

Pedagogy and Space

Transforming Learning through
Innovation

*Every
child,
every
opportunity*



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Introduction



‘The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers.’

How the World’s Best-Performing School Systems Come Out on Top, McKinsey & Company, 2007

Awareness of the relationship between the educational and architectural design features and principles when planning new learning environments in Victoria has escalated in the last five years. Not only should school buildings be durable and aesthetically pleasing, but they also need to be functional and fit for purpose. These trends are underpinned by a body of unique research. The research, associated with 162 schools since 2003, focuses on the way in which schools have used resources for time, space and information communication technologies (ICT) to change teacher practice.

This publication explores the leading practices that have been adopted by schools and teachers in their quest to improve student learning outcomes and to more effectively identify and respond to student learning needs. Leading practice is proven, sustainable and adaptable practice leading to improved outcomes, validated by research.

The design of new learning environments should enable teachers to work together differently, to learn and practise new skills together, and to readily access resources to support the teaching and learning relationship.

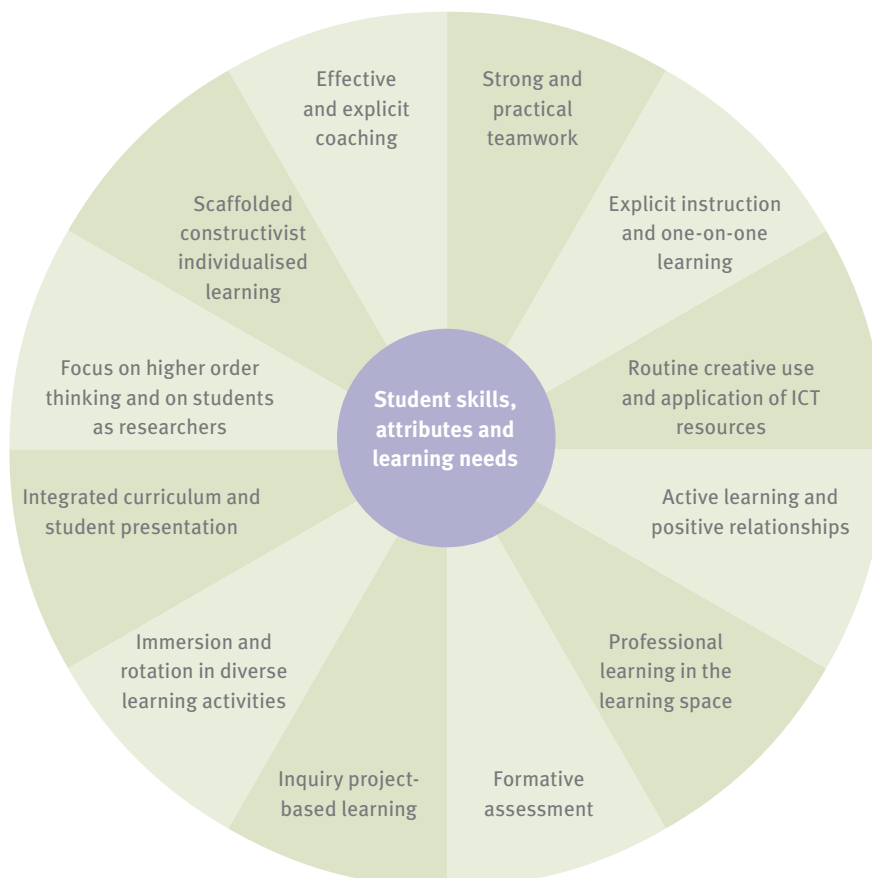
The design of school environments allows schools to use a mix of media and locations, flexible student and teacher groupings, and improved access to resources. The capabilities and confidence of teachers and students are central considerations when dealing with technological and cultural change. Therefore, school design must incorporate ICT as key learning and teaching tools. The action research indicates that schools have moved beyond engaging in isolated ICT professional learning activities for staff and moved to the model of professional learning in teams with a focus on student-centred learning approaches.

