



The Currajong School

Annual Report 2018



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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.

Philosophy

The Currajong School is committed to providing a positive and therapeutic school experience for children presenting with significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The educational program at Currajong has been designed to meet the needs of these young students, with social and emotional learning as an integral component of the curriculum. The Currajong School operates within the framework of a nurture approach, where learning is understood developmentally, and all behaviour is viewed as communication. The classroom offers a safe base for vulnerable children whose complex social and emotional needs have become a barrier to both their learning and their wellbeing. With the nurture approach students' social and emotional development and learning is supported and enhanced, and the opportunity provided for them to reach their greatest potential.

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:

Mrs Deborah Negri (Chairperson)

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

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

Ms Elizabeth Pattison B.Sc (Hons)

Mr Stephen Carey B.BsCmn (Journalism)

Mr Ken Vaughan Dip Building

Company Secretary: Belinda Wright

Staffing

In 2018 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)

Joanne Linsdell B. Visual Arts (Vic College of Arts), Grad. Dip Educ. (Hawthorn Institute), Grad Dip. Visual Arts (Sydney College of Art), M. Visual Arts (Sydney College of Arts and Glasgow School of Art), M. Ed - Special Education (Melb)

Michele Whitby B. Arts (Deakin), B. Ed (Deakin), M. Ed – Special Educational Needs (Deakin)

Teaching Assistants

Jamie Choon	B. Applied Science – Disabilities Studies (Deakin)
Noelle Collado	Certificate in Childcare, Certificate III in Education
Nicole Eykman	B. Fine Arts (Monash)
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)
Georgia Koutina	Cert III in Education Support
Frances Moon	B.Ed. Music (Deakin)
Nancy Moss	Certificate III in Education
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

Bernadette Young B.Arts (Caulfield Inst.Tech.) Certificate of Education (Deakin)

Music – Hey Dee Ho Educational Services

Dance – Fit2Move

Swimming – Ashburton Pool & Recreation Centre

Programs in 2018

In June 2018, The Currajong School received accreditation as a National Nurturing School through Nurture UK. Nurturing schools embed a nurturing culture throughout their schools, enhancing teaching and learning, promoting healthy outcomes for children and young people. This is achieved by focusing on emotional needs and development as well as academic learning in a whole school environment. Nurture has a significant influence on social emotional skills, wellbeing and behaviour.

The Six Principles of Nurture:

1. Children's learning is understood developmentally
2. The classroom offers a safe base
3. The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
4. Language is a vital means of communication
5. All behaviour is communication
6. The importance of transition in children's lives

During the 2018 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
- ANZAC Day 1000 steps challenge at Mt Dandenong
- Werribee Zoo excursion
- St. John's Ambulance First Aid for Children incursion
- Adventure Days for transition students - rock climbing, high ropes, gymnastics
- Melbourne Zoo excursion
- Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre excursion
- National Buddies Day
- National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence
- Responsible Pet Ownership Program
- Book Week celebrations
- Wednesday afternoon club activities throughout the year

Improved School Facilities

General:

- Installation of new garden edging to playground
- Raised garden/vegetable planters installed for children's garden
- Maintenance/repair to paintwork throughout school

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 - \$9660

Conference

The presenter at the annual Currajong Conference on 9th November 2018 was Jill Sweatman (Neuroscience Strategist in Learning and Development). The presentation "*The 3 Deadly Ds of the classroom – Devices, Distractions & Diet*" explored the impacts of device overuse and why over-stimulation affects the way students perform at school, on their ability to make or maintain friends, and on their family life. Jill addressed the impact of problematic internet use, and the impact that distractions from devices are having on students and families.

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-Johnson IV Tests of Achievement for reading, mathematics and spelling.

Annual NAPLAN assessments are made available to our students. In 2018, three children participated in the NAPLAN tests. Parents of other eligible students in years 3, 5 & 7 signed consent 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:

- Seeing the progress that students make both academically and socially
- Our school's programs effectively meet the special needs of students
- Being able to provide a positive school experience for the children and the difference it makes to their families
- The school successfully supports the development of the students' social and personal skills
- Teachers at Currajong school know and care about their students
- The dedication of staff to improving student learning outcomes

Parents reported high levels of satisfaction with the following:

- Teachers at Currajong know and care about my child
- The range of learning areas offered at this school is excellent
- This school is a safe place in which to learn
- Teachers at Currajong are keen to help students of all abilities
- Students are treated fairly at this school
- Currajong offers good support for all students with special needs
- Teachers provide excellent help and support for students when it is needed
- Parents are kept well informed about the learning programs undertaken by students

Students reported their satisfaction with the following:

- This school has the best teachers I have ever had
- Currajong has helped me with being happy and controlling my feelings
- I have worked hard at Currajong and feel that it has helped me to get over my anxiety
- This school is the best school ever
- My teachers expect me to do my best
- I have been accepted for who I am
- The school has helped me to improve my socialisation and interacting with others
- I feel like people at this school know me

Student Attendance

Overall attendance rate for 2018 as measured during the DET collection period was 86%. 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	494,911
Interest	39,336
Donations	9,885
Government Grants	1,660,981
Capital Grants	0
Other	12,450

Expenditure:

Salaries and Associated Costs	1,525,899
Operating Expenses	320,379
Depreciation	99,029
Contingency	282,736

Contact information

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