AITSL standards for teachers ... and you addressed them by reading!

- The big one: 1.5 - Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.
- But also ... 3.3 - Use teaching strategies.
- 3.6 - Evaluate and improve teaching programs.
- 4.3 - Manage challenging behaviour.

how you use the system – just bear with me a little longer. I totally get it. When it comes to improving behaviour, we've been subjected to so many buzz programs and catchwords (don't get me started on "Stop it. I don't like it." That's why he's doing it to you in the first place!) that we are prepared to give a go to something designed to appeal to get the interest of a very specific cohort – naughty boys. Jarryd.

The issue I have is that it's appealing to the problem and not the solution for Jarryd. Jarryd is already highly motivated by competition. And as with many mild-mannered people of sound potential, the moment you place them in a competitive environment they can display

some truly deplorable behaviours... but they love it!

There's a place for competitive behaviours and that's in competition. As such, we shouldn't strain to integrate collaborative behaviours into these environments.

This is the folly of handing out identical ribbons to everyone in the race.

The race is designed to rank and this is where we learn to win and lose well – strong contributors to resilience, but classrooms are

not competitive environs. They are collaborative ones.

And the moment we bring in competitive systems, is the moment we can predict competitive behaviours becoming the norm in the long run.

Sure, some boys will be motivated by the league table. The same way some journalists and politicians are motivated by NAPLAN league tables.

But the absence of context and the strong compulsion to do things above and not with others does not help schools or classrooms improve.

We all gain by matching collaborative behaviours to collaborative environs.

Above a points system, we should be looking to import the best elements in cooperative learning into our classrooms. Even if it's hard. Jarryd needs it more than anyone. ■

Adam Voigt is the Founder and Director of Real Schools. Built upon years of experience as a successful Principal, Real Schools helps schools to build and sustain strong, relational school cultures. A speaker of local and international renown, Adam has delivered a TED Talk and is the schools/education expert for *The Project*.

HOTS program takes primary students' thinking to new heights

Angeliki Karvouni

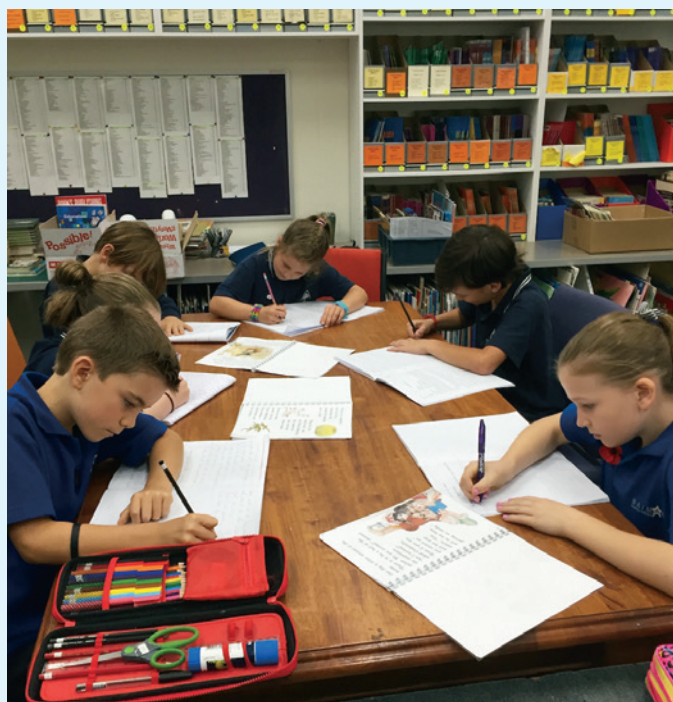
Extension learning coordinator, Middle Park Primary School



Middle Park Primary School in Victoria aims to identify, nurture and support the individual learning needs of all students and to maximise their learning outcomes. This includes students identified as gifted and talented.

The school acknowledges the Victorian government's *Aiming High-A strategy for gifted and talented children and young people 2014-2019*, which adopts the accepted definition of giftedness and talent proposed by education researcher Professor François Gagné (2004) which 'giftedness' is understood as outstanding potential and 'talent' as outstanding performance.

Middle Park Primary School has put in place a creative and critical thinking program for students from years two to six to provide gifted and talented students with challenging and exciting curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Students participate in a variety of activities involving problem solving that encourage them to experiment with a range



Photos courtesy of Middle Park Primary School

of creative solutions. With thinking tools to assist them, they begin to ask more focused and clarifying questions.

They develop skills in collecting and organising ideas from a range of sources to construct knowledge. They start to learn to

question the validity of sources, communicate and record their questions, responses and thoughts, and to give reasons for their conclusions. They reflect regularly on their thinking and learn to describe their thinking process verbally.

This ensures quality programs for students are accessible on a daily basis. The Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) program at Middle Park Primary School is based on the philosophy that highly able and gifted children have particular needs for stimulation and challenge that match their high level of curiosity and desire to learn.

HOTS is a subject within the curriculum that allows students to develop analytical thinking strategies, meta-critical and reflective skills as well as creative problem-solving techniques. Students use Hudson's divergent and convergent thinking framework and consider a number of challenges. After pinpointing the challenge it is then a matter of asking questions about it using the SCAMPER thinking tool to guide them.

The key to the creative and critical problem solving process is the use of both divergent and convergent thinking. With Divergent thinking you diverge and you generate many options.

Divergent thinking is followed by **convergent thinking**, in which you assess, judge, and strengthen



Sarah Holdich is a year six student at Middle Park Primary School in Victoria.

A Student's Perspective on Higher Order Thinking Skills

This is my third year in the Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) program as I was selected for the HOTS program in year four. The selection involved teacher nomination, peer nomination, parent nomination and self-nomination. Our HOTS classes are held once a week for 100 minutes a session and I have learnt that whenever you think divergently, for best results you need to:

- Defer judgment
- Strive for quantity
- Seek wild and unusual
- Build on other ideas

On the other hand, whenever you think convergent, for best results:

- Assess ideas
- Evaluate ideas
- Improve ideas
- Consider originality

This has helped me to use the many divergent and convergent thinking tools I have learnt in the HOTS class which I practise in other classes and in general, in my daily life. With thinking tools such as: brainstorming, brain writing, Substitute. Combine. Adapt. Modify. before (SCAMPER), Hits, POINT, Clustering and Bloom's Taxonomy to guide me and to challenge my thinking, I now have the ability to come up with more creative and original outcomes and results. While studying fairy tales we use Bloom's Taxonomy to develop questions of higher order thinking for the three higher levels analysis, synthesis and evaluation. We then use convergent thinking to assess them and improve them with our peers before we respond to them in a creative way. I feel the HOTS program gives me and many other students the opportunity to challenge our thinking and to learn valuable thinking tools for life.

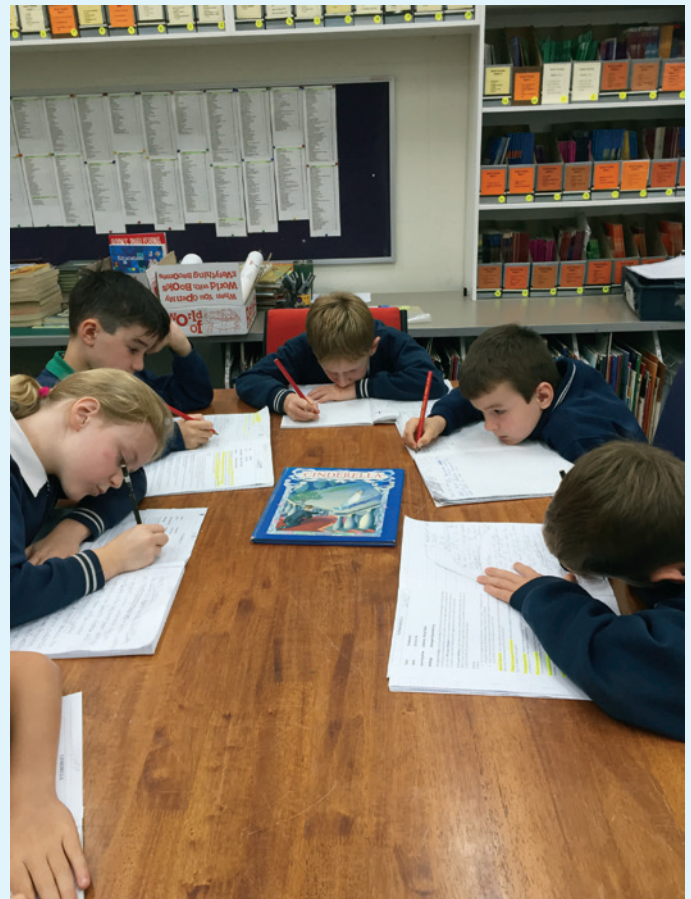
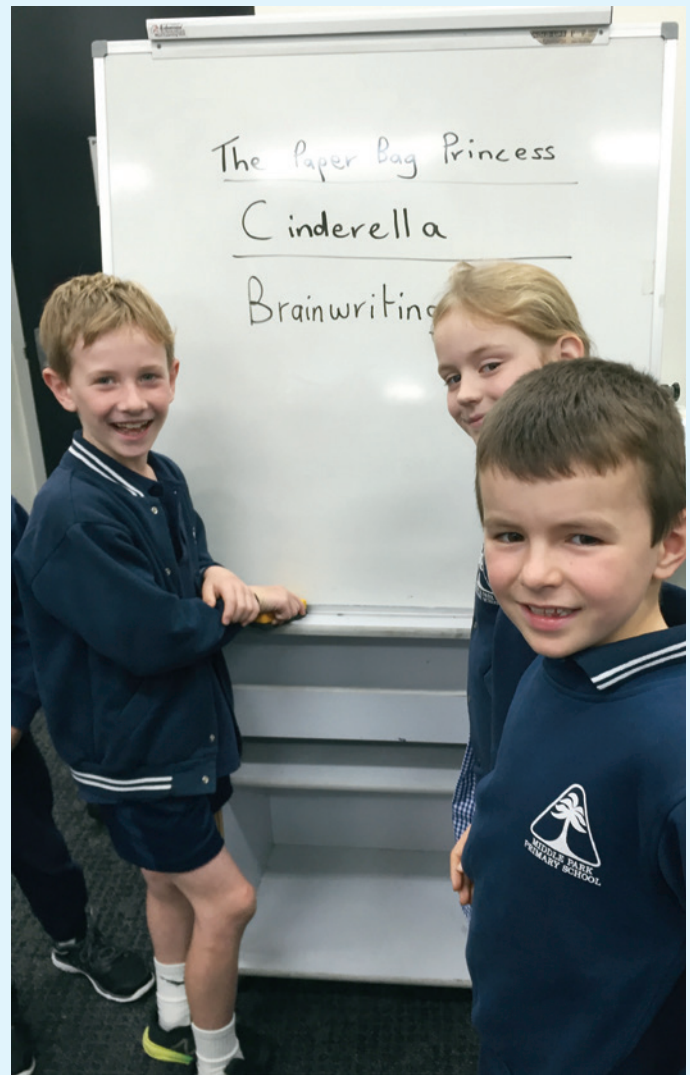
those options, and then decide what to keep and how to proceed.

During the HOTS classes, students use a range of thinking tools confidently to represent the problem and, work individually and with others, to develop a range of creative solutions and explore the advantages of generating unconventional rather than conventional solutions through the divergent and convergent thinking framework and Bloom's Taxonomy.

In addition students use Bloom's Taxonomy as a framework for developing "higher order" questions and responses. They have the ability to develop their own questions for investigation, collect relevant information from a range of sources and make judgments about its worth. They can distinguish between fact and opinion and use the divergent and convergent thinking framework throughout the process. They learn to be creative in their

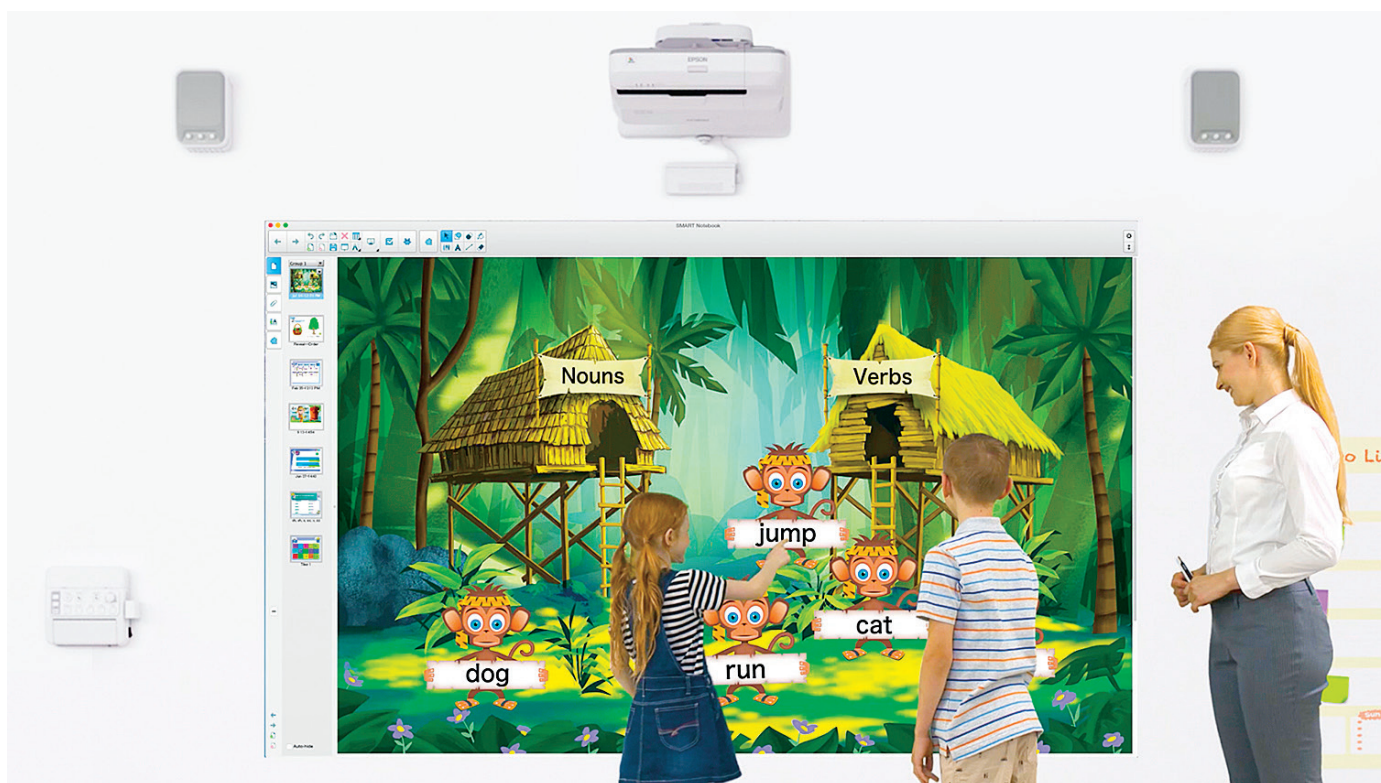
thinking in a range of contexts and to test the possibilities of concrete and abstract ideas generated by them and others. Students share responses and give each other feedback on an ongoing basis. During the HOTS class students use a broad range of thinking processes and tools, and reflect on and evaluate their effectiveness. They have the ability to articulate their thinking processes and to reflect on, modify and evaluate thinking strategies.

Our school recognises that 'gifted and talented' students learn at a much faster rate. They can conceptualise ideas and solve problems at a much faster pace than their peers. These students are intense with their learning and often study areas at great depth. They perform best when interested, stimulated and challenged and they enjoy working with like-minded students. ■





Smart classrooms for digital natives



The first interactive whiteboard was released in the early '90s, but in recent years the positioning of Smart technology in the classroom has quietly shifted from a novelty to a necessity.

The discussion around 21st century learning has shifted towards matching the classroom environment to the tech-driven world into which the students will emerge. Competing with the hyper-stimulation of the world outside the classroom is no mean feat. Decades ago, teachers competed with movies, music, fishing and perhaps dancing or a rollicking game of football for their pupils' attention. Today, distractors are enticing, responsive and engaging. The internet is winning, its most winning feature in the context of the famed impatience of youth? Its instantcy.

At home, many students have access to high speed internet on a personal device. If they want to

know something they tap it into YouTube or casually demand it of Siri. They have high expectations for movement and sound, and enjoy access to interactive apps that would have children from 60 years ago feeling like they lived in a circus. Not all of this is good news. Governments, parents and schools are addressing the negative impact of a virtual existence, while they try to harness its power for the greater good.

