

SchoolNews

The essential industry guide

Issue 11 | Term 1, 2019 | AUD \$12 incl GST | school-news.com.au

Handling suicide & grief Teachers don't feel equipped

Essential Reading for Principals • Department Heads • Teachers • Professionals



A school library should be more than just a room with books. Create a dynamic space for students to connect, explore and learn.

resourcefurniture.com.au



Get into the car you love for less!

You could save thousands with a novated car lease



Hyundai i30 Active

Hatch Auto PD2 2.0i

\$337* PER FORTNIGHT
INC. \$142 OF RUNNING COSTS

Prices include:

✓ Finance ✓ Running costs

Mazda 3 Neo Sport Auto



\$289* PER FORTNIGHT
INC. \$127 OF RUNNING COSTS

Kia Cerato S Hatch Auto



\$309* PER FORTNIGHT
INC. \$140 OF RUNNING COSTS

VW Golf 110TSI Comfortline Hatch



\$384* PER FORTNIGHT
INC. \$126 OF RUNNING COSTS

Nissan X-Trail ST 7 Seats 2WD



\$413* PER FORTNIGHT
INC. \$155 OF RUNNING COSTS

Kia Sorento Si Auto 3.5i 7st AWD



\$500* PER FORTNIGHT
INC. \$177 OF RUNNING COSTS

Looking for a different car?



Request a quote on a car you love
to see how much you could save!

Find out how much you could save with a novated car lease.

1300 150 275 | leaseandsave.com.au

*Based on the following assumptions: living in NSW 2560, salary: \$70,000 gross p.a., travelling 15,000 kms p.a., lease term: 60 months, using the Employee Contribution Method for FBT purposes. Images shown may not be the exact car that the calculations have been based on. All figures quoted include budgets for finance, fuel, servicing, tyres, maintenance, Vero by Suncorp comprehensive motor insurance, Hydro Platinum Pack and re-registration over the period of the lease. Also includes, for Nissan and Audi models only, 2 year Platinum Warranty insurance. Vehicle residual, as set by Australian Taxation Office, payable at the end of lease term. The exact residual amount will be specified in your vehicle quote. Vehicle pricing is correct at the time of distribution but may be subject to change based on availability.

SKYPEAK ADVENTURES

Is your school ready for
THE HEIGHT
of fun?



Introducing SKYPEAK ADVENTURES, Sydney's state of the art, one of a kind school excursion destination.

With over 60 adrenalin-filled aerial challenges that students can conquer individually or as teams, SKYPEAK's excursion packages are specifically designed to build kids' confidence, foster resilience and encourage problem solving in a fun and safe environment.

Highlights:

- Choose your own path along high-wire ropes, barrel runs, zip lines, tree top swings, bungee leaps, suspended bridges, boats and bikes, plus loads more (there's even a magic flying carpet ride!)
- Experience something super fun and physically challenging that is unlike anything else out there
- Ideal for inspiring leadership, team building, PDHPE excursions and school activities, or a fun, rewarding day out
- Caters for both large and small groups (up to 90 children every 2 hours)
- Located in Western Sydney, less than 1 hour from the CBD
- Plenty of free parking for buses and cars right outside
- Adjoins a large air conditioned café with comfortable seating and entertainment

For bookings, call (02) 9677 7759 **or email:** info@skypeak.com.au

Skypeak Adventures

243 Forrester Road, North St Marys NSW 2760

School News is distributed to primary, secondary and intermediate schools throughout Australia by Multimedia Pty Limited.

The views and images expressed in *School News* do not necessarily reflect the views of the publisher. The information contained in *School News* is intended to act as a guide only, the publisher, authors and editors expressly disclaim all liability for the results of action taken or not taken on the basis of information contained herein. We recommend professional advice is sought before making important business decisions.

Advertising Conditions

The publisher reserves the right to refuse to publish or to republish without any explanation for such action. The publisher, its employees and agents will endeavour to place and reproduce advertisements as requested but takes no responsibility for omission, delay, error in transmission, production deficiency, alteration of misplacement. The advertiser must notify the publisher of any errors as soon as they appear, otherwise the publisher accepts no responsibility for republishing such advertisements. If advertising copy does not arrive by the copy deadline the publisher reserves the right to repeat existing material.

Disclaimer

Any mention of a product, service or supplier in editorial is not indicative of any endorsement by the author, editor or publisher. Although the publisher, editor and authors do all they can to ensure accuracy in all editorial content, readers are advised to fact check for themselves, any opinion or statement made by a reporter, editor, columnist, contributor, interviewee, supplier or any other entity involved before making judgements or decisions based on the materials contained herein.

School News, its publisher, editor and staff, is not responsible for and does not accept liability for any damages, defamation or other consequences (including but not limited to revenue and/or profit loss) claimed to have occurred as the result of anything contained within this publication, to the extent permitted by law.

Advertisers and Advertising Agents warrant to the publisher that any advertising material placed is in no way an infringement of any copyright or other right and does not breach confidence, is not defamatory, libellous or unlawful, does not slander title, does not contain anything obscene or indecent and does not infringe the *Consumer Guarantees Act* or other laws, regulations or statutes. Moreover, advertisers or advertising agents agree to indemnify the publisher and its agents against any claims, demands, proceedings, damages, costs including legal costs or other costs or expenses properly incurred, penalties, judgements, occasioned to the publisher in consequence of any breach of the above warranties.

© 2019 Multimedia Pty Ltd. It is an infringement of copyright to reproduce in any way all or part of this publication without the written consent of the publisher.



Multimedia
PUBLISHING LIMITED

PO Box 1080, Noosaville BC, Queensland, Australia 4566
Phone: (07) 5440 5322 Fax: (07) 5604 1680
mail@school-news.com.au www.school-news.com.au

EDITOR

Rosie Clarke, editor@school-news.com.au

STAFF WRITERS

Mandy Clarke

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Richard McGill, production@school-news.com.au

ADVERTISING

Pip Casey, advertising@school-news.com.au

CONTRIBUTORS

Adam Voight, Brendon Fogarty, Daniela Falecki, Kristen Douglas, Dr Ameika Johnson, Diane Robertson and Bill Hansberry.

KEY

- ▲ Commercially funded supplier profile or supplier case study
- Supplier information or content
- ★ Suppliers share their views in one-off, topical pieces
- General editorial. Case studies and features may cite or quote suppliers, please be aware that we have a strict 'no commercial content' guideline for all magazine editorial, so this is not part of any commercially funded advertorial but may be included as relevant opinion. Happy reading!

Inside our Term One issue



Front Desk

Should we tell high school students to go to university? **06**

News Round-Up **05**

Education

What do I say? "Dead, dying, death." **10**

Principal Speaks: Opening new worlds for every student..... **14**

Sorting the science from the scat..... **17**

Anxiety, ASD and meeting special student needs..... **18**

Working out ideas for a sustainable school..... **21**

Profiles

Adelaide Botanic High School:
The 1st truly vertical school in South Australia **22**

What's Hot **24**

Teacher's Desk

Op-ed: Teachers talking to students about suicide **26**

Do our students need to be more mentally tough? **27**

Balancing screen time in schools and how theatre can help..... **28**

Language in, language out:
a basic model for school culture..... **30**

Upcoming events calendar **31**

Teaching Resources

Laser cutters aid projects at Mitcham Girls High School..... **32**

"I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms." **34**

Synthetic phonics are back(ed by research)..... **38**

High school readers need a YA book club..... **40**

Administration

Beef up your school's visitor management system **44**

E.O.T.C

Guiding tomorrow's decision makers towards a sustainable future **45**

The Canberra Experience:
Delivering the Australian Curriculum..... **46**

Health & Safety

Too hot not to be SunSmart..... **52**

Sports & Recreation

Sports Day is everyone's chance to shine **54**

Property

Transform how your school communicates..... **57**

ILEs: it all sounds great, but sound is the problem!..... **60**

Solar power: Sun, STEM & stimulating cost savings..... **62**

Australia's first 100% sustainable school **63**

Not on your watch: securing school grounds..... **64**

A living playground:
school-designed nature play **66**



Looking for fun and adventure at your next school camp?

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| ✓ High Ropes Course | ✓ Swimming Pool | ✓ Flying Fox |
| ✓ Raft Building | ✓ Giant Swing | ✓ Basketball & Tennis Court |
| ✓ Rock Climbing | ✓ Archery | ✓ Canoeing |
| ✓ Trampoline | ✓ Leap of Faith | ✓ Football & Soccer Oval |

www.alexandraadventureresort.com.au



**Book your
next camp today
PH: 5772 1409**



**Sleeps
210 people**



We plan an exciting, team building and action packed camp that will be the most memorable and fun experience for both students and teachers.

- ✓ **NEW 5 bedroom self-contained Teachers Lodge - king single beds**
- ✓ **Located less than 2 hours from Melbourne**
- ✓ **Huge indoor facility hall**
- ✓ **Amazing views & Sports facilities**

Alexandra Adventure Resort

43 Murrays Road, Whanregarwen VIC 3714

Hosts: Chase and Brooke Pearce

Web: www.alexandraadventureresort.com.au

Email: info@alexandraadventureresort.com.au

Tel: 03 5772 1409



Should we tell high school students to go to university?

It feels wrong to tell kids not to go to university but are we giving them the full story?

For decades, higher education has been a marker of success and a gateway to better jobs. But times have changed. Here's a few reasons why...

International enrolments are booming, so there's a lot more competition for those elusive graduate jobs; medicine might be the only 'safe bet'. According to the Grattan Institute, medicine, nursing and education were the only disciplines in which earnings grew between 2006 and 2016 for early-career graduates aged 25 to 34. Overall, the rate of professional job growth has slowed while the number of students competing for those jobs has increased.

Student debt has skyrocketed.



Rosie Clarke,
Editor, *SchoolNews*
editor@school-news.com.au

The amount of total debt rose by more than \$25 billion between 2012 and 2017. The average amount of student debt per person is now \$19,100 and takes nine years to pay off. In 2014, 69 percent of recent university graduates secured a full-time job within four months compared to 84 percent of apprentice and

trainee graduates. The latter were also debt-free.

While medical graduates are the highest earners, they also have the most debt (between \$100,000 and \$150,000). While the compulsory repayment threshold for the 2018-19 income year was \$51,957 the average graduate salary was only around \$56,000. Things don't seem to get much better with career progression, either. Millennials today, a few years older than current high schoolers, are getting smaller wage rises and spending more of their salary on ballooning rent than older workers.

Is uni worth it?

Forty percent of humanities graduates will earn the same as (or less than) the median school leaver. Law graduates will earn 20 percent more. Across most disciplines, Australians will still

earn more money if they have a degree just not as much more as they would have 10 years ago.

On the other hand, travel is cheaper than it's ever been: in the early 1980s, flights to Europe would have cost around \$9500 in today's money. A return flight to Berlin will only cost \$1200 in 2019. It makes sense that 'gap years' are growing in popularity, then, with young people travelling before they saddle up for a 'mind mortgage' to get their degree.

Based on the statistics, university is still the best chance young Aussies have to earn a lot of money. However, it's not the safe bet that it once was and Year 12s should think carefully before they sign themselves up for more than nine years of debt.

HECS matters: having debt isn't nice and it does put a dampener on that exciting first wage slip. ■

Melbourne School Access Control Specialists

Are your students and staff safe and secure?

- + emergency lock down
- + automated locking and unlocking of doors
- + track & control users
- + increased security
- + reduce administration costs
- + improve building management



 **eclipse**
security systems

1300 66 11 99
www.eclipsesecurity.com.au

BRAND
PARTNERS

 **interlogix**
Smart Technologies

 **inner range**
Intelligent Security Solutions

SALTO
inspired access

 **ICT Protege**

What's going on?

Tidbits from the *Twitterverse*



Controversial Chaplaincy program to tackle bullying

In the federal budget last may, \$247 million was promised to support the *National School Chaplaincy Program* through to 2022 with 3000 schools now signed up.

The program has been controversial as it provides government funding for schools to employ a religious person (they must be recognised or accepted by a religious institution) as a chaplain. Confusingly, a school chaplain is not permitted to proselytise or promote religion but they have to be religious themselves. This is especially confusing for public schools, which are fundamentally secular.

The program has also come under legal fire with the High Court striking it down twice, first in 2012 and second in 2014. Initially, the High Court claimed that the federal government wasn't legally authorised to spend money on the program. After the federal government passed legislation to approve spending, the High Court ruled that school chaplains didn't qualify as something the federal government could pass legislation on.

The resulting process is one where federal funding is passed down to each state, and the states then run their chaplaincy programs.

This term, minister for education Dan Tehan said: "School chaplains will be required to undertake anti-bullying training provided by the *Office of the eSafety Commissioner* at no cost to schools or chaplains.

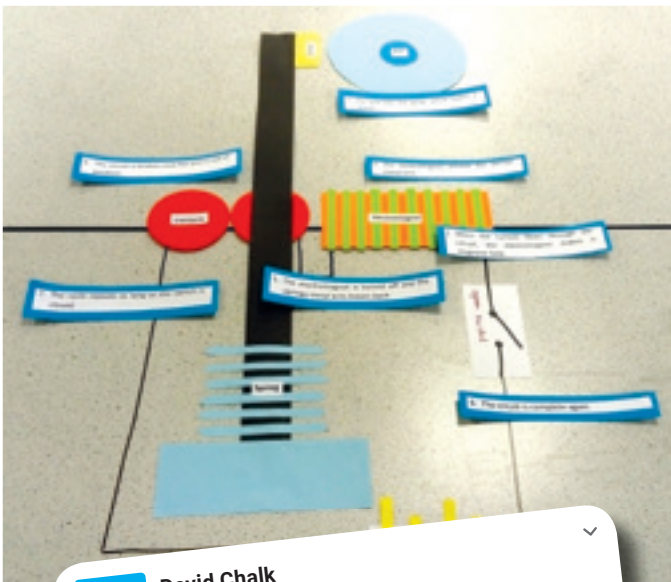
"Bullying takes a terrible toll on the students affected and parents know it is a real issue. Our Government is taking action to better support students who are being bullied and to decreasing bullying in our schools."

The ScoMo government also claims the *National School Chaplaincy Program* complements the national bullying and cyberbullying work program endorsed by all education ministers and adopted by all state and territory leaders at the recent COAG.

"Under the work program, school communities are being supported to grow appropriate behaviours and social skills in children such as resilience and conflict resolution," Mr Tehan said.

"I also encourage schools throughout Australia to take part in the *National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence* on March 15."

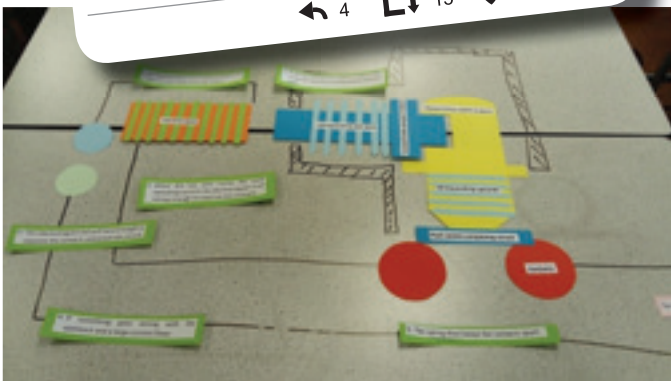
Schools can register at www.bullyingnoway.gov.au which has resources and information for teachers, students and parents.



David Chalk
@teacherchalky1

When teaching about electromagnets circuit breakers give modelling it a go!

4 15 353



Dr David Zyngier
@dzyngier

It's time that politicians & s media "commentators" either stopped their unwarranted criticism of teachers or spend a week trying to wrangle 25 or more teenagers or Preps! #AussieEd #auspol

4 15 353

Dress codes under fire as Hindu girl excluded for nose stud



Aranmore Catholic College (ACC) in Leederville (Perth) has been called out by the president of the Universal Society of Hinduism for allegedly 'kicking out' a Hindu teenager because she was wearing a nose stud.

Identified in *The West Australian* as 15-year-old Sanya Singhal, she reported being told not to return to class until the stud was removed.

Her mother informed the newspaper: "They have exceptions for the Islamic girls by allowing them to wear their headscarf, but we were told our cultural needs are not relevant," Ms Singhal said.

School News reached out to ACC and principal

Declan Tanham directly to clarify the situation and include their response but they did not wish to comment.

Catholic schools tend to have strict dress codes in Australia. ACC's 'Uniform and grooming guidelines 2018' note that students are permitted to wear a maximum of one plain silver or gold small stud or small sleeper per lower ear lobe but that additional piercings, taping, or plastic studs are not permitted.

Hindu statesman Rajan Zed, in a statement, said he believes the school's "policies and procedures" are "discriminatory and denied the right to express religious and cultural identity".

He has urged Western Australia (WA) minister for education and training, Suzanne Mary Ellery, along with the Roman Catholic archbishop of Perth Timothy Costelloe, Catholic education commission of WA chair, bishop Gerard Holohan and Catholic education WA executive director, Debra Sayce to launch a thorough investigation.

Zed, who is president of Universal Society of Hinduism, said that this student was "honouring the tradition of her family, who were reportedly of Indian descent, by putting a stud in her pierced nose". Nose piercings and ornaments have been a tradition of women of India for centuries and the Hindu goddesses have been depicted wearing nose ornaments.

"Besides suspending [the principal] and cooperating in the enquiry; [the ACC Board] should admit the mistake, immediately reinstate and apologise to [the student] and her parents, issue a formal apology, and amend the 'Uniform and Grooming Guidelines' accordingly for future," Rajan Zed noted.

Therapy dogs being good boys at QLD state high schools



In wholesome news, Queensland's Department of Education announced: "Many of our schools have enrolled new and very popular students; students who quickly became everyone's best friends. Friends who provide calm support in stressful times, welcome with joy and are happy just to sit in silent friendship".

Those friendly faces are therapy dogs, and they are working wonders on school grounds!"

Theodore is a therapy dog who attends Helensvale State High School. His owner and trainer, Tania Craig, is a teacher at the school. "Theodore's main role is to enhance social and emotional wellbeing. His presence can de-escalate behaviour and stress in our students," Ms Craig said.

Theodore proudly wears his school uniform each day, attends assemblies and among many other duties, distracts anxious students during immunisations.



Kate O'D
@k8ylu

Today I asked my Y6 Ss, on their first day of school, to describe a classroom environment they enjoyed and learned a lot in. This response is a credit to this S's previous teachers.
#AussieED #edchat

4 15 353

- Respectful
- Had controlled fun (had fun but stayed on task)
- Our teacher was open to new styles of teaching (so learning wasn't always the same)
- We had class tasks so that everyone felt valued/contributing
- Our classroom had structure (eg. how ^{our} english lessons worked)
- Our classrooms felt safe and secure

ONE *giant* FESTIVAL FOR THE WHOLE OF EDUCATION

CHOOSE FROM 5 SPECIFIC STREAMS

SCHOOLS STREAM

Take a strategic look at the future of education by sharing global trends and developments, updates on Australia's curriculum, and the latest thought leadership into how to lead and teach within 21st century schools.

Discuss the significant changes underway in higher education globally, the key role of technology to remain competitive, how to enhance student learning/ engagement and ways to grow partnerships and collaborations.

TERTIARY ED STREAM

ADULT LEARNING STREAM

Together with the Australian Workplace Learning/ AITD Conference, focus on learning and development in the workforce.

Learn from fellow education ICT Managers and Network Administrators responsible for purchasing IT solutions, building, managing and supporting education institution ICT systems and infrastructure.

ICT MANAGEMENT STREAM

BUILD/ DESIGN STREAM

Combined with the EduBUILD Expo is Australia's largest education buildings and infrastructure conference and expo for education leaders and decision-makers of buildings for schools, colleges and universities.

Brochure now available



www.edutech.net.au

Register today for 20% off
Use code '**SN20**' by 30th April 2019



Attendance of EduTECH conferences counts towards PD activities

Interested in sponsoring or exhibiting ?

Contact: education@terrapiinn.com or call (02) 8908 8555

What do I say?

“Dead, dying, death.”

By Rosie Clarke, Editor

Grief is part of life but for teachers it is a chronically overlooked part of the job.

In the classroom, grief has many faces... Teachers can experience feelings of pressure to identify at-risk kids, confusion about language-use and a lack of support for their own grief. Above all, teachers have told us they struggle to strategise around suicide and suicidal ideation. Out of respect for privacy, **School News** has not named or identified any of the teachers, former students or schools included in this article.

The statistics are shocking

Seventy percent of mental illness and suicidal behaviours begin between the ages of 12 and 25 in Australia, according to *Suicide Prevention Collective*.

For every completed suicide there are 30 attempts nationwide. Twenty-one young Queenslanders and 15 young people in Western Australia ended their lives between 2010 and 2012 alone. 2016 saw the highest rate of youth suicide in 10 years, then there was a nine percent rise the following year, according to *Australian Bureau of Statistics* data. Queensland had the largest increase of any state in 2017. In 2018, almost one person a week ended their life in the Northern Territory. Youth suicides are twice as likely to happen in clusters than adult suicides and just this past January, a 12-year-old Indigenous girl in NT ended her young life and perhaps most upsettingly,

rates of suicide are increasing for children under 14.

Secondary school is a critical time for suicide prevention and mental health awareness, as a 2017 survey of Australian tertiary students between the ages of 17 and 25 revealed that 35 percent had experienced self-harm or suicidal ideation in the previous 12 months. Noticing warning signs, providing support and developing strategies for self-care in middle and senior school is essential if we want to change these statistics.

What to do when a student expresses suicidal thoughts?

School News spoke with a state school teacher in Queensland

who said: “Kids do go to the guidance officers but a lot of those kids have trust issues, so they want to go to speak to their favourite teachers but we aren’t trained in helping them, so we’re supposed to refer them to the GOs. What are we supposed to do? Not talk to them?”

