



The Currajong School

Annual Report 2017



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General Information

The Currajong School is a registered independent special school for children with social, emotional and behavioural disorders.

Vision

To transform the lives of children experiencing social, emotional and behavioural disorders.

Mission

To provide a positive and therapeutic school environment for children whose social, emotional and behavioural needs are unable to be met within mainstream education.

Goal

To work intensively with children to develop the learning and coping strategies which will allow them to re-enter mainstream education with healthy self-esteem, established work habits, and acceptable behaviours. To achieve this goal, children are treated respectfully as individuals, given responsibility for their own behavioural choices, taught to be resourceful in solving problems, and accepted as valued members of the school community. Children are encouraged at all times to seek positive rather than negative ways of belonging.

Governance

The Currajong School Limited is a company limited by guarantee. The Board of Directors forms the School Council which acts as the governing body, appoints the school principal, and establishes and monitors the strategic direction of the school. The operation of the school is delegated by the Board of Directors to the school principal.

Information on directors is as follows:

Mr Andrew Cooper (Chairperson) B.A. (Melb). (resigned April 2017)

Mrs Deborah Negri (Chairperson). (appointed chairperson April 2017)

Dr Jennifer Bars B.A. (Hons), M.A., D.Phil

Ms Philipa Murray B.A. (Monash), Grad. Dip. Public Relations (RMIT) M. Ed (Primary)

Mr Peter Carlin Dip. Management (Swinburne). (resigned April 2017)

Ms Anne Maree Downes B.Ec, Diploma in Australia Tax Law

Ms Elizabeth Pattison B.Sc (Hons)

Ms Connie Linney-Barber B.App. Sc in Computer Science (RMIT), Dip. Comm. Services - Child Care (Swinburne)

Mr Stephen Carey B.BsCmn (Journalism) (appointed August 2017)

Mr Ken Vaughan Dip Building (appointed August 2017)

Company Secretary: Belinda Wright

Staffing

In 2017 the staff comprised of 23 staff members, which included teaching, support and administrative staff members, both full time and part time. No staff member identified as Aboriginal and/or of Torres Strait Islander background.

Principal

Jenine Pallant

Dip. Tchg. Primary (Vic. College), B. Ed. Primary (Vic. College), Post Grad. Dip. Ed. Studies - Student Welfare (Melb), M. Ed. (Melb), M. Ed Studies - Leadership (Monash)

Administrator

Belinda Wright

Teachers

Sonia Dunne	(Deputy Principal) B. Ed (University of Tasmania), M. Ed – Special Education Needs (Deakin)
Cris Payne	(Leading Teacher) Dip. Tchg. Primary (Monash), Grad. Dip. Sp. Ed. (Vic. College), B. Ed. (Deakin)
Paul Crick	Dip. Tchg. (W. Sydney), B. Ed. Sp. Ed. (New England)
Kerri Ledingham	Dip. Tchg. Primary (Christchurch College of Ed), Cert Teaching People with Disabilities (Christchurch Polytechnic), M. Ed – Special Educational Needs (Deakin)
Ashlee Lord	B. Art Ed (College Fine Arts University of NSW)
Michele Whitby	B. Arts (Deakin), B. Ed (Deakin), M. Ed – Special Educational Needs (Deakin)

Teaching Assistants

Jamie Choon	B. Applied Science – Disabilities Studies (Deakin)
Nicole Eykman	B. Fine Arts (Monash)
Noelle Eykman	Certificate in Childcare, Certificate III in Education
Janine Hamilton	Certificate III in Education - Integration Aide
Susan Hughes	B. Arts (Monash), Grad Dip. Educ. Secondary (Monash), Dip Counselling, Dip. Family Intake and Support Work.
Sarah Hunt	B. Visual Arts (Monash), B. Fine Arts (Monash), Grad. Dip. Ed Secondary (Monash)
Beth Mennie-Carter	Certificate IV OSHC, Certificate III – Meetings & Events (resigned May 2017)
Frances Moon	B. Ed. Music (Deakin)
Nancy Moss	Certificate III in Education
Bernadette Young	B. Arts (Caulfield Inst. Tech.) Certificate of Education (Deakin)
Matt Young	
Zac Wright	

Specialist Support

Psychologist

Sharon Crowley B.A., Grad.Dip. Applied Psych, M. Psych - Child and Educational (Monash).

Speech & Language Therapist

Suzanne Goldin B.A. Speech & Hearing (Univ. of Witwatersrand, Sth Africa), M.S.P.A.