We have programs in place to get kids on the move, and legislated

time for silent reading (of books not screens), social programs to compensate for electronic childhoods, and cyber-bullying programs to tame a beast that is largely beyond the control of educators.

The tech is here to stay, it will define their futures, and if we want to help them learn how to navigate it safely, perhaps we should join the party? If that's the way to go, knowing what's on offer is paramount. Touchscreens and multi-touch displays: what's

out there, and how can Smart equipment enhance learning? To answer this question and more, we have Nathan Fulcher from Epson to refresh our pages with the latest in Smart tech for classrooms.

Industry view

Mr Fulcher said, "any technology aid in the classroom has the potential of enhancing the delivery and pace of the classroom session".

Updates in real time: "Teachers are able to annotate materials as they to respond to questions or clarify aspects of the lessons," Mr Fulcher added. In the context of the rapid pace of the world outside school, the familiarity of fast content delivery could augment the engagement rate of the students.

Mr Fulcher added that incorporating interactive technology "facilitates the development of students' proficiency in using technology to synthesise and report information".



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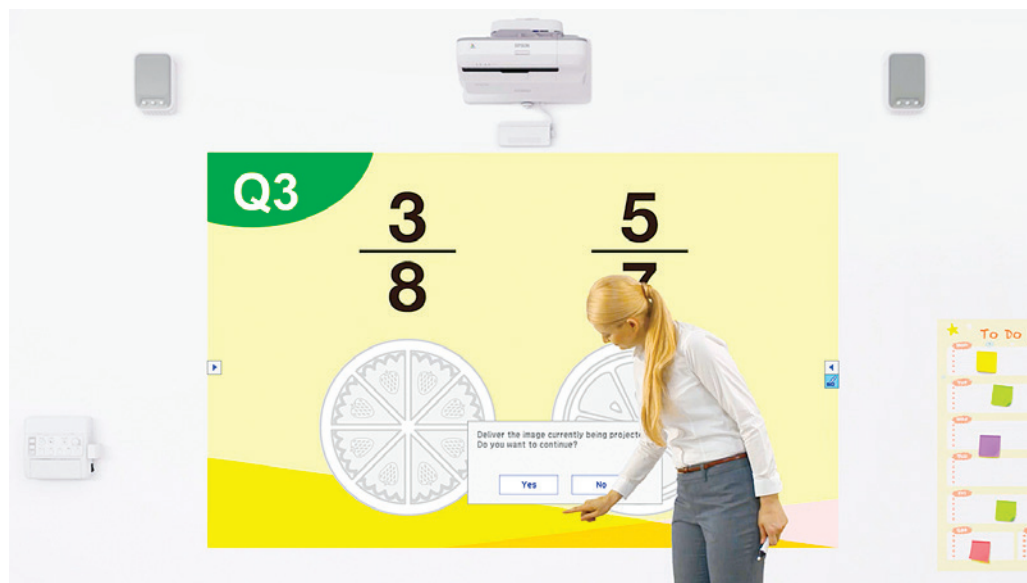
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◀ So, what are the options? "The main technologies available for use in classrooms are "interactive whiteboards, touchscreen panels, and interactive ultra-short throw projectors."

"These can be used for a range of functions, including translating hand-writing into text, carrying out polls and quizzes and using software to capture notes".

"Interactive technologies involving 'finger-touch' interaction allow for greater student engagement by making lessons more 'hands-on,'" Mr Fulcher noted.

Smart devices open the classroom to the world, and the existence of internet alone has invited expansive and transformative content into the modern classroom, making intrepid adventurers of us all.



However, unless you have a shared interactive platform for the information, the connection remains somewhat stilted, and the content must be redistributed somehow by the teacher.

An interactive whiteboard means a student can stand in full view of the class scouring an interactive diagram for the appendix, or

colour-coding the ventricles of the heart. Trial and error, giggles as students suddenly realise why the kidney bean and dish are so-called; and hey presto - biology is fun. The thing about Smart devices in the classroom is that they allow students to *play*. The educational apps are limited only by the imagination of developers, and offer learning experiences in

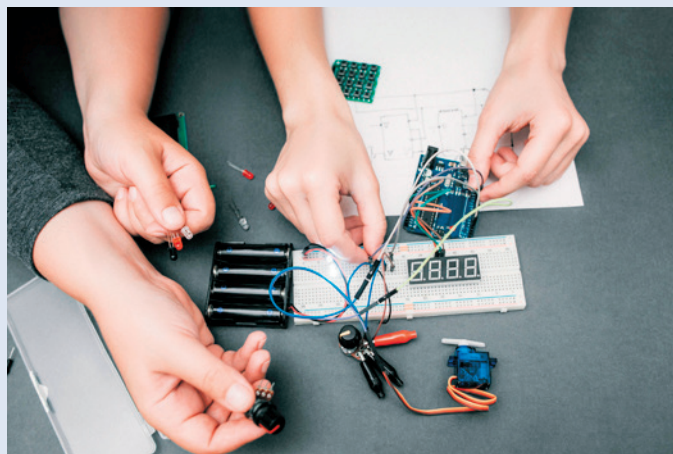
game format – possibly mirroring much of the students' leisure time at home. "These devices allow students to interact with content in real time, with students having the capacity to move digital resources on the board," Mr Fulcher explained. Students are involved in their learning; hence engagement follows.

Coding, Arduino, the Raspberry Pi and IoT.

Teachers, students and parents have had it drummed into them in the past five years: the students of today will be navigating an employment landscape dominated by software and hardware development.

Technology has infiltrated parts of our lives that we never thought possible. We live in a digital world where computer programs underpin fields such as logistics, science, entertainment, medicine, just to name a few! Delivering advanced services in digital technology will secure Australia's future prosperity as we move beyond commodities.

Already coding has become an essential part of the curriculum for many schools and has managed to spread beyond the computer lab into areas of science, maths and yes, even the humanities. Students are surrounded by devices



controlled by software every day - any teacher who's tried to stop them using their phones during class can attest to that! Coding not only represents a new skill for students, but an appreciation for what can be built using it.

The device that changed everything for the Internet-Of-Things was the Raspberry Pi. Dubbed the "\$35 computer" when launched, it has taken the world by storm selling over 10 million units

in three years. The Pi is a small, powerful computer not much bigger than a credit card, which can be interfaced with hardware for automation and robotics. The biggest asset of the Raspberry Pi is not the board itself, but its huge community including thousands of teachers and students from around the world contributing to projects and resources that can be implemented at a classroom level.

Community is also what drives its

less powerful brother, the Arduino. Started in 2003, Arduino is a small, powerful, and importantly, cheap platform for developing robots, logging data from sensors, driving motors and other hardware. Since its launch, the Arduino has become synonymous with student robotics designs, with hundreds of easy 'drag and drop' programming tools now available for the platform. With its low price point and prolific community, the Arduino has been the starting point for many schools implementing a coding curriculum.

With the right tools, coding can show students the inner workings of the hardware and software they use every day. In a world filled with instant one touch apps, it's important that kids learn how computers really tick. The Raspberry Pi and Arduino platforms not only teach software and hardware development, but encourage students to think outside the box, tinker and explore new ideas. Who knows, they might just find a way to save your school time! ●

BYOD schemes supported by Smart technology

"Epson interactive projectors allow the teacher to connect to up to 50 Windows®, Mac®, iOS® or Android devices, display up to four different device screens simultaneously, and control which device screens to display," Mr Fulcher advised.

"Interactive functionality is also available without a PC connection, so drawing on the projected screen is now possible when connected to other devices, such as visualisers or DVD players. Even when there is no input source, you can annotate on the screen like a whiteboard," he noted.

With so much to offer, is there something turning teachers from the technology? Why are there so many reporting glitches?

Mr Fulcher says the glitches often occur with interactive whiteboards (IWB) rather than projectors and made the following distinction. "An IWB is a system that usually includes a purpose-built board, a computer, a projector and white-boarding software. The elements need to work together and if there is an issue with any one of them, the user may experience a 'glitch'.

"Interactive projectors, on the other hand, can use any flat, mostly white surface. The interactive functionality and software is built into the projector, as long as the projector is set up correctly by a qualified installer, glitches are very unlikely."

The role of technology in teaching and learning is an inevitable force, and while some are wondering if the classroom teacher will

become obsolete, Dr Derek Alexander Muller who researches the physics of education at The University of Sydney says it's here to stay.

According to Dr Muller, teaching is a social function, the purpose of which is to "guide the social process of learning". He says teachers are evolving with the help of technology, rather than prescribing to the theory that a revolution is afoot that will replace teachers entirely. Perhaps any social function designed to engage this generation of 'digital natives' just might need to evolve to include more than a smattering of interactive technology, or be just a little bit doomed. ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter



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New to the bookshelf



I'm Australian Too

By Mem Fox

I'm Australian! How about you? Many people from many places have come across the seas, to make Australia their home. How Australian is that?

Mem Fox takes children on a meet and greet of the Australian population. A celebration of the Australian history of migration by Australia's pre-eminent children's author Mem Fox. Distinctive and joyful pictures by Ronojoy Ghosh.

Scholastic
For readers 5 to 105



Busting

By Aaron Blabey

Lou is BUSTING for the loo. But the loo has quite a queue. So what on earth is Lou to do?

A fun look at an issue most young children will empathise with. From the creator of Pig the Pug, this bit of comic fun had my two six-year-old reviewers in stitches, and one of them running for the loo in giggles!

Scholastic
For readers 4 +

Our Race for Reconciliation

By Anita Heiss

Mel Gordon loves running, and watching Seinfeld, but mostly she loves Cathy Freeman. It's 2000

and the Olympics are going to be held in Australia.

In a year of surprises, Mel finds out that Cathy Freeman is coming to talk to her school. And her family is heading to Sydney!



It becomes an unforgettable journey to Corroboree 2000, bringing together all Australians as they march and sing and celebrate Australia's Indigenous heritage and also acknowledge past wrongs.

Scholastic
For readers 8 +



Letters to the Lost

By Brigid Kemmerer

Juliet Young has always written letters to her mother, a world-famous photojournalist, and after her mother's death, she leaves letters at her grave.

Declan is doing court-ordered community service and finds a haunting letter left beside a grave, he can't resist the urge to write

back. Soon, he is sharing his pain with a perfect stranger and he feels like he might be helping her too. Real life and their secret life of letters overlap with a twist that may tear them apart.

Bloomsbury
For readers 10+



Boy

By Phil Cummings

Boy lives in a small village with his parents. Because he is deaf, he communicates 'with dancing hands and pictures in the sand', though the villagers, who are unable to understand him, consider him strange.

The village is constantly under attack by a dragon and Boy, though unable to hear the fighting, can sense the distress - starts the process of resolution by writing in the sand.

A lovely picture book for young readers, or read aloud.

For readers 5+ Scholastic



Twice Upon a Time

By James Norcliffe

What happens when you find yourself trapped inside a story? What happens if the only way out is to solve the riddles of the Very Bad Very Good Storyteller, Mr Aesop Sod?

Ginny and her strange new friend, Digger Dagger, must navigate their way through this upside-down, topsy-turvy world where Don's Dairy has become Nod's Diary, the fish and chip shop is full of tropical fish tanks and wood chips, and the ghost train at the fun fair really is a ghost train.

For readers 10+ Penguin Random House



Stargazing for Beginners

By Jenny McLachlan

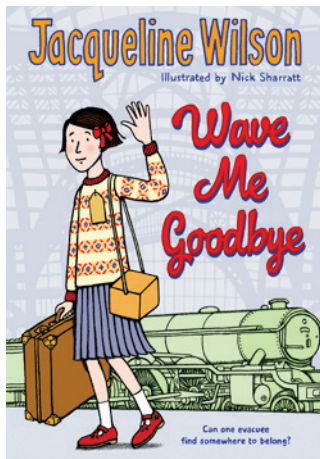
This fabulous bit of YA fiction was written by an English teacher. The characters are believable and irresistible.

Budding scientist and aspiring astronaut, Meg, is desperate to win a competition so she can visit the NASA headquarters but when she'd like to be working on her entry, she is facing other challenges.

Her free-spirited mother has other starry-eyed notions. She lumps Meg with the task of looking after her little sister, Elsa, for 10 days, while pursues altruistic tendencies that don't quite extend to parenting Elsa, or Meg for that matter.

Will Meg muddle through? Will she get to NASA? An excellent title for those 'mighty girls' out there.

Bloomsbury
For readers 11+

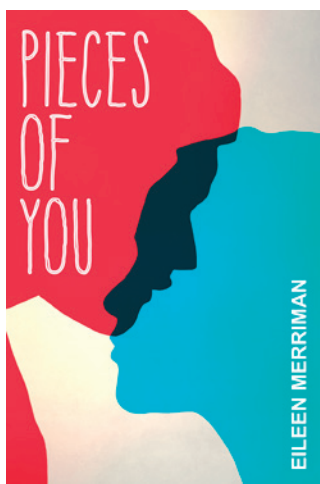


Wave Me Goodbye

By Jacqueline Wilson

September, 1939. As the Second World War begins, ten-year-old Shirley is sent away on a train with her schoolmates. She doesn't know where she's going, or what's going to happen to her when she gets there. All she has been told is that she's going on 'a little holiday'. Shirley is billeted in the country, with two boys from East End London, Kevin and Archie – and their experiences living in the strange, half-empty Red House, with the mysterious and reclusive Mrs Waverley, will change their lives for ever. Award-winning, bestselling and beloved author Jacqueline Wilson turns to this period of history for the first time, in this beautiful, moving story of friendship and bravery against the backdrop of the worst conflict the world has ever known.

For readers 10+
Doubleday
Penguin Random House



Pieces of You

By Eileen Merriman

Fifteen-year-old Rebecca McQuilten moves with her parents to a new city. Lonely but trying to fit in, she goes to a party, but that's when things really fall apart.

When things go badly wrong, Rebecca feels she has no one to turn to. Who would believe the new girl in town?

Things look up when she meets gregarious 16-year-old Cory Marshall, but more heartache lies in store. This is a love story about those tough teenage years.

For young adult readers
Penguin Random House



Flight Path

By David Hill

Eighteen-year-old Jack wanted to escape boring little New Zealand.

But he soon finds that flying in a Lancaster bomber to attack Hitler's forces brings terror as well as excitement. With every dangerous mission, he becomes more afraid that he'll never get back alive.

He wants to help win the war, but will he lose his own life?

A gripping novel for young adults that captures both the daring and the everyday realities of serving in the Air Force during the Second World War. ■

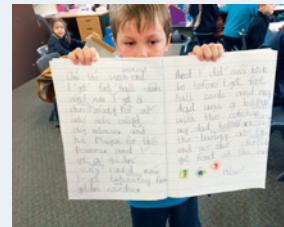
For young adult readers
Penguin Random House

Supplier Profile | The THRASS Institute

A paradigm shift in literacy teaching

The THRASS Institute (Australasia & Canada) is an Australian based company that has developed a Specific Pedagogical Practice (SPP) for the teaching of literacy, marketed as THRASS – an acronym for 'Teaching Handwriting, Reading And Spelling Skills'.

THRASS is a phonetics teaching-tool that has made a paradigm shift in the teaching of phonetics. It has a phonographic, multisensory focus, complemented by an analogous learning model that makes reading and spelling acquisition much simpler, faster and more sustainable than conventional 'phonic' approaches.



As a classroom strategy THRASS is fun, systematic, explicit and linguistically correct.

The THRASS SPP and accompanying THRASS charts and teaching resources have been highly effective in schools and learning institutions since 1998 and are the most widely used and recognised teacher reference tools for teaching the phonographics and orthography of English. ●

For more information please contact the THRASS Institute by visiting www.thrass.com.au

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Fundraising - keeping it simple

Fundraising - it's the gritty reality of education today, plugging the gap between state and federal funding, and the cost of running a well-resourced school. It also requires a huge outlay of time and energy. How can schools run effective fundraising campaigns that don't suck the life out of staff and volunteers?

In most schools, the task of fundraising falls to the Parents' & Citizens' Association (P&C), and their efforts can make a colossal difference to the resources a school can provide for students. The traditional book fair, for example, can reap in excess of \$10,000 in a big primary school. And the annual school fair or fete, a day of great excitement for children, can be the most lucrative fundraiser of the year - as well as providing an opportunity for the school to connect more closely with its wider community.