Mental health campaigns frequently encourage students to talk to trusted adults, and the designated ‘trusted adult’ in a school is the guidance officer or chaplain. But according to *Black Dog Institute’s* mental health report on 15-19-year-olds, just as many kids would seek help from a teacher as a school counsellor. So, shouldn’t teachers be better trained on how to respond when a student confides suicidal

ideation or other mental health issue?

Students may not be aware that teachers have a duty of care to report what they have said, so educational psychologist Michele Blick advises: “If a student approaches a teacher with concerning behaviour, the teacher needs to remain calm and attentive, acknowledge and validate the student’s feelings of distress and express empathy; listen without judgement, thank the student for trusting her/him to share this information, and inform the student that s/he will need to get someone else to assist. The teacher can continue to show support for the student by checking in with the student and reminding the student of the support that is available.”

Ask the student to clarify intent

If you think someone might be having suicidal thoughts you must take immediate action. Headspace advises to ask them directly whether they are having suicidal thoughts, and whether they have a plan in mind.

“This will not ‘put thoughts into their head’ and is vitally important in assessing their risk of suicide.”

Specialist bereavement counsellor from the National Centre for Childhood Grief, Dr Dianne McKissock provides context: “The majority of people say things like ‘I wish I was dead’ or ‘if it wasn’t for X, I’d kill myself’. It is rare for people to act on those words. If anyone sounds or appears suicidal it’s important to listen empathically, then clarify intent. ►

Self-care for grieving teachers

School staff can grieve the same losses as the students they support. NCCG’s Dr Dianne McKissock gave **School News** some tools for teachers to help themselves through grief at work:

1. Find a trusted ‘other’ who will provide compassionate understanding when you express your own reactions.
2. Rehearse with the trusted person what you are thinking of doing to support a student or students.
3. Do some form of physical exercise to reduce adrenaline and restore normal breathing. Most people tend to hold their breath (or take shallow breaths) when shocked or grieving.
4. Remember that it is normal for eating and sleep patterns to be disrupted initially. If disruption continues, consult a competent bereavement counsellor.
5. Read literature provided by grief counsellors - especially pamphlets because they are brief and provide a concise understanding of children’s and young people’s reactions and needs. Correct information is empowering for teachers and students.

AUSTRALIAN MADE + DESIGNED BAG + HAT HOOKS

SAFEHOOKS FOR YOUR SCHOOL

the durable, safe alternative to sharp metal
bag & hat hooks



USE THEM
ANYWHERE

**FREE
SAMPLE**
ORDER YOURS
ONLINE NOW!

Our OZ-Y and OZ-I range of bag & hat hooks not only look great, they are functional too.

Suitable for installation indoors or out. Low maintenance, affordable, strong, safe, easy to clean and install.



CLASSROOM



CHANGE ROOMS



OFFICE/STAFFROOM



5 YEAR
WARRANTY



STRONG
& SAFE



UV
PROTECTION

PHONE TO ORDER @ 07 3511 1668
OR SHOP ONLINE @ safehook.com.au

safehook
— AUSTRALIA —

- ◀ Ask questions like, 'Are you telling me you feel so bad at the moment that you wish you didn't have to wake up in the morning, or are you telling me that you really intend to kill yourself?'

"If they answer yes to the first part of the question, ask something like, 'What do you really need me to understand?' If yes to the second part, ask if they have a plan to kill themselves, and how and when they might act on that plan. If the plan sounds serious and achievable, let the student know that by law you have to act on what they have told you, that you have a responsibility to ensure their safety. Ask, 'Who would you prefer me to tell? Your parent's, a bereavement counsellor, your GP, or all of the above?' Never carry responsibility for another person's life alone. Teamwork is essential."

What if a student sends a concerning note, email or their classmate expresses concern?

In 'Guidelines to assist in responding to attempted suicide or suicide by a student', the Victorian government advises: "Do not ignore suicide notes/e-mails/messages sent to staff by students. Follow up both these situations immediately." This would include a risk assessment by a mental health practitioner; creation of an individual management plan to monitor and later review the student's progress; liaising with any relevant professionals working with the student; providing referrals and support for any students who have been affected by the display of suicidal ideation; and organising generalised mental health and wellbeing sessions for the whole school.

Warning signs and risk factors

There are some behavioural signs of imminent risk to be aware of:

1. Threats of self-harm or suicide
2. Talking or writing about suicide, dying or death
3. Obvious shift in mood, particularly increased aggression or feelings of hopelessness
4. Expressing feelings of being a burden to others and/or saying goodbyes to friends



Image courtesy of Headspace

5. Giving away possessions and/or withdrawing from others
6. Making less effort with physical appearance; noticeably dishevelled

Please refer to the Headspace School Support Suicide Postvention Toolkit – A Guide for Secondary Schools for further guidance.

Don't blame yourselves

Multiple teachers told **School News** that they felt responsible for their students and experienced feelings of guilt following a student death. "What could I have done?" is a natural question to arise but the truth is that we don't know exactly why suicide rates are so high among young Australians.

What we do know about suicide is that it's most often correlated with issues far beyond the scope of one teacher. Research suggests that domestic violence, addiction, pre-existing mental health conditions, recent bereavement and social isolation are all risk factors. We also know that suicide is statistically more common among Indigenous Australians, males and LGBTQIA+ youth.

Research, such as the review carried out by Judit Balazs and Agnes Keresztesy in *World J Psychiatry*, infer a positive association between ADHD and suicidality in both sexes and in all age groups. However, a direct link between ADHD

and suicide is hard to ascertain because of comorbid disorders like depression and anxiety. A US study of 1706 children between the ages of six and 18 found that all children with suicide attempts had a comorbid psychiatric disorder, meaning more than one, as did all but two children with suicide ideation.

Dr McKissock added that particularly in the postvention of a student suicide or other recent death, while "knowledge of these pre-existing difficulties is important because they increase vulnerability and often indicate the need for additional care, they are not a prediction for a reaction such as suicide."

What happens after a student suicide

First, school leaders should consult with the families, police and any other professionals involved to ascertain what has happened. If there has been a suicide, staff should follow-up on any other unexplained student absences. Reach out to relevant CAMHS or mental health agencies. Initially, schools should seek help to assemble a team of qualified staff, mental health and community advisors to help manage the response and create a statement.

Write a script but prepare for impromptu questions

A script can provide an outline for school staff about what they

are allowed to say. However, a scripted speech alone will not be enough for all students, so questions should be expected. State governments advise schools to have close friends informed individually or in small groups, ideally by a mental health professional. Any students who are affected by the news should not be left alone, parents should be informed and teachers must keep records of any concerning behaviour they notice, escalating their concerns to guidance officers or whoever the relevant person is in the incident management team. Statements can be provided to larger groups of students. A small group of students may also be asked to let the school know of any rumour mill activity or other concerning behaviour on social media following a traumatic incident.

Never say 'passed away'

One teacher told **School News**: "We were given a statement of about 100 words in our pigeon holes: to avoid rumours, we read it out to our form classes. It said words like 'passed away because of an incident', we couldn't say who it was, the family didn't want students to know. We set-up a room in the school where normal guidance officers and a regional officer trained in psychology stayed for like two days."

Multiple stories similar to this were shared with **School News**; among them, complaints that two days with an external counsellor is not enough.



Grief specialists strongly discourage the use of phrases like 'passed away'. When discussing death with a child or young person, specialist bereavement counsellor at the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement, Susan Meyerink said: "Information for children needs to be age appropriate and honest as possible."

We talk about people who have completed suicide, and we say the word died."

Dr Dianne McKissock further explained: "We use explicit language always, not euphemisms." She clarified that "avoiding words like 'death, dying and dead' tend to convey that death is so scary that we can't even give it a specific name". In primary school: "Young children have no idea what we are talking about when we say things like 'passed away' or, even worse, 'passed'."

Details of death should not be discussed

School News spoke with a former student whose classmate completed suicide during secondary school. She said: "Teachers never said how he did it so we were always confused and wanting to know what happened."

Although confusing for students, it is crucial that staff do not discuss the details of any suicide or suicide attempt. Explaining that curiosity is natural but knowing how a person died does not change the fact that they are dead, or that people are sad about their death, is one way to mitigate these questions, advised trauma charity Skylight representative Raewyn Hewitt.

Children have no idea what we are talking about when we say things like 'passed away' or, even worse, 'passed'

'How did they die, Miss?'

Getting into more depth about how to navigate these tricky questions, Dr McKissock elaborates: "Access to truth means that students know that all questions are permissible, and that they will be given truthful answers in appropriate language. This doesn't mean being given facts in a way that is unnecessarily confronting."

"Rumours are best addressed and better contained in a structured setting. For example, a group of students most affected by the death, and facilitated by two teachers, or a teacher and the school counsellor, could

stop the spread of gossip.

"The facilitator could begin by stating what they all know, for example, 'we are all here because X has died and we are affected by his death."

Many of you know the manner of his death, but for those who don't, you can ask questions and we will give explanations as simply as possible.

Once questions have been answered, we will all share our thoughts and feelings and talk about ways of managing our distress. After this time together we hope that you will all contribute to stopping the spread of gossip. Each

time a story does the rounds it tends to gather details that are often incorrect and can cause alarm to the listener, and unimaginable distress to the family of the person who died. Who has the first question?"

Opening a discussion around grief that leaves doors open for children and young people to express their feelings is key.

Providing a class system like a letter box, painted stones they can hold onto or hand signals to let you know they would like to talk after class or have some quiet time can help identify children who may be struggling with grief and need extra support. ■



DOS AND DON'TS

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ALLOW YOURSELF TO EXPRESS EMOTION IN FRONT OF STUDENTS. IT HELPS MODEL HEALTHY COPING STRATEGIES. 2. INVITE ANOTHER TEACHER TO JOIN YOUR CLASS TO SUPPORT YOU IF YOU FEEL OVERWHELMED. 3. ADMIT THAT YOU MAY BE TRIGGERED INTO RELIVING PAST TRAUMA OR GRIEF. 4. TALK TO FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES, FAMILY, AND ANYONE ELSE YOU TRUST. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FEEL YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO GRIEVE WHEN SOMETHING TRAUMATIC HAPPENS AT SCHOOL OR TO A STUDENT. 2. BLAME YOURSELF, ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAD NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS WITH THE PERSON INVOLVED. 3. POSTPONE THERAPY IF YOU FEEL YOU NEED IT. 4. IGNORE COMPASSION FATIGUE, WHICH CAN HAPPEN AFTER PROLONGED EXPOSURE TO TRAUMA THROUGH YOUR GRIEVING STUDENTS. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Opening new worlds for every student

By Diane Robertson,
Principal, Clarke Road School

Understand my brain and you understand me.

– Ylana Bloom, 2013

At Clarke Road School, we are committed to our moto, opening new worlds for every student.

Our purpose is to provide a caring and vibrant learning environment that engages students to achieve their personal best – to open new worlds for every student. Our school caters for students with complex intellectual disabilities, K-12.

Our school draws on insights of positive psychology, internal control theory and neuroscience to systematically build our learning community where we all support each other, fuelling a drive for continuous improvement of practice.

The school sustains a strong wellbeing focus, balanced with academic and functional programs, empowering students to achieve success, happiness and high self-esteem. Children must be well to maximise their learning opportunity.

Our teachers and school learning support officers (SLSOs) work together in the classroom in a seamless and purposeful way. They all operate collaboratively and are respected as educational leaders.

We specialise in many innovative programs that support students who learn differently and require differentiated curriculum.

We provide personalised and individualised educational



programs students, designed in consultation with families, carers and external providers.

Clarke Road School has strong community networks and inclusive programs that foster belonging in the broader community. We have strong local links with local government and non-government schools and organisations. Our students are front and centre of all that we do. They are encouraged to develop skills and knowledge

to manage themselves in our broader community and community access maintains an important place in our programs.

Great schools care about students, care about parents and care about each other. They take responsibility for and pride in educational growth in learning. They are accountable to students, parents, carers and the broader community. Great schools are led by great leaders.

As principal, I have a responsibility to build leaders who are connected to the processes and practices that makes our school excel.

Leaders drive vision and all staff need to have ownership of the schools vision through consultation and collaboration at all stages of development. practices that and ethos every day, in every way, and with everyone closely connected with the school.

I am fortunate to live on a beautiful island, with no cars, and my trip to school starts in my boat each day as I cross the river to start my commute to school. It's a unique way to start my day! I am a fifth generation teacher.

This year I was honoured to be awarded *Australian Principal of the Year - Government* and overall *Principal of the Year 2018*.

Together, our team has transformed the operations and performance of Clarke Road School over a seven-year period. It takes time and sound management to build confidence in leadership to bring about change in a school – you must bring the team along with you, developing and respecting the diversity of talents in the team before you.

The award is an acknowledgement of an outstanding school and an excellent team of educators that drive a culture of continual improvement. We have two programs that have reshaped our work. Our *In the Zone for Learning* and *Creating a Voice* programs focus on building support staff and teachers' understandings of effective, evidence based teaching strategies. Our professional learning sessions include brainstorming/mentoring with a colleague and academic



I am in this game because I care for students and want the very best for them.

partner, learning conversations with a team member, as well as presentations, such as how the latest research in brain science is linked to practices within our classrooms. We have strong positive video evidence of the efficacy of the professional learning through these programs.

We are committed to a central and shared ethos and approach. We believe it is important to look outwards, as we want to develop and validate effective research-based innovative programs for our special education learners. My vision setting a positive psychology-based support through this process has transformed the school. We now have a well-organised school environment that meets the physical, emotional, social and learning needs of our complex students in the classroom and beyond.

I am a champion of NSW public education and am privileged to work for the NSW Department of Education, an education system that is dedicated to excellence in education. Winning an award as prestigious as this does not

happen unless you have an incredible team around you and a team who walks the walk with you every day to ensure our students receive the highest quality education that we can deliver.

I am in this game because I care for students and want the very best for them.

What do I value most about education?

The greatest leaders I know are student focused with a view to a student's best possible outcomes. They ensure they know, value and care for every student in their school.

They value the participation and voice of their students and families in the rich context of their schools and they drive their strategic school directions from what they understand their students' needs are.

Great leaders are reflective of their practice. Their professional learning is driven from their school plan and reflects what they need to understand about their learners and what those students need moving forward. ►



“Brilliant! Amazing Experience. 10/10”

- Varsity College

Cyber Safety | Bullying | Student Wellbeing



Brainstorm Productions

Award Winning In-School Theatre brainstormproductions.edu.au

Enjoyed by 360,000 students in 2018





The journey of CRS

I have been principal of Clarke Road School for seven years.

We tasked ourselves with a challenge in 2013. To change the mindset of everyone about how we think about 'behaviour' and respond to 'behaviour'. Too often schools can sit on the treadmill of behaviour management support plans without a deep understanding of brain function and how to align that understanding to teaching. It can be an exhausting exercise. We developed 'In the Zone for learning' in collaborations with occupational therapist, academic partners, speech pathologists and educators. Our project has heralded major changes in how we understand and support students with

complex learning issues. We focus on student regulations and, through explicit instruction we teach skills to improve the student knowledge and ability to regulate and increase engagement in learning. Teaching patterns of learning, providing schedules for learning and adjusting teaching tools has been instrumental. Student needs drive curriculum, not the other way around. We have mapped learning progressions backwards and integrated an understanding of brain function to maximise student gains.

I couldn't think of a more rewarding career than one that celebrates diversity. I love special education or rather just education for special kids... And aren't they all!

Our mantra is, understand my brain and you will understand me.

Great leaders are team focused and strive to build strong and connected teams deeply focused on personalised planning and teaching for each student. I characterise my leadership style as *leading from the inside out and not from the top down*. Strong distributive leadership practices have fostered transformational change across our school

My staff and I value a growth mindset and, as such, we respect and support professional risk-taking. This is moderated by careful attention to evidenced based practices and ongoing evaluation, and review, to ensure our innovations achieve improved learning and success amongst our students and support of their parents.

Students with moderate and

severe intellectual disability require outstanding teachers who have expertise in understanding how a student's brain is operating and what teaching practices support that child to be regulated and increasingly engaged in their learning. The integration of therapeutic practices that build the capacity and capabilities of staff to use those strategies every day to ensure our students are regulated and 'owning' their learning and behaviour is essential. The quantum gap that can exist between knowledge and teaching practice is where we focus our energies. Changing the pedagogical and inclusive practices for disabled students requires deep reflection and instructional practice that emanates from what a student needs. Their personalised needs. Deeply personalised learning is

the hallmark of our school and our families are deeply engaged in the planning and monitoring of learning goals. Our families are engaged in professional learning alongside the teachers, as this ensures we build our collective efficacy.

Education is the key to a student's potential and every child has immense potential, unlocking this remains the challenge for many special educators. Know how your students' brain operates and you begin to know the child. Disability can impact the brain, just like trauma does. Training your staff to be able to deliver trauma informed practices and adjust curriculum to meet student needs is just so

critical. Teachers also need to be mentored to develop the pedagogy required to target teaching and learning for complex students,.

Known your families, listen to their stories, celebrate their child gains often and publicly, however small. All gains are moving you closer to a better life for our students. Wrap your supports around them. Connect with them and build their wellbeing. They come to us with their best intentions and skills. Build from there. Know your students, deeply. Treasure your crew! Our teachers are gems and need to be recognised, valued and supported.

Teachers are just incredible human beings. ■



Sorting the science from the scat

Read the research on developmental dyslexia and you will soon know better about how the brain learns to read.

You also get an idea about what's happening when it can't. For over a decade, I have waded through the literature on dyslexia. Books by Shaywitz, Dehaene, Wolf, Seidenberg and Kilpatrick fill my bookshelf and influence my work with children and the training programs I run for teachers. These authors are academics and reading researchers. I imagine that they despair, like I do, at how slowly the science of reading is making its way into classrooms and intervention programs for students with dyslexia. Known widely as *the research to practice gap*, this is a very real problem for Australian students.

Despite consensus between reading-scientists about how to teach reading, and what works best when teaching students with disorders of reading like dyslexia, the education marketplace remains awash with an overwhelming range of so-called 'treatments' or 'cures' for dyslexia that claim to be evidence-based (of course they do), but on closer scrutiny do not stack up against the science. Many of these approaches promote scientifically *disproven* methods that are damaging to *all* students, particularly those most vulnerable, the one-in-five learners who live with dyslexia or dyslexic-type learning needs.

Instead of bagging what doesn't work, let's investigate what does work. The consensus from reading science tells us that the best results comes from *Structured Synthetic Phonics* (SSP). SSP is nothing new because our writing system is based on sounds and letters, so of course, *systematically* teaching learners the relationships between sounds and letters is important. Sadly, SSP was dumped from teaching through the 70s and 80s in Australia and elsewhere. It was shunned as old-hat and traditional and some of this shunning continues.



Bill Hansberry,
Co-Director, Hansberry
Educational Consulting

Fast forward 20 years to the *naughties* and Australia, the US and the UK started looking for reasons why too many kids were failing at reading. Each commissioned an enquiry: the U.S. set up the *National Reading Panel* (2000), the U.K. commissioned the *Rose Report* (2006) and here we had the *National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy* (2005). What did they find? *Structured, Synthetic Phonics* had the strongest support from the research and beat *Whole Language* and its equally ineffective offspring *Balanced Literacy* hands down. As you'd expect, these less effective approaches disappeared from the literacy landscape overnight and literacy started improving immediately!

Sadly, this didn't happen.

Structured Synthetic Phonics needs some explaining:

Structured: means teaching the elements of our language in a logical order of letter-sound correspondences, syllable types, spelling rules, grammar and morphological concepts.

Synthetic phonics: is teaching that promotes the *synthesising* (blending together) of phonemes (single sounds), that are represented on paper or screen by graphemes (alphabet letters or groups of letters) to make a word. You've already worked out that *decoding* (*sounding out*) is the go-to strategy to read unknown words instead of guessing from pictures, context or the first and last letters in a word. As it turns out, this 'guessing

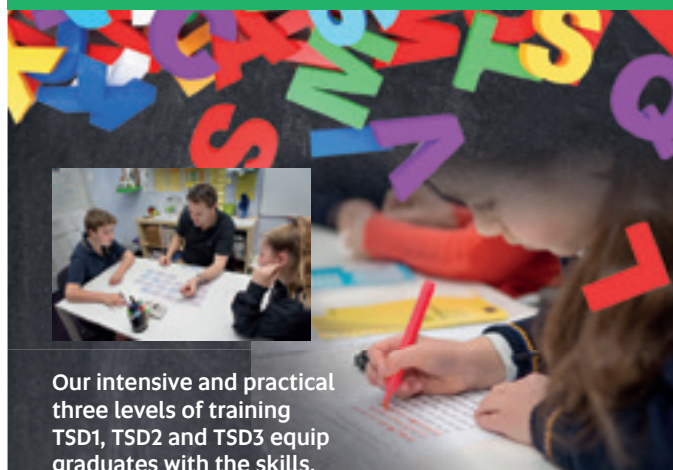
game' approach to tackling unknown words is intuitively used (unsuccessfully) by our weakest readers, but is unbelievably still promoted by *Whole Language* and *Balanced Literacy* proponents who didn't disappear, or change their practice, after three enquiries showed that their methods were just poor teaching!

Now there's a bit more to this. Added to these *structured, synthetic phonics* elements, things go better when students are taught in a way that is *cumulative* - meaning that the skills being taught to the structure build up logically. The learning is *multi-sensory* - tapping into *visual, auditory and kinaesthetic memory* systems. Simply put, whenever possible, students do tasks where they *see* (the letters and words), *hear* (the sounds as they say them out loud) and *write* (feel the

letters form as their hand writes them), all at the same time. This provides greater anchoring of new learning in long-term memory.