Direct Instruction/ Transition Co-ordinator

Marnie Nyhuis B. Tchg.(Deakin), Grad. Dip. Sp. Ed. (Deakin)

Student Assessment

Lucy Chia Grad. Dip. Sec. Studies (RMIT), B. Arts (Melb)

Music – Australian Institute of Music & Childhood Development

Dance – Pivot Dance Studio

Swimming – Ashburton Pool & Recreation Centre

Programs in 2017

During the 2017 school year students enjoyed a wide range of activities and excursions, including weekly dance, music and swimming classes. Other highlights included:

- Annual Concert for family and friends
- City Survival Program for transition students
- Currajong Footy Day, including AFL visit to the school & AFL Footy Roadshow
- Art Activities including NGV and Ian Potter excursions
- ANZAC Day 1000 steps challenge at Mt Dandenong
- Immigration Museum excursion
- St. John's Ambulance First Aid for Children incursion
- Adventure Days for transition students - rock climbing, high ropes, gymnastics
- Melbourne Zoo excursion
- National Sports Museum MCG excursion
- Wild Action incursion
- National Buddies Day
- National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence
- Responsible Pet Ownership Program
- Fizzics Education science incursion
- Polly Woodside excursion
- Wednesday afternoon club activities throughout the year

Improved School Facilities

General:

- Maintenance/repair to paintwork throughout school
- Art room renovation

Donations from the following charitable foundation provided additional classroom resources for our resilience and wellbeing program:

- Australian Hotels Associations - \$10,000 grant

Bursaries enabled financial assistance to be provided to a number of families:

- Rotary Club of Chadstone/East Malvern - \$9100

Conference

The presenter at the annual Currajong Conference on 11th August 2017 was Andrew Fuller (clinical psychologist). The presentation “*Anxiety in Children*” explored how, for some children, fears and anxiety can have a significant impact on the way they perform at school, on their ability to make or maintain friends, and on their family life. Andrew addressed how anxiety affects children and what can be done to promote their mental health and well-being.

Student Progress at The Currajong School

The Currajong School is a registered special school. At Currajong, each child has an Individual Education Plan. All students are assessed at the time of enrolment and twelve monthly thereafter on the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test, South Australian Spelling Test, and the Keymath Diagnostic Inventory.

Annual NAPLAN assessments are made available to our students. In 2017, four children participated in the NAPLAN tests. Parents of other eligible students in years 3, 5 & 7 signed consents for their children to be exempt from participation.

Staff, Parent and Student Satisfaction with The Currajong School

When asked for feedback on their satisfaction of Currajong, staff reported the most satisfying aspects were:

- Our school's programs effectively meet the special needs of students
- Seeing the positive changes in the students
- Working with other dedicated staff in a supportive environment
- Seeing the students happy, engaged in learning and making friends
- The school successfully supports the development of the students' social and personal skills
- Teachers at Currajong school know and care about students
- The students have access to high quality materials and resources that help them learn
- Staff at Currajong are dedicated to improving student learning outcomes

Parents reported high levels of satisfaction with the following:

- The learning program offered at Currajong meets the needs of individual students
- Currajong offers good support for all students with special needs
- Teachers at Currajong know and care about my child
- Teachers provide excellent help and support for students when it is needed
- Currajong is a safe place for students to learn
- Parents are kept well informed about the learning programs undertaken by students
- There are excellent opportunities for contact with teachers at this school

Students reported their satisfaction with the following:

- My school is a safe place in which to learn
- I am proud to be a part of this school
- The learning programs at Currajong have met my needs and interests
- I have been accepted for who I am
- The school has helped me to develop good study habits
- I feel like people at this school know me

Student Attendance

Overall attendance rate for 2017 as measured during the DET collection period was 83%. Student non-attendance across the four class groups during the year related predominantly to illness and/or medical, therapy and counselling appointments.

Currajong families are required to notify the school of an absence either in person or by telephone, email or note. All absences are recorded daily and systematically by the school. We encourage regular attendance, it is important if appropriate levels of progress are to be made. Currajong will work with parents and psychologists to support a student's regular school attendance.

School Operations

Income:

Fees and levies	466,465
Interest	41,036
Donations	18,525
Government Grants	1,633,306
Capital Grants	0
Other	4,717

Expenditure:

Salaries and Associated Costs	1,491,047
Operating Expenses	325,921
Depreciation	96,313
Contingency	250,768

Contact information

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