The challenge with fundraising is determining cost and profit. Bake sales, for example, are labour and cost intensive, with the average

contributing family spending around \$10 in ingredients to contribute baking, only to then send more cash to buy someone else's (usually sugar-laden) baking. It could be argued that a more effective strategy would be to hold a No Bake Sale; no one buys ingredients or bakes, but everyone sends a dollar or two.

There are, however, fundraising opportunities that require minimal input from staff and volunteers. Online crowdfunding campaigns fit this bill perfectly, allowing rapid sharing of information and collection of funds with as much or as little publicity as the donor prefers. A scan of the education entries on GoFundMe reveals this method

to be gaining in popularity, with pages of campaigns for school fundraising. Some schools need help with providing seemingly basic equipment, for example, air conditioning for a high school in tropical Queensland, while others want to replenish supplies of gym equipment or specialist gear for children with additional needs.

The flip side of the fundraising headache is the sense of belonging created when the staff, pupils and families are supported by their wider community. Fundraising events can bring the whole community together and give children the message that their education is really worth investing in.

Remember also to look out for grants on offer in your school's communities. A successful grant application can bring in more money for less work than a cake stall or fair.

Hundreds of millions of dollars in education-related grants are available to schools each year from governments, charities and the private sector. ■

By Anna Clements,
Industry Reporter





SIPAHH MILK FLAVOURING STRAWS PRESENTS



A wholesome and profitable fundraising programme
to support Australian Schools and Community Groups



FUNDRAISING EVENTS



FUNDRAISING DRIVES

RAISE
\$22 PER
FUNDRAISING
BOX SOLD

- ✓ Less than 1/2 teaspoon sugar per straw
- ✓ Lightly flavoured
- ✓ Naturally coloured and flavoured
- ✓ No preservatives

Visit our website or call us on 02 9336 7788
for a fundraising info pack and a Sipahh sample.
www.sipahh.com.au



GREEN LIGHT

Sipahh is GREEN LIGHT in School Canteens when served with reduced fat milk (apart from Amber rating in QLD & no rating in SA)

Sipping milk to raise money for your school

Sipahh Fundraising Ventures is a new fundraising program designed to help kids, clubs and schools raise money for their causes through the sale of Sipahh Milk Flavouring Straws.

With a 4.5 healthy star rating, less than half a teaspoon of sugar per straw, and nomination for 'best new fundraising company' in 2016, it's a more wholesome, healthy and unique way of fundraising. Sipahh provides two fundraising options; first, the Sipahh Fundraising Crates. These cute fundraising crates enable everyone in the school or group to participate by selling little packs of Sipahh straws. Each crate contains 24 four-packs with a profit of \$22 per crate sold, a margin of 46 percent.

The second option is to hold a Sipahh fundraising event at your school fete, carnival, market or special event. It involves raising money by selling glasses of milk with Sipahh straws.

The vintage, pop-up Sipahh Milk Bar is available to order online, and combined with a wider selection of Sipahh flavours, it makes for an exciting and unique way of fundraising.

Kids love Sipahh straws as they're so unique and parents love them because they're lower in sugar and more profitable than many fundraising options.

Sipahh helps people drink more milk with less sugar every day.

For a limited time, Sipahh is offering eight free crates for every 40 ordered. That's \$380 additional profit for your fundraiser. ●



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Australia's leading
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Lighting up school events with risk-free fundraisers

Everything Glows! products light up parties and events all around Australia, and the company specialises in providing schools with fundraising opportunities.

Product investment is low, starting at less than \$1 per item, and cheerful - items glow or flash, allowing schools to make a good profit. Most popular items include glowing paraphernalia - sticks, glasses,

earrings, caps, cups and bracelets, and flashing novelties such as necklaces, wands, bubble guns and badges. Company spokesperson Paula House says, "Everything Glows! provides material data sheets for all products; checks all products for compliance with Australian Safety Standards, and will advise clients about any restrictions that may be relevant for schools". "Everything Glows! provides schools with the flexibility and easy payment terms they need to take the hassle out of fundraising." ●



School admin a breeze with SMS applications

School administration is becoming increasingly complex. With ever-expanding reporting obligations, individual learning plans, an increase in allergies and diagnoses, not to mention the increasing expectations of parents, school administrators could feel like they are drowning in paper, forms and requirements.

School Management Systems (SMS) are no longer the domain of the progressively organised, rather, they are a necessity. As distinct from the Student Management System, a School Management System provides a total system that records and analyses data on curriculum, behaviour management, timetabling, student wellbeing, financials, and even alumni, for use by all stakeholders.

The programs can be streamlined to incorporate record-keeping in areas of attendance, academic results, co-curricular involvement, behaviour and student wellbeing. What exactly can a school management system contribute to the smooth running of your school? We asked some experts for their perspective.

Industry views

Edval Timetabling provides a feed-in service to SMS, and from this vantage point, sales manager Phil Donato has observed SMS transforming the connectivity of schools in all areas: "Systems are generally broken down into modules, allowing schools to effectively 'build' their system, based in their individual school's data needs." PC Schools is an organisation providing SMS capability across Australia and New Zealand. Director Brendan Croese says that for an SMS to truly be a 'school management




system', it must enable the school to leverage its data in a multitude of applications, rendering the system far more efficient and reducing the need to massage data to third party applications. Mr Donato noted that with SMS, a teacher entering daily attendance data can result in greater engagement and care for the student.

"At that moment of entering, they have access to current data on family welfare or academic progress, past and present; this holistic perspective is of great value in providing context for lateness of absence. "SMS providers have



developed great communication tools, via teacher-student-parent portals, allowing everyone to collaborate on the common goal of educating kids."

Mr Croese says schools can expect more from an SMS than maintaining attendance statistics, or 'marking the roll'.

"This is just the starting point for attendance statistics in SMS. Research has clearly established the high correlation between academic success and absenteeism/lateness (even at low levels)."



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TOTAL SCHOOL MANAGEMENT	EXCELLENT SUPPORT	MORE FOR YOU						
<p>There is more to an SMS than Student Management</p> 	<p>93% of our users rate PCSchool as 'EXCELLENT'</p> <p><small>(internal survey results)</small></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Independent survey results</p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Value for Money of Administration Software</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Support of Administration Software</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="background-color: orange; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 29% <div style="background-color: gray; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 41% <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 30% </div> </td> <td style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="background-color: orange; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 27% <div style="background-color: gray; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 9% <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 64% </div> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: small;"> ■ Poor ■ OK ■ Good ■ Great </div> </td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Value for Money of Administration Software	Support of Administration Software	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="background-color: orange; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 29% <div style="background-color: gray; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 41% <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 30% </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="background-color: orange; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 27% <div style="background-color: gray; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 9% <div style="background-color: yellow; width: 20px; height: 20px;"></div> 64% </div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; font-size: small;"> ■ Poor ■ OK ■ Good ■ Great </div>		<p>Create, analyse and publish monthly financials and cash flow forecasts in minutes</p> 
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Phone 07 4939 5995 (Aust) 09 974 9624 (NZ)	Web www.pcschool.net	Email info@pcschool.net						



SMS tech keeps students on track with their learning. Photo: PCSchool

◀ Mr Croese says performance outcomes and SMS should have analytics to track, and map patterns of attendance, allowing schools to address trouble areas and remedy issues causing poor attendance.

The dreaded timetabling

According to Mr Croese, most schools have a "timetabling guru". "Generally, they have programs of preference for achieving this 'arduous' task. "Some still rely on pencil and rubber techniques, while others use sophisticated software to manage the task more easily. There are many timetabling solutions out there, both integrated as part of SMS systems or as stand alone, built for purpose systems."

Mr Croese says SMS packages should allow this freedom to the administration rather than restricting access to the inbuilt system that may not be the system of choice for the 'timetabler': "Whichever timetabling solution is utilised, it is critical that the resulting timetable can be imported and utilised within the SMS for normal day-to-day management including roll marking, matching attendance to subjects studied, and providing covers for absent staff." While timetabling used to necessitate a pencil, rubber and sleepless nights, SMS has freed up those sleepless nights for reporting and compliance requirements.

Mr Donato says when timetabling is achieved through specialised third party software, SMS integration is vital. "Many of our integration

partners have worked with us to ensure there is 'live' integration of data. For example, when a student changes their subjects in year 11, this is generally noted in the timetabling software, and once saved, the data is automatically updated in the SMS for all users to see."

The same applies to adding new students to school lists, and parents have access via the portal to see their children's current enrolments, and receive notifications of changes automatically. Mr Donato added that SMS providers' move towards enterprise solutions serves multi-campus schools. "In theory, student information would follow the student as they move from one site to another."

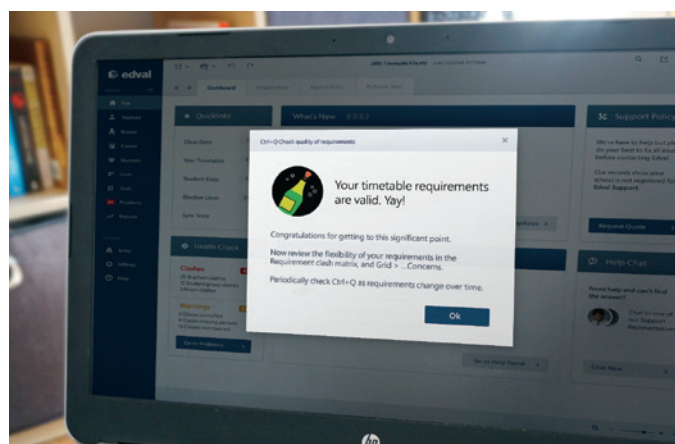
SMS in the Cloud

With technology rushing on, SMS is keeping pace. Mr Donato says most

systems are stored in the Cloud, which has allowed the community greater access to stored data. "We are seeing more apps for mobile devices and accessibility via online portals as the norm."

Mr Croese sees a trend towards increased involvement of caregivers and students in the education journey. "This is seen to significantly enhance outcomes and involvement. To achieve this 'web portal' delivery is critical."

The key benefits of SMS are derived from data and data analysis, especially vital in a large school where school leaders simply cannot keep a holistic view of 1,000 students' school life in view. The SMS can keep an eye on all areas of a student's engagement with school and, if concerned, a teacher can bring up their data to obtain a clearer picture, and upon noting a spiral, they will intercept.



Edval's personal touches break the doldrums of timetabling. Photo: Edval

Managing assessment and mapping progress

According to Mr Croese, assessment programs need to supply institutionalised performance indicators "as required by governments, higher education and employees". He says a vital role of SMS is to store data and report on results, mapping them against student goals to maintain focus on learning outcomes.

"To monitor and report performance longitudinally, against prior performance as well as standardised national testing, SMS must offer live data analysis to enable effective intervention."

Mr Donato says SMS technology now responds to current wisdom that feedback is vital for student learning: "Systems now allow students to submit assessment tasks and receive teacher feedback online as part of the learning process before final submission."

Noting that parents are "a vital component" in learning, he says SMS means communication flows both ways, which in many schools is still a challenge.

And the future? "I think technology is bringing us together," says Mr Donato. "An SMS of the future should build on kids' existing technological awareness and use technology to better support the individual learner. Whether it's gaming, flipped classrooms or virtual reality, an SMS should find a way of bringing this learning space together."

Mr Croese predicts that the role of SMS will continue to expand. "The era of SMS capability limited to marking the roll and producing reports is over. Future-focussed SMS providers will be web-based, and accessible on any device, while providing strong analytics and live data to the users, offering solutions that are proactive in enabling change and benefit our ever-changing world." ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter

World leading scheduling software backed by a team of experts



Edval Timetables is the leading scheduling company in Australia and has been expanding worldwide thanks to its powerful and easy to use software developed and supported by a team of dedicated scheduling experts. We offer products and services that are critical to a school's operation and our goal is to maximise efficiency whilst improving educational outcomes.

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Training: quality, structured training, fully accredited and by far the best valued training available in the market.

Consultancy: experts in this field, our team have seen it all and can work with any structure or curriculum model.

Timetabler-in-Residence: an exciting new model for schools, completely outsource the timetable generation and year-long upkeep of the schedule. Take back months of time and stress and let the experts handle it all.

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EdvalDaily: daily organisation, exam timetables, room booking, extras, in-lieus and underload tracking.

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HP BYOD

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What is HP BYOD?

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What is BYOD?

Student bring your own device (BYOD) is a program being adopted by K-12 institutions that allows students to use a personal laptop, endorsed by the school, for day-to-day educational requirements. BYOD is importantly driving technology rich class rooms, new ways of learning and an increase in student engagement.



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BYOD Specialists:

HP's team of BYOD specialists will work one-on-one with you through the BYOD roll-out and beyond. Our team specialise in product selection, online store creation, teacher and parent information nights, and product training coordination for teachers and students.

Ease of Purchasing:

In addition to a customised online BYOD store, HP provides a call centre team to help parents choose the right device, FREE delivery Australia-wide and a 14-day change of mind return policy. Interest free financing options are also available. T&C's Apply.

Latest Technology Direct:

Buying direct from HP guarantees the school and ultimately students from K-12 access to HP's latest learning devices at affordable prices. All devices meet prescribed education standards and come with enhanced three year onsite support.

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Starting from \$499



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Step 1: Our BYOD experts will work with you to understand your school and students requirements. We will then

identify the best devices to help maximise learning outcomes for both teachers and students.



Step 2: We'll design a custom BYOD online store. Plus we will participate in parent information nights, and assist school and

parents on what to purchase, how to purchase, and the benefits of each learning device.



Step 3: We'll deliver all learning devices FREE to the chosen delivery address. HP in-conjunction with Microsoft can

also offer training to both students and teachers on how best to maximise the device for optimal learning outcomes.

BYOD key dates

March 2017 – July 2017

Define schools BYOD policy, product selection, build customised BYOD portal, teacher briefings, parent information nights

December 5th 2017

Last day of ordering to ensure laptops are delivered prior to Christmas

January 10th 2018

Last day of ordering to ensure laptops arrive before start of school year

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Manage data with flexibility, efficiency and integration

Karen Willison is the database officer at Moama Anglican Grammar School and has been using the School Management System (SMS) software developed by PC Schools for more than six and a half years. She says "integration" is the key to its significant merit: "One database covers finance, the admin department, as well as the teachers' side, and anything that is updated goes live across all users instantly".

Maintaining attendance levels is national priority, and the PC Schools SMS tracks the location of students throughout the day. Ms Willison says



Moama already had good attendance, but the tracking has helped catch issues related to increased mobility at a senior level:

"We know if a senior student is repeatedly missing a subject class, it may indicate that support is needed, and we can intercept."

The monitoring also assists with

pastoral care: "If there's sudden change in the family situation of a student, everyone is made aware."

NAPLAN checks and balances: Ms Willison says the SMS charts progress from kindergarten to year 12:

"There's a graph mapping their progress across the years, so if there's a dip, it's obvious to

parents and teachers and we can work out what's going on and fix it."

Ms Willison's personal favourite? The hallowed e-forms!

"There's no more paper; it is all done online: teachers fill in excursion application form, it goes through the head of faculty, the deputy principal,

Timetabling software with efficiency and personality

English teacher Brigitta Ragg is the timetable coordinator at Adelaide's Nazareth Catholic College. She says timetabling is "a funny job": "Only one person in a school does it, so nobody really understands why we get so stressed about it."

Ms Ragg says timetabling 1100 students and close to 100 teachers can be a colossal task, not to mention "a lonely one" - staring at a screen, willing the pieces of the puzzle to fit.

However, using Edval Timetabling, she finds herself laughing and wondering who wrote the program, with such a "cute sense of humour": "There's this champagne icon with a retro 1980s King's



Quest feel to it that pops up when you have a solution that fits all requirements." Ms Ragg reports whooping for joy the first time it popped up, though her colleagues were nonplussed by her enthusiasm.

Messages such as: "Doh! The room is too small for class you have allocated. Consider double decker desks or try something else!" are also a

welcome distraction. She says Edval's personality is rivalled only by its efficiency and its creator's apparent social awareness:

"There are group training sessions, where you can connect with other timetablers and swap hints; it's amazing what you pick up from other users."