When it comes to intervention for struggling readers, all the above components are used. However, progress through the teaching structure moves at the pace of individual students and incredible amounts of practice and revision are provided to take students to the point of *overlearning*. This is not a quick fix, it is fine-grained and thorough to ensure progress. Students are withdrawn from normal classes for this instruction for a minimum of an hour a week and, at the intensive level, work individually or in pairs with a specially trained adult. There are a growing number of Australian schools that fund this model of intervention for their most-struggling readers without any additional funding. ►

TSD TEACHING STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA TRAINING



Our intensive and practical three levels of training TSD1, TSD2 and TSD3 equip graduates with the skills, knowledge and materials to help dyslexic learners using evidence based teaching methodologies.

Our growing group of accredited specialist multisensory teachers are making a real difference to the lives' of young people and their families.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Bill Hansberry
0433 399 767
bill@hansberryec.com.au

Anxiety, ASD and meeting special student needs

By Rosie Clarke, Editor

Recent studies suggest one-in-70 Australians have an autism spectrum disorder while anxiety is the most common mental health condition in the country.

Teaching students with ASD, anxiety or both can be challenging and confusing for educators. **School News** relished the opportunity to interview two experts on anxiety and ASD in the classroom to get some insight.

Caitlin Nathanson is a social worker and lecturer at the University of Queensland, who first took us through some of the misconceptions



about students with ASD. "A misconception I encountered working in schools as an ASD consultant was that students with ASD were in control during a meltdown and were just 'tantruming' or being 'manipulative'.

"Meltdowns are the result of a complete loss of control. During a meltdown students are operating from their "downstairs brain" (Siegel, 2012) and need to be provided with sensitive and appropriate support from school staff to manage during a

meltdown and as they recover from one. Schools should take a proactive approach by teaching students with ASD about emotional regulation, using tools like the 'Five Point Scale'; teaching students to recognise when they are becoming dysregulated and providing a break space for students with calming tools to use.

Misconceptions about students with anxiety.

Teacher and neuro-developmental therapist, Ebony Birch-Hanger explained that "the absence of panic attacks does not mean an absence of anxiety". She notes that anxiety is too often conflated with depression but anxiety can manifest even when the person seems happy. 20 ►

◀ This is a choice they make. Those who rebut with 'we don't have the funding for this', are usually the schools wasting money on programs that have low effect sizes on student learning. In other words, they are poor consumers. If you are thinking that this way of teaching must demand a high level of teacher knowledge, you are correct! There is simply no getting around this. Reading researcher Louisa Moates says:

"Teaching reading is rocket science." I wish to add that reading intervention is a *special type of rocket science*. This type of intervention requires specialist teachers who are specifically trained. The science on how to teach all kids to read, and how to intervene when they fall behind has been around for about 20 years. There is conclusive agreement on what works; there are no arguments.

Do not be told otherwise. My colleagues and I live in hope of the day where SSP is a mainstay of teaching reading and reading intervention. Until then, we will continue to bang our drums loudly, teach anyone willing to listen to us, and use the science to help our most vulnerable learners, because they deserve it. ★

Bill is co-director, Fullarton House - assessment, therapy and teaching, South Australia, as well as an author, speaker, specialist dyslexia teacher and trainer of the Teaching Students with Dyslexia (TSD) courses.



Rediscover THE WONDERS OF READING

The world of reading continues to change on a daily basis with the addition of digital books, tablets, mobile apps, and many other technological alternatives.

However, the printed, hard-copy word is everywhere in our society and it doesn't look to be going anywhere soon. For some, this creates a serious struggle.

Roughly 1 in 5 people in Australia suffer from reading difficulties, with many thought to be undiagnosed or with minimal support. These people, as well as English language learners, encounter daily challenges with reading. Reading is everywhere, it's unavoidable and for those with reading difficulties it can not only be problematic but also

stressful and demoralising. But there are solutions.

Learn to read before reading to learn

Detailed research around those with reading difficulties has proven that with the right tools and support, they can achieve far beyond expectations. Students with these obstacles mostly respond best to multisensory study and phonics based support. Mainly, reinforcing visual reading with audio support.

It's normal for students with dyslexia to receive reading help from a human assistant in an exam situation, each student would need a human reader. This applies to computer apps with the need of extra invigilators. These costs add up, not to mention the mental stress it puts on students being separated from their friends. The feeling of exclusion can have a negative



impact on a student's attainment and, more importantly, their mental wellbeing.

Succeeding with scanning pens

Even with multiple alternatives, there is one innovative assistive technology that continues to surpass expectations. Scanning pens are designed to be discreet reading supports that students can use in the classroom or in exams without standing out.

The C-Pen ReaderPen is used as a reading aid with overwhelming positive feedback. With a built in dictionary, the ReaderPen reads out a scanned sentence and any

definition for any word scanned. The ease and portability of the pen reinforces the student's existing reading skills and brings out their potential. With a large storage space and a voice recorder, there are countless uses for students without ever feeling like they stand out. There is also a simplified version of the pen for exams called the ExamReader which has been evaluated by every Exam Board in Australia and approved for use under various conditions. ▲

Free trials are available online at readerpen.com and examreader.com

scanningpens | AUSTRALIA

ESSENTIAL ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR 2019

EVERY SCHOOL SHOULD HAVE ONE

FREE 30-DAY TRIAL

AVAILABLE TO SCHOOLS, COLLEGES, & UNIVERSITIES



**bett
AWARDS
2019 WINNER**

**#succeed
with
dyslexia**

The C-Pen ReaderPen is a vital resource for students with dyslexia and reading difficulties



Converts text to speech



Allows students to read on their own



Increase independence & boosts self-confidence



3GB storage & Voice recorder



Promotes independent learning, freeing up valuable teacher time



Improves results

Contact: david@scanningpens.com
Mob: 0418 800 234

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [ig](#) #readerpen

www.readerpen.com



"There are systemic issues and teachers are on the frontline having to manage with a lack of ASD specific training, and inadequate resource provision in mainstream classrooms to support the complex and varying needs of all their learners. Teachers cannot address systemic issues themselves but at an individual level, they could consider using 'Universal Design for Learning' to optimise learning for all students."

Navigating anxiety in higher versus lower achieving students

Ebony says: "Anxiety can and does occur in both higher and lower-achieving students: I would approach these students differently on the one hand but exactly the same on the other. It's often easier as a teacher to recognise when a lower-achieving student needs support and completely miss signs in a higher-achieving student. Even once a teacher recognises a higher-achieving student is anxious, it's easy to think that they won't need as much support as others because they appear more capable of managing the anxiety. Usually this is not the case."

Ebony explains that it's important to identify what's triggering the anxiety so you can organise the right support. For lower-achieving students: Offer assistance without waiting to be asked; remind them that you are also evaluating their effort and a grade isn't a measure of how intelligent they are as a person; and, foster positive self-talk by modelling it for them."

For higher-achieving students with anxiety, she says: "Make sure they know exactly what is required to achieve a particular grade; check progress and let them know when they've already met the requirements and therefore don't need to do any further work; check how they are managing their deadlines and offer extensions for a specific amount of time, to minimise their anxiety around not meeting them." ■

To register for the Special Needs Symposium in Brisbane or Melbourne and find out more, head to: www.nationaleducationsummit.com.au/brisbane-special-needs-symposium

sometimes stem from difficulties with *interoception* – the brain's ability to interpret and identify physical sensations in the body. In these cases, students don't recognise the warning signs their bodies may be giving them.

Holding a supportive space for students with ASD

Teachers should band together and create some momentum within their school. "They can develop an individualised plan for each student with ASD in collaboration with the student that identifies their triggers, where the student can go to keep themselves and others safe, the calming strategies that work for the individual student and the key staff that will respond and provide support," Caitlin advises.

"In my PhD research, 'Square pegs in round holes: The mainstream schooling experiences of students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder and their parents', students with ASD did not report experiencing inclusion in mainstream schools; rather, they experienced standing out in mainstream schools.

"They experienced a sense of belonging in an ASD-specific education setting. Inclusion is so much more complex than simply placing students with special needs in mainstream environments. It requires a complete reorganisation of pedagogical practices in traditional classrooms and of how schools are funded.

"This is not to say that mainstream schools can't provide individualised support for students with ASD. They can and should be doing so as they have a legislative and ethical requirement to practice inclusion. However, true inclusion is complex to achieve in practice.

◀ "If you notice signs of anxiety in any of the students in the class/es you're teaching; ask the student, 'what do you need?' rather than, 'how can I help?'. This is because the word 'help' may trigger a sense of helplessness and therefore refusal of assistance. If they can't answer, provide some options: a chat with you, a break in the classroom, a break outside the classroom, time to chat with a friend, support from another teacher, a different learning task."

Another misconception surrounding anxiety that Ebony has noticed, is that students are aware of their own anxiety and

are therefore likely already being given help/support. "It is logical to assume that if a student is experiencing anxiety and it is affecting how they function, they must be aware of it and/or have sought help. However, as teachers, it's important to know this is not always the case.

"I have worked with many students who know that they just don't feel 'right' or comfortable, but don't have the word – 'anxiety', to explain it. There are also students who are unable to identify anxiety in themselves, even if they understand what anxiety is and can identify it in others. This can

Bringing the Sea To You in South East QLD

Curriculum based live marine animal incursions P-12
Habitats – Life Cycles – Adaptations – Classification
Human Impact – Sustainability

07 5443 8545
www.oceanlifeeducation.com.au

Working out ideas for a sustainable school

By Rosie Clarke, *Editor*

If anyone has a vested interest in environmental sustainability, it's today's youth.

Unfortunately, they are growing up in a society that has largely failed to safeguard the Earth for their future. Their generation may be the first to live through dramatic climate change and they will be tasked with switching global economies over from fossil fuels to renewable energy. According to *National Geographic*, by the end of this century there will be less freshwater due to the loss of glaciers and vast increase in 'megadroughts'.

So it makes sense that schools should be engaging students not only in environmental sustainability, but in skills like problem solving, adaptability, engineering and creativity. The tide is certainly turning, with more sophisticated sustainability programmes available now than ever before. From on-campus chicken farms and gardens, to solar data analysis, wind farms and school trips to farmer's markets, the sky's the limit for a curriculum-integrated school programme.

Sustainability features in the national curriculum, first *The Australian Curriculum* specifies sustainability 'as a



priority for study that connects and relates relevant aspects of content across learning areas and subjects".

Learning areas pinpointed include English, mathematics, science, humanities and the social sciences, arts, technologies, health and physical education, languages and work studies. With cross-curricular projects and programmes, the goal is for students to "develop the knowledge, skills, values and world views necessary to contribute to more sustainable patterns of living".

Reflective thinking processes are a key concept in the curriculum's emphasis on sustainability. Critical reflection should empower students to design action that will make a positive difference in working

towards a sustainable future.

In order to integrate a sustainability project or programme into the curriculum, teachers need to make sure that students have enough opportunities to plan, put in place, and enact what they have learned about the need for sustainability and potential for innovation.

For instance, in a school-based recycling initiative students should be tasked with hypothesising, developing and trialling multiple systems or changes to the current school recycling system and they should examine the cause for inefficiency in the current system. It would not necessarily be enough to meet curriculum criteria for a student project just to pitch a suggestion as this would not require as much 'reflective thinking'.

What schools are getting up to this term

It's been a couple of years since a Tasmanian high school won the Zayed Future Energy Prize for its solar-based energy saving initiative to turn itself into a carbon neutral school. Since then, sustainability programmes have been popping up all over Australia and around the world. Competing for the 2019 prize

this year, Fiordland College of New Zealand was named a global high school finalist for proposing to build a student-run energy park integrating solar, water, wind and energy, while combining functionality with art via energy-generating culturally-inspired sculptures. The winning school was Muntinlupa National High School, in The Philippines, which proposed to build a solar-powered micro-farm with photo-bioreactors to promote efficient algae cultivation for algae products.

Lowanna College, in Victoria came up with a broad student leadership programme for sustainability through projects that are fun and engaging. They were also finalists in this year's Zayed Sustainability Prize. The projects Lowanna students proposed include: wicking garden water reduction using recycled milk bottles as the reservoir, biodigester model, pellet mill, solar array, mushroom house, worm farm shelter, and a bicycle powered smoothie maker.

Getting a school garden started

School gardens can be a great tool for cross-curricular sustainability projects as they can integrate into so many learning areas. What better place to take a class for creative writing or quiet reading? Of course, there are obvious uses for science and STEM activities, but making use of garden vegetables in the kitchen can benefit food technology programmes, health and physical education, even business studies or economics projects. Pick a teacher to be 'garden manager' and delegate tasks to groups of students. Perhaps create a sustainability task force of older children who can make caring for the garden a whole-school affair. ■



Whatever you decide to do (or have already been doing!) let us know! We love to feature sustainable schools doing interesting things.



The 1st truly vertical school in South Australia

By Mandy Clarke,
Industry Reporter

School News spoke to Adelaide Botanic High School principal, Alistair Brown as he prepared to welcome excited students to the first truly vertical school in South Australia.

This new school, by Cox Architecture, is “not only green, sustainable and reflective of the new era of collaborative learning spaces, it’s also an example of adaptive reuse”. It has been an ambitious and unique

\$100 million building project, to repurpose the bones of the old medical school and completely refurbish the Reid building, which has six learning levels plus a basement and open-planned plaza space at ground level. This building is linked by a glass atrium to a brand new seven-storey building also with a basement and rooftop terrace.

Thrilled, Alistair said: “This is a very exciting time for us, we have been able to start a school from scratch, using the most up-to-date worldwide research available to create the building, design, curriculum and most importantly the culture. There is

no history to drag, we can start as we mean to go on, challenge ourselves and evolve into the future.”

Parents seeking the best school for their child’s academic success will look at the decor, design and ergonomics of this school and point to a 2015 British study showing a link between well-designed schools and improved academic performance. A well-designed school were said to improve pupil performance by 25 percent, with lighting, circulation, acoustics, individuality and colour affecting pupils’ progress in the year-long study by Salford University. Results like these

undeniably inspired this learning environment’s design.

Situated in the central business district - surrounded by leafy green spaces, botanic gardens and the vibrant Adelaide Zoo - this is the ideal location for Adelaide Botanic School’s new 2019, term one starters. Year 8 and Year 9 students will immediately integrate within the exhilarating neighbouring hub of universities, businesses, museums, the state library and the performing arts facilities.

Alistair told us that the location is truly a vantage point to inspire students in viewing tomorrow’s possibilities as limitless,



electrifying and immediate. As an educator and leader for 35 years, and a father for almost as long, Alistair understands the importance of choosing the right school for a child.

This is no “flat packed” school, the whole vertical environment has an abundance of light, is visually stimulating, creates a feel of connection and is full of amazing resources. It ignites learning passions and inspires interaction with the creativity and culture of the inner-city precinct.

Alistair explained: “The building is incredibly agile; the furniture is all mobile and the spaces can be completely changed in an instant, meaning no day will be the same. We also have the most amazing technology with audio visual tech that can go live throughout the school.”

Alistair’s personal philosophy is to “never do something the second time without improvement” this will be ingrained into how the school operates; ever questioning and improving methods, so students are immersed in a futures-focused learning environment.

Furthermore, the carefully selected, highly skilled, small team of teachers share the same passion for innovative research-based learning as Alistair. He said: “Our team will work collaboratively to inspire creative innovative young people and bridge the gap between the real world and school.”

This is a very different era, one



Adelaide Botanic High School principal, Alistair Brown

where infinite and unexpected opportunities lie ahead, the future will certainly require creative and nimble young minds.

Alistair agreed: “As educators, we owe it to our young people to equip them today with the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need to thrive tomorrow. Our priority is to equip our students with complex problem-solving skills and expert discipline knowledge to ensure they are fully prepared for the future.”

Adelaide Botanic High School will showcase the best of public education and 21st Century learning, catering for the learning needs of all students through

its extensive curriculum and grounded in science, technology, engineering and maths, local partnerships and research, our future leaders will also be agile, cooperative, flexible and imaginative. Learning spaces have been designed to cater for a contemporary, interdisciplinary approach to learning, which mirrors what students can expect when they enter tertiary study or the modern workplace.

Alistair explained: “If I had to put a label on the pedagogy, it would be a purposefully connected curriculum. There will be fluidity and connection rather than traditional lessons, but discipline will be retained within a collaborative environment. What will set us most apart from

other schools will be that no teacher teaches alone, we will have (what I call) collaborative professionalism meaning we will work together as a true collective and everything about the building design encourages this.”

The new Adelaide Botanic High School is officially open from this term onwards, providing 1250 students from inner-city suburbs with greater access to high quality secondary learning. The school will start with Year 8 and 9 students initially, growing to 1250 students by 2022.

“Fully embracing its green philosophy the school has no parking spaces but provides secure basement bicycle parking for 170 bicycles.” ■



▶ WHAT'S HOT



▶ THE SPEEDY 360 LASER ENGRAVING MACHINE

Laser technology welcomes endless advantages and learning opportunities for teachers and students alike.

An educational laser cutter, such as the Speedy 360, allows students to discover and try out new processing, create interesting prototypes, test and learn CAD/CAM programs, create models and slowly develop their imagination and creativity – turning bright ideas into reality! The skills that these students will learn whilst using the Speedy 360 can then be carried out beyond the classroom and into their future career paths. The Speedy 360 laser engraving machine will make learning feel fun at your school, attracting and resonating with the minds of tomorrow.

**Trotec Laser | 1300 876 832 | info@troteclaser.com.au
www.troteclaser.com.au**



▶ WIRELESS & DURABLE ACCESS CONTROL FOR SCHOOLS

School Security Experts, Eclipse Security Systems only install quality products that are tailored to their clients needs.

With a large variety of models, Salto XS4 electronic escutcheons fit virtually any door, including those with narrow frames. They are also suitable for use at fire doors and emergency exits. The XS4-60 wide body version is specially designed for use on busy, high traffic doors that need additional strength. Wire-free and networked through SALTO Virtual Network and SALTO Wireless network Eclipse Security Systems have partnered with Salto Systems on many Melbourne School Projects.

**Eclipse Security Systems | 1300 661199
sales@eclipsesecurity.com.au | www.eclipsesecurity.com.au**



▶ FULL FUNDING FOR CLEAN POWER STATIONS

Get access to the latest cleantech energy generation with Upstream's funding program..

Capital restrains are so often the barrier to school sustainability. However, unbeknownst to many - there are nil-capital solutions to generate on-site power from the latest technologies. Rooftop solar is now the lowest cost form of electricity in Australia. Did you know you can generate heating and power from campus organic waste? Or that battery storage, LEDs and intelligent HVAC controls can ensure your school has zero energy costs within 10 years? Upstream is one of Australia's earliest clean energy generator-retailers, offering complete funding for school projects. Upstream's capability is delivering immediate cost benefits and up to 100% sustainability.

**Upstream Energy | 02 8226 8616 | hello@upstreamenergy.com.au
www.upstreamenergy.com.au**



► SAFEHOOK AUSTRALIA'S NEW MEDIHOOK'S

Blue for Asthma kits, Red for Epi-pens kits. Safe storage ideas for the classroom or office. Easily recognisable and simple to install.

Safehook Products have been purposely designed to provide safe, strong, functional, wall storage for bags, hat's etc, getting gear off the floor and onto the wall. Moulded in tough, easy to clean, UV Stabilised Polypropylene Safehook products are made to endure both indoor and outdoor installation. Safehook Australia's latest Medihook's are available in either Blue or Red and include a printed decal that is easily recognisable by students and adults alike.

Safehook Australia | 07 3511 1668 | www.safehook.com.au



► BEAN BAGS FOR ANY SPACE

Pusku Pusku bean bags have arrived! They are available in a huge range of styles and fabrics suitable for children, youths and adults.

Pusku Pusku bean bags are handmade with close attention to detail and are perfect for study, outdoor and soft seating breakout spaces.

**Resource Furniture | 1300 577 267 | design@resourcefurniture.com.au
www.resourcefurniture.com.au**

► POINT OF DIFFERENCE

Is what Sunquest Industries makes your school image

Sunquest Industries are about transforming plain walls into something very professional and long lasting – Using high quality machines materials, and trained staff, we handle it all for you right from conception to completion – 6mm solid Aluminum, powder coated letters and emblem, with galvanized 20mm stand off studs, chem-set into the wall.

Sunquest Industries | 07 5437 8024 | www.sunquest.com.au



► TRANSFORM YOUR SPACE WITH MOBILE RETRACTABLE SEATING

Mobile retractable systems, are small systems designed to provide maximum versatility.

The closed unit can be positioned anywhere in the room, allowing you to reconfigure the layout to optimise your staging and seating configuration. With its small foot print combined with Interseats dedication to work with flooring manufactures to ensure the moving of the unit does not damage your floors, these systems can be used to transform enclosed sporting halls into small theatres.

To find out more about Retractable Seating Solutions for your school give Interseat a call on 1300 798 769 or email sales@interseat.com.au

Interseat | 1300 798 769 | www.interseat.com.au

Op-ed: Teachers talking to students about suicide

By **Kristen Douglas**,
Head of Headspace in Schools,
Headspace

Sometimes it can become stressful for teachers and educators to navigate a conversation about suicide with both students and their families.

As many teachers have not studied psychology, social work or counselling, they may feel that they struggle to communicate about such a sensitive topic.

The suicide of a young person has a long and lasting impact on their friends and peers, their families, schools and communities. Talking to young people about suicide can feel daunting and many people fear it will cause increased distress or even lead to the development of suicidal thoughts or suicide 'contagion'. However, it is important to note that talking about suicide in a calm and straightforward way, as well as providing information and support, is actually very important in helping young people to manage their feelings and allows them to make sense of what has happened.

The aim is to limit the harmful impact of the death and to promote positive coping strategies and good mental health.