Efficient and practical

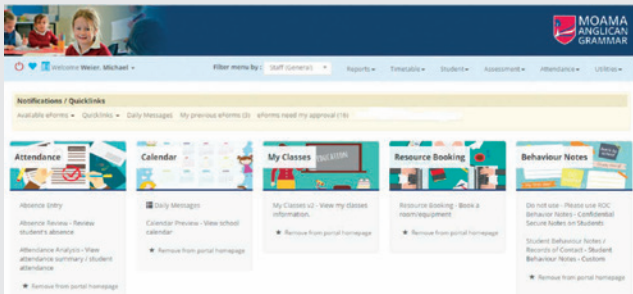
"Edval is smooth and easy to learn; while the process seems complex, I was surprised by how logical it is," she noted.

"I can also adapt it to manage the bookings for parent teacher interviews, elective selection, as well as teacher preferences."

Ms Ragg says the program can be taught to pick up issues such as co-requisite ineligibility due to pre-requisite requirements and other potential clashes.

Edval Daily manages daily absences or necessary room changes. Ms Ragg says the process is simple, and the updates instant - with automatic text dispatch to affected staff or relief teachers.

Edval's "tiny file size" means entire timetable solutions can be sent between users,



then off to the daily organiser to enter into the calendar, to the finance department for bookings and invoicing, then out to the parents."

Parents can also report absence, request appointments or sign permission slips using an e-form.

She says excursion forms are a breeze to lodge, and once received, the system uses the data to prepare documents with all information required for the outing, including medical information, such as the need for EpiPens or ventilators.

Ms Willison says the flexibility of PC Schools makes for

unexpected capabilities, and by working with the functions of categories, different objectives are achieved:

"I can use the subject selection platform to allow students to book their preferred activities at our 'celebration day', just as they would a unit of study."

"Our parent-teacher interview platform can be repurposed to book in times for parent helpers, and you can use it to book support appointments with IT – it's very flexible," Ms Willison told *School News*.

"Think outside the square a bit, and you'll be amazed what you can make it do for you." ●

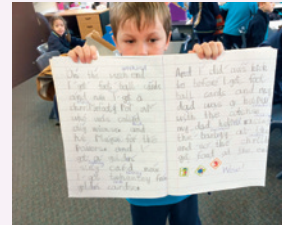
Supplier Profile | The THRASS Institute

A paradigm shift in literacy teaching

The THRASS Institute (Australasia & Canada) is an Australian based company that has developed a Specific Pedagogical Practice (SPP) for the teaching of literacy, marketed as THRASS – an acronym for 'Teaching Handwriting, Reading And Spelling Skills'.



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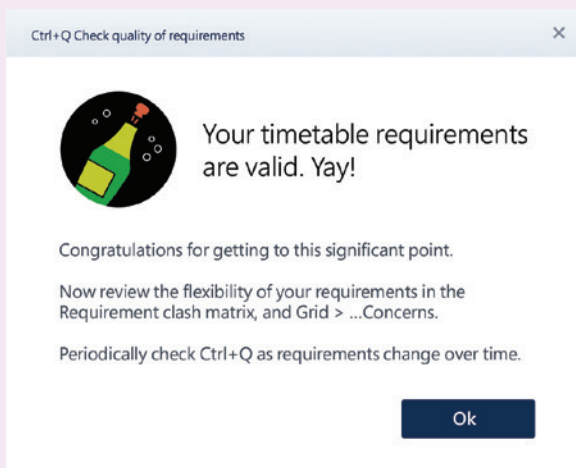
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and backed up. The small files helped Ms Ragg's early learning curve by facilitating risk-free 'trial and error'."I could keep 100 files open with possible solutions and compare them."

As an educator, Ms Ragg appreciates that when she

contacts the help desk, they don't just fix it, they teach her how to fix it herself. "The help system is excellent, there's an email site with same day service, (usually within an hour or two)" and a helpline is available for a human connection. ●



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Transforming the school library for innovative learning

The joy of reading is something that stays with someone for life, and for many, this joy has its roots in the school library. Reading for pleasure is also inextricably linked with higher achievement and social mobility, making the school library a place of great importance in a child's life.

While the end goal is the same, the layout of today's library has changed considerably from even a few years ago to accommodate high demand for technology and the shift from a quiet space to a learning hub for both groups and individuals. It is imperative, therefore, that the design and resourcing of the school library is meticulously planned by those with expert knowledge.

Industry views

School News spoke to industry insiders for advice on refitting the school library.

Consider your space

Start by looking at your space, advises Scott Reed from Resource Furniture, suppliers to hundreds of school libraries across Australia. "Consider any distinguishing features of the building or space that could be highlighted, and any window views that could be utilised to create pleasant, relaxed reading spaces."

The company provides a space planning consultancy service to evaluate the library space and create a space for people to connect, explore and learn. "We work out flow of traffic, create fun and interesting reading nooks and breakout spaces, provide a range of options for seating and standing, and ensure there is sufficient space for PC and own device plug in," said Mr Reed.

"The contemporary learning space requires innovative thinking to complement interaction and engagement with students," said



Photo: Quantum Libraries

Trevor McCann from library design and solutions company Raeco. "Setting up zones such as quiet reading, learning, discussion, breakout areas to plan and play are important examples to enhance student learning experience."

Shelving

Of chief consideration is the accommodation for books. How many shelves? What type? And what height? Most consultants will be able to provide guidance on the amount and types of shelving required once they are supplied with book collection numbers.

The number of choices for shelving is vast both for style - rollaway, wall mounted, floating, curved and shuttle, and for construction - steel, natural timber and acrylic.

All suppliers agree that there has been a shift to face-out display not only in emerging readers and picture books, but in graphics and fiction too. "For some time now we have been supplying a shelving system that displays the books facing out, not like before boring old spines," said Darrin Batty from Fry Library. "This reduces wear and tear on the books and the kids love seeing the bright illustrations.

It's also a win for librarians as face-out displays are easier to re-shelve. We are also putting non fiction books and series books into browser bins which serve as a space saver."

There is also a high demand for mobile shelving, especially curved units, which have a middle division to stop the books from falling back, said Mr Batty. "They require no installation, are easy to move even when fully loaded, and can be used to create quiet areas and different shapes in the library."

Acrylic spinners are a popular choice for novels and DVDs, as are acrylic-fronted bookcases for picture books.

Versatility of shelving units is essential, said Mr Reed. "We (Resource) have developed a steel shelf that transforms from a standard flat shelf, into a display shelf, a picture book tub and a CD/DVD shelf. This allows any shelf type to be completely interchangeable between any unit in the library and provides great flexibility."

Furniture

"Today's library areas are for communal work and independent study so are equipped with large tables and booth seating," said Doug Stewart from Quantum Libraries.



Photo: Raeco



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◀ Furniture also needs to be easy to move so that spaces can be re-worked according to group size and use. "Flexible, modular furniture is essential, said Mr Reed, and today's school furniture is fun for users. "Breakout soft seating that is easy to move and re-configure is proving very popular."

Schools are also asking for nesting tables and mobile flip tables, both of which can be used for collaborative work, yet easily pulled apart for small groups or independent study.

As laptops and tablets find their way into the hands of even the smallest customers, demand for chairs and tables with integrated power continues to rise.

Mr Stewart encourages clients to ask where the product is manufactured, and how long it can be expected to last. "Check whether the supplier will be able to help if you have any problems with the product, and always ask if it is designed for your requirements as some companies will try to apply generic solutions."

At Raeco, Mr McCann said that schools need to ask their supplier whether the new learning environment will encourage engagement and interaction. "Is the furniture agile and flexible for a learning space? Can they provide a learning environment that encourages engagement and interaction?"

Acoustics

With the shift away from libraries being quiet zones to multi-purpose digital learning environments, the consideration of acoustics for ceilings and walls is becoming a necessity.

Acoustic specialists consult with schools to help them create learning spaces where groups can work collaboratively without noise negatively impacting on individual learners.

Acoustic treatments which have been engineered to absorb noise and reverberation can be fitted. All acoustic specialists agree that the first port of call is always



Photo: Resource Furniture

the ceiling, as that is the cause of most room excess sound reverberation and noise.

And it is easier to treat a ceiling because it isn't limited by windows, doors, shelving and fittings.

As a guideline, \$1,000 of acoustic ceiling panels correctly positioned will make a significant improvement to the acoustics of any small to medium-sized library room.

Flooring

Choice of flooring will also impact on the library's acoustics, however, some can be very expensive. One cost-effective choice is acoustic-backed carpet tiles.

Wired for learning

All libraries require extensive provision for learners with laptops and tech devices, and new furniture includes choices of tables and seating with integrated power.

"Booth seating with built-in power is popular with more and more people bringing their own devices and requiring power and data facilities," said Mr Reed from Resource.

"This also coincides with the increased need for laptop/tablet tables that hook around seating to provide a little working surface."

Questions to consider

Space

- What are the distinguishing features of your library space?
- Are they being utilised?
- Are there views to consider?
- Is there sufficient lighting?
- Does the flooring need replacing?
- Are the wall colours suitable?
- Do the acoustics need improving?

Signage

- Do you have prominent signage?
- Are the service points clearly signed?
- Would you like to incorporate wall graphics?

Collection

- Can the collection be weeded?
- What are the collection numbers?
- What is the percentage on loan?

Circulation pods

- How many circulation pods are required?
- Would you like the option of sit and stand height pods?
- Would you like to incorporate

electric height adjustable pods?

- Do you require storage? ie. Door for hard drive, drawers etc.

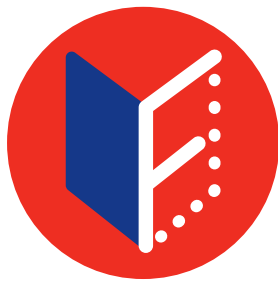
Breakout furniture

- What type of soft seating would you like to include? ie. Individual chairs, ottomans, booths, incorporated power and data etc.
- What type of tables do you prefer? ie. Round tops with pedestal base, mobile flip tables etc.
- How many chairs per table would you prefer?
- Do you require tables and chairs for outdoor use?

Other considerations

- What other services need to be considered throughout the library space? Will it be used for meetings, training or events?
- Do you require tables and chairs for these spaces?
- Do you require workstations or desks for offices and work rooms?
- Do you require storage units for these spaces? ■

By Anna Clements,
Industry Reporter



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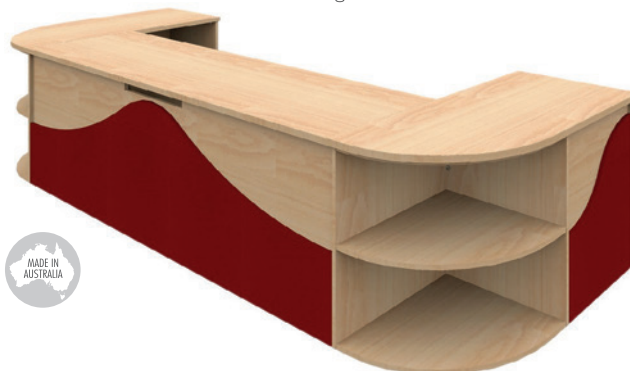
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Resource Furniture offers a complete range of educational furniture for schools and libraries, and can fulfil any order, whether for one piece of furniture or enough to completely refurbish the library.

They will advise schools on creating the right functionality, and overall layout for shelving and furniture.

"Resource Furniture provides a space-planning consultancy service to evaluate the library space and create a space for people to connect, explore and learn," said company director Scott Reed. "We work out flow of traffic, create fun and interesting reading areas/'nooks' and breakout spaces, provide a range of

seating/standing options, ensure there is sufficient space for PC and own device plug in and custom design furniture for any unique spaces.

"Once the library provides us with the book collection numbers, we enter the figures into our Collection Calculator to determine library units required, and then determine the best layout and configuration, in conjunction with breakout furniture to suit the library space."

One of Resource's recent refits was at Encounter Lutheran College in South Australia.

Working closely with the school's principal Kelvin Grivell and librarian Sally Judd, Resource supplied library shelving and furniture solutions to fit the space, and coordinate with the finishes specified by the architects.



Shelving from the Slimform range was chosen for the library's lower level coupled with Fusion tables.

Slimline shelving incorporates power and data outlets, is suitable for straight, curved, single and double-sided modules, and can be built in a range of sizes.

Fusion tables are actually four individual desks, which slot together to accommodate up to ten children seated, but are easily separated for break out

work. Tables are fitted with castors for easy repositioning, and are height adjustable.

Upstairs, the library's "perch" was furnished with softer seating in funky styles and bright colours. Seat covers are of a hard-wearing vinyl, and zip off for easy cleaning. Beanbag chairs, available in a variety of sizes to suit all ages, were also supplied. These are available in both fabric or vinyl. A long bench was fitted for small size group work. ●



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Transforming a tricky space into an inviting library

Nazareth Catholic College in Adelaide encompasses reception to year 12 students across two campuses. The college library serves their Findon campus with approximately 800 student visitors through each week, and recently had a complete, \$30,000 makeover.

"Before the works, it was very dark and closed in," said college spokesperson Victoria Richardson. "The space was originally classrooms and the shape is quite tricky - it's almost a t-shape. We wanted to make the space lighter and brighter, with more options for use - areas for large groups as well as small groups and

individuals. We also wanted flexible furniture options that helped to create better use of these spaces."

The college engaged Fry Library for the project. "They were local and affordable but most importantly, knowledgeable and obliging. Nothing was ever too hard for them and they were very generous with their time and advice during the process of deciding what we needed in the space."

Fry's consulted with Nazareth to assist in the design of the entire space. "Some key areas they specifically supported us with were the design of our section for series books and the formatting of our reference resources. Our staff were able to visit other schools which Fry's had worked with and then adapt their ideas to our



space," said Ms Richardson. "Our decision-making process was quite lengthy, but once we decided exactly how we wanted things designed, the installation process only took a few days. Once again, Fry's were so obliging, with multiple site visits and further recommendations."

Fry's also made suggestions for areas or other products (not necessarily supplied by Fry's) and was able to keep costs down by working in some of our existing furniture.

Staff chose curved shelving to make the space contemporary,

and all furniture is moveable to allow learning spaces to be adjusted.

"We can now accommodate guest speakers, activities for Book Week, two year levels at once (170 students seated), and buddy classes.

Nazareth staff and students are delighted with their new library. "We love it! It's more inviting and since the upgrade, we've seen an increase in use of our resource centre." Staff, too, are making more use of the space, choosing it for their non-contact times." ●

Refitting for optimum learning spaces

Quantum Library Supplies is a full-service library and education fit-out company.

They have been in business for 38 years and have fitted out hundreds of libraries across Australia. Services include design and manufacturing of furniture, steel shelving, service counters and pods, circulation desks and administration counters. They also specialise in relocating library collections, and make trolleys, library equipment for book processing and protection, and set up controlled access and returns systems.

One of Quantum's recent fit outs was of the Potter Library at All Hallows' School in Brisbane, a school of 1,300 girls. Quantum was called in by architects

managing the library rebuild, who supplied a conceptual plan. This plan was then refined by Quantum into a functional fit out. "As library specialists, we understand the intricacies of functioning libraries," said Doug Stewart for Quantum.

During the renovation, the library's collection still had to be accessible to staff and students, so Quantum relocated it to a temporary library on campus. They arranged for other resources to be stored off site. When the refit was complete, Quantum managed the retrieval and restocking of all collections and resources.

Anne Weaver, head of library and information services at All Hallows', was impressed with how Quantum managed the consultancy and fit out. "The level of communication, collaboration and attention



to detail was fantastic. The suppliers built most of the new furniture including circular shelving and booths, and we were even able to view the furniture whilst it was being built in the warehouse to check final details."

The shelving selected is from a range called Sterling, a combination of timber-frame carcass with wood or steel shelving. A mix of straight and curved shelving was used.

The forum booth was custom-built with sterling shelving wrapped around the outside, and tables and seating were fitted with castors to allow for easy repositioning.

"Libraries are becoming more community-focused for collaboration, and furniture needs to be versatile," said Mr Stewart. "They also need to be technology-friendly with plenty of spaces for laptops and tech devices." ●

Outside of school hours care

Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS) data shows the proportion of families with both parents working is on the rise with no sign of abating.

The federal government has moved to redirect family assistance dollars towards childcare,

sending a clear message that the demand for out of school hours care (OOSH) is not dwindling. Parents need more childcare places, but it's not as simple as opening a room and having students file in. *School News* developed a feature covering various industry voices regarding the provision of quality before and after school, and holiday care.

Think outside the square for OOSH innovation

Embarking on the decision to set up outside of school hours care in your school is a big decision, and can be addressed using more than one approach. Sherpa Kids' managing director, Vicki Prout suggest schools "think outside the square":

She says limitations on usable school space has resulted in innovative ideas, such as play cafes, or using business premises and community halls for added convenience.

While schools can manage their own centres, Ms Prout says the National Quality Framework (NQF)

is "becoming more burdensome" and "OOSH operators need to be subject matter experts" to manage all reporting and compliance requirements. She says that while this is entirely possible when resources are available, the days of the "homespun approach of yesteryear" may be numbered.

"Schools running their own OOSH services really now need an individual dedicated to governance," she noted.

Planning a program: "A provider or committee should conduct an intensive interview with the school to identify their very specific needs, and the program can be structured to meet them," Ms Prout advised.

Before-school care: Ms Prout said,

"a welcoming, nurturing, safe and calm environment gets children to the point where they're ready for the school day, underpinned, of course, by an interesting and healthy breakfast".

Holiday care: Ms Prout says having a good mix of incursions and excursions keeps students engaged: "Avoid any semblance of a strict classroom environment; it is 'holiday' care. Also, variety is important; following different daily themes is an enjoyable way to engage children. It also allows them to experience a diverse range of activities."

Taking the plunge: Ms Prout says she sees schools delaying the "difficult discussions" about establishing or contracting an



OOSH service: "When schools wait until the last moment and then embark on the process, it becomes rushed and stressful." And finally, "don't underestimate the actual work involved," Ms Prout said. "OOSH care has evolved into a genuine business; whether you are running it as a business or not, you will still have to treat it like one, with appropriate care and due diligence around such business-like elements as financial stability, operations, staffing and compliance." ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter

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Childhood in the digital age

We all know that childhood is different in the digital age. The challenge facing parents, schools and educators is to blend the best part of pre-digital childhood with the benefits of the digital age. Research findings indicate that there is still work to do. So how do we get the balance right?

Over the past decade, we've seen the development, and subsequent market domination of smart phones, tablets, gaming consoles and wireless internet.

These technological advances were instrumental in the explosion of social media platforms like Facebook and



Instagram. They have reinvented the way we interact with videos, music and books via an array of download and streaming sites and apps.

While the advantages of technology are easy to see, left unmanaged, the array of negative effects could reach

epidemic levels.

Schools have a responsibility to prepare children for the future, and technology is a key component of that.

In a world in which 'extelligence' is growing at an exponential rate, teaching children to use it well may be more important

Adam Pease

CEO, Camp Australia



than intelligence. Extelligence is a term coined by author and scholar Ian Stewart, referring to the cultural capital available in the form of external media. Extelligence contrasts with intelligence, that is, the knowledge and cognitive processes within the brain.

Children can benefit from interactive programs and apps, as well as those based around music, movement and stories. Technology is a draw-card for children.

Television, computer games and internet sites are colourful, loud and enticing and it's easy for children to feel the lure of technology to relieve their boredom.

Unfortunately, technology can also be used for purposes other than the pursuit of knowledge,

Engaged staff, varied programs key to OOSH engagement

Camp Australia's CEO, Adam Pease says partnering with an experienced provider takes the guesswork out of compliance, regulations, recruitment and training, program set-up, rostering, and billing - allowing the school to focus on teaching and learning.

He says compliance with the National Quality Framework (NQF) is a major consideration for schools looking to establish their own centre, "but plenty of support is available."

The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) publishes several guides on their website, and experience and knowledge can be shared from other in-house providers as well as attending forums, conferences and seminars. "Meeting with



regulatory authorities can provide initial and ongoing support," he added. It's all about the kids: Whether you choose an external provider or establish a centre in-house, the children's welfare is the main game. Mr Pease says consulting with the school community, including children, helps ensure the program meets everyone's needs.

He suggested the 'My Time, Our Place' educational framework as a useful tool for educators charged with creating play-based learning opportunities for school-aged

children outside of school hours.

Before-school care: Mr Pease says the best approach will vary depending on the child, just like with teaching. "Creating an engaging program tailored to the child's interests is a sure-fire way of capturing their attention and getting them motivated for the learning day ahead," he added.

Holiday programs: "The vital ingredients for a successful holiday club are to create a safe and fun environment; recruit energetic and eager educators;

and ensure there's a wide range of engaging activities," Mr Pease said. Leadership is vital: "Educators influence the direction of the program and should retain control of the room and manage the kids' energy throughout the day."

Holiday programs can be a long day for children. "Creating 'zones' or opportunities for indoor/outdoor play, reading, cooking, hands on-science, or even excursions, allows kids freedom and choice within the confines of the program," he noted.

Mr Pease says schools should be aware of the considerable work involved, in compliance; recruitment, training and retention of quality staff, as well as accounts-related complications. However, if they have the person power, he says it's achievable. ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter

and the consequences of its misuse are broad.

The time children spend immersed in technology - or screen time - currently outweighs the time they spend doing physical activities. Across society, lifestyles are more sedentary, and the incidence of obesity, especially in children, is rapidly increasing.

According to the 2011-12 Australian Health Survey conducted by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the number of children that are overweight has doubled in recent years, with approximately 25 percent of children considered overweight or obese at the time of reporting.

The same report indicated that children who spend more than three hours a day on screen time

are more likely to be overweight and physically less active; sleep less, drink more sugar drinks and snack foods high in sugar, salt and fat; have fewer social interactions, and underachieve at school.

There is a time and place for technology, and it should not replace reading, writing, playing or problem-solving activities for children.

Educators must promote, encourage and make space for 'unplugged learning' and play to help develop these crucial skills.

Getting the Balance Right

Embracing the benefits of technology doesn't mean that a culture of unregulated screen time is advised.

Screen-free time allows children to learn through experience, play and adventure, rather than through a screen. In our busy modern existence, parents struggle to find opportunities for unstructured physical play, so they turn to organised sports.

While the physical health benefits of sports are significant, structured sporting activities, particularly competitive ones, cannot approximate unstructured or free play.

Free play allows exploration and promotes self-directed expansion of physical and mental capabilities.

Unstructured play is a serious business, and until a generation ago, children were learning life skills like negotiation, compromise, leadership and teamwork in a variety of

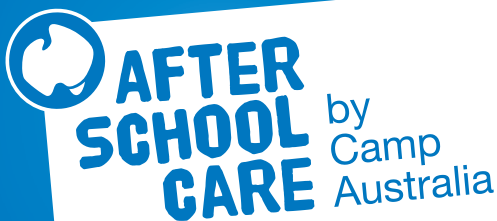
circumstances and often from a number of perspectives.

It is, perhaps, a little ironic that after school care, which a generation ago was regarded by children as restrictive, is now one of the best opportunities a child has for free play.

This is not to say that it is unstructured chaos, or a longer version of lunch time.

Quality after school care does provide children with a safe 'no screen' environment, in which they are encouraged to explore their own ideas as well as new things.

After school care is not what it used to be; it delivers a safe, reliable and nurturing environment for kids to play and grow and it definitely makes kids smile - that is why we do it. ■



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Consolidation in OOSH care 'causing problems'

Vicki Prout

Managing Director,
Sherpa Kids Australia



When a non-verbal seven-year-old boy with autism and Down syndrome walked unnoticed out of his Western Australian after-school care and into a stranger's back yard last year, the shockwaves reverberated throughout the education and childcare sectors.

Worryingly, it wasn't a one-off. Examples of these incidents abound; most recently allegations that two five-year-olds left two separate centres unsupervised in July and August.

None of this should be coming as a surprise to anyone who has watched the evolution of the Australian OOSH (out of school hours) care sector over the past decade or so.

Part of the issue is that while new laws, regulations and administrative requirements are

forcing long overdue change on the sector, very little has had to change in the way OOSH or OSHC services are actually delivered.

Rampant consolidation within the sector has resulted in larger and larger groups of children being placed into single service provision centres, with very little in the way of structured supervision.

Behind this trend, lies a seemingly insatiable demand for this type of child care. Commonwealth reports show that in 2013 there were 100,000 more children in OOSH care (335,000) than in 2004 (225,000). More than two thirds of that growth (66,950) occurred after September 2010, and demand for after-school care providers continues to outstrip supply in most areas.

Volunteer-managed OOSH committees are struggling with the issue of out of school care in the face of new regulatory reforms that increase quality

expectations but also increase administrative burdens.

The net result is that senior educators are looking for a better way and OOSH service providers are frequently an attractive option, which brings the story full circle, back to our view that consolidation within the industry has got to the point where it's causing problems.

This is a stale sector of the child care market. Some of the more established providers have been around for decades, and in many cases, they've degenerated into little more than a corporate baby-sitting service.

This is where the rot starts. It's just not good enough to chuck a few toys and some balls at a couple of hundred kids and tell them to go off and play. Of course, a few of them are going to find a hole in a fence somewhere and go walkabout. It's entirely predictable. It's also preventable. But first real structural change needs to happen in the way OOSH

services are tendered and commissioned.

The big players are now doing their thing on an almost industrial scale. So, when they come to tender for a service at any given school, they can pretty much buy their way in by way of shovelling much of their fee right back at the school in the form of a 'financial contribution'.

Of course, principals and OOSH committees are going to look really carefully at these attractive financial models.

However, as with most things, there's a trade-off, and in our sector, that's the large volume, unstructured environment I was talking about earlier. The feedback I've received from schools indicates that carers and teachers are becoming a bit leery and twitchy about the industrialisation of OOSH. This is much of what's driving one of the biggest shifts likely to impact the OOSH sector, 'a sea change' perhaps in when and where OOSH services are offered. ■

School camps a rite of passage to remember

School camps: a mixture of mucky fun and rollicking adventures, midnight tent giggles, the occasional injury, and a contingent of teachers in sneakers and cargo pants, with a lighter than usual countenance, who always seem to be drinking coffee. That might be the student's view of camp, but what about the teachers?

Let's see... school camps: a mixture of logistical nightmares and uplifting natural vistas, bleary-eyed mornings after night-patrol. Homesick students, night-time exclusion bullying in the girls' tents, locating lost torches and pyjamas... and coffee.

Whether you have to send someone home early or not, the overall experience of students and staff is normally good. Connections are made and strengthened between students and teachers, and successful team-building promises an improvement to interpersonal relations for the rest of the year.

Students gallantly row hours up-river against currents, endure character-building hikes with fit, youthful and charismatic group leaders, spouting information aplenty on flora and fauna for anyone not too exhausted and delirious to listen. Campfires, marshmallows, frogs in the



Photo: Queensland Recreation Centres

shower. Bee stings, ant bites, and slightly singed hair.

The traditional school camp formula will never age; it's based in a scouting tradition, and a hearkening to the origins of humankind. The school camp may be our last rite of passage, as experts decry the loss of meaning in the passage from child to teen. Education extends and the beginning of independent adulthood creeps into the twenties, while once, fourteen-year-olds were jackaroos, and life began at 16.

Back in 1999, when *Raising Boys* was released, Steve Biddulph said, "Adolescence is a spiritual crisis as well as a hormonal eruption. The questions arise: 'Where am I going? What's my life about? What do I stand for?'"

School camps can offer a student a sense of meaning

and purpose, they can provide practice in overcoming obstacles, develop endurance and broaden a student's view of their own capabilities. Depending on the destination, a school trip can broaden a student's life view and add new awareness and diversity

to their view of the world.

Whether it's a humanitarian project, a couple of weeks in a foreign country, (desperately trying to remember the formal verb forms to address your host), or the physical challenge of cross-country skiing at a destination far from home: all these and more can give adolescents an experience of engaging in, and overcoming, a personal challenge.

Finances are always an intrinsic element to the planning process of school camps. Some schools just have more access to funds than others, as do some families. Engaging in planning early and charging students with fundraising is as much of an empowering quest as the journey itself. The process of saving for a two-week trip to Japan gives students a sense of achievement, ownership and engagement in the trip. It also ►



Photo: YHA Fremantle Prison

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◀ makes them appreciate it more.

High school aged students used to contribute substantially to the family's livelihood; in many cultures, they still do. Their energies, when channelled can be formidable, but what happens when this force has nowhere to run? Steve Biddulph tells us: "Where there's a gang of boys, the men in that community aren't doing their job - 17-year-olds can't lead boys anywhere, except into trouble". No doubt, the same applies to girls leading each other astray.

Karen McElroy facilitates day and residential programs for girls and young women, and she says a girl's transition to adolescence is no less important than marriage, birth and death: "The acknowledgement of this transition can support self-esteem and foster a strong identity and sense of purpose. Young people face so many pressures in modern

times and adolescence is a special time where we start to truly see ourselves for the first time, learn who we are and why we are here."

In various interviews and his own TED Talk, adolescence expert, Dr Arne Rubenstein identified the period between 14 and 18 years as "a critical time" of development. He says it's when new behaviours should emerge, and 'ego-centricism' should be replaced by community awareness. This transition is recognised, and marked with an initiation ceremony in all Indigenous cultures, but not in ours. His view is: because we are not creating initiation ceremonies for our teenagers, they are doing it themselves. A lot of the risk-taking behaviour we see, such as reckless driving, drugs, alcohol abuse; Dr Rubenstein says these are examples of self-initiating.

Casting back to ABC's 2016 screening of *Revolution School*,

for those who missed it, a documentary followed a year in the life of Kambrya College, a turnaround school in Melbourne. A special feature of the program was the Darrabi boys. Boys, who would otherwise have been excluded from school, were enrolled in a separate class, where they received intense support, mentoring and remedial tutelage. In one episode, the boys were drifting from their objectives, and the program leaders were concerned. What did they do? They took them out bush of course. In the lead up, the boys complained about the rustic conditions ahead, but when they almost lost the privilege a week before the planned trip, the dismay in the room was palpable. These boys wanted this, perhaps sensing it would be as transformative as it proved to be. They returned 'new men' and one of them went on to stand for election for a student representative position. He won.

Whether the school trip is an outback endurance adventure or a trip interstate or overseas, an element of challenge will be present for students. Some students have never spent more than a night away from their parents, and the ability to self-manage is still developing in many students. Tasks as simple as keeping track of their own items, sorting out their washing, or budgeting their spending money, can be new territory and almost as educational as tour content itself.

While the content of a school camp will vary, the learning is real and intensive, and students are challenged while outside their comfort zone. When students return from such an adventure, they seem just a little bit older; they walk just a little bit taller, and memories are made. These are memories that last a lifetime. ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter

Hole up your kids at Fremantle Prison

The Fremantle Prison YHA is perfect for a group of thirsty - and occasionally criminal - young minds. Based in the original women's wing of the Fremantle Prison, several dorms are (surprisingly spacious and comfortable) converted prison cells. Many feature an interconnecting 'teacher's room', offering privacy without compromising on supervision.

For social or 'class' times, YHA's conference room offers AV equipment and ample seating. YHA Fremantle manager Sean Stahlhut says students will

enjoy volleyball and table tennis on the lawn in the 'exercise yard'.

YHA has placed historical storyboards around the hostel to peak the students' excitement. "Some of the more infamous prisoners are featured and students are fascinated, and teachers love that students immerse themselves in a true historical situation," he noted.

When inmates stage a jailbreak, the Fremantle CBD, Oval, Museums and Markets, and guided tours of Fremantle Prison are just outside the prison gates. Mr Stahlhut recommends early booking, as the unique property has become popular with school groups, - but said, "last-minute bookings can often be accommodated". ●





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During the winter, skiing is the most popular choice of activity for visitors, and Go Orange! arranges packages including accommodation, transport, rental, clothing and lift passes.

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for white water rafting, cycling, walking, kayaking, and cruises of Milford and Doubtful Sounds. They can also provide transport for school groups to travel to dinners and other events, will also arrange charters to and from dinners and events. Groups of 20 or more are provided with a tour leader free of charge, and the full ski package includes access to a choice of four ski fields: Cardrona, The Remarkables, Coronet Peak and Treble Cone. ●



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The Queensland Recreation Centres now offer four new themed programs as part of their all-inclusive Adventure Camp.

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Each of the programs develops skills through a fun, challenging, and engaging experiential learning process, using activities such as rock climbing, abseiling, surfing, raft building, and even caving!

The programs have been designed in consultation with experienced teachers to align with the Australian Curriculum. A suite of teacher and student



resources are also available for Year Bands 5/6 and 7/8, which include pre, during and post camp activities.

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Sports flooring for performance and safety

Remember the days in the old school yard? The grazed elbows and that chilling scrape of the knees as you shed your skin like a snake on the gravel?