Suicide is a complex behaviour caused by a range of factors and is rarely the result of a single event or problem. Many people who suicide would have experienced mental health difficulties such as depression leading up to their death. This condition can make people feel hopeless and impact on their ability to think clearly and rationally. Identifying the link between mental illness and suicide

Resources for teachers

Headspace has a range of free resources online at headspace.org.au/schools/resources/supporting-students/.

Teachers can also head to beyou.edu.au for free resources about how to create a holistic approach to mental health and wellbeing within schools.

when addressing a death in their school community can encourage young people to seek help for themselves or others, which will decrease the risk of suicide.

Suicide can elicit a range of emotional and behavioural responses and young people often want answers about why a suicide has occurred, which can lead to them blaming the death on a particular event or person. It is crucial to explain that suicide is not simple and is often the result of a range of contributing factors. This can reduce the likelihood that blaming or scapegoating will occur.

Importantly, talking graphically about how the suicide took place should be avoided at all costs. Detailed descriptions of the death can not only be distressing and overwhelming, but can also increase the risk of imitation by vulnerable young people. We recommend focussing on how to manage the emotions brought up by the persons death and away from details of how someone has died.

It is important that we highlight that it is okay to talk about suicide

More national youth support services:

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
kidshelpline.com.au

ReachOut.com: au.reachout.com

More national 24/7 crisis support services:

Lifeline: 13 11 14 lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service:

1300 659 467
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

MensLine Australia:

1300 789 978 mensline.org.au

in and outside of the classroom in response to the needs of students. In the classroom, the discussion of suicide may come up at unexpected times and could be seen to take up valuable teaching time but it should not be made into a prohibited topic.

Teachers need to acknowledge what has happened and reiterate that this type of experience is likely to affect people in different ways. It is also important to include in these discussions messages that outline options to seek help and positive coping strategies.

Research shows suicide risk in schools is an increasing concern and no school is immune. This indicates that we need to continue to work with educators to build mental health literacy and help them to develop the skills to identify and respond to risk when they see it.

With suicide unfortunately remaining the leading cause of death for young people aged between 5-17 years of age, Headspace has teamed up with Beyondblue and Early Childhood Australia (ECA) to develop the *Be You* initiative, which provides teachers and educators in early learning services and schools with online resources including a guiding framework, building blocks, and professional learning modules. All this is backed up by direct support from a team of consultants across all states and territories.

Returning to school can play an important part in a young person's recovery following a suicide attempt, so we encourage all schools to develop a *Return to School Student Support Plan* to help them establish a safe and supportive learning environment for the young person.

Headspace is committed to reducing suicide among young people and know that improving help-seeking and early intervention is a proven pathway to suicide prevention. When support is accessed in the early stages of distress or suicidal thinking, young people are best placed to recover quickly, and learn lifelong coping strategies. We know that with the right support, young people can get things back on track and it can start with the conversations teachers have with their students. ★

Kristen Douglas is the head of Headspace in Schools, the National Youth Mental Health Foundation. If you or someone you know is struggling, visit headspace.org.au to find your nearest centre or call eheadspace on 1800 650 890. Headspace in schools (in partnership with beyondblue) implements a suicide post-vention service that assists Australian school communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from the death of a student by suicide.

Do our students need to be more mentally tough?

In a world of increasing stress and pressure, ensuring the wellbeing of both staff and students is always a hot topic in education.

What we do know is that stress is a normal part of life; however, if not managed effectively it can be detrimental to learning, wellbeing and achievement. 'Mental toughness' has been defined as a personality trait that determines a person's ability to perform consistently under stress and pressure, and it is closely related to qualities such as character, grit and perseverance (Clough & Strycharczyk, 2012). While the concept of mental toughness is relatively new in education, it has a long history in academic research related to resilience and cognitive hardiness, especially in the area of sport psychology. Professor Peter Clough and Doug Strycharczyk, managing director of AQR, have merged these fields to form the *4C Model the Mental Toughness*:

1. **Control:** the degree to which you believe you have control of your circumstances including your emotions
2. **Commitment:** the degree to which you can set and achieve realistic goals
3. **Challenge:** the degree to which you actively seek challenges and manage setbacks
4. **Confidence:** the degree to which you know your own strengths and can work with others in groups

Three growing areas of concern in schools that relate to mental health in young people include increasing test anxiety, peer relationships and bullying. This is typically because young people may feel they have no control over their assessments or friendships; they may be unable to regulate their own



Daniela Falecki,
Founder and Director,
Teacher Wellbeing

emotions; they may lack confidence in their own abilities or lack the drive to take on new challenges. If young people have the skills to better understand the relationship between life control, emotional control, interpersonal confidence and achievement, perhaps they will be better placed in dealing with these situations should they occur (Gerber et al., 2013).

The bottom line is, 'while cognitive ability reflects what an individual can do, it is non-cognitive factors that reflect what an individual will do' (McGeown, 2016). Common non-cognitive attributes frequently measured in education include motivation, self-efficacy, perseverance, emotional regulation and more, yet these terms are not often understood or used by young people themselves. Mental toughness, on the other hand, is less academic and more likely to be a part of young people's everyday speech (Gerber et al., 2013).

What we do know from the research is that not only can resilience be taught, but mental toughness can be a natural or developed psychological trait (Bull, 2005). Dr Suzy Green, CEO of The Positivity Institute, and myself have recently written a teacher-led mental toughness curriculum for 14-16-year-olds called, 'Growing Mentally Tough Teens'. The program offers teachers complete lesson plans with lesson instructions,

worksheets, resources, research and more.

Even more exciting is that mental toughness can be measured using a valid and reliable measure called the *MTQ48* to identify students at risk or track the progress of individuals, classes or whole year groups.

What we also know from the research (Norrish, 2012) is that for student wellbeing programs to be effectively embedded into a school, staff must 'learn it' and 'live it' before they 'teach it'. So, while giving young people

skills in mental toughness is essential, perhaps we as teachers would also benefit from learning and practicing these skills. Especially given the fact that teachers are struggling too, with increasing workloads, high cognitive loads and emotional exhaustion.

What if we as teachers reflected on the 4Cs each day at work? What if both staff and students could be more mentally tough? How might the culture of your school community look? ★

Daniela Falecki is founder and director of Teacher Wellbeing (www.teacher-wellbeing.com.au). She is known as the 'keep-it-real' teacher who specialises in positive psychology. Her passionate, practical approach makes her a sought-after speaker, sharing stories from her 20 years of experience in schools.

A Staff Wellbeing Toolkit

Positive Psychology for Teacher Collective Efficacy



PD BY TEACHERS 4 TEACHERS

Energize, Engage and Inspire Your Staff with Meaningful PD;

Twilight sessions (3hrs)

Full day (whole staff or leadership)

Conferences

Online courses

Program Options

- 1- Teacher Wellbeing - The foundations of collective efficacy
- 2- Living & teaching with a growth mindset
- 3- Peer coaching & mentoring

Helping schools build belief, recognise impact & embrace possibility.

Contact Daniela Falecki
daniela@teacher-wellbeing.com.au

Free resources at www.teacher-wellbeing.com.au

Balancing screen time in schools and how theatre can help

Excessive screen time is emerging as a major concern for parents and teachers.

Children are learning to use digital devices from a young age and primary school students regularly use technology for entertainment and to socialise with friends. The latest *Child Health Poll* found that one-third of Australian pre-schoolers, two-thirds of primary school children and almost all teenagers own their own tablet or smart phone.

The Office of the eSafety Commissioner warns excessive screen time can contribute to sleep difficulties, obesity and poor school performance. A 2018 study found that any screen time beyond one hour per day was associated with lower psychological wellbeing in children and teens, including poorer self-control, curiosity, emotional stability, and poorer ability to complete tasks, manage distractions and make friends.

It has been suggested that screen time stunts imaginative play by saturating the senses with a constant stream of entertainment. Excessive screen time can also have implications for eye health, posture and sleep.

Digital health expert Dr Kristy Goodwin says displacement effects are one of the biggest issues – the more time kids spend on screens, the less time



Dr Ameika Johnson,
Brainstorm Productions

they are spending outdoors in sunlight, being physically active and developing balance, coordination and social skills.

How much time should kids spend on devices?

The Australian Government's *Physical Activity And Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines* recommend no more than two hours of leisure screen time per day for 5-to-17-year-olds. Dr Anthea Rhodes, paediatrician at the Royal Children's Hospital, recommends keeping screens out of the bedroom and says it is best to have no screens one hour before bed.

While most parents try hard to limit their children's screen time, it is becoming an increasing struggle. Many parents are left feeling ineffective and frustrated. Some experts believe the current guidelines are unrealistic and should be



updated to be more applicable to our screen-saturated world.

It is also important to note that the current recommendations do not include time spent on devices at school and doing homework.

Margaret Kristin Murga from Murdoch University notes that most students are already exceeding the recommended screen time for leisure and believes we need guidelines that account for the hours spent using devices for schoolwork.

So what about screen time in the classroom?

There are differing opinions about how devices should be used in education.

An *SBS Insight* program revealed that many Australian schools are embracing technology in the classroom and bring your own device (BYOD) policies are common practice.

Many educators believe that when it is well integrated into the learning environment, technology provides opportunities for more critical, curious and self-directed learning. When used appropriately, technology can make learning more engaging, interactive and efficient. It can prepare students for a rapidly changing world and an uncertain future.

Others, however, have observed a reduction in students' ability to focus when there are devices

in the room. They are struggling to keep students on task and compete with the distractions available on tablets and laptops. Monitoring of internet use is an ongoing challenge, with many students using hotspots to access blocked websites. Most teachers would agree with the need for restrictions on smartphone use, however policies differ greatly between schools.

While some students are able to self-moderate their technology use, this is a big ask for most, especially primary school students.

These issues are likely to place greater pressure on teachers and the student-teacher relationship.

The importance of balancing screen time at school

In addition to clear limits and guidance, students need balance when it comes to technology use.

In fact, students often appreciate the value of screen-free learning time.

Year 10 student Matt told *Insight*: "Everyone's so much more involved when we're not using computers. I feel much more focused in class." Year 12 student Jack said he remembers content better when he uses a pen and paper. Year 6 student Suzanne pointed out: "I've got other things to do besides going on my devices." ►

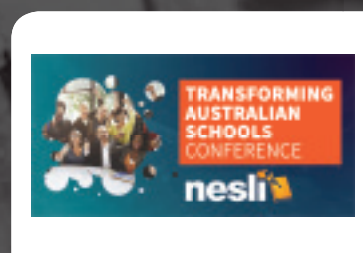




NATIONAL EDUCATION SUMMIT



The National Education Summit environment is personalised, relevant and meaningful, with a deep commitment to children's development.



EARN
PD HOURS

PLUS!
VISIT THE FREE TRADE EXPO

**FREE
SEMINAR
PROGRAM**

REGISTER TO ATTEND:
www.nationaleducationsummit.com.au

Enquiries: 03 9596 9205

Language in, language out: a basic model for school culture

I was recently working with some school leaders and I devised a basic model on the run with them about school culture.

When I came home from this particularly engaging session, I looked upon my new hastily conjured model, perhaps pondering just how clever I was to have spontaneously designed such a neat artefact, I realised that I may have gotten one small detail wrong – my audience.

Here's the model. I'd love to know what you think:

To be up front, what I think I got wrong in terms of audience is that this model is probably far more important for classroom practitioners than it is for school leaders.

Allow me to explain why. Language as an 'input all' of the



Adam Voigt,
Founder and director
Real Schools

literature around classroom climate/culture points to the importance of the language chosen by those with authority. Think about a family for a moment.

The language choices made by the parents/caregivers is directly teaching the learners of the culture, in this case their children, what matters, what's important, what the rules and what the

norms are within that little family culture. As it is with teachers. Your language choices are teaching your students what's okay and what isn't in your classroom.

On the positive side, if you were to choose to speak effectively, meaning that you use statements that incorporate feelings and words through statements like, 'I'm really frustrated with the choice you just made. I need you to make a better one now'. as opposed to, 'Hey, cut that out!' then you teach your students to be more empathic.

On the negative, if you fly into threats or raise your voice at the first sign of a bad day, then you teach your students that this is an acceptable response to frustration.

In my model, the words on the input side are a reminder to you that this is first a choice or decision to change language. But more than the choice, you'll need to practice these simple language shifts in order to move through strong levels of self-awareness towards a new linguistic default.

Language as an output in time, the persistent deployment of

positive and affective language in your practice, is more likely to generate students who are:

- **Empathic** because they've learned to care through exposure to the language-of-care, almost via some version of verbal Chinese water torture.
- **Thoughtful**, they begin to actually think before they act, rather than merely contemplate potential punitive consequences and how to avoid them.
- **Restrained**, they pause for a moment to allow space for wise decision-making before making impulsive behaviour choices.
- **Creative**, they create for themselves better behavioural responses, even under pressure.

Further, when they do get it wrong, they're more creative about devising appropriate responses to poor choices – because they will continue to make mistakes. What we want is for these moments to be seen as opportunities to practice that relational creativity, rather than sources of personal shame. ★



A 'hastily conjured model' by Adam Voigt, Real Schools

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. Adam has delivered a TED Talk and is the schools/education expert for The Project.

◀ Whatever your school's approach to technology, students still need to learn through a range of media and methods, using all of their senses.

They need to learn how to read from a book, write and draw with their hands, move their bodies in different ways, understand social cues and interact with nature. They need to learn how to focus on a single task, even when the task is boring. And they need to learn how to tune in to their thoughts, emotions and physical sensations.

Creative activities like music, dance, visual arts and drama can give students a variety of hands-on learning experiences. They require students to use different parts of

the brain and expose them to the richness of human experience.

Breaking up screen time with theatre in education

Theatre in education can be employed by teachers to enhance their existing student wellbeing programs and give students a break from screens.

Theatre companies provide the opportunity for students to explore issues like (cyber) bullying, cyber safety, screen time, mental health, resilience and respectful relationships while also engaging with a narrative.

There is evidence that students may learn more from a live

performance than they do from a movie with the same themes. Theatre gives them the chance to connect with the actors in front of them and requires them to focus on one thing for an extended period. Social perspective taking, tolerance and a willingness to accept different opinions may all be enhanced through the experience of live theatre. Live theatre may also inspire students to participate in drama and performance, which promotes

a host of positive outcomes including creativity, self-esteem and emotional wellbeing.

The issue of screen time is at the forefront of the minds of parents, teachers, scientists and policy makers. As the digital world evolves, so does our understanding of how technology is impacting on children. Now, more than ever, we need to ensure students have access to a wide range of learning opportunities. ★

Dr Ameika Johnson is a registered clinical psychologist who has worked with clients across the lifespan in research and clinical settings. She currently works with Australia's largest theatre in education company, Brainstorm Productions, helping them to develop and continuously improve their wellbeing, bullying and cyber safety programs for primary and high school students.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 2019

06 Accidental Counsellor Training – QLD

TAFE Queensland

CONTACT: sophieokeefe@englishaustralia.com.au

WEBSITE: www.englishaustralia.com.au

ABOUT: The Accidental Counsellor Training is a full day program for people who are not qualified as clinical counsellors but often respond to emotional upset and distress because of the role they are in.

15 Accidental Counsellor Training – VIC

CQUniversity Australia

CONTACT: sophieokeefe@englishaustralia.com.au

WEBSITE: www.englishaustralia.com.au

ABOUT: The Accidental Counsellor Training is a full day program for people who are not qualified as clinical counsellors but often respond to emotional upset and distress because of the role they are in.

20 National FutureSchools Expo & Conference

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

CONTACT: futureschools@terrapinn.com

WEBSITE: http://www.futureschools.com.au/

ABOUT: The five conferences at the National FutureSchools Expo have all been designed to cater for senior leadership working in different roles within K-12 education.

APRIL 2019

04 Language, Literacy and Learning Conference

Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre

CONTACT: conference@dsf.net.au

WEBSITE: www.literacylanguageconf.com

ABOUT: The Language, Literacy and Learning Conference will provide a wealth of information on the factors influencing the successful acquisition of skills in language, literacy and numeracy. It will be particularly relevant to classroom teachers, school principals and administrators.

Keynote speakers include founder of researchED Tom Bennett, psychology professors Daniel Ansari and Kathy Rastle, neuroscientist Simon Fisher, memory specialist Yana Weinstein, and renowned researcher in the field of reading and the brain, professor Stanislas Dehaene.

18

The Australian schools women's leadership summit

Rydges World Square Sydney

CONTACT: info@wla.edu.au

WEBSITE: www.wla.edu.au/schoolssummit

ABOUT: Connecting, celebrating and developing women leaders across the K-12 education sector, this summit aims to be a national platform for women at all levels to connect, share ideas and enhance their leadership skills. Keynote speakers include Australian of the Year Ita Buttrose AO.

May 2019

21

5th Annual School Planning, Design & Construction Summit

Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne

CONTACT: jamie.elekman@informa.com

WEBSITE: www.informa.com.au

ABOUT: Everything you need to know about Innovative Learning Spaces for positive outcomes. Digital learning and new building configurations have defied the traditional education model, and those in charge of school planning must reflect that shift in their ideas and implementation. Collaboration between experts such as educators, architects, state officials, design consultants, and many others is key to meet the new demands of modern Australian schools.

31

National Education Summit

Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre



CONTACT: +61 3 9596 9205

WEBSITE: www.nationaleducationssummit.com.au

ABOUT: For the first time, the National Education Summit will hold a Brisbane event in 2019, bringing a comprehensive professional development program to local educators over two days. Enjoy concurrent conferences and interactive seminars alongside an education focused Free Trade Expo. Earn professional development hours on all events you attend. With the flagship summit continuing in Melbourne next August, the Brisbane event is a new addition to the long running summit and comes in response to strong feedback from the education sector for a Queensland event. After the temporary exit of other education conferences from Brisbane in recent years, this is a rare opportunity for teachers, school leaders and principals to attend the respected national event closer to home. ■



Does your school have enough seating for sports day?

Kick off 2019 with Felton's range of premium quality grandstands, spectator seating, benches, change room furniture and more for your school!

Call us 1800 22 00 55



AGES 2-4 YEARS



EXTRA SAFETY FEATURES

felton.net.au

Laser cutters aid projects at Mitcham Girls High School

By Rosie Clarke, Editor

Laser cutting is the high tech envy of every STEM program in the country.

World leader in the product manufacturing and development of laser cutters, Trotec Laser has been assisting schools in their upgrade.

Innovative teaching and learning coordinator at Mitcham Girls High School, Simon Brooks told **School News** all about the sophisticated new laser cutters they installed.

"Trotec has been amazing at introducing laser cutting to Mitcham Girls High School. Well before we got our Rayjet 300, the local rep, Ben supported me when I was trialling some new laser cut projects with the girls. This really helped to get the purchase of the laser over the line because I was able to showcase these projects to the school community.

"During the purchasing and installation process of our machine in our new STEM centre, Trotec were awesome at communicating with us at school, the architects and builders of the redeveloped area. Since the installation, the team has further supported us by also helping with queries that we have about different materials and troubleshooting if we have missed something from a software or hardware point of view."

What do you use the laser cutter machine for?

Simon explained: "I thought the laser cutter was the number one investment for the new STEM centre because it provides the girls with the opportunity to create industry standard products.

"Due to its speed, it provides an outstanding platform for students to think critically and creatively about their designs with rapid prototyping. The laser provides the opportunity to develop solutions to the problems that they encounter relatively quickly.

"It has created a whole new level of sophistication in our student projects. It has also allowed teachers to develop new innovative tasks that previously would have been almost impossible without the laser."

Has there been a reaction within the school community?

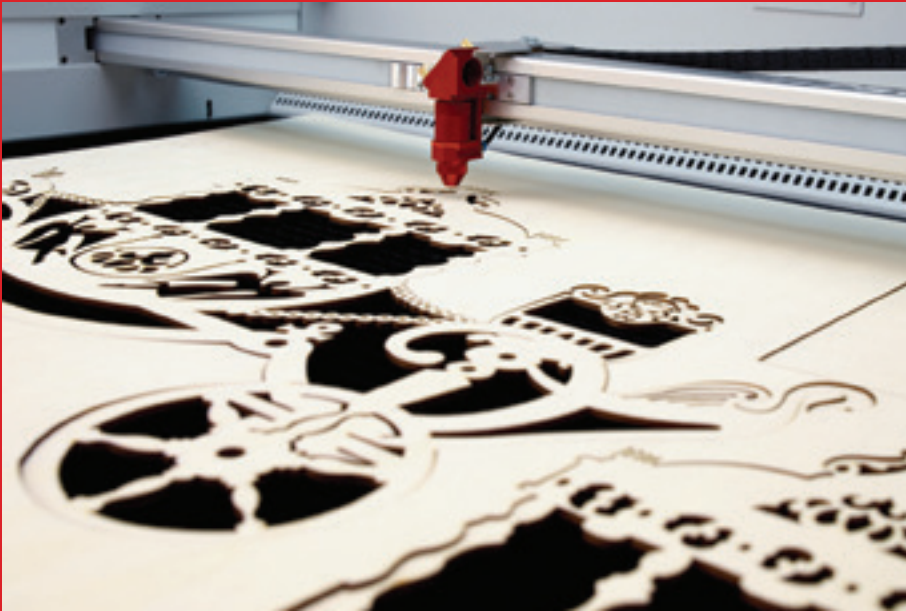
"The reaction from the whole school and wider community has been extremely positive to date. The students absolutely love it and I still remember the look on the students faces when we hit print on our first job.

"The parents have commented on some of the projects we have done with the laser to date and have been impressed. This was evident with our *Women's and Children's Project* where the girls designed little purple butterflies as gifts for mothers who had recently experienced pregnancy loss.

"The teachers across the whole school have done a small PD project to learn the basics of laser cutting and have found it extremely useful to see how they can now apply it to their curriculum areas. ■



Australia's preferred laser and consumables supplier for schools



- *Industrial and Technical Design*
- *Information Technology*
- *Home Economics*
- *Sports*
- *Admin*
- *Arts*



Ideal for STEAM curriculum

"I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms." – Oscar Wilde



By Rosie Clarke, Editor

A quirky little rule of thumb in improvisational theatre is, 'yes, and...'