Many students in contemporary schools are spared this rite-of-passage result of bulrush and jailbreak. Although many schools still struggle with funding to update grounds, there is a shift towards harnessing technology to develop ground coverings and large indoor spaces with flooring that is easy on the body, and incredibly versatile.

Students play sport that at an exploratory level at school, which means they sample numerous sports through the practical components of health and physical education curriculum. Students also participate in school-wide sports programs, get-fit campaigns, and games that enhance confidence and coordination managed by class teachers. The options for sports flooring are as varied as the sports students play on them.

Industry view

Jason Tully of Ace Floors and Coatings says the most commonly used products are as follows:



Melton Christian School. Photo: Ace Floors & Coatings.

Modular sports tiles: a durable sports tiles suitable for indoor and outdoor use. He says the tiles create a low-maintenance surface with an average life expectancy of 15 years that can be padded for added resilience.

Maintenance: Mr Tully says modular sports tiles require no maintenance besides general cleaning.

Sports sheet vinyl: welded seam cushioned vinyl sheet. He says the result is a low-maintenance surface also with a life expectancy

of around 15 years. The disadvantage of this one is that the surface can't be changed from the original install; for example, colour or line markings can't be updated.

Maintenance: sports sheet vinyl requires only general cleaning by way of maintenance.

Seamless synthetic flooring: this involves pouring a polyurethane coating over a rubber matting base; it can be re-topped after seven years to prolong the life of the surface.

Maintenance: this is a low-maintenance surface with options for re-painting and line marking when showing signs of wear, generally after seven years. The life expectancy is around 20 years, and when traffic is skewed to high frequency locations, resulting in uneven surfaces, he says a top self-levelling coat can be put down, to extend the life of the surface.

Sprung timber: this versatile option can be suitable for sport played at different levels of competition. Timber can come in a range of colours and be derived from various species or tree. Sprung timber flooring has a high level of resilience, durability and performance. The life expectancy more than 50 years.

Maintenance: Mr Tully said, "sprung timber should be coated every 12 months to give the required slip resistance and wear to the surface. Every 10 years, they should be fully stripped back to bare timber to level out the floor and provide a new looking surface".

Safety first

Mr Tully says schools should ensure a high level of slip resistance to their surfaces and a medium level of resilience.

"Having a resilient floor will result



Photo: Ace Floors & Coatings.



Photo: Ace Floors & Coatings.

in fewer impact injuries to joints from an early age. Resilience is having the elasticity to partially compress, providing spring in the floor. This extra degree of give protects joints through not having instant force applied."

In a society characterised by heightened concern for safety and accident prevention, health and safety, duty of care (and legal concerns) will feature heavily in all decisions about a school's infrastructure and facilities. Mr Tully says schools generally request the highest levels of safety in their flooring, with "slip resistance being the main issue".

Another aspect of health and safety, which is relevant to indoor sporting facilities, is maintaining optimum indoor air quality for users, who in this case are children with developing respiratory systems. Mr Tully says surfaces will vary how they impact the indoor environment, and subsequently the health of developing lungs: "For example a seamless synthetic flooring uses fully recycled rubber matting with a low VOC top coating."

And the environment? Mr Tully says there are options that are gentler on the environment, such as their choice to "source timber from the only carbon negative timber mill in the world".

Climatic considerations

Mr Tully says flooring selection is affected by climate: "Tropical areas tend to use the synthetic or vinyl options, because of the effect of humidity on timber, such as mould and expansion, while most areas use the timber floors as the life expectancy ensures longevity."

Aside from those climatic differences, Mr Tully says most schools require similar things; resilience and safety. "Schools

seem to favour the traditional options, because they know they work."

He has observed a recent trend in efficient use of facilities: 'Schools are using their sports hall as a multi-use space; and using retractable seating allows them to seat up to 1500 people to host productions, concerts and school assemblies.'

Mr Tully told *School News* he has seen an increase in Futsal being played in facilities in the past few years, though the trend is budget-dependent: "Futsal requires a large floor area, which not all facilities can afford."

Service and maintenance

Mr Tully says safe, multifunctional flooring that addresses the requirements for a variety of sporting and non-sporting activities is a straight-forward business when you know what is required to keep your flooring in the condition required for optimised performance.

Mr Tully suggested that keeping things competitive might be a good call: "With exclusive dealership situations, you are locked in with one supplier for future repairs, making it easy for them to just set their price, when you need repairs."

He says exceptional before and after sales service makes all the difference: "I've met with Australian schools who been supplied with sports flooring without information on cleaning and maintenance requirements." He says this results in expensive repair costs for damage that could have been avoided with proper care. ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter

supplier profile

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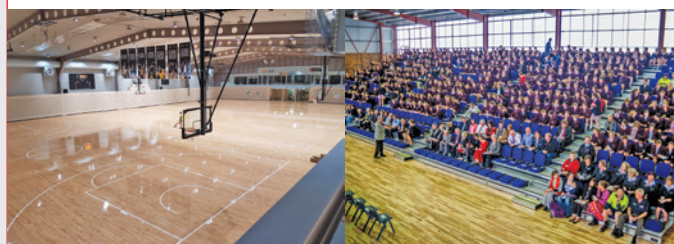
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Creating a positive school sporting culture

Government initiatives, community groups and health professionals are singing the same tune on fitness levels for children and teens. As the instances of childhood obesity inch upwards, so too do the concerns of parents, teachers and thankfully politicians.

Recent news items raised doctors' concerns that parents no longer realise what a healthy weight looks like. It could be that society is no longer able to recognise a healthy level of activity for a growing child. Government has responded to the rising rate of inactivity with policy, funding and heightened focus on health curriculum in schools.

One such recipient of funding and support is the information portal, Clearinghouse for Sport (www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au). The site is a hub of knowledge, delivered by Australia's leading sport and active recreation government bodies and agencies. Membership is free; go here to join: https://www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/about/member_registration

The site published a framework document evaluated by Graeme Murphy, School of Health and Sport Sciences, University of the Sunshine Coast, highlighting that



Photo: Rowing Australia

the following key messages must underpin a national or state-based junior sporting framework:

- Sports policies and programs that encourage enjoyable, safe, inclusive and challenging experiences for children will support better and longer-lasting participation outcomes.
- Developmentally appropriate sports programs achieve one (or more) of three broad outcomes for children and adolescents – fun, fitness, and friendship (i.e. social interaction).

A report titled *Sport in Education*, on the same site issued the

following key messages for educators, PE department and school leaders regarding the implementation and promotion of sport in schools:

- School sport makes a valuable contribution to a child's overall accumulation of regular physical activity.
- School sport, physical education curriculum, and school-day physical activity (including active transport to/from school) contribute to a child's development in several ways (e.g. health, physical and emotional wellbeing, cognitive and social development).

- School sport can be a positive influence on lifelong participation in sport and physical activity.

As sport in schools remains a priority, funding is dedicated to its implementation and promotion. Government-funded initiatives support these themes and many schools are enjoying a positive partnership with government sporting and health agencies to achieve their goals. Such programs include 'Girls on the Move', aimed at encouraging more teen girls into sport, and Sporting Schools; a \$160million Australian government initiative designed to help schools to increase children's participation in sport, and to connect children with community sport.

Creating active culture in early primary

Clearinghouse of Sport published a report titled *Participation in exercise, recreation and sport: Children's Report 2010*, prepared by the Australian Sports Commission in 2012.

The data collection for this report came from the *Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS)* conducted by state and territory departments of sport and recreation.



Photo: Sport 4 Schools

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◀ The report read:

"The percentage of Australian children reporting 'infrequent' (i.e. not on a weekly basis) participation was high, 71 percent. Only 35 percent of children participate at least three times per week, and participation further declines to only six percent of Australian children engaged in organised activities seven or more times per week.

"The median frequency of participation among children, aged between five and 14, in organised physical activity (including school sport, club sport, and other organised activities) was two times per week."

SPANS study of New South Wales school children found that only "44 percent of kindergarten students met the Australian

physical activity guidelines, this percentage increased somewhat to 49 percent among year-four students". There seems no compelling reason to imagine the situation is improved in other states and territories.

What can schools influence?

Admittedly, schools are starting behind the eight-ball when many students arrive for their first day of school having whiled away their early childhood on the iPad. Kinder and prep teachers lament the fact that their students can't use a pair of scissors, but there is also the rising concern of students who can't play 'capture the flag' without turning red. It's a sensitive topic, and one that confounds many. How to discourage focus on the physical, while addressing a real health



Photo: Sport Star Academy

issue presented by the rising levels of obesity?

In NSW, a new policy decision to extend the parameters of "risk of serious harm" to include the risk of childhood obesity caused a furore of consternation amid a shower of support. The department's position is

that "obesity is considered a child protection issue when it is impacting on the child's wellbeing and welfare to a significant degree, and it is having a harmful effect on normal physical, social and emotional functioning, and parents/carers are unwilling or unable to address

Exposure to variety helps kids find their sport

Peter Nikolakopoulos of Sport Star Academy says that when children are starting out in sport, exposure to a variety of sports can help them discover one they truly love: "Our before, lunchtime and after school programs are popular with schools and it's easy for parents."

"It's important children are exposed to various types of school sports programs to develop gross motor skills, improve balance and coordination and gain fitness.

"Different sport work different parts of the brain and body, and not all people enjoy the same sports.

"Sport Star Academy provides children aged from age one to 18, skill-based sports programs designed to unlock their potential. Our team of coaches is dedicated



to providing an exceptional experience for the children and to take the stress away from schools, clubs or other providers who want to provide a specialised school sports programs." As schools struggle to engage students in sport, Mr Nikolakopoulos says consistency is key in the delivery and execution of the program: "A consistently engaging program will keep children motivated to reach their personal goals and continue with sport."

It's about more than the physical; Mr Nikolakopoulos says skills learned through sport contribute to the holistic development of young people: "Leadership skills, and values such as honesty, teamwork, commitment, respect and integrity are developed through team sport especially."

"These are life long skills we use throughout various stages of our lives both as a young person and as adults." Easy on schools: "Engaging a specialised sports

program provider removes the costs, equipment and other stresses schools may face in providing a varied sports program," Mr Nikolakopoulos explained. "Sport Star Academy provides all the necessary equipment and provides user-pay system that removes the payment element for the schools. That is, the parents pay the supplier directly."

Mr Nikolakopoulos says parents are no longer interested in a 'babysitting service'; "they are after quality programs with specialist coaches, and they want to see that their children are learning skills every week."

Mr Nikolakopoulos says different sports are trending and "the rise of football (soccer) popularity in Australia has been overwhelming."

"It's exciting to see Australian football gaining momentum and hopefully can do well on the world stage!" ●

these concerns." The policy sparked debate, and Australian Medical Association president Michael Gannon called it "social engineering".

At the risk of laying yet another responsibility at the feet of teachers, schools are being encouraged to ensure a sporting culture - and succeeding to varying degrees. In a past edition, we heard from St Pius College on their boxercise program, which began as a mental health measure, underpinned by school counsellor Rick Russo's awareness of the benefit of exercise on mental health. The program has provided the impetus for a string of schools to follow and the wind of change shows no sign of easing.

After school programs and sports incursions have broadened to include a surprising array

of pursuits. Expanding on the stalwarts of traditional 'everyperson' sports like cricket, netball and AFL, indoor rowing programs mean students can 'heave ho' in unison whether you have river in view or not.

Variety and opportunity has expanded in most areas of modern life, so why would school

sport be any different. Engaging and active sessions can mean anything from martial arts and self-defense training, to circus acrobatics and unicycling, which suit some students who find the fear of failing team-mates hard to overcome. Individual sports allow a student to focus on their own development of physical skills

while other students focus on theirs. If you really want to dangle the carrot, there are 'pop culture' sports like skating and scooting, and no, I don't mean boot-scooting, but you could try... ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter



Photo: Rowing Australia

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CHAMPIONS ARE MADE, NOT BORN



Professional sports coaching with a sense of fun

Greg McDonald lives and breathes sport. The former AFL development officer, first-grade cricketer, first-grade rugby union player and NSW representative, is the owner of Sport 4 Schools - "a group of sports development coaches who provide fun, active sports coaching sessions for children in Australia".

"We provide all sports equipment when we visit schools. Our passion is giving children the opportunity to learn sports skills and play sports, so our programs are negotiable for primary schools and high schools with limited budgets." Safe sport with a twist: Mr McDonald says their inflatable sports equipment engages students: "The inflatable soccer arena provides



a safe playing environment while also providing a stadium feel for players and spectators."

"The best thing about inflatable soccer is that the ball never goes out. The ball bounces off the inflatable walls so the soccer game is continuous. At inflatable soccer, everyone gets a kick! This fun inflatable arena can also be used to play touch footy, Oz tag and almost any sport inside it."

To take the variety to dizzying heights, Sport 4 Schools offers a fun circus skills program. "Children rotate through a circuit of stations, learning circus skills

that aid concentration, hand eye coordination and motor skills."

Mr McDonald says the benefits of circus skills include improved coordination and balance; hand-eye coordination, self-confidence; increased cardiovascular fitness and more. At the end of the term students perform a fun talent quest where they can show what they have learnt and win prizes.

Fitness ever a concern with today's generation, Mr McDonald says Sport 4 Schools has devised an inflatable boot camp obstacle course. "This massive 25-metre long inflatable military

obstacle course challenges competitors to navigate through a series of combat obstacles, just like they would at an army boot camp."

"It has tyres to jump through, pits to swing across, hurdles to overcome, hills to climb, and slides to slip down into victory." Mr McDonald says fewer parents want to spend their weekends on their children's sporting commitments, and is says school sport is vital as a result.

Sport 4 Schools provides coaches, referees and inflatable sports for high school sport: "We also provide specialist sports coaching at private schools."

Mr McDonald said, "schools can hire the inflatable boot camp obstacle course, inflatable soccer arena or water slide for an end of year party from just \$4 per student - why hire buses when we can bring a fun day to you?". ●

Indoor rowing takes the sport to the mainstream

Ron Batt, National Community Development and Education Officer at Rowing Australia says rowing is a team sport that encourages athletes to work together: "It also teaches resilience, punctuality, good social skills and the importance of working with others."

"You learn a great deal about yourself - how hard you are prepared to push yourself. Our program, Sporting Schools: Riggers gives primary or secondary school students an opportunity to try the sport of rowing for up to six sessions."

For schools struggling to engage students in sport, Mr Batt suggests a change to the mode of delivery may help: "Ensure

sport is also about having fun, trying your hardest and not just about winning." He says "over-coaching" students can mean students spend too much time being told what to do and not enough doing.

He says rowing engages the whole body, making it excellent physical exercise for developing bodies, but it's not just the physical that gets a workout. "We see improvement in social skills and evidence suggests students study better when participating in rowing," Mr Batt noted.

Through the Riggers indoor program, rowing will be available anywhere in Australia, and these days no water is required to practise the sport: "There are costs associated with on-water equipment but indoor equipment is far cheaper," Mr Batt noted.

Mr Batt says Rowing Australia is producing an online training course with the University of Queensland: "This will allow teachers to deliver Riggers - Indoor Rowing themselves."

Is rowing on the up? Mr Batt says it is, both on the water and indoors: "We're seeing a significant increase in numbers, particularly in under 18s and masters (27+). Growth in indoor rowing is particularly strong."

He says the Australian Indoor Rowing Championships are gaining traction, with races held at various locations across the country from the November 4 to 12: "There are races for all ages and abilities from 12 to 90+, men and women; and for over 18s, lightweight and openweight events. You don't have to be a champion to compete."

Rowing is no longer the domain of highly-resourced schools with a nearby river. A sport that genuinely works out your entire body; promotes team-building skills, leadership and cooperation is now readily available. Rowing has gone mainstream and young bodies and minds are reaping the benefits. ●



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Riggers has been specifically developed for primary schools, as part of the Australian Sports Commission Sporting Schools initiative, giving students an opportunity to try rowing in a safe and fun environment.

Up to 6 indoor sessions, using rowing machines, are available to give primary school students an opportunity to try a new and exciting sport in their school program. This is a great way to engage children in a fun and enjoyable sport. Games are played to learn how to row.

Shortly, Rowing Australia will be providing an online training course available to all school teachers, via the University of Queensland, that will enable teachers to deliver Riggers themselves (indoor rowing component only).



For more information contact **Ron Batt** via email: rbatt@rowingaustralia.com.au or telephone: 0410 583 474.