It's the idea that by accepting someone's truth onstage, you learn more about the scene; if someone asks whether they can sit down to receive their results, you know that you're in some kind of office and that you have power over the other person because you have their 'results', so now you must decide what those results are. If your scene partner says there's a dinosaur behind you, you better scream. Replying that you can't see a dinosaur will kill the scene.

The real world isn't so different; if you acknowledge whatever is thrown your way, it becomes a little easier to move forward.

In *Big Think*, professor and CEO Bob Kulhan explains that the concept is critical to creating a safe working environment. He writes that it encourages colleagues, teammates and clients to articulate their perspective freely.

It's not just about the validation of a 'yes' or the decision-making of a 'no', it's the inference of two-way communication. By saying 'yes, and...', you can engage with the other person's perspective more effectively.

In school, theatre is a uniquely collaborative and creative endeavour that can include students of all abilities and ages. It's not uncommon for schools to combine year levels in an end-of-year production and the number of different roles both onstage and behind the scenes mean there's something for every child to do.

Everyone can feel valued and benefit from creating something audiences applaud as the house lights flick on.

That's not to say there aren't difficulties. A lot falls on a teacher's shoulders to plan and manage, and it's no easy feat.

Absent actors, finding costumes and copyright dilemmas

These are all fairly common issues that plague any school

The P.A. People

40+ years' experience in schools & colleges!

Experienced advice and solutions for all your audio and AV needs.



Experience | Independence | Assurance

P. (02) 8755 8700 / E. sales@papeople.com.au / 9-11 Leeds St, Rhodes NSW 2138

papeople.com.au

COSTUMES without DRAMA

Calling all Performing Arts teachers!

Take the drama out of costuming your school performance this year.

No sewing or laundering with a Full inventory and delivery available.



Stress-free, affordable quality costume hire
- You'll wonder how you survived without it.
Call or email us to find out more.

Phone: 03 8838 2616

www.costumeswithoutdrama.com.au
info@costumeswithoutdrama.com.au



performance, particularly the full-scale musicals. The first might be surmised as 'commitment issues': it's hard to make sure all the students attend every rehearsal. Some tips School News received from performing arts schools include: make students (and their parents) aware of rehearsal dates before they join the cast or crew; have understudies for the main roles and encourage them to motivate each other's

attendance; incentivise each rehearsal with something like a 10-minute theatre game or small reward for being the first arrival.

Depending on your chosen production, costumes vary in extravagance. Young people today are more skilled than ever before in things like makeup, hair and crafts thanks to the dawn of the YouTube tutorial. So whether it's for a smaller class production or a huge, sweeping musical,

draw up a list of who can do what. Encouraging students to teach each other things like stage makeup in their own time will also prove helpful. Factor costuming into your budget: not only will it help students feel professional and get into character, but it will also elevate the production level of the show as a whole. Talk to suppliers and get some quotes because the affordability might surprise you.

Copyright is a big question

for school performers. The temptation may be to create something original; perhaps student-written. As any teacher who has attempted this will know, though; it's quite hard to do. Asking a large group of students to write something succinct can be a gamble, particularly if you plan to showcase the production to parents and friends at the end of the year. If they do write their own material, they must be wary of plagiarism. ►



AUSTRALIA'S SCHOOL TIERED STAGE AND CHOIR RISER SPECIALISTS



*School Stages and Choir Risers
Made Just for You - Ask Us How*






AUSTRALIAN MADE

PO Box 893 Lilydale VIC 3140 T 1300 778 243 F 1300 736 449 E sales@selectconcepts.com.au



"Select Concepts' Australia-made Portable Stage Systems perform successfully for Ingham State High School events - yours can too - just ask!" – Leonie McDerby, Select Concepts

◀ Students might not know that mentioning a movie or anime character counts as copyright infringement.

Modern adaptations of classic works are popular in schools because there's no need to get a licence (the works of Oscar Wilde included). You also don't need a licence if you're not going to be performing for the general public or outside school hours. This is regardless of whether you charge money for tickets. Any song, musical or play will also have some kind of royalty fee attached so find that out before choreography rehearsals begin.

Professional requirements

Quality performances bring out the best in students and showcase a school's vision. Acoustics and stage lighting are critical. From the stage itself, what material it's made



Fun Facts...

109,000 students study creative arts at tertiary level.

85% of Australians think the Arts make for a more rich and meaningful life.

78 tickets are sold to performing arts events for every 100 Australians per year.

While the theatre industry is only 38% women, they make up 63% of award nominees.

from and how the microphones are hooked up, to your on-campus venue. Luckily, most suppliers will take you through all the equipment when they help install it, so that staff and students will be able to operate the AV controls themselves. If you don't have space for a permanent stage, portable stages are available that can be set-up in-or-outside, these work well for schools with a budget

as they are so multipurposed. That said, dance, sports, music and theatre all have different acoustic requirements from a stage, so please discuss intended use with your chosen supplier.

If you will be hiring equipment, aim to negotiate long-term and plan for multiple performances at once to get a better quote. Projectors, screens and special

effects lighting are all versatile and, in the case of lighting, essential to any performance.

Theatre is serious stuff. Not only is sincerity required to create something authentic onstage, but the skills gained in taking part are skills that set you up to cope with the big stuff in life. Resilience. Communication. Empathy. Humility. ■



"Designed for safety, built to last - get ready for your events in 2019 with Transtage!" – Oliver Ryan, Transtage



"With 40+ years of providing systems for education facilities, The P.A. People has strong relationships with many equipment manufacturers, allowing more choice and value for schools!" – Michael Stephens, The P.A. People



"Think hiring costumes is beyond your budget? Think again! Take the drama out of costuming your performance this year."
 – Tracey, Costumes without Drama

Portable Stages

- | PORTABLE STAGES
- | CHOIR RISERS
- | SEATING RISERS
- | CATWALK STAGES
- | DRUM RISERS







Australia's leading supplier of Portable Stages and Dance Floors.
 We offer wide-range of high-quality options to suit every school budget.

📍 14b/8 Gladstone Road
 Castle Hill
 NSW 2154

✉ info@transtage.com.au
 ☎ 1300 712 066

www.transtage.com.au
 www.dance-floor.com.au



Synthetic phonics are back(ed by research)



By Rosie Clarke, Editor

Literacy requires a child to decode language and decipher meaning: both are essential but the former really gets educators talking.

Back in the early 1900s, when NSW students were still writing on slates, learning to decode language was a relatively rigid process that relied on formal grammar lessons

and phonics. In the 1960s, a new era dawned: rote learning would no longer be the status quo and students would organically absorb grammar instead.

Phonics were taken out of the curriculum and literacy lessons focussed on exploring text, both in-and-outside traditional literature. Language would be functional and contextual rather than an objective, intersecting list of rules. Students would understand how a letter referenced a particular sound, or how punctuation worked, by piecing it together in a text like a puzzle.

But research has increasingly shown that context isn't enough.

PISA 2015 was a big wake up call for many countries, including Australia. Concrete proof was uncovered for the first time that literacy proficiency was on a hasty decline. Just 53 percent of state school students reached the *National Proficient Standard* for reading literacy in 2015 and in the 15-years prior, the proportion of low performers rose while the proportion of high performers sank across all jurisdictions. Boys' scores averaged a year-level below girls'.

A lot of debate followed these results, with a wave of academics calling for phonetic resurgence.

University of Melbourne researchers pointed out that failing to teach linguistic rules and systemic patterns of language to young Australians could even be causing the nation's declining foreign language acquisition.

"Fifty years ago, about 40 percent of all secondary school students in Australia studied a second language into their final year of school. Today, that number is closer to 10 percent," explained Sarah Hall and Elizabeth Cassidy in their *Pursuit* think piece, 'Why are Australians linguistically lost?'.

Since 2015, phonics have made a (somewhat) triumphant return. South Australia followed England's lead and trialled a 'phonetics check' in 2017 to assess reading literacy among Year 1 students. It was a controversial move, with teachers' unions insisting schools already integrated phonetics into lessons and a check was an insult to the profession.

The check itself involves children reading a mixture of words and 'pseudowords' aloud to a teacher using phonic decoding. The pseudowords prevent them from relying on sight memory and ensure a purer test of phonics ability.

The South Australian results took everyone by surprise. On average, the children only scored 22 out

of 40 (substantially lower than England's average score of 32). This was far lower than teachers had expected, indicating that standard assessments were not accurately depicting decoding ability at Year 1.

More shockingly, the students enjoyed taking the test. Teacher feedback included reports of a lack of anxiety from the children surrounding the phonics check. Students were also said to enjoy the one-on-one time with a teacher that it afforded.

A British study by educational psychologist Dr Marlynn Grant followed 30 children who were taught phonics from the age of four and found that at seven they were, on average, 28 months ahead of their peers for reading and 21 months ahead for spelling.

What does this mean? According to emeritus professor of education Kevin Wheldall and senior research fellow Jennifer Buckingham from Macquarie University, it pokes holes in any argument that Australia currently teaches phonics to a high enough standard.

They wrote in a report for *The Conversation*: "Almost all teachers in the [SA] trial said they taught phonics using either synthetic or analytic methods, reflecting the claim that Australian teachers already teach phonics. But there was no information to

verify that phonics teaching is systematic or explicit, and these results clearly suggest they don't teach it well enough."

A whole-school, systemic literacy program that teaches children to read using synthetic phonics seems like the best move for teachers looking to give their students a jump start with reading this year.

Industry clarification: how should teachers teach literacy today?

School News spoke with literacy specialist, presenter of Firefly Education's Spelling Masterclass, and all-around synthetic phonics expert, Nicole Forrest.

She formally agreed: "All schools need systematic, evidence-based approaches to spelling and reading instruction." The last few years have propelled change, and we are in the middle of an exciting and productive time for literacy teaching, Nicole said.

"Now there is a growing awareness of the need for explicit, systematic, synthetic phonics to teach fundamental

reading and spelling skills.

For too many years in education, there was a mismatch between what research findings told us about how children learn to read and spell, and what actually happened in classrooms each day. That's definitely changing now and I think as a result we'll see improved literacy outcomes for students.

"Consistent, highly-effective teaching across the board reduces the number of students requiring intervention in the first place and, over time, decreases the spread of abilities found in classrooms. I constantly observe the positive effects of school-wide consistency with the schools using whole-school synthetic phonics."

She advocates for running a whole-class program with built-in opportunities for support and extension. "This negates the need to create several very specific groups in the one classroom. In my experience, trying to run multiple groups in the one room can lead to a lack of explicit teaching as the teacher can simply only be with one group at a time and a



chaotic classroom environment as students struggle to work independently on concepts they have not been taught. "Once you have a comprehensive whole-class program as a base, you can begin to focus on working with students who need specific support and extension. Diagnostic spelling tests can be used to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and then you can

implement teaching based on the results of the test. This is where some small group work is valuable.

"Towards the end of your week, provide practice activities around concepts taught earlier in the week to the majority of your students and then work with those students who need support or extension on a specific concept (as identified by your diagnostic testing)." ■

Spelling success

starts in Foundation

In staff rooms all over Australia there is increased awareness around the need for explicit, systematic synthetic phonics teaching in the early years.

However, knowing what is needed and having the support and resources to make it a reality are very different things – which is where Sound Waves comes in. Created in Australia for Australian classrooms, Sound Waves has been a favourite systematic synthetic phonics and word study program for decades.

However, with the demand on teachers increasing year on year, Sound Waves needed to up the ante... That's why Sound Waves Foundation, the most



crucial year in reading and spelling development, has had a revamp. Sound Waves Online now delivers engaging, streamlined resources for every lesson throughout the year.

The Student Book is in full colour, with increased writing and segmenting opportunities that consolidate every lesson. And the Teacher Book embodies all of these changes in an easy-to-reference printed format for those who prefer to work offline.

Of course spelling instruction doesn't stop at Foundation – with Sound Waves Online for Years one to six having recently won Best Primary Student Resource English at Education Publishing Awards, you know you'll have everything you need going into the future. ▲

WIN SOUND WAVES FOR YOUR CLASSROOM

To celebrate the **new and improved** Sound Waves Foundation, we're giving you the chance to win one year's access to Sound Waves Online and a class set of Student Books.



To enter, visit soundwavesspelling.com.au/win
Entries close 26 April 2019. Full T&C on entry form.

High school readers need a YA book club

By Rosie Clarke, *Editor*

I interviewed teacher librarians around the country about student reading habits and discovered a clear preference for reading young adult fiction (YA).

In recent years, text lists for English studies across the *Australian Curriculum* have undergone revision and debate. In February this year, researchers from Queensland University of Technology lambasted the brand-new QLD reading list for only including two (out of 21) texts with vague references to queerness. Those texts were *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*: hardly pinnacles of queer literature, but credit where credit's due.

Literacy rates among Australians are sliding, with 43 percent of 15-60-year-olds scoring low on the literacy competency scale, according to *Australian Bureau of Statistics* data. Educators are scrambling to turn the tide. 2014 government recommendations invited the introduction of more 'high quality writing' pulled from the Western canon. This was reflected to a certain extent in revised text lists across several states. However, much of the literary canon predates the mid-20th



Century; if students are finding Shakespeare difficult to read, wait 'til they get their hands on Chaucer, which was a suggested addition by Professor Barry Spurr in the curriculum review.

School librarian Kirsti Graham said: "Each year we seem to have a larger number of students asking to borrow the audiobook version of their class texts. Students are finding classics increasingly difficult to read and relate to." Kirsti runs the reading program for Years 9 and 10 at Loreto Mandeville Hall in VIC.

Program leader at QLD all girls' secondary school, Mt Alvernia College, Helen Stower revealed

that 25 percent of her students also borrowed audiobooks.

So what are students actually reading?

One huge trend teacher librarians identified was anime, manga and graphic novels. These texts had some of the highest borrowing rates across the five schools we received library data from. Audiobooks for graphic novels don't exist, so the students are definitely reading them but they are obviously a visual medium. Still, a couple of librarians suggested that teachers use them more often in class. "Graphic novels

in particular are a fantastic tool for teachers, especially when [students] are at different levels of learning," said Domonique Mileto, teaching and learning librarian at the all boys' Trinity Grammar School in NSW.

Helen added: "The novels studied for class rarely have an impact on student borrowing in the senior years. [...] I do think including young adult fiction and new genres such as graphic novels in the syllabus is a good idea.

"The diversity of the topics and the points-of-view they present provide opportunities for young people to explore their identity, understand their society and culture and build empathy for others. Emerging genres, such as graphic novels, broaden literacy skills to include visual literacy."

Some graphic novels are included in state-wide text lists, including *Maus* by Art Spiegelman (SA) and *Persepolis: The story of a childhood* by Marjane Satrapi (QLD) but these are 38 and 18 years old respectively, so how much more relatable can they be?

Science fiction and fantasy novels were also popular with students, and are notably lacking on prescribed text lists but the overwhelming commonality across school library borrowers was a love for YA.



It makes sense: modern YA encompasses all genres and is written for 12-20-year-olds. Narratively, YA involves young adult characters, a 'coming of age' story that extends beyond the parent-child dynamic; lots of 'firsts' and usually a hopeful ending. Because it's written for teenagers, teenagers find it relatable. Relatability is a struggle to achieve with classic works like Shakespeare despite their universal themes.

YA is also extremely progressive: you will find no shortage of queer, multi-cultural and intersectional characters. But why isn't there more of it in the syllabus? Reportedly, teachers are reluctant to use it in class.

"There are some very well-written, highly regarded young adult titles that would be perfect as class texts, but they're often dismissed by teaching staff purely because they're young adult titles," said Kirsti.

Teacher librarian at Ravenswood School for Girls and published YA author, Katharina Colmer argued that it really comes down to time: "NESA give an extensive list of YA texts, including graphic novels, as part of their new English 7-10 NSW syllabus support material. It's heartening to see a solid number of texts by well-liked authors such as Patrick Ness, Cath Crowley, Vikki Wakefield, Randa Abdul-Fattah and David Levithan. The problem, however, is that in many under-resourced schools with time-poor staff, the texts chosen for study tend to stay on a program year-after-year with little change to newer, and possibly more student-relevant, titles."



Katharina Colmer

It's a shame because YA ticks a lot boxes teachers want ticked.

According to an Australian Council of the Arts survey, 42 percent of teenagers participate in 'books and reading' on social media and the internet. These online communities are highly analytic: if you read some of the lengthy Tumblr posts and Twitter threads deciphering symbols and character motivations, it's interesting to note that this is unprovoked, outside-the-

classroom, organic literary criticism. Teachers might start to see the analytic enthusiasm

that is very present online bleed into the classroom if they can merge the two worlds.

Something schools could do to foster YA reading without having to rewrite their assessment is start a book club or wider reading list.

As Katharina suggests: "Wide-reading programs can help [...] by exposing students to a greater variety of titles across different genres."

For time-poor teachers, teacher librarians ask you to look no further. They are happy to take on the YA book club mantle. As Helen explained, teacher librarians "are up-to-date on newly published books in the market".

"At our school, we have a literature promotion program that brings classes to the library once a fortnight for a book chat, borrowing and reading. We gather data from this process to share with students, teachers and parents so that they can see the impact and importance of reading for pleasure."

Domonique added: "If you can't get your class to the library [...] I love nothing more than shuffling a trolley of books over to History or up to English." ■

If you don't like to read, you haven't found the right book.

– J.K. Rowling



Keeping schools safe.

Why your school should consider a digital visitor management system.

Schools have a clear responsibility to know who is on their school grounds at all times. The duty of care can go two ways: schools must be able to account for everyone in their school in case of an emergency; and they must be able to manage security risks posed by unauthorised visitors.

Keeping children safe is every school's mandate. Furthermore, schools need to securely manage visitors in line with policies set by the Department of Education and Communities.

At first glance it can be hard to tell the difference between someone who is authorised to be on school grounds, such as a teacher, parent, or invited guest, and someone who shouldn't be there at all.

Most schools have a visitor registration or check-in process that requires visitors to write down their names to gain access. However, that simply isn't enough information in case of an emergency. It's essential to capture meaningful information and to provide a form of identification to the visitor to prevent confusion.

Ideally, this should include a high-quality photograph of the visitor along with their name, contact details, purpose of their visit, and the name of the authorised school staff member who will be responsible for them while they're on school grounds. In the past, collecting all of this information, especially photographs, has been too time-consuming and burdensome for schools. Now, with the right visitor management system, this information can be gathered very quickly.

A digital visitor management system can both inform the school that someone is on the premises as well as provide visitors with any safety or emergency information they may need while on school grounds.

The system should be able to print visitor badges, generate real-time reports, and capture emergency contact details to ensure all employees and visitors can be located immediately if an emergency arises.

Schools need to use systems that make this process welcoming and streamlined to reduce the chances of people bypassing the system. The interface should be robust enough that it can't be easily removed from the reception area, yet small enough that it can blend in. It should offer intuitive touch screens that simplify check-in procedures and let the school customise the printed badges. Furthermore, the system should let the school retrieve the data from off-ground locations in case of an emergency.

The system should also protect visitors' privacy by only allowing data to be accessed by authorised employees.

The digital visitor management system should be augmented by a security-conscious culture at the school where staff members are encouraged to be alert to visitors who may be unescorted. They should challenge visitors and check their credentials if necessary to help ensure no one is on grounds who shouldn't be there.

Knowing who is on school grounds and being able to quickly identify why they're there is critical.

pitney bowes 



A digital visitor management system can relieve some of the burden faced by frontline staff and should feature critical components that combine to complement staff greeting procedures, maximise safety and security, and use the latest technology to help protect your school.

LobbyTrac™ by Pitney Bowes can help streamline this process to boost your school's security.

To learn how the LobbyTrac can help your school manage visitors with greater speed and security, **call 13 26 63 or visit us online to schedule a demo today:** pitneybowes.com/au/lobbytrac/schools2

Know precisely who is on your school grounds.

Manage visitors with greater speed and security with LobbyTrac™.

Combine safety, security and the latest technology to deliver a seamless visitor management experience within your school. With its intuitive features and user friendly interface, LobbyTrac helps you manage visitors with greater speed and security, allowing you to:

- Capture vital visitor information
- Produce on-demand reports
- Store critical information in a secure database
- Customise the sign-in process to provide site inductions and other safety information
- Receive real-time notifications when guests arrive.

For more information, call **13 23 63** or visit **pitneybowes.com/au/lobbytrac/schools2**

Exclusive offer

Order a LobbyTrac pedestal before 30th June and receive 25% off a desktop tidy pedestal.

Terms & condition's apply.



Manage visitors to your school in 4 simple steps:



Step 01

Visitor signs in through LobbyTrac.



Step 02

Electronic notification is sent to you.



Step 03

Complete meeting with visitor.



Step 04

Visitor scans out using LobbyTrac.

Join the many schools already benefiting from LobbyTrac™.

Call or visit us online to schedule a demo today:
pitneybowes.com/au/lobbytrac/schools2

Beef up your school's visitor management system

Back in the day when life seemed much simpler and tasks were less risk-assessed, teachers marked student's attendance roll on paper and visitors were greeted with a friendly smile at the reception desk and were asked to sign their name in a register.

Today, teachers and administrators are far more security-conscious and starkly aware of the risks posed to absent students and dangers from unwelcome visitors leading to schools beefing up their visitor management procedures.

Schools are under increased pressure to check the legitimacy and credentials of visitors entering school grounds. Many aspects of school administration and classroom preparation have been streamlined through a variety of software programs that can be a 'one-stop-shop' for teachers, students and parents where everything can be recorded and tracked in real-time.