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If your school is interested in hosting or being part of an AIRC event, please contact **Ron Batt** via email rbatt@rowingaustralia.com.au or telephone: 0410 583 474 and hear about how you can get involved!

Encouraging students to ride to school

As childhood obesity statistics fill both news feeds and the preoccupations of parents and carers, the modern routine of the school run in the family car endures.

How can schools support their students to jump on those bikes or scooters and get to school under their own steam?

In a Queensland town, local police officers recently issued a public warning to parents that students under 12 should not walk or ride to school alone. I'm sure many remember traipsing to school, or sailing, helmet free down the footpath with the wind at their back. Well, that's just not safe, not the bareheaded bit anyway, but the rest, many argue, is quite



Photo: Leda Security Products

safe, in fact, it's healthy. If this is so healthy, why are parents not sending their kids to school by bike, or on scooters, or simply on foot?

The reasons are many, but the most frequently cited are increased distance between home and school resulting from urban

sprawl, and the trend away from just attending your local school. Other factors include road safety concerns, the risk of theft, and kids these days are used to being driven everywhere.

How can a school encourage their students to self-power to and from school? I heard of an 'introductory

bicycle skills' program at a school the other day, which seemed perfectly normal, until I realised it was for high school students. With the rite of passage from training wheels around age five no longer the norm, health advocates suggest schools pick up where the parents left off, and teach bike and scooter skills at school.

Aside from education, appealing to the local council to ensure bike paths are at least on the agenda should be part of the plan, and of course, storage.

Industry view

Bike and scooter parking is a must if schools expect their students to ride to school, and families will be reluctant to send valuable equipment to school without assurance of security.

Strong, lockable bike racks give confidence to ride

Jon Rutledge from Cora Bike Racks says schools and parents want students to ride to school for the health benefits, and the environmental impact. Safe and secure bicycle parking facilities are intrinsic to supporting the practice: "Reducing the risk of damaged or stolen bikes, means more kids ride their bikes to school."

Mr Rutledge recommends giving thought to accommodating "all modes of self-powered transport likely to be ridden by students - including bicycles, scooters and skateboards" and "make sure the racks are lockable."

Without security, he warns racks may sit there unused, but safe

storage is not only about theft: "For bicycles, the rack must support the bike in a stable position and allow a U-lock to secure one wheel and the bike frame to the rack."

For durable bike storage solutions, Mr Rutledge says using a hot dipped galvanised or stainless steel finish will avoid the need to repair chipped and rusted products: "If using colour, use a high-quality thermoplastic that is resistant to scratches, and avoid racks that require assembly as they tend to be more prone to vandalism. Use tamper resistant fittings."

For more information, Mr Rutledge says guidelines for bicycle parking layouts and products, such as required space to access the racks can be found in standard AS2890.3(2015). ●





Photos: Leda Security Products

David Matthews, managing director of Leda Security Products, says the numbers of schools providing bike and scooter parking is increasing: "Years ago, when we first moved into providing bike and scooter storage for schools, most principals said they had no funds, and if they were installed, they were funded by P&C associations."

"Australia definitely lags behind New Zealand in the number of kids riding to school, but Australia is seeing a steady increase," noted Mr Matthews. He says that in Australia it varies from state to state, with Western Australia the clear leader: "In WA, they've taken the initiative that bicycle parking must be included in all new school

design projects." The last decade has seen a shift towards bike racks in other Australian states, but progress is still slow.

Mr Matthews acknowledged that progress had been made with speed restrictions around schools at high-traffic times of the day, but "certainly councils and government could make it easier for children to safely get to and from school in a healthy way if they provided paths."

In most cities in New Zealand, scooter and bike use is far more common than in Australia, as cycling culture strengthens.

Despite traffic issues around Auckland particularly, there is

commitment from local councils to work towards better bike paths and safe cycling measures.

Mr Matthews says awareness is also growing worldwide: "In London, the school boards are encouraging students to ride their bikes or scooters to school to overcome traffic congestion; we've been approached to provide advice on this issue."

What are the options?

Choices are extensive and styles of bike racks vary from a simple low-rise rack with support for the front wheel to a locking cage holding more than 100 bikes.

"Some schools are installing what

we call 'end of journey facilities'," Mr Matthews said. Already quite common in CBD apartments and office buildings, the facilities include storage for bikes, repair stations, helmets, and clothing, as well as shower facilities for students to wash off their morning's ride and start school refreshed.

In WA, end of journey facilities might be gaining traction, but Mr Matthews said the most common is still just a bike rack in an open area, while cages holding 40 to 50 bikes are becoming more common:

"We had one in WA holding 100 to 150 bikes."

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◀ “Once you supply students with a cage, you’ve improved their security, and what we are hearing from schools is that security is paramount.”

Most commonly, bicycle and scooter parking in schools will take the form of outdoor bike racks, but Mr Matthews urges that the type of rack you choose can affect your students’ inclination to ride to school.

Bike and scooter storage is governed by mandatory standards in Australia, and guidelines in New Zealand. “The rack must be durable, you get what you pay for. In the days of internet shopping, buying lower quality racks online can mean investing in a product that doesn’t meet Australian standards.”

How racks are coated will vary: “Installing bike racks with powder coating or a painted surface can



Photo: Cora Bike Racks

result in a scratched surface followed by rust; they look awful.”

Mr Matthews says schools most frequently select a rack with a hot-dip galvanised finish, “which provides excellent rust protection”. Racks are also available in stainless steel.

Mr Matthews says schools sometimes try to economise and “select the wrong equipment, and it doesn’t provide the level of security that will encourage families to risk sending their kids with expensive equipment”.

Rack design

How the bikes and scooters are stored within the rack can mean the difference between damage or safe keeping. “Some racks rely purely on the front wheel, with no leaning rail attached to it, which means that bikes can fall over, causing damage, such as scratching and sometimes worse,” Mr Matthews cautioned. “A rack should include a leaning rail, with a coating to provide protection from metal on metal.”

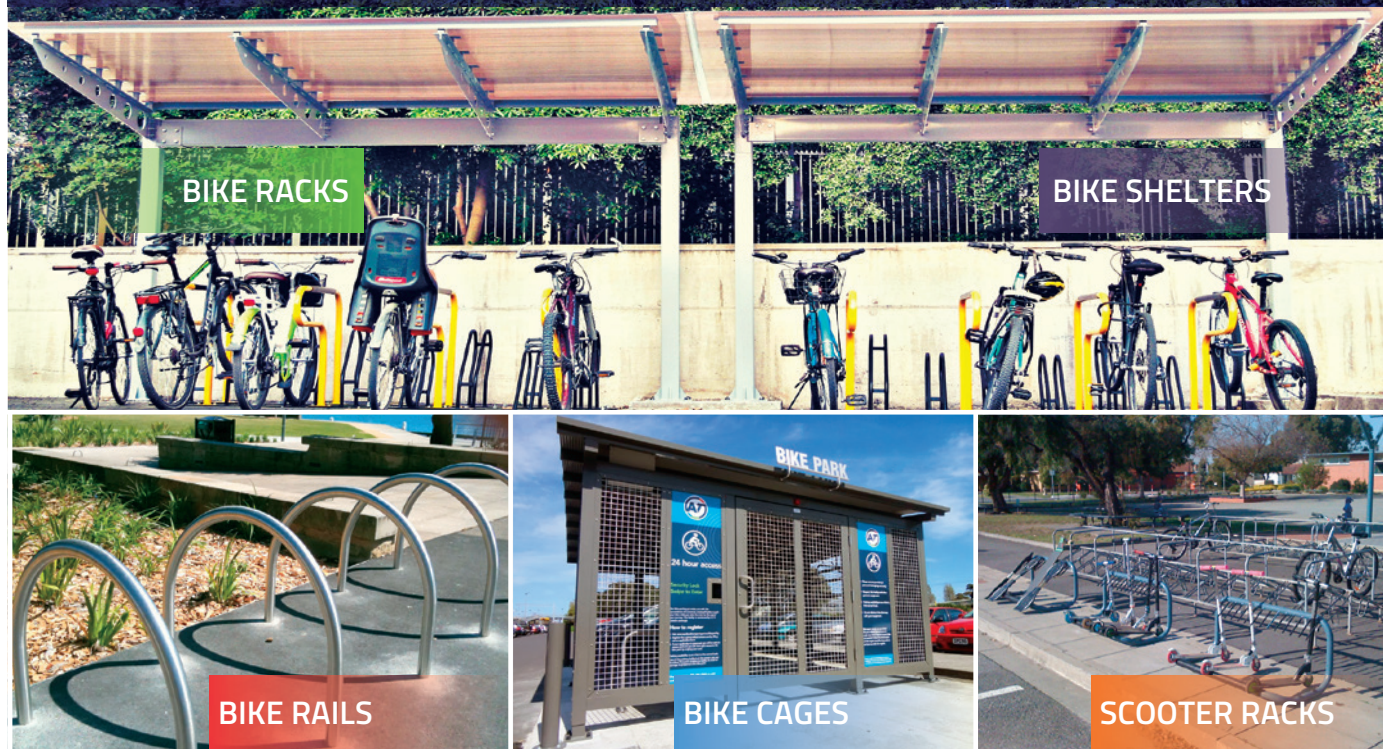
Other innovations include designs

that stagger the height of front wheels, resulting in better use of space. “For years, we have provided architects with a free design service, giving them layouts as to what they can achieve in any given space, and space is always a primary concern.” Location should be well considered: “Put parking in a high visibility area, not tucked away where vandalism can occur.”

“Communicate with your school community,” Mr Matthews advised: “If schools made a point of advising parents they are set up for kids to ride to school, and that storage is available, more parents would encourage riding.” With childhood obesity on everyone’s mind, it might just be worth pressing local council, and funding bike and scooter storage to get your students on the move. ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter

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Safe storage of chemicals and hazardous substances

Australia has various standards and regulations governing the storage and transportation of dangerous goods and toxic substances.

"Purpose-built dangerous goods cabinets can safely store petrol, kerosene, and diesel. Other flammable goods must be stored and contained separately to reduce the risk of fire igniting and spreading too quickly."

Non-compliance or accidental spills can lead to environmental damage, heavy fines, and injuries. Additionally, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) writes and enforces regulations regarding dangerous goods. They also issue strong recommendations for preventative maintenance on equipment and storage infrastructure.

Schools are equipped with hazardous substances – chemicals used in science laboratories, industrial cleaning solutions and fuel for the lawnmower, to name a few.

School leaders have a duty of care to ensure that the whole school community is protected from harm when handling these substances, so it's imperative to ensure that dangerous goods onsite are stored, labelled and transported properly in compliance with these regulations.

Industry View

School News recently spoke to Seton (a supplier of workplace safety and security solutions) for advice on keeping chemicals safe, secure and out of reach from unsupervised students and unauthorised staff.

Seton product manager Paul Stenton says that you cannot

put a price on student and staff safety, and that sourcing the most effective storage solution for your dangerous goods is vital.

Fuel for lawnmowers, pesticides for garden work, and other general maintenance chemicals should be stored in the maintenance area, and adequately safeguarded

against unauthorised access or misuse. "Training in the requirements of the relevant standards is important for anyone handling dangerous substances, but ensuring you are storing all hazardous substances in an approved, regulation compliant cabinet is paramount," Mr Stenton said.



A 250L flammable liquid storage cabinet. Photo: Seton



◀ “Purpose-built dangerous goods cabinets can safely store petrol, kerosene, and diesel. Other flammable goods must be stored and contained separately to reduce the risk of fire igniting and spreading too quickly.”

Hazards in the science lab

All Australian schools are required to comply with the relevant Australian standards for the storage of hazardous substances. These standards include AS1940 for Flammable Liquids, AS3780 for Corrosive Substances; AS2714 for Organic Peroxide, AS/NZ4452 for Pesticide; and AS/NZ 4452-Class 6 for Toxic Substances.

“It is the school's responsibility to ensure they are compliant, but not all schools are aware,” Mr Stenton said. “The consequences may include fines from governing bodies, injury to people or damage to property.”

“For any school science laboratories using toxic or corrosive chemicals for classroom experiments, it's crucial to have purpose-built toxic



and corrosive chemical storage cabinets to prevent students from accessing these chemicals without supervision.”

“Clearly marked containers also help prevent accidental misuse of hazardous substances. Placards, labels and purpose-developed safety signs can alert staff and students of the dangers and risks associated with handling dangerous substances.”

“Storage units must comply with the relevant Australian standards, and dangerous goods information such as safety data sheets must be accurate and up-to-date.” It is also recommended that “schools have emergency information hazmat (hazardous materials) boxes located at all main entrances so that emergency services personnel can easily obtain information on which

hazardous chemicals are kept onsite in case of a fire or spill.”

For fire prevention, Mr Stenton advises that flammable liquid storage cabinets, spill containment pallets and chemical handling devices help minimise the risk of incidents.

He says safety standards are updated periodically and schools are expected to educate themselves to be, and remain compliant. Mr Stenton told *School News*, “GHS stands for the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, and is a system used to classify and communicate chemical hazards using internationally consistent terms and information on chemical labels and safety data sheets.”

“From January 1, 2017, any chemicals that are used primarily in the

workplace must comply to these new labelling requirements,” he explained. He says schools should ensure that any chemicals that they purchase from this date have updated GHS labelling.

Ensuring compliance

Mr Stenton recommends conducting a dangerous goods storage audit: “This is where you simply list which chemicals the school uses and stores, along with the size, for example, number of litres of each dangerous chemical.”

He says referring to www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au regularly will ensure that your school remains compliant and staff members can be kept informed of safety requirements. “Sticking with a reputable company that supplies only compliant safety equipment can take the guesswork out of ensuring your school's dangerous goods are stored properly and in compliance with Australian standards.” ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter

Safe, reliable storage of hazardous materials on school grounds

Providing a safe environment for students to learn and grow is the goal of all schools across Australia.

A critical part of school safety is the correct handling and storage of hazardous chemicals and such as flammable corrosive and toxic chemicals.

“School communities are diverse. They include not only the students, teachers and support staff but also the extended community such as parents, grandparents, carers and after-school community groups,” Paul Stenton, product manager, Seton Australia said.

“It is therefore important that exposure to hazardous chemicals is minimized and also meets



the latest global standards.” New labeling requirements for chemicals were introduced in January 2017 under the Globally Harmonised System (GHS) of Classification and Labeling Chemicals. The system is used to classify and communicate chemical hazards and states

that any chemicals used in the workplace must comply with the new labeling requirements.

“The handling of hazardous chemicals in schools includes substances such as petrol and diesel used in lawn mowers as well as kerosene and other

flammable goods. “School laboratories also require the safe storage of flammable substances to protect students and teachers. Correct storage also ensures that the chemicals are intact, ready for use in the next class,” he said.

For more than 22 years, Seton has supplied workplace safety products and solutions to a range of industries across Australia helping keep employees safe.

Seton carries a range of 150L and 250L flammable storage cabinets as well a dangerous goods storage cabinets that meet the GHS labeling and storage requirements.

“Keeping the whole school community safe is a priority for the welfare of everyone who passes through the school gates,” said Mr Stenton. ●



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Keeping children safe around the school carpark

The start and end of every school day can be hair-raising to witness. At exactly the time we need our streets and carparks to be safe, they are at their most hazardous, as students, parents, bikes, cars and buses converge in the same location.

As any teacher who has survived crossing duty can testify, school drop-off and pick-up times are full of anxious moments as students navigate car parks, duck distracted drivers and weave past illegally parked vehicles.

Schools write to parents with monotonous regularity, pleading for them to mind speed limits, parking regulations and to watch for young pedestrians. "Please do not call your child out into the road or to cross the road rather than use the crossing," writes one principal. "Students and parents are to use the crossing. There have been some near misses which were totally avoidable."

In Australia, transport-related injuries are the leading cause of death and the most common cause of hospitalisation for children up to the age of 14.

According to the Centre for Road Safety, NSW, this is, in part, because children are impulsive and have little or no sense of danger; are small, fast and impulsive.



They also find it difficult to judge the direction of sounds, or the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles.

Boys are twice as likely to be involved in child pedestrian casualties as girls, and the highest rate of child pedestrian casualties are boys aged 13.

More than 14 per cent (29 cases out of 204) of child pedestrian deaths beyond the home occur in car parks and places such as schools and hospitals, where vehicle access is often restricted to specified members of the public, and where we would expect

vehicles to be travelling at relatively low speeds and performing low-speed manoeuvres.

Road safety issues around Australian schools are managed by state and local government agencies. Although the roles and responsibilities of the agencies vary, school principals must approve any request before the agencies responsible are contacted.

Local issues such as illegal parking, unsafe crossing behaviour, and pick-up and drop-off procedures should be managed with information and education programs. Schools can also work with their local council to raise awareness of road safety issues in the school area.

Roads around schools

Government agency, Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) provides many road safety measures around schools, including:

- installation of new school zones – new school, new direct access point;
- installation and maintenance of all 40km/h school zone signs, patches and dragon's teeth markings;

- operating times of 40km/h school zones; and
- maintenance of school zone flashing lights.

Schools on state roads

If your school is on a state road, RMS is also responsible for:

- pedestrian crossings;
- road surface repairs; and
- installing or moving a bus zone/stop.

Regional and local roads

If your school is on a regional or local road, your local council is responsible for:

- parking – changes to restrictions, signs;
- road repairs;
- pedestrian crossings;
- installation of traffic calming devices, including speed humps and roundabouts;
- off-road shared paths, cycle paths, walking trails; and
- children's crossing flags.

On school grounds

One of the biggest headaches for schools is keeping the staff car park safe for students, and yet accessible for drivers.

Research from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development reveals sobering truths about the extent to which "non traffic" areas such as car parks, pose a threat to child safety.

In places like parking lots, schools and sports grounds, children have been killed or injured after being run over by a motor vehicle.

"These are places where vehicles are typically travelling at low speed, hence the appearance of the term 'low-speed vehicle run-over', which has emerged from child trauma units in hospitals," the department advised.

State transport departments recommend that principals don't allow parents and carers to drive





onto the school ground to pick up or drop off students. This can be reinforced by:

- placing signs at the school gates;
- reminders in the school newsletter, website; and
- closing school gates to prevent entry.

They also recommend that schools encourage parents to help reduce traffic congestion by carpooling or allowing their children to walk, cycle or scoot to school.

Traffic calming

Vehicles using school grounds can be slowed by traffic calming measures such as signage to specify a speed limit, and by physical adjustments such as speed humps or speed cushions.

A speed cushion is like a speed bump, but it allows emergency vehicles access, without slowing down to a crawl. The cushion sits in the middle of the lane where, at 1.8m wide, it will slow most vehicles. But because ambulances and fire trucks are wider, the tyres will not touch the cushion so they can continue to travel at speed. Speed cushions are widely used

in driveways of hospitals and rest homes.

Mirrors

The use of mirrors for blind corners is effective if your school has a patch where visibility is limited, and drivers cannot see what is around the corner.

Demarcation

Traffic safety measures need not be bulky or expensive. Clearly painted lines to show where cars can and cannot park are practical and cost effective.

Bollards

These will keep vehicles out of pedestrian areas so can be useful to designate vehicle-free bays. They are also useful for funnelling traffic into narrow lanes.

Wheel stops

Wheel stops are a practical way to keep the footpaths clear. Rather than have the footpath partially blocked by car bonnets, the wheel stops will keep vehicles back - and away from pedestrians. ■

*By Anna Clements,
Industry Reporter*

Bollards for improved safety in vehicle areas



One way to keep students safe in and around the school car park is to install bollards. Bollards installed in high traffic areas prevent damage to property from reversing cars and keep students safe by providing a physical barrier between pedestrian areas and moving vehicles.

The Bollard Shop helps schools to figure out how many bollards are required and where best to position them.

Bollards can be temporary or permanent, depending on the school's requirements, making them a cost-friendly solution compared with fencing, for example, and one that's easy to change or upgrade as parking needs evolve. They can also be tailor-made to clients' specifications, and all are built to Australian standards.

"All our products are hot dipped galvanised and powder coated to prevent rust," said Bollard Shop spokesman Aaron Higgins. "Products come with a 12-month warranty against defects, but as we are primarily dealing with steel products, their life span is 20 years plus." ●



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A recipe for change in school lunch provision

School lunches may have become the most frequently discussed meal in our society, and with good reason. Research has shown that both healthy and unhealthy eating habits formed early in life can follow on throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood.

The ABS released results indicating that in 2011-12, 25.1 percent of children aged between two and 17 years were overweight or obese, comprised of 18.2 percent overweight and 6.9 percent obese. In 1997, this figure was 20.9 percent; in 1970, an unhealthy weight in children was far less common.

Governments have responded with programs, underpinned by the National Health School Canteen (NHSC). These programs provide frameworks within which canteen coordinators can develop menus that support good nutrition. Even when the school does agree to implement the NHSC system, limitations are apparent, with critics wondering why a sugar laden

strawberry milk is an appropriate inclusion in the 'green light' everyday food category. Perhaps this is why NSW has recently scrapped the traffic light system, and replaced the program with a new system aimed at increasing the consumption of fresh food.

Programs vary, but every state and territory has one, and they are all aimed at improving nutrition at school. Common sense tells us that food affects more than a person's girth, but experts say diet can affect our ability to concentrate and process information. Essentially what children eat at school affects behaviour and learning – and anything that affects learning is the business of the school leadership team.

Jamie Oliver continues to revolutionise lunchtime in cafeteria-culture countries where 'school dinners' are served on a tray, but Australia has a lunchbox and canteen culture. Our lunch revolution is about healthy lunchbox regulations and canteen overhauls, and not everyone is happy.

De La Salle College, at Revesby recently made the news with a

student-driven 'bring-back-hot-chips' online petition, and despite some convincing arguments for the connection between learning and fried potatoes, principal Timothy Logue will be standing firm. Our culture is changing, mass-produced chicken drummies don't cut the mustard in the contemporary Australian canteen. Combine this with the time-poverty of parents, and you have a recipe for disaster, or is it actually a recipe for change?

Every issue of *School News* touches on several ways that technology is enhancing the smooth operation of our schools, both inside and outside the classroom. From interactive technology in the classroom to school management systems (SMS) that allow instant updates and enhance parent communication, and transform administration, leaving more time for the important business of helping students learn.

Unsurprisingly, the school canteen is no different, and technology can streamline this notoriously cumbersome mechanism, signalling an end to scrawled orders on brown paper bags and sorting mountains of spare change.

Industry view

We checked in with Teisha Hough, managing director of QuickCliq for some insight into how online ordering can integrate your school lunch needs into a single ordering portal for parents and staff.

Ms Hough said, "many of our families really struggle to find the time to prepare healthy meals every day". She says another issue with school lunches is selecting items that will last well in an unrefrigerated lunchbox.

"Ordering online allows families to order affordable healthy meals, and they can quickly prepare for the week in advance." She says online ordering systems allow parents to organise healthy meals within 30 seconds for under \$5: "It removes the stress of daily food prep." She says families can save their regular orders, and when children have special diets, this information can be entered in against the child's name, and will trigger alerts when unsuitable foods are selected: "We have a 'health warning session,' which follows the child through every order, with alerts also appearing with the order for the attention of the food supplier.



We also have an integrated healthy eating reporting and reward system."

She says teachers can access a separate menu, allowing busy teachers to eat well without rushing out of school on short breaks – or going without when they are rostered on for playground duty. School requirements vary, and suppliers will depend on the school's location, and characteristics: "Our system services over 550 food providers, every supplier is unique; they may offer a delivery service directly to schools, or they may be located onsite, such as a school canteen."


With any online ordering system, Ms Hough says flexibility is key: "If the online system is completely school and community initiated, it means families can also arrange activities outside of school, using the same platform." Ms Hough says their objective was to develop one portal for families to order everything from meals to school supplies and uniforms: "This allows families to use the portal for independent or one-off events, such as fees for community sporting events."

"It was about developing a processing system that serviced the families as a whole integrated system, that could be operated by multiple users. For example, the uniform shop is a separate entity from the canteen, sports departments or a user created for specific events. This facilitates the break-down of revenue for reporting and analysis."

To get the most from your ordering system, Ms Hough recommends selecting a provider that will "be on your school's team, supporting you through the whole process of reporting, collecting orders and managing families."

In a country with no school dinners, concerning childhood obesity statistics, against a backdrop of behavioural problems increasingly linked to lifestyle factors, nutrition at school needs everybody's attention. Healthy eating guidelines are a good start, but if families are time-poor, lunch ordering with a few quick clicks of the mouse might just make those guidelines a reality. ■

By Suzy Barry,
Industry Reporter



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Photo: Adventure+

Playground design more than child's play

Educators recognise that younger children do their most important work through play, which means planning a school playground involves a series of important pedagogical decision.

The school playground could be seen as an act of town planning, in miniature. The space must support the social interaction of humans, yet, because the end users of this space are still forming their characters, perhaps specialised specifications are in order?

They are on a steep learning curve, negotiating power relations and the role of status in society, while developing skills like cooperation, respecting the space of others, and the holy grail; empathy and compassion.

Playgrounds can facilitate social cohesion as they learn these big lessons, by allowing flow and movement. Along with fun and exercise, they can provide obstacles to stimulate growing minds.

Teachers know exactly where boredom and frustration leads. One long bus trip is enough to impress that indelible lesson on an educator's psyche. The playground must give room for exploration, offer visible and manageable risks, and promote a positive flow of play to minimise traffic jams and conflict. So, if this is what children need from a playground, what do they want?

According to an article titled 'Children Create the Playground of Their Dreams', published on *Edutopia Online*, when a charity funded and executed project in a low-SES school in Seattle they discovered what children want.



Multiple entry and exit points keep play in flow. Photo: Omnitech Playgrounds

They want fantasy, imagination and action in their playgrounds, and they have ideas about what that looks like. Students were invited to submit design ideas, with requests ranging from equipment that swirls you around "until you get dizzy" and structures crowned with flags ("more like a castle than a fort"), to approximations of water slides and roller coasters.

While children may not always err on the side of realism, they do have some terrific ideas, and it is the students, after all, who shimmy, bend, swing and twirl their break times away on poles, slides, platforms and swings.

The Seattle project leaders found the children were happy to have their ideas considered and implemented where possible, and rationalised when impossible, or even respectfully dismissed.

Dared by their carers to dream, the children realised plenty of their visions, but also gained a valuable skill: to modify their plans when reality bites.

However the visioning process unfolds, a playground designer will

advise on the features, materials and designs required to craft a play space that provides challenging fun, in a safe and harmonious environment, while remaining affordable for schools.

Read on for perspectives and tips from industry experts.

Industry views

Directing the flow of play for social harmony

Bottlenecks and traffic jams on play equipment can lead to pushing, shoving or worse. Both Richard Kelsey of Adventure+ and Rebecca Biehl of Omnitech emphasised the importance of multiple entry and exit points and route design that keeps children moving. The exits at multiple intervals also allows students to save face and seek an 'out' if they feel challenge ahead is beyond them.

Mr Kelsey says there's more to playground design than randomly combining a series of activities, so engaging an experienced playground supplier is important to ensure logical and harmonious

channels of movement during play: "Area points for entry and exit need to be strategically located, taking into account factors such as direction of approach, speed of access and conflicting paths."

Ms Biehl says she always ensures playgrounds feature multiple entries and exits, "but in a school environment, we would also make it a circuit type unit to keep the flow of children through the area".

Catering for the full range of primary years

Ms Biehl says that while separate areas for junior and senior students are the norm, in cases where spaces must be combined, starting with low level items of 400-800mm deck height will suit the five-year-olds: "You can then progress to higher decks/platforms of 1200-1600mm, but they should be separated by challenging elements, so younger children can't progress past their ability level." Mr Kelsey says compromise in equipment height and activity length is inevitable when the equipment must cater for multiple ages, "but, it is possible to create a multi-age playground that can be enjoyed by all."

Climbing: safe, challenging and fun

Mr Kelsey says climbing is not only a great activity for the developing physical coordination and confidence, but children love it!

Spider web structures are on the rise and Ms Biehl says the risk of increased climbing height is mitigated by the staggered levels and fall-breaks: "They're also popular because they can accommodate a lot of kids at one time and give the climbing and height that all children love."



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"All I can say is wow! What a fabulous play structure we have now in our school yard. The playground has been a fantastic addition and is very popular amongst our students. Every lunch time and snack time the playground is covered with children playing and laughing. It is wonderful to see!"

"The important feature of a children's playground in our minds is the ability to provide imaginative play opportunities and you certainly responded to that need."

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◀ Mr Kelsey agreed, and highlighted the importance of the fall height being age appropriate: "All compliant rope structures are designed in such a way that children can't fall from the top to the bottom."

"When designing equipment for multi-age use, access to the higher parts of the equipment can be limited by increasing the stepping distances."

"Ensuring climbing equipment has compliant under-surfacing installed and maintained in accordance with the Australian playground standard also minimises risk of injury," he added.

Flooring: a safe place to fall

Safety considerations extend to floor surfacing, and options include mulch, rubber, synthetic turf and sand. Ms Biehl says mulch is the cheaper alternative, and schools often manage the regular maintenance requirements through working bees. She added, "the other surfaces sometimes cost as much as the equipment".

Mr Kelsey agreed that schools choose loose under-surfacing for its availability and low initial outlay, though there are disadvantages: "It requires constant replenishment

as it becomes compacted or displaced during play."

"Where budget permits, rubber under-surfacing is a great alternative due to its visual attractiveness and minimal maintenance required," he advised.

Cotton wool clad kids?

Ms Biehl says risk is important in children's growth and development: "Children will get hurt in the playground, though often from misuse of equipment or 'being silly', but lessons are learnt, and this is important for growth and development."

Mr Kelsey says tighter regulations and increased risk awareness have considerably reduced the severity of injuries, however a reduction in "risk management strategies" is becoming apparent in today's children: "It's a social dilemma with varying schools of thought, but the increased variety of play experiences offered by modern equipment is still exciting!"

Safety, fun, adequate opportunity for challenge through visible risks at a manageable level, and thoughtfully planned flow of play are among the recommendations for a school playground to remember.

Adventure plus planning equals playground success

Adventure+ managing director Richard Kelsey takes play seriously. "Designing a school playground involves a detailed survey of the school's requirements: Which age group? Are we designing for special needs? What's the budget, location, topography: numerous factors that will determine the specs of the final product?"

"While all play equipment aids development, our designers match specific components to areas and stages of development, such as upper body strength, gross motor skills and coordination."

Mr Kelsey says the aim is to provide a balanced blend of activities. Natural elements

are popular, and can be incorporated using natural materials to give an organic feel to a stimulating play system.

He says a playground is about more than the equipment, and an experienced designer will manage its integration into the surroundings: "This may involve shade structures, access paths and landscaping."

Mr Kelsey says the Australian Standards are about safety and good manufacturing practice. "With 30 plus years in playground design, Adventure+ combines knowledge of play, developmental criteria and the Australian Standards, to seamlessly produce exciting and challenging play." ●



School playground guidance from spark to finish



Planning a school playground is a big responsibility, and an investment that is expected to serve the needs of students for years to come.

Omnitech sales manager Rebecca Biehl says being an Australian owned designer and manufacturer of Australian made equipment ensures the flexibility required to customise designs to suit a school's individual requirements.

She says Omnitech can take the project from vision to completion with everything from in-house designers and manufacturers, to concrete installers and laying mulch, rubber or synthetic turf.

"Post-installation, we conduct maintenance and annual safety checks to ensure all is equipment is safe and working well."

Ms Biehl says playground designs must offer a variety of age-appropriate developmental experiences for children: "We integrate sensory stimulation, physical challenge and enhance social and physical reflex with interactive components."

She says most children want slides and to climb and run, and as playtime is limited at school, Omnitech is focussed on physically challenging equipment that sparks the imagination. ●

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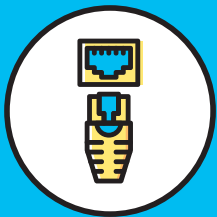
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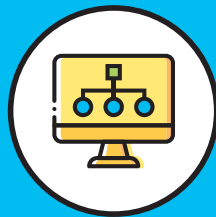
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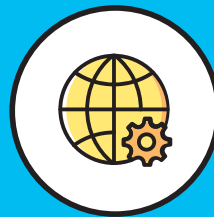
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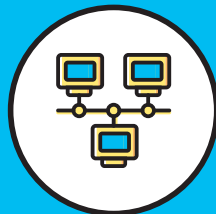
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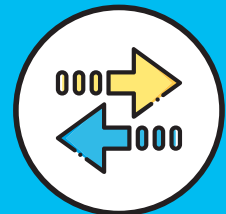
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