Of course, visitors to a school should be welcomed with a warm smile but registration procedures are vital and differ from school to school but the most efficient method is digital. The

new processes generally involve guests digitally entering their names into an iPad stationed at the front counter and selecting their visitor type from a list of drop-down boxes. A person signing in may also need to complete a background and credential checking to ensure they have been cleared to work with children.

Visitor management policies differ from state to state but all aim to create safer school environments able to manage the legal demands of the modern world and minimise any liability. For instance, the Victorian education department provides an extensive explanation of its visitor management procedures and categorises visitors into the following: prospective parents and employees; guest speakers and other invited members of society arriving for a teaching purpose; salespeople such as uniform suppliers, book sellers, talent scouts and photographers; and, religious leaders or instructors providing special religious instruction.

As a minimum, Victorian schools are required to ensure they have a record of all visitors in case of emergency or for future investigations and in other states the sign-in procedures also include

checking whether guests who will be working with students have the appropriate approvals for example the *Working with Children Check* in Victoria or the *Blue Card* in Queensland.

A good visitor management system can also cover other day-to-day tasks, such as staff signing in and out, tracking the provision of first aid to students, or reporting and tracking late student arrivals and early departures. The system can also notify teachers of student movements and alert staff to the arrival of their visitor with an email or SMS.

Keeping in mind other benefits, such as data collection can be undertaken and used for future marketing and communications. The system can also be customised to your school and even link to school signage. A thorough school management system may do almost everything from visitor monitoring and student attendance, to lesson planning, bill paying and curriculum creating.

There are many software platforms on the market, so do your homework and make sure that the system you choose will save you time and enable meaningful communication with students, teachers and parents.

Implementing a visitor management system can be a challenging process, and your school leadership team must proactively drive the project forward, have a plan and ensure everyone is on the same page and enthusiastically implementing the new system.

Remember to embrace all new digital technologies because they could dramatically reduce your workload and more importantly, they will add a greater measure of security for all, to your school day.

Specialty insights from the industry

School News spoke with Stephen Darracott from Pitney Bowes to find out more about services now available to schools.

"The different devices available really come down to footprint in the school. Some people prefer a standalone device while others prefer a desktop tablet device that can sit tidily on the counter where the book would have sat.

"Different devices meet the varying needs of communicating with the visitors. For example, when contractors visit the school they need to sign an acknowledgement that explains the conditions of being onsite, emergency procedures and exits. Likewise, for parents signing in, schools can use the same device to promote a school event to parents. With a visitor management system schools can do all this electronically, rather than signing a physical paper and then storing it somewhere for future audit needs. There is a shift from physical to digital. In the future, he revealed: "I think we will find more automation in schools. As the world digitises, people expect to have information at the touch of a button.

"On that front, I think visitor management is a good start to digitizing schools' processes to ensure the safety and security of its premises." ■



Guiding tomorrow's decision makers

towards a sustainable future

'Keep Australia beautiful' is not just a slogan that we may remember from the 70s, 80s and 90s...

It is now a call to arms for all. Most importantly, it is a call to arms for the young people of today - our future leaders - who must have the desire and determination to really make the changes to 'keep Australia beautiful' for today, tomorrow and forever. With the understanding that the Australia of tomorrow starts with the students of today, appreciating and experiencing the outdoors in a healthy and positive way is a crucial part of every student's education.

Learning in the outdoors empowers young people to help shape a shared future for a better world. It emphasises the strength and importance of human interaction and encourages the development of actions towards a sustainable future at different times and places. In his writing, the chair in outdoor and environmental education at the University of Edinburgh, professor Peter Higgins, refers to the importance of the "three Rs" (no, it's not, Reading, 'Riting and 'Rithmatic). His work as an educator must be *Real and Relevant*, help develop *Relationships* and a willingness to take *Responsibilities*. Higgins states that his "...own priorities ensure that a central focus of these real and relevant issues are global environmental issues, and my approach is to encourage



Brendon Fogarty,
National Head of Curriculum,
The Outdoor Education Group

students to develop relationships with place, people and planet, and to help them develop confidence and drive to take responsibilities for their actions".

It is by experiencing the outdoors for themselves that students are encouraged to personally engage with the environment that gives them meaningful and real experiences that are relevant to them. Providing an outdoor education program for students invites them to reflect and explore their relationships and interactions with each other, while at the same time giving them the opportunity to develop a sense of belonging and community that instils an understanding of what sustainability actually means to them. The fundamental essence of learning in the outdoors is the notion of *learning by doing*; students actively engage in learning at the point of origin, with oftentimes, direct feedback. However, learning in the outdoors



also provides the opportunity for students to not only learn *about* the environment but more importantly, learn *in* and *for* the environment. It is clear that when given the opportunity to be directly immersed in the natural world, students are exposed to the benefits of nature-based activity and develop lifelong respect for the world in which they live.

All schools acknowledge that preparing students for life beyond the school gates means not just learning traditional academic skills, but just as importantly, developing real-life skills with learning based in real places, providing real issues with authentic tasks.

Amanda Lloyd, Executive Officer at Outdoors NSW, and Tonia Gray, associate professor at University of Western Sydney, cite that "an environment-based education will help students realise that school isn't supposed to be a polite form of incarceration, but a portal to the wider world". By being present in the natural environment, learning is not passive but rather active and alive. In this context, students can form a deep understanding and connection to place, promoting a relationship with the natural environment, constructing deep environmental knowledge and understanding of the world that surrounds them.

'Letting the mountains speak for themselves' is an adage that has often been expressed in the outdoor setting but this way of understanding can no

longer shape the facilitation of environmental education. As the issue of environmental sustainability becomes increasingly prevalent in our society, outdoor educators are re-examining the purposes of their educational efforts. As has been established already, the teaching of outdoor learning must be real, build relationships and be responsible for lifelong learning.

Therefore, the idea of teaching for a sustainable future "impacts at a personal, philosophical and identity level," education faculty University of Tasmania Allen Hill writes. "In plain terms, teachers who seek to educate for a sustainable future need to walk the talk."

Our planet is at a tipping point. The news of the world promotes an outlook of gloom, with images of floods, hurricanes and bushfires regularly. Ultimately, it will be the responsibility of the students of today to guide us towards a sustainable environmental future. Participating in and experiencing learning in the natural wonders of the Australian environment is crucial in developing their knowledge and understanding of its, and ultimately our own, vulnerabilities.

By having experiences in and with nature, students will be better equipped to promote positive attitudes and responsible action towards *Keeping Australia Beautiful* today, tomorrow and forever. ★





The Canberra Experience: Delivering the Australian Curriculum

Students at the National Library of Australia, Canberra, photograph courtesy of NCETP, photographer Steve Keogh

By The National Capital Education Tourism Project (NCETP)

It is well known that Canberra, Australia's national capital, is the perfect destination for civics and citizenship education.

It has a rich collection of attractions providing curriculum-linked education programs immersing students in hands-on learning in spaces, where real-life democracy takes place.

Where else can you watch government representatives discussing important national issues, or sit in seats where past political figures made decisions that shaped Australia? Or view our nation's founding documents, with the seal of Queen Victoria? Or watch the High Court deliberate on our constitutional rights?

However, the Canberra excursion experience has changed over the past 20 years, evolving into a sophisticated range of intertwined programs offered at over 23 attractions, all focussing on supporting

the successful delivery of the Australian Curriculum.

Nine attractions provide learning experiences considered as core civics and citizenship education, assisting teachers to delve deeply into topics surrounding systems of democratic government, the Constitution, Australia's justice system, freedoms and responsibilities, Australia's social history and national identity, whether taking in a program at the Parliamentary Education Office or learning how to vote at the National Electoral Education Centre.

More broadly, many other experiences contribute to the idea of national identity, and the roles all Australians play in our evolving society. Following is a sample of the concepts students can embrace while visiting the National Capital, that on an initial glance may not be seen as civics and citizenship education.

Science and technology

Canberra has a world of science to offer. Home to the headquarters of two of Australia's leading science organisations, CSIRO and Geoscience Australia, both have education

programs designed to engage and inspire students in STEM.

Questacon: The National Science and Technology Centre, provides a fun, all-encompassing look at science at its main site at Parkes, and also caters for those interested in technology and innovation at the Ian Potter Foundation Technology Learning Centre. At the Canberra Deep Space Communication Complex and Mount Stromlo Observatory students can learn about Australia's ongoing contribution to space exploration and the study of the universe.

This science experience can also extend to exploring our Australia's flora and fauna at the Australian National Botanic Gardens, the National Zoo and Aquarium and the National Arboretum Canberra, taking a look at how we interact with our natural environment.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

The cultural institutions have a wealth of collection and exhibition material on offer, recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories

and Cultures as an important cross-curriculum priority for all students to engage in reconciliation, respect and recognition of the world's oldest continuous living cultures. From collections of indigenous artefacts at the National Museum of Australia to art at the National Gallery of Australia, through to documents and exhibition content at a range of other cultural institutions on the 1967 referendum and the 1992 Mabo decision that reflect on the fight for Indigenous rights, there is an extensive thread of content to be explored and many programs developed specifically to address this topic.

Australian history and culture

History and culture can be explored at all cultural institutions, whether it be exploring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, social and political history at the Museum of Australian Democracy, or Australia's involvement in war at the Australian War Memorial, or how sport is an inherent part of Australian culture, the National Capital is designed to showcase

where we have been as a nation and where we are going.

The arts

Most would recognise the National Gallery of Australia or National Portrait Gallery as leading art institutions, but a Canberra art excursion can offer so much more. Consider the extraordinary Australian art found on the walls of Parliament House, or in the collections of the National Archives of Australia and National Library of Australia, just to scratch the surface.

A Canberra excursion helps students see themselves as part of a broader society, not just of their own town, their own city or their own school community; it may be the first time they visit an art gallery or a museum, and it aids them to understand they are part of the future, that their vote counts, and that, even as students, they have rights and responsibilities as citizens of Australia.

The high quality of the Canberra experience can be attributed to the education staff of cultural institutions, all focussed on



Students at the National Electoral Education Centre, Canberra,
photograph courtesy of NCETP, photographer Steve Keogh

making learning exciting and meaningful, evidenced by a recent University of Canberra research report indicating a nine-out-of-10 rating of teachers' satisfaction with the programs at Canberra's cultural institutions and attractions.

Indicating the importance of

Canberra school excursions, over the past 13 years the Australian Government has supported the journey of young Australians through the Parliament and Civics Education Rebate, a subsidy providing funding ranging from \$20–\$260 per student, accessed by those

travelling from as close as Sydney to as far away as Broome.

The Canberra excursion can provide all these experiences in a safe and easy to get around location, with many of the cultural institutions and attractions only minutes away from each other. ►

A NEW WAY TO

BOOK CANBERRA EXCURSIONS ONLINE



The National Capital Educational Tourism Project, along with nine of Canberra's cultural institutions and attractions, has developed an online platform, **BookCanberraExcursions.com.au**, to assist tour operators and teachers in making group bookings for school excursions to Canberra.

These partners have worked tirelessly to develop an efficient platform that: provides program availability online; simplifies booking processes; makes scheduling of itineraries easy; reduces enquiry response times; and provides relevant information.

For a list of participating attractions, visit
canberraexcursions.org.au/book-canberra-excursions





Students at Questacon – The National Science and Technology Centre, photograph courtesy of NCETP, photographer Steve Keogh

◀ This allows schools the opportunity to take in more activities than possible in other educational tourism destinations.

Canberra is a city built within the landscape, as was the vision of its designers Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahoney Griffin, concepts that can be explored at the National Capital Exhibition. With lots of open spaces and recreational activities on offer, Canberra can provide an even balance of high-quality education with time to enjoy its bush environment.

Understanding teachers have limited time, a range of tour operators and coach companies, some with 30 years or more experience, can assist in planning excursions to Canberra. These operators work closely with Canberra attractions, continually updating their knowledge of what makes a memorable excursion. With their support, coupled with the introduction of the new Book Canberra Excursions website,



Students at National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, photograph courtesy of NCETP, photographer Steve Keogh

teachers need only focus on educational content suiting their students. Many operators can also offer tailored excursions centred on themes outlined above.

The Canberra excursion experience is like no other; however, it can be explored beyond the actual visit. Cultural institutions use their expertise to assist teachers to create practical

classroom activities, whole school activities, and local community activities. For instance: running a mock parliament in the classroom after visiting Parliament House; or holding a school election as experienced at the National Electoral Education Centre; or conducting a wreath laying service involving local veterans and local community groups, reflecting a visit to the Australian

War Memorial; or running a local portrait competition inspired by the National Portrait Gallery.

The National Capital Educational Tourism Project (NCETP) is a partnership program of 23 cultural institutions and attractions located in Canberra, plus the ACT Government, delivering an awareness program that ensures schools and teachers throughout Australia understand the importance of a visit to Canberra in supporting a range of learning areas including civics and citizenship, Australian history and culture, science, art and environment.

The NCETP produces publications and teacher conference displays, develops teacher programs, and assists in improving the overall education experience through ongoing research projects. Through the canberraexcursions.org.au website teachers can find information about all components of planning a school excursion. ■

**BEST
EXCURSION
EVER!**

an aerial experience LIKE NO OTHER

See the world from new heights with Skypeak Adventures, a world-class aerial facility that soars over 25-metres high and features over 60 challenges.

Ideal for school excursions, it fosters leadership, teamwork, self-confidence, proper risk-assessment and all-round fun. Whether you're a novice or thrillseeker at heart, this exhilarating attraction based at St Marys in Western Sydney (one hour from Sydney CBD) will see climbers test their mettle as they clamber up a series of towers and platforms, some as high as six storeys.

At the heart of Skypeak Adventures is a 300-year-old river red gum from Victoria. The tree has been repurposed and integrated into the structure in such a way to inspire students (and even teachers) to embrace their "inner kid" who once loved to climb trees. The aerial adventure course is packed with plenty of adrenalin-fuelled activities – including bridge walks, high trapeze swings, monkey bars, barrel runs, swinging branch clusters, rope swings, zip lines and free-fall drops.

Skypeak Adventures' CEO and Founder Amgad Botros said that the aerial park aims to cater for Sydney's growing population and challenge people to overcome their fears in a safe and fun

environment. One thing he said Skypeak always guarantees is that every student will be challenged and no one will be bored.

"Whilst three out of four adults enjoyed outside play more often than being indoors as kids, in comparison today, only one

"This is a wonderful example of people thinking outside the square – to make something truly fantastic happen!" he enthused.

Set over a 2000sqm site and based on extensive world-wide research, each activity has been specifically designed to maximise the high-flying fun. School



in ten children have the same experience," he said.

"Skypeak Adventures will take kids away from the technology in their bedrooms and get them into an environment that allows them to enjoy the simple things in life – being outdoors and engaging with other people and their peers in a new way."

VicRoads Director Trevor Boyd said that he was excited to see the tree used in such an innovative way at Skypeak Adventures in Western Sydney.

groups have an opportunity to schedule customised leadership development and team-building programs at the site in St Marys.

Our programs and challenges enable student to confront their assumptions about what is possible whilst building upper-body strength and decision-making competence in a completely non-judgmental setting. Skypeak is easily accessible for Sydney and regional schools. Located less than one hour's drive from Sydney CBD near the M7 and

M4 intersection, Skypeak will save schools the need to travel for extended periods and avoids the costs of overnight accommodation. There is plenty of free level parking for buses and cars.

Part of the BIG TIME entertainment complex at St Marys, students and teachers will have the opportunity to relax in the full air-conditioned café and entertainment area. Visiting students tell us that it is enormous fun. It proves their ability to face challenges they have never faced before, choosing their own difficulty level and going at their own pace. It is a fantastic way to build student self-confidence and boost self-esteem!

For some, the memory and exhilaration of overcoming that one "scary" challenge will last with them forever. Skypeak Adventures is a unique and universally enjoyable choice for schools. It is ideal for students from upper primary school-age to tertiary groups. Skypeak offers customised programs including catering if needed, tailored to your budget and to suit specific timeframe or curriculum requirements.

Skypeak has activity packages designed specifically to support school curriculum outcomes in a safe, social and physically challenging environment. ▲

Contact Skypeak Adventures to organise your next school excursion on 02 9677 7759 www.skypeak.com.au or email: info@skypeak.com.au



A day in the life of SCHOOL CAMP

at Alexandra Adventure Resort!

Monday morning at Camp, the sun is shining, everyone is busy sprucing up the camp for the next school group.

One of our team calls out “the bus is coming”! All the staff head to the car park to greet the school arriving at our camp for 3 days of fun and adventure. Located just 7kms from the local town of Alexandra and less than 2 hours’ drive from Melbourne CBD, our facilities are surrounded by scenic farmland and overlook our beautiful lake, which is the first thing the students see as the bus pulls into the car park.

Excited kids and teachers spill out of the bus. Calming everyone down enough to get their bags off the bus and listen to our welcome instructions is no easy task as the students can’t wait to get started to experience everything there is to offer at camp – and all are eager to start exploring! But always safety first – we get their bags into their rooms before everyone heads to our huge undercover BBQ area for more instructions from our Outdoor Education team on rules of the camp, including meeting the camp dogs and sometimes even the owners, Brooke, Chase and their 3 young children!

Since taking over the camp in 2013, Brooke and Chase have been busy upgrading the entire

camp and facilities so we can now accommodate over 200 people plus we have amazing new activities, huge new hall and undercover BBQ area, and upgraded swimming pool, tennis courts and grounds in general.

Once all the information is shared, the students enjoy their packed lunch and as soon as that is over, head off on an orientation tour of the camp, showing the still excited students all the activities they will experience during their stay! Then the fun begins and it’s all go, go, go from here! Everyone gets into their groups for activity time! The kids are all looking forward to their activities – some with a bit of trepidation, but all are eager to get started.

School groups come to camp to encourage their students to challenge themselves, develop new skills and interests, as well as to build new friendships! Part of the experience is enjoying lots of activities, of which we have over 16 onsite, and we program them for the school to make life easier for the teachers.

In each group, there will be students who love the challenge and will try anything, and others that are fearful and lack confidence. They get to step outside their comfort zone, try new things and if at first they don’t succeed, try again! All with the support of other students,

the teacher’s and of course our experienced Outdoor Recreation team.

Today’s adventures include the high ropes course where students will push their limits and face their fears, the flying fox which glides over the lake and the giant swing which sees the students work as a team and encourage each other to take on the challenge. After several hours of activities, a tired but happy group of students head back to their rooms to get ready for dinner. Our Chef has been busy preparing delicious, nutritious food for the group as he knows only too well that they will all be ravenous after such a busy first day! Part of the camp experience is giving students responsibilities so before each meal, a team work together to get the dining area ready for everyone’s meal, as well as clean up afterward.

Once dinner is over, it’s time for some more fun before bed! Some evenings the students will enjoy a camp fire where they toast marshmallows, other nights might be a quiz night or disco. Whatever they do, they will all sleep well in their comfy bunk beds and get ready for all the new adventures that the next day will bring. And the teacher’s have the opportunity to put their feet up and have a bit of quiet time if they are lucky, in the beautiful teacher’s unit! With coffee

machine, luxury king single beds, kitchen, lounge area with television, it’s just like home!

The staff head home for the night although the owners live on site so can be available if needed. Lights go out in the camp, and the only ones awake now are the plentiful wildlife around such as Kangaroos and Wombats, as well as the cows on the surrounding farm land. The camp is quiet and everyone is getting the deep sleep that only the fresh country air can provide. Tomorrow is another day!

Testimonial 2017

My name is Lincoln Barnes, Camp Coordinator for Ballarat High School. This has been our first year at Alexandra Adventure Resort and has surpassed all expectations. We have 3 camps here over a week and a half week block (250 students) and all students and staff have absolutely loved their time here.

Accommodation for both students and staff is exceptional. The highlight is definitely the facilities available and the activities for the kids. The staff are all amazingly caring and the food is great. We were a little bit worried about the distance from Ballarat however we now know that it is definitely worth it as they have been the best year 7 camps we have had in over a decade. ▲

To book your next camp call 03 5772 1409

www.alexandraadventureresort.com.au info@alexandraadventureresort.com.au

THE OUTDOOR EDUCATION GROUP ▲

JOURNEYS AND EXPEDITIONS ACROSS AUSTRALIA'S
MOST AMAZING LANDSCAPES OR VISIT OUR CAMPS:

CAMP MARGARET RIVER. WA ▲

CAMP WOMBAROO. NSW ▲

BUSH CAMP BILOELA. NSW ▲

CAMP MARYSVILLE. VIC ▲

CAMP JUNGAI. VIC ▲

BUSH CAMP EILDON. VIC ▲

Nothing prepares students for real life like the
REAL WORLD.

As Australia's most established outdoor education provider,
we help children

GROW.

We help schools perform. And help parents enjoy more

MATURE, INDEPENDENT
children.

From providing industry-leading preset courses
to fully-tailored, curriculum-integrated programs,
we connect with schools across the country to bring

EDUCATION OUTDOORS.

1800 888 900

OEG.EDU.AU

ENQUIRIES@OEG.EDU.AU





Too hot not to be SunSmart

It's shocking to think about now, but just a few generations ago, sunburn was not perceived to be a big deal.

Parents believed it was a normal by-product of childhood fun, just like skinned knees and bumps on the head. But when you know better, you do better.

Australia's sun is harsh, and when children are at school, daily ultraviolet (UV) radiation levels are at their peak. This makes schools responsible for teaching sun safety to kids, as

well as ensure school grounds are as 'sun safe' as possible.

SunSmart tips

Wide brimmed hats can block 50 percent of UV radiation to students' eyes and face, so they are a good item to be part of your uniform policy.

Encourage children to bring a dry change of clothes if they will be participating in a swimming carnival or other water-based activity. Even if they will be taking part in something like cross-country in wet weather, this is a good suggestion because wet clothes lose their ability to block

UV rays. Engage students in learning about meteorology by finding out which hours in the day will be hottest, coolest, and have the most UV radiation. Sources like the Bureau of Meteorology can send daily alerts, and letting students know that radiation will reach its peak at 12:45, for instance, may motivate them to remember to wear hats and apply sunscreen at lunchtime.

The *National SunSmart Schools Program* was launched in 1998, and is offered in all primary schools nationwide. In Western Australia, where temperatures regularly reach 40 degrees celsius

in the summer, the program is gaining popularity in secondary schools. The Cancer Council provides support and tailored educational resources to schools, for improving the sun smart behaviour of their students.

Age appropriate lesson plans are available for download from www.cancer.org.au, complete with instructions and resources. The Cancer Council Australia website lists melanoma skin cancer as the fourth most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia in 2012, and estimated that it will remain so in 2016.



Ultra Germ Buster™ Anti Bacterial Hand Sanitiser

- 70% Ethanol - Sustainably sourced (Bio Ethanol)
- No Water Required
- pH Balanced
- Hospital Grade
- Kills 99.9% of Germs
- Australian Made & Owned



ORDER NOW! Find a Concept Labs stockist at: www.conceptlabs.com.au/customers or Call Concept Labs on **07 5437 9303**.

Childhood is the ideal time to change the culture of 'tanned is beautiful', and to promote a healthy approach to absorbing the sun's rays in a responsible manner. While Vitamin D, which is absorbed through the skin from the sun, is vital for synthesising other vitamins and minerals, levels can be sufficiently obtained during the safer times of the day; early in the morning and later in the afternoon.

The difficulty, as stated on the Cancer Council's website, is that the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the major cause of skin cancer and the best natural source of vitamin D, which is needed for strong bones and overall health.

Bearing in mind that Australia is a large land mass with diverse climates and conditions, a policy that may suit schools in Broome will have little relevance in the chilly Tasmanian hills. Knowing the importance of Vitamin D for mood, energy levels and immunity, the Cancer Council recommends a balanced UV approach in order to reduce the risk of skin cancer, while ensuring some sun exposure for vitamin D. How this looks in the playground will vary from location to location, and schools will need to consider their own climates when developing policies.

The general guidelines across all states are the common goals of preventative care. The enduring campaign: Slip, Slop, Slap can be supported through measures such as, school uniform design, replacing athletics singlets with short-sleeved shirts and making a sunhat like a second skin during high UV months.

SunSmart schools also make a commitment to minimising exposure by increasing shade in



outdoor playing areas, through shade sails, tree planting and playground design measures.

SunSmart school support in WA

Western Australia has long, hot and dry summers. For much of the school year, Western Australian students are playing, doing sport and learning in high UV periods of the day. Schools need not go it alone when creating a sun smart policy. While all states have access to sun smart policy and recommendations, The Cancer Council WA has these particular encouragements for *SunSmart Schools* membership.

From Cancer Council WA

If your school becomes a SunSmart School, Cancer Council WA provides you with

the following free resources:

1. a *SunSmart Schools* metal fence sign
2. curriculum resources, activities, posters, etc.
3. parent education materials
4. advice on health promotion strategies including policy development
5. SunSmart talks to parents, staff and students.

It's free to become a *SunSmart school* member and benefits include:

Access to accurate, current information on sun protection issues such as sunscreen allergies, nanoparticles, vitamin D, occupational safety and health and duty of care.

Support – you get information about how other schools have

dealt with particular problems, free teaching resources, access to competitions and discounts on sun protection items at the Cancer Council shop.

Advocacy – Cancer Council speakers can talk to parents and staff about the risk of skin cancer and the value of good sun protection policies and procedures.

Critical mass – formally joining the program allows Cancer Council to count your school in the program membership. In turn, higher participation rates add weight to our representations to the Department of Education, helps convince other schools to join the program and demonstrates your commitment to reducing the burden of skin cancer in the community. ■



Ultra Protect ® SPF50+ Sunscreen

- Environmentally Friendly
- Lightweight & Dries Clear
- Dermatologically Tested
- Suitable for Children & Sensitive Skin
- Contains Vitamin E and Aloe Vera
- Oxybenzone Free
- Oxtinoxate Free
- Paraben Free
- Fragrance Free
- Every Day Use

ORDER NOW! Find a Concept Labs stockist at: www.conceptlabs.com.au/customers or Call Concept Labs on **07 5437 9303**.



Sports Day is everyone's chance to shine

"When your sports day is done, retractable seating allows you to transform your indoor sports court, into a performance hall." - Ken Matthews, Interseat

Love it or hate it, bring the eggs and spoons, rally up the rounders team and oil up the wheelbarrows.

Get ready to embrace all the fun for your school's 2019 sports day because it must be just around the corner!

With sport such a huge part of our society and culture, the inaugural sports day is one of the most popular days of the school year and even those students who are less than sporty can be tempted to let their hair down and participate in a game for their team. With so many sports, activities and games to choose from annual sport days can have a vast reach, achieve unparalleled popularity and can motivate kids to take up a long-term sport, as well as provide a foundation of positive values.

Ready?

According to some of the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research, the 1.35 million Australian adults who participate regularly in some kind of team sport are less likely than the average Aussie to experience depression, anxiety and/or intense stress.



If this is the case, encouraging children to enjoy sports could help set them up with better mental health as adults.

Between 2013 and 2014, 25 percent of Australians aged 18+ reported experiencing stress at some point in the preceding 12 months, compared with 21 percent of those who regularly play a team sport. Some 16 percent suffered from anxiety,

a figure which fell to 12 percent of regular team-sport players; and 14 percent had depression, considerably higher than the eight percent of those who play regular team sport.

This difference is more striking among the under-25 age group, with all three conditions being far less common among those who play team sport on a regular basis. Incidence of anxiety fell

from 31 percent to 17 percent, depression from 17 percent to eight percent, and anxiety from 20 percent to 10 percent.

Any event that encourages students to be more active and helps with their physical development and general health is a winner and this is certainly the most important contribution sport has for children.



However, it is also a very powerful tool that not only breaks down barriers, improves self-esteem but also many studies have shown that it improves both mental health and academic achievement.

Education increasingly recognises the role of sport in school and its values not only within the school community but nationally and even globally. UNESCO (United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) has developed several tools presenting the benefits of sport values in all world regions to combat challenges, such as inactivity, obesity, unemployment, and conflict.

Indeed, the true beauty of sport is the improvement of physical and mental development of children but some of the tactics and strategies learnt in childhood sport can be very useful to adults and help them cope with the struggles endured throughout many aspects of life, for many years to come.

UNESCO even states that "sport can teach values such as fairness, teambuilding, equality, discipline, inclusion, perseverance and respect"

and "has the power to provide a universal framework for learning values, contributing to the development of soft skills needed for responsible citizenship". The international agency has developed several tools presenting the benefits of sport values in all world regions that you can check out and download online.

Set?

We are spoilt for choice when it comes to the variety and frequency of our national sporting events and these occasions can be a great inspiration for students to get involved and can provide some great sports day ideas. Why not think about how you can incorporate national or international sporting events into your next sports day?

Lead up to your sporting event by setting up a Facebook group because social media and online influencers are a great way to motivate and inspire your kids, this works especially well with older students. For younger children, you could find books where the main character does a sport or a short film with a relatable fit and healthy lead character. ▶

Transforming Spaces



1000 SEATS
SET UP IN UNDER 2 MINUTES
PACKED AWAY IN UNDER 2 MINUTES
STORED AWAY IN A SPACE ONLY 1.5M DEEP



OVER 40 SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

throughout every state and territory of Australia have been the proud recipients of Interseat Retractable Seating Systems.



- ▶ Australian Designed & Engineered
- ▶ Compliant with Australian Standards & Codes
- ▶ Ensuring floor compatibility with floor suppliers
- ▶ Site specific custom design
- ▶ Space optimisation
- ▶ Followup Service & Maintenance
- ▶ 10 Year Structural Warranty

Interseat[®]
Transforming Spaces

1300 798 769 | sales@interseat.com.au



"Featuring 20 percent more aluminium and safety end caps, the Select Grandstand is highly durable, safe and a favourite with schools." – Gus White, Felton Industries

◀ For instance: If you have any *Peppa Pig* fans in your class, there's a whole compilation of sports day episodes on their YouTube channel that can give you some great sports day ideas!

Share a whole host of different sports/exercises showing different types of people participating in them (i.e. footage of special Olympic events) is a great way of confirming that sport is for everyone.

Reaffirm to your students that they don't have to be a 'sporty' type to enjoy their sports day.

In addition to the usual sports day classics, remember to incorporate 'silly' games and team activities that don't require high levels of skill and stamina, after all some non-competitive

fun and laughter is the perfect motivator. Include activities that require balance, strength and or problem solving.

Most of all, have fun and provide quality sport experiences because these are essential elements when trying to get your students excited and involved. Furthermore, remember that quality experiences must also include having a safe social and physical environment to play in, so play safe and provide shade, water and sun block.

Finally, ensure that all your staff and volunteers are enthusiastic and remain consistent with delivery and communication.

Go...Go...Go...

What are you waiting for? ■

Here are a few ideas:

- An obstacle course
- Who can hold a funny balance for the longest?
- Tug of war
- A giant puzzle, chess or giant Jenga game.
- Get creative with space hoppers and hula hoops.
- A game of 'who can bounce a tennis ball the most times in a row on a racket?'





Does your school have enough seating for sports day?

Kick off 2019 with Felton's range of premium quality grandstands, spectator seating, benches, change room furniture and more for your school!

Call us 1800 22 00 55











AGES 2-4 YEARS

ETTERED NUTRITION & RANGE

felton.net.au

Transform how your school communicates

'Screen time' is a staple word for generation 'z', the group of kids born after the mid-90s, and it's arguably when they communicate the most.

Like a communal smartphone, digital signage offers a modern solution that traditional methods of broad communication lack.

In a message about safety... Screens can be updated or programmed to spur onlookers into action, e.g. *Hall flooded, meet in library or School closed for emergency repairs. Check website for updates.* Digital signs can also convey important messages to parents or school buses entering the school, with parking information, closure notifications or school traffic updates. Real-time weather

forecasts, emergency alerts and messages are also possible.

In a message about events...

Schools can promote their activities, fundraisers or competitions wherever they have organised digital signs or screens to be placed. From digital scoreboards that add a professional vibe to sports events and increase hype among students, to screens around campus that replace print flyers for school plays, functions and special assemblies.

Speaking from the sector

Signpac managing director, Larry Wainstein takes us through what signage is available to schools. ▶



Great Service



Modern Design



New Technology



5 year warranty



Signs are our business... Partnerships are our strength

The Trusted Name In School Signs

At Signpac, we believe in partnerships. Our position as the leading expert in school signs for the past 25 years shows that Australian school leaders trust our company.

Signpac electronic digital signs are manufactured with the highest quality components for tough Australian conditions. We know this is a big investment so we make sure that it will be loud and proud at your school for many years.

Using the very latest web based technology you can change messages with ease from anywhere.

Contact us now for a free onsite assessment.



📞 1800 140 940 ✉ sales@signpac.com.au 🏠 www.signpac.com.au



◀ When it comes to digital electronic signs, the main purpose is to provide an instant message platform at the front of the school for students, parents and wider community. This is where multiple messages and images can be displayed in full colour.

More and more schools across Australia are embracing LED digital signs, installing new ones or removing their manual, changeable signs and replacing them with a digital electronic sign, or retrofitting an electronic screen into their existing frame, or installing it on the wall at the front of the school building. LED screens can also be used in the hall: these are on wheels and can be rolled away when not needed. Signpac has special LED signs that can also be installed in foyers or in a window where parents and

students can see a range of different scrolling messages. These can be changed easily on a mobile device, providing real-time, scrolling updates.

There has been a lot of interest lately in placing screens in an undercover play area or on walls in the playground or quad, where that screen can also display videos as well as images and daily relevant messages.

The other area that digital screens are very practical is in on sports grounds or inside gymnasiums as scoreboards. Of course, these need to be waterproof and weather-proof.

With the latest advancements in LED technology, the resolution of the screens has become so much more important with low resolution screens being requested more and more.

The lower the resolution, the more clarity there is in images and word layouts. Screens should be at your school for many years, so it's best to look at getting the best quality possible, to take the sign into the future.

Schools are becoming more and more aware of the importance of quality components for lifetime value. Having to replace signs that are breaking down after only a few years because they cannot withstand Australian conditions, is a chore for schools, so it's worth doing your research and purchasing from a reputable company with a good reputation for supplying and understanding what schools need in a digital sign.

Larry Wainstein says buying a digital sign based on price, either too cheap or very expensive (and not getting the full value for the price), can be a costly exercise, especially as the advancements in outdoor screen LED technology is improving all the time. The fact that you can get a P4 resolution screen for the outdoors today shows how far things have come; only a few years ago, the best you could get was a P10. As more and more digital signs go up around the schools, we are installing a lot more of custom design pylon-style signs.

Schools are seeing the benefits to their image and how quality digital signs uplift the overall look and impression of the school.

However, while wow-factor is great, schools need to be aware that looks are cosmetic and the most important thing is the quality of the screen that sits inside it.

Sunquest director Syd Shilling told us all about the different choices schools have in 2019.

There are a plethora of signage options available and really the mind is the limit. LED signage has become very much in demand, with things like LED neon letters that glow at night but run on 24V. Entry signage that glows from behind the letters are also popular, along with large, inscribed pencils, peace poles for overseas 'sister schools', wayfinding signage, braille and tactile signage, LCD and touchscreen networked signage, and even large acrylic wave flumes.

Needs and demands of schools have evolved in recent years. LED Screens are becoming an item on the wish list of just about every school I talk to, along with touch screen technology. These are becoming a standard for a lot of schools and the trend to upgrade the image of a school is becoming more and more common. Schools want to portray themselves as communities that communicate well with students and parents.

I'm always excited about technology; particularly inter-communication and how apps are playing a bigger role. Signage is almost the oldest form of communicating, from stone age carvings to electronic wiz bang. Each school is different in what it wants from tech signage and retro signage as it depends on who is at the helm but ease and comfort is very attractive for a lot of school staff, from groundsman to principal. ■

the POINT of DIFFERENCE

www.sunquest.com.au

Get your Message Across in Bright Lights

The first and still the best

We were one of the very first companies to introduce LED signs into Australia, and over the past 12 years we have installed hundreds of LED screens to **happily satisfied customers, countrywide.**

Over this time our LED's have changed from the early clunky large pixelated displays now to ultra-fine high-resolution screens, that can display text and images with outstanding clarity, and whilst products have improved immensely, prices have remained the same or even dropped! We operate our own research company to develop and build our LED panels which gives us **full quality control over all our products.** All our LED screens are assembled here at our factory, they are tested and 'run in' before we deliver.

We are constantly improving our products to be able to provide most advanced LED displays available in Australia. Buying an LED sign is a substantial investment so it is important that when you make the choice to buy a LED sign you make the right choice by choosing **Sunquest Industries** we provide you with the all technical know-how, tried and tested top quality products, graphic and industrial design, and an after sales service, that is second to none.

The main consideration when buying an LED sign, is choosing the correct resolution and size to suit to the sign location as not all screens types suit all locations.

At no obligation our LED Sign specialist will visit you, and survey your site to achieve the perfect position, size and P rating (resolution) for your sign.



We do all the behind the scenes work too, such as engineering, approvals, graphic and product design, foundations, electrical and data connections, technical and software, meaning **you don't need to stress** about anything at all as its all taken care of by our professional team, and when your sign gets to site, it's installed correctly and operates fully from day one.

We will train you with the software so you can start to display some amazing images and messages immediately, that will proudly and effectively promote your organisation in the community and instantly be admired your neighbors.

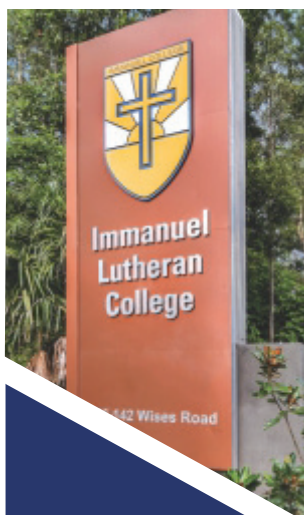
Our software can be easily operated via wi-fi, 4G, LAN, & Cloud.

Our after sales service is exemplary we are always here to help keep your sign operating smoothly, our software enables us to monitor your sign remotely, and our technical help is on hand to keep your sign running perfectly.

We offer full-service contracts, and spare parts that will ensure that your screen remains in tip top condition for years to come.

Call us today and start your exciting progress towards a new LED Sign

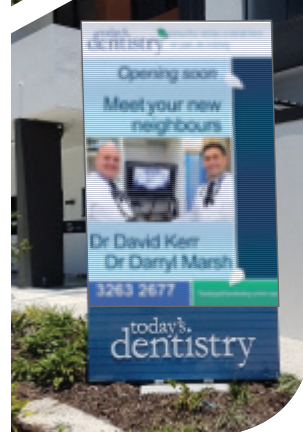
* wireless access requires clear sight and a Telstra sim card which is given at special rates to educational organisations



www.sunquest.com.au

33 Technology Drive
Warana, QLD, 4575
P. 5437 8024
F. 5437 8741

www.sunquest.com.au





ILEs: it all sounds great, but sound is the problem!

Across Australia, classrooms are being transformed into engaging, vibrant spaces that facilitate collaboration, creativity, innovation and independent learning.

Teachers are being introduced to multiple new pedagogies as we prepare our schools to educate our children for jobs of the future.

Education environments have changed and an 'Open-Plan' design now leads the way with zones and nooks and new approaches to seating and organization. They are appearing because they make better spaces and places for engaging learning from a new generation of learners. It sounds great except the sound is the problem.

A larger classroom, more students and multiple activities will naturally lead to an increase in noise and when the room is open-plan, the noise is harder to control. Noise is not



Jacqui Hawksworth,
Director, Mumble By Design

just distracting, it can have a negative impact on learning outcomes and health.

It is for this reason that noise in the classroom is becoming a much-discussed topic among researchers, teachers, designers and architects. Poor acoustics in the classroom can have a significantly negative impact on speech intelligibility. Students must be able to hear and understand what is being said for learning to occur.

To fulfil the role of a learning environment, classrooms should

have acoustic properties that allow for at least 90 percent of the useful information leaving a talker's mouth to reach listeners ears.

'With specific regard to children and education, Flexer (2005) reported hearing is of paramount concern. She stated that when a child cannot clearly and easily hear spoken instruction (from teacher e.g.), "the entire premise of the educational system is undermined"'. (*Handbook of Acoustic Accessibility*, J. Smaldino, C. Flexer)

Not only is poor acoustics in the classroom related to poorer learning outcomes but it is also a leading contributor to vocal strain amongst teachers who are constantly raising their voices to be heard. A survey undertaken by London South Bank University indicated that over 65 percent of the teachers which they surveyed had experienced vocal strain during their career.

This fact supports other studies which have suggested teachers

have significantly higher rate of voice problems than the general population. (Comins, D. *Survey of UK Voice clinics 2001/2*. Voice Care Network; 2002)

It goes without saying that If a teacher must increase the volume of his or her voice to be understood, there is an acoustic issue that needs to be addressed. The classroom needs to be a hive of activity however without the stress and anxiety that unnecessary noise brings.

There have been several articles in the *Sydney Morning Herald* lately about teachers leaving the profession due to stress, poor pay and underappreciation. It is a well-known fact that there is a direct correlation between level of noise, unwanted sound and stress. It's in everyone's interest to restore calm to the classroom.

Currently there are no mandatory acoustic standards for the classroom and very little local data on how the open plan classrooms are performing acoustically when occupied

and engaged in different types of activities relative to modern pedagogies which are driving the change in classroom design.

It is due to this that insufficient emphasis is placed on the acoustics of the classroom at design and building phase and it's often only once the classroom is in use that the issue of poor acoustics becomes apparent for both mainstream students as well as those students who require additional assistance in "all-inclusive" classrooms.

Unfortunately for many schools this is also after the budget has been spent.

I believe things are, however set to change. As more and more classrooms are transformed it is becoming harder to ignore the elephant in the room so to speak. 2019 promises to shed more light on the actual state of acoustics in the classroom.

The University of Melbourne's learning spaces research group which is running ILETC is collaborating with NAL (the Federal Government's National Acoustics Laboratories) on

a focused study into effect of acoustics on student outcomes.

They are currently looking for schools located in NSW to participate in their research to build solid evidence around the issue.

After discussing the project briefly with the principal researcher, Dr Kiri Mealings from NAL, I'm feeling optimistic

about the future of "Future Learning". This research does not set out to challenge the new design of classrooms or associated pedagogies but rather sets out to support it.

This data will enable industry professionals to design the most effective acoustic solutions for learning environments whether it be product based, teaching techniques or

both and with a little luck a set of mandatory acoustic standards for the 21st Century Classroom in Australia. ★

Jacqui is a proud mum of two primary school students and passionate advocate for better classroom acoustic standards.





Acoustic Solutions for 21st Century Classrooms



The image shows a bright, modern classroom with green and blue walls. On the green wall, there are three hexagonal acoustic panels with text: "REDUCE BATHING SOUNDS", "REDUCE CALL PANELS", and "ACUSTIC CLOUTER BATHING". On the blue wall, there are two more hexagonal panels: "ACUSTIC CALL PANELS" and "REDUCE BATHING SOUNDS". The room features a whiteboard on wheels, a small table with stools, and a large blue beanbag chair. A laptop is visible on a shelf in the background.

Sounds Like A Solution

www.mumblebydesign.com

Solar power: Sun, STEM & stimulating cost savings



The dream of a completely self-sufficient, solar-powered school inches closer as *School News* hears from the industry and one school in particular whose savings have been electrifying.

Pricing options are also available so that schools no longer have to buy panels upfront but can enter into a 'rent to buy' style agreement, called a *Power Purchase Agreement*. These are often structured so that operational costs are immediately lower and after a contracted period of time they can assume asset ownership. Schools can also be free of maintenance and repairs as the responsibility falls to the system owner/operator. A PPA generally means zero upfront costs, lower risk and lower operational costs for a school.

There have also been a few notable examples of extensive solar in schools grabbing headlines. In 2017, Bangalore's Canadian International School became the first school in India to operate 100 percent on solar power.

Much closer to home, in October last year, new-build Perth primary and secondary school, Atlantis Beach Baptist College (ABBC) became Australia's first fully solar powered school. The college runs on 20kW of rooftop PV and 30kWh of battery storage, with solar heat pumps servicing hot

water across campus. Their carpark is illuminated each night by self-sufficient streetlights.

Upstream Energy funded and commissioned the installation at ABBC, so we spoke to the managing director, Nathan Begley about what a school solar installation really means and what he expects to see in the near future.

"Schools will often have a general idea of how much power they use from their electricity bills but the first step is to have a fully accurate picture."

Here's the steps he advises schools to take: "Engage a handful of solar installers and provide them with the school's electricity invoices and 'interval data', which is readily available from the energy retailer. Ensure the proposed system is appropriately sized: ask the installer how much energy will be exported to the grid during weekends, pupil-free days and term holidays. How much will be consumed on-site, and what will be the overall impact on their energy costs? It can also be worthwhile having a third-party review or conduct the tender process on behalf of the school."

There is also a broad range of technologies out there to consider. Nathan explained: "Solutions include solar, wind, battery storage, LED lights, power factor correction, intelligent HVAC controls and even hydroelectricity from regional

on-campus running streams. Progressive schools might also be interested in biogas storage, which captures and stores methane from everyday organic waste and utilises the gas for cooking, hot water and even generating electricity!

"Some projects include wall-mounted LCD screens to display both historical and real-time system output. For example, students at ABBC can access the portal to see how their battery discharges overnight and during cloudy days to provide power to the site, then re-charges when the sun is shining brightly."

There's an pedagogical side-benefit - to "provide both a high-level and in-depth educational program for students to illustrate each element - from the science of solar to the mechanical engineering of a small hydroelectric generator, to the mathematical cost benefits of battery storage."

Getting into more depth about finance, he clarified: "Solar installed on site is by far the most inexpensive source of power in Australia. This is due in part to high network costs, meaning that even if coal-fired power was free, the cost of getting it to your door is still higher than solar produced on site."

"Solar has a working life of over 25 years, so an appropriately sized system can actually create a school with zero long-term energy costs. There are several different finance options, including:

- leasing (fixed repayments, school responsible for operations, maintenance)
- outright purchase (high upfront capital cost, school performs O&M)
- *Power Purchase Agreement* (nil upfront cost, no O&M costs, system output risk transferred to third party).

The environmental benefits are a key consideration for schools too, with solar one of the most popular forms of renewable energy in the world. "Depending on the state you're in, a kilowatt hour of electricity generally produces 800-900g of greenhouse gases. Once installed and switched on, solar displaces this completely - meaning that a typical school of 100 students using 300,000kWh per annum can reduce their carbon footprint by up to 300 tonnes each year.

"Coal power is also very water-intensive, using anywhere from 400-4400 litres per megawatt hour, with gas-fired power using a quarter of that. In comparison, solar requires about 2 litres per MWh assuming you wash the panels twice a year.

To put this in perspective, Australia used 258 million MWh in 2016. The difference between 100% solar and 100% coal would equal - at minimum - over 100 billion litres of water conserved throughout Australia." Nathan agreed that the future looks incredibly bright for solar in schools. "Certainly more schools will become 100 percent sustainable in the future - the cost of generation technology (both wind and solar) has dropped to the point where it is by far the cheapest form of power available. Battery storage is fast becoming a reality and ABBC illustrates that schools can achieve this at nil capital cost, just by paying their normal electricity invoice." ■



Australia's first 100% sustainable school

Atlantis Beach Baptist College is a creative and innovative coeducational private Baptist College which commenced its first day with students on February 1, 2017.

Newly constructed and situated an hour north of Perth, the college is rapidly expanding to meet the needs of the growing community in Two Rocks, Yanchep and surrounds.

Faced with unfeasible grid connection costs, ABBC had been operating solely on diesel generators since the start of 2017. Upstream was engaged to provide a nil capital solution for ABBC, one that would cease their reliance on diesel generators forever.

Principal Brendon Donaldson said that "designing a system is key so having good experienced people is



critical". He noted that they were able to carry out the installation over the school holidays so the process felt "seamless".

Upstream's design includes:

20kWp rooftop PV solar to generate the required power

- 30kWh battery storage to store and deliver the power 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- self-sufficient carpark lighting to separate the lighting loads

from the campus

- solar heat pumps to replace diesel based hot water systems.

Upstream provided all capital funds for the project to allow ABBC to best manage their internal costs. ABBC purchases the solar power from Upstream each month just like a normal electricity retailer. The system will grow in-line with the campus; as more students enrol and more buildings are constructed, so too will the solar generation

and storage capacity expand to meet their requirements.

Brendon added that he has been able to integrate solar into student projects: "We have a very environmentally strong curriculum and with the solar, our students can monitor our system with apps, plan targets, etc., they can watch it in real-time as we have set up our facility for students to see the batteries and system working."

Upgrades are implemented for ABBC at nil capital cost. Upstream's solution for ABBC is cash flow neutral – meaning they were able to switch to 100 percent sustainability with no change in their energy costs. Atlantis Beach Baptist College is the first school in Australia to become 100 percent carbon free, self-sufficient and disconnected from the grid. ■

Upstream is providing **full funding** for school sustainability projects across Australia.

Just like our **solar power station** for Robinson College in Broken Hill, NSW.

\$5,100
benefit in year one

\$43,000
benefit over term

\$882,700
lifetime benefit

Time to sharpen the pencil?

Upstream^o

upstreamenergy.com.au
hello@upstreamenergy.com.au
02 8226 8616

Not on your watch: securing school grounds



By Rosie Clarke, Editor

Just last term, four Adelaide boys were reported by police for theft of electronic items from multiple schools.

Two Bundaberg schools suffered a blow when thieves broke in over a weekend in September. Elliot Heads State School principal Nichola Lister told *News-Mail* at the time, “it was just devastating”. Students were particularly shaken up as the theft included ‘icy cup’ money that they had fundraised.

Not only did the vandalism mean the school would have to pay for repairs, as the robbers caused damage to the tuckshop door during the break-in, but it also frightened the students and staff.

The best thing schools can do is try to prepare and prevent as much damage as possible. Make sure your first step is to organise a risk assessment to identify problem areas and access points around campus. Once these risk areas have been identified, there are a multitude of ways to strengthen security: clearly signposting alarm systems, CCTV and security patrols is a great way to help deter vandals and thieves. A good tip is placing your signs

behind a see-through fence, or somewhere clearly visible but difficult to deface or hide behind.

Security lighting is also important as it will prevent blind spots or dark shadows in CCTV footage and strong visibility will act as a deterrent if would-be vandals know they can easily be seen. Security lighting and infra-red lights have the added benefit of surprising trespassers, discouraging them from entering. The sudden bright lights may also

trigger neighbours to keep an eye out or call police. Professionals should be brought in to install the lights in places that will be most impactful and most difficult to deface or disarm.

One of the most effective ways to secure a school after-hours is to establish a strong boundary. With a solid boundary fence, onlookers will note that the school is secure and students, parents and teachers can feel safe during term time.

Fencing is popular, as trees or landscaping can be scaled and walls feel too imposing.

School News spoke with *Eclipse Security's* Greg Flood about his thoughts and views on creating a safe boundary for schools.

He suggested: “CCTV cameras can monitor the perimeter and key areas of a school campus and are an effective deterrent which has been proven to reduce criminal activity around and within education facilities.



On top of that CCTV cameras are not only useful for deterring theft and vandalism but can also be particularly useful where bullying is a problem, or for monitoring student behaviour. I also recommend that a school should investigate the addition of an electronic access control system which can automate the locking and unlocking of doors and gates, manage keyholders and in some cases engage an emergency lockdown".

Interestingly, Greg revealed that while a school will have a security policy, they may not know that professional solutions can be completely tailored to their school, its policy and any security concerns and needs.

"Finding a reputable company that specialises in school security is an important part of a successful security policy, they will have the experience and knowledge which will ensure that this policy is planned and implemented effectively".

"Quality products that provide the right solution and that are easy-to-use and maintain are important. Maintenance frequency will depend on the systems installed and



the level of security needed, I generally recommend a full maintenance check be carried out at the end of each term."

Above all, schools need to remember to communicate with and address any security concerns that the various

stakeholders may have i.e Parents, staff and students. Parents should rest-assured that the security systems installed are there to provide protection for their children and also to provide the school's staff and managers with the technology to respond to any issues."

"No two schools require the same security plan and many factors are taken into consideration.

The level of security needed may depend on the location of the school, the surrounding socioeconomics, even the size of the facility will also be a factor for consideration. If the facility is large, security upgrades will normally start in the main building and progress in stages throughout the facility to include a CCTV system, intrusion alarms, and access control systems.

"Finally, and probably the defining factor for most state schools in the past, would be the budget. In recent years budgets have been increased for schools to upgrade facilities, principals and facility managers are putting the safety of staff and students high on the priority list.

Private schools are increasingly very security conscious, with many having the latest access control systems that provide automatic door locking, easy management of users and emergency lockdown." ■

Melbourne School Access Control Specialists

Are your students and staff safe and secure?

- + emergency lock down
- + automated locking and unlocking of doors
- + track & control users
- + increased security
- + reduce administration costs
- + improve building management



 **eclipse**
security systems

1300 66 11 99
www.eclipsesecurity.com.au

BRAND
PARTNERS

 **interlogix**
small technology

ir inner range
Intelligent Security Solutions

SALTO
inspired access

ICTProtege.

A living playground: school-designed nature play

By Rosie Clarke, Editor

Australia desperately needs to make physical activity a way of life for its children, advocates the latest data in Active Healthy Kids Australia's (AHKA) Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Young People.

Could nature play, increasingly popular among educators, be the solution?

Australia received a dismal D- overall on the AHKA report card, with "less than one-in-five children getting the recommended 60 minutes of huff and puff (aerobic) activity," said Dr Natasha Schranz from the University of South Australia. Parent-report data also revealed that most primary school



children (54-65 percent) have more than two hours of screen time on a typical day. Boosting physical activity shouldn't just be about increasing the number of PE lessons, either, if we want to make it a 'way of life' for kids. Scheduling lots of sports or organised activity could send wrong message if it

means the child will then equate 'rest time' with playing on their iPad. Designing an environment for students to inhabit where physical activity is the norm, however; that might work.

School News spoke to some of the country's biggest movers and shakers in the growing sector to find out what these spaces

require to qualify as 'nature play'. Jeavons Landscape Architects director, Mary Jeavons explained the three essential themes: "First is the concept of *looseness*, which invites true engagement; children building, constructing, arranging objects creatively (and often socially). Second is that materials are not perfectly smooth, purpose-designed, evenly spaced or predictable and are completely *open-ended* in how they may be used. Third, the setting ideally provides some *living* elements, most likely vegetation, that will in turn attract birds, insects and wildlife and expose children to the local environment, seasonal change and natural processes.

"Nature play challenges many of our adult concepts about order, control, aesthetics, mess and perceptions of risk and safety but is an inherently important activity for children. ▶



Case Study: Eltham College

Learning capacity is a critical fixture in nature play too; a place where teachers can also teach. **School News** caught up with Sonia van Hout, who has worked with Jeavons historically on many projects, most recently as part of her role as director of ELC and junior school at Eltham College, where she collaborated with Jeavons Landscape Architects on an extensive nature play space for Years 1-6.

"It was built to our own design:

we consulted with the children so they were really part of the process and the Jeavons team ran a number of group sessions with them and observed them in the space. They talked a lot about story and roleplay, which we integrated into our design. Now there's a real flow between the indoor classroom and the teacher's ability to take a group outside. I've seen children outside reading books, or having movement breaks, and it's given teachers a line of sight so that some of their kids can be learning inside while others learn outdoors.



"We have a Lilydale topping and rock area, where children can bring in dinosaurs and make huts with sticks, there's little mushrooms and a beautiful storybook platform the children might turn into a castle; then we have hanging monkey bars, climbing and balancing apparatus, a slide and fireman's pole, wobbly bridges and more.

"At the top level, there are wooden platforms and tiers that can be used as stages or seating areas, then we have a lot of organic space with logs, rocks and arches we have grown, plus another area for

sportier games like kickball. We tried to create something that had as many options as possible. We even had a mining club before the redesign where the kids would dig up stones and treasures so we made sure there was an organic, open-ended space where they could dig."

Sonia's big tip for other schools who want to take the nature play plunge is to visit other playgrounds with thoughtful, nature-based designs, and "take time to observe, talk and wonder". ▲

Planning Outdoor Environments in Schools

NATURE PLAY IN SCHOOLS

A One Day Seminar - Friday 3rd May 2019

A forum for discussion and information, in a lovely venue and with great food, covering:

- the role and value of outdoor play at school
- practical design for play, learning and landscape
- gardens for wellbeing in schools
- the importance of movement and physical activity in schools

Venue - City of Melbourne Bowls Club, Flagstaff Gardens,
West Melbourne (a short walk from Flagstaff Station)



Jeavons Landscape Architects
design and advocate for
inclusive, sustainable and
engaging landscapes in schools

03 9387 7337

www.jeavons.net.au

info@jeavons.net.au

Book Tickets at
www.eventbrite.com.au
or call (03) 9387 7337

Who should attend?

School Principals, Educators,
School Council Reps. & Parents,
School Planners
Business Managers and
Wellbeing Officers,
Landscape Architects,
Architects

Early Bird Ticket Discounts End 1st April 2019

◀ They repeatedly demonstrate high levels of problem solving through the creative use of loose materials in their outdoor environments at school."

In 'An exploration of nature-based play at Australian pre-schools', Southern Cross University's Julia Truscott discusses this idea that 'risky play' is something children seek and may need for their healthy development. She explains that play areas designed to challenge children encourage them to lean on their risk perception while 'safer' equipment can become more hazardous if children misuse it to create a sense of risk.

George Davidson from GDL Nature Play Spaces noted: "It's all about adding things to open up the senses and help teach children to take more risks in a natural environment."

Madelyn Smith from Timber Creations said: "One of the major factors in the decline of play over the last 50 years has been the overreaction to parental concerns about safety, leading manufacturers to attempt to eliminate all risk in their equipment. This has led to smooth surfaces and



standardised gaps that children could never misstep or trip on, which has led to children lacking the motor skills and ability to assess risks required for essential development."

George listed popular nature play ideas, like building a cubby, playing in a stream or climbing a tree but revealed that water play

is by far the biggest hit. "It can be used in so many ways, from a simple water channel and pump to a larger creek bed where you can dam and control the water."

Madelyn emphasised the learning capacity of nature play: "Nature play equipment should have things to discover - uneven surfaces, interesting knobs and

angles, natural bug trails and different textures. Exciting pieces of equipment highlight natural features and entice students to notice things about them, and wonder how they formed. For example a knot in a branch, smoothed for safety but placed for grabbing as you climb, and a good height to study.

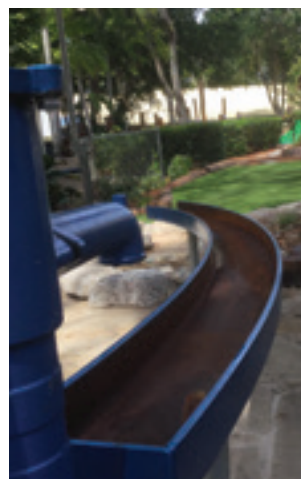


Case Study: Good Shepherd Lutheran College

GDL Nature Play Spaces worked on a stunning space redesign at Good Shepherd Lutheran College, in collaboration with principal Tim Lambert. George Davidson shared: "The collaboration was to bring a dream to life for the teachers who had been planning their ideas for over two years.

The playground was old and tired, so it was ready for a revamp and they gave us a lot of free reign on the site. That is always good news, as some of the best ideas come along as the space evolves. As the school is on a sloped site, that also gave us a lot more options, which was very exciting."

He advised any principals out there who are new to nature play but eager to bring their plans to life: "With the information available online it is quite possible for you to come up with the first concept for a play space but when it comes to making sure it will work, it's best to bring in a designer or company that builds them. There are still safety issues that need to be looked at and this is something that can be tricky for people who are not well-versed in the industry. It also helps to use someone who understand the materials and their limitations. A professional designer can also see more potential in a space as this is what they do for a living." ▲



Mary described what key elements your nature play design could have: "Nature play settings can be a forest, a vegetable garden, a sand pit, or a complex space with built structures and loose elements that enable children to make the most out of the relationship between the two."

What is involved in the design process?

George gave us a detailed overview of what the design stage requires: "Sometimes, the school will have been working on their wish list for a year while researching funding options. But the design stage starts with a site visit to assess which areas are to be used and what the school wants out of their design. Sometimes, the space might not be big enough for what the school initially wants, or the site may lend itself to something completely different and quite unique."

"From here, a simple concept plan is drawn up and the amount of detail required in the plan depends on whether the project will go out to tender or be constructed by the same



company. In a space as small as 20m² you can create a simple balance area and cubby surrounded by planting. One of the biggest things that eats up space is when you build anything above 600mm because then you need to include fall zones and clear spaces in your blueprint."

Madelyn said: "The most elaborate nature play space will have trails through bush, and a mix of plenty of designed features encouraging

interaction with natural features. Most schools do not have this opportunity, but with careful planning can still create an area that enables open-ended play and exploration.

"The typical size of school playgrounds we have done in the past would be about 80m², and this can be anything from a 8x10m space, or a trail of elements weaving around a space. These are typically organised early to mid-term, for installation in the following

holidays, with a minimum of four weeks lead time."

She also clarified that nature play is for older children too: "Though most studies have focused on the many benefits for early childhood, increasing evidence is coming to light about the important benefits for teenagers, especially in the digitized world of today. These benefits can be harnessed by schools by getting natural, non-prescriptive play elements installed."

Creating a space for children to endlessly problem solve, create, take risks and play is essential in developing skills like resilience and flexibility. "This generation will face a range of challenges, including the impacts of climate change, increasing globalisation, and the consequences of rapid technological change," CHEO Research Institute scientist, Dr Tremblay says.

"They will need to be purposely physically active in order to grow into healthy, resilient adults who can survive and thrive in a changing world." ■



GDL Nature PlaySpaces

We are a landscape construction company based on the Sunshine Coast Queensland that offers Custom made nature inspired play spaces.

We cater for early learning centres, schools and public spaces. Working from our concept plans we bring your ideas to life. We work closely with you and gain inspiration from the children's ideas to bring the best possible solution to your space and budget.

What is Nature Play?

Nature play is a concept to encourage children to spend more time playing outdoors using their imaginations in a natural setting. It inspires open-ended possibilities for self-designed play, creativity, learning and socialising. In the past, playing outside in nature was a part of everyday, normal childhood experience.

For more information or to request a consultation contact George:

Info@gdlanscaping.com.au Phone 0410863756 gdlnatureplayspaces.com.au





Case Study: Woy Woy Public School

Woy Woy Public School recently had its playground designed by Timber Creations, winning a commendation award at the 2018 Kidsafe National Playspace Design Awards.

Madelyn revealed that the school wanted to create a practical and engaging playground for its preschool, on a relatively small budget.

"They needed to match the

preschool's core values, providing inquiry and play based learning and development. A nature play space was essential for this, allowing children to be creative in using the space.

"Parent, child and community participation were the focus of a holistic and inclusive playground.

Natural features were retained in the multi-use equipment, including a wonderful hollow log tunnel with beautiful different textures inside and out." ▲



Natural Playgrounds for Schools!



ANDREW SMITH

TIMBER CREATIONS

Natural playgrounds made to the Playing Safe Guidelines for schools, and custom created from sustainably sourced, recycled Australian timber!

Timber has long been considered one of the greatest building materials, but lesser known are the extra benefits from using timber in playgrounds, for health and development. Students have a lot to gain from experiencing natural play.

The timbers we collect have significant history, character, and durability that is priceless. These pieces are shaped by highly skilled craftsmen into playground elements that are also unique works of art. Contact Timber Creations for a custom designed play icon for your school, with play benefits second to none!

Andrew Smith Timber Creations Pty Ltd are the leading industry experts in creating natural playgrounds for schools.

Contact Timber Creations for the very best in nature play
(02) 4372 1170

andrew@timbercreations.com.au
www.timbercreations.com.au

Full Natural Play Packages - Installed!

OFFER APPLIES FOR SCHOOLS IN CENTRAL COAST, NEWCASTLE,
PORT STEPHENS, LOWER HUNTER & NORTH SYDNEY REGIONS, NSW



Packages include play elements, a log and stone retaining wall for seating, balancing and play, plus certified softfall mulch!

**PACKAGES FULLY INSTALLED
FOR ONLY \$29,500 + GST**
for above areas - others considered


Australian Made


Compliance to AS4685 series

Award Winning Designers

Warranty Guarantee

Custom Play Equipment

 [timbercreations](https://www.facebook.com/timbercreations)

 [timbercreationsau](https://www.instagram.com/timbercreationsau)

 [timbercreationsau](https://www.pinterest.com/timbercreationsau)

www.timbercreations.com.au

Super stackable student chair

Whass is a multifunctional chair designed for learning environments.

It is light, easy to move and super stackable. It comes in a range of models for varied and flexible use.

Whass creates smart spaces for study places.



RESOURCE
FURNITURE

workwise environments



resourcefurniture.com.au

p 1300 577 267 e design@resourcefurniture.com.au