Steps connecting student centred learning, leading teacher practice and innovative learning spaces

Step 1: Data – know the learning needs of students



Step 2: Invest in the knowledge, understanding, skills and practice of teachers



Step 3: Determine the function and design of learning spaces



Indoor and outdoor learning environments



Welcoming entry and displays



Specialist focal points



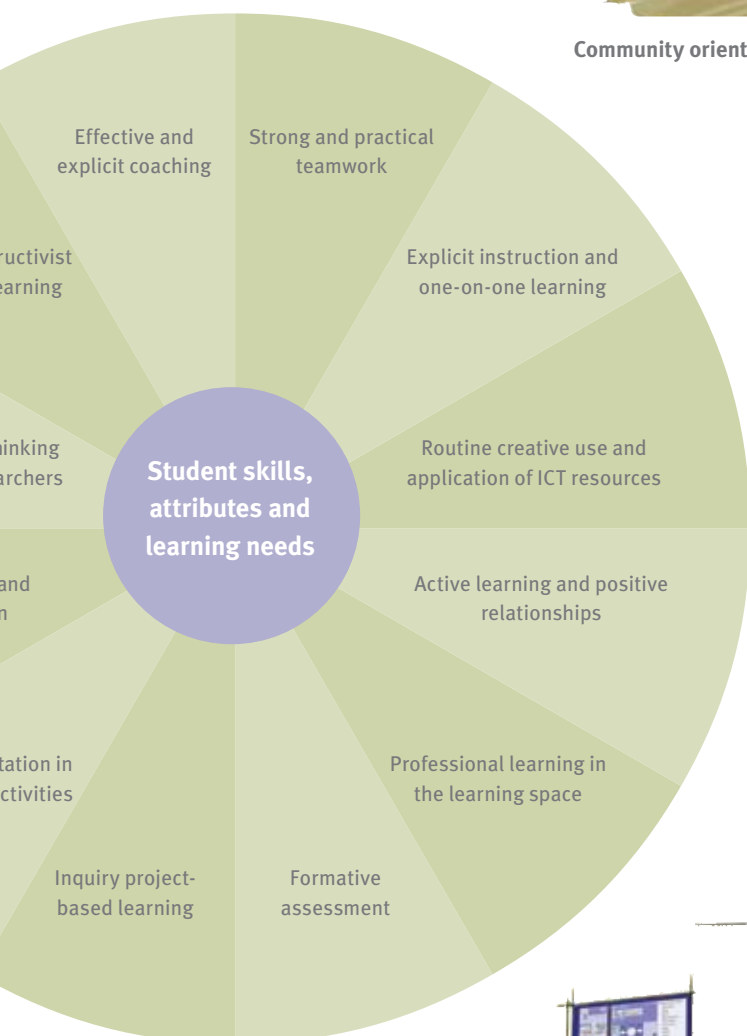
Multipurpose spaces

Scaffolded construction
individualised learning

Focus on higher order thinking
and on students as researchers

Integrated curriculum and
student presentation

Immersion and role-play
diverse learning activities



Community orientation



Innovative flexible space and furniture



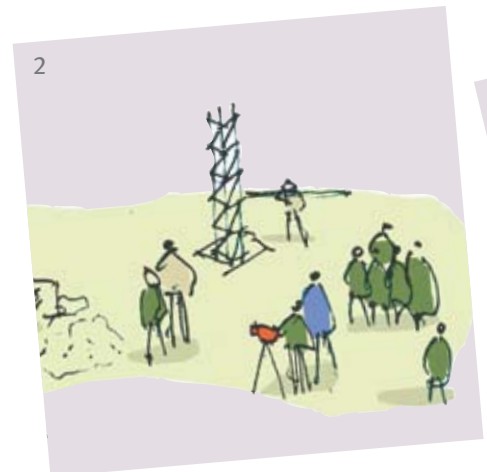
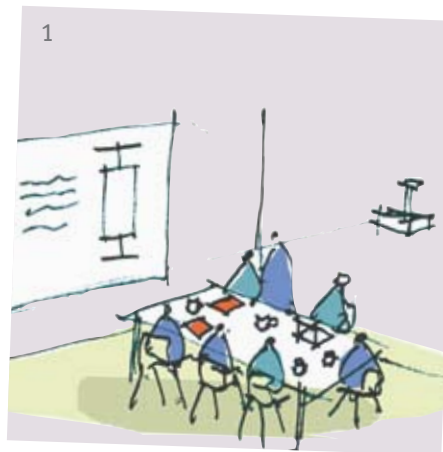
Home bases, learning neighbourhoods and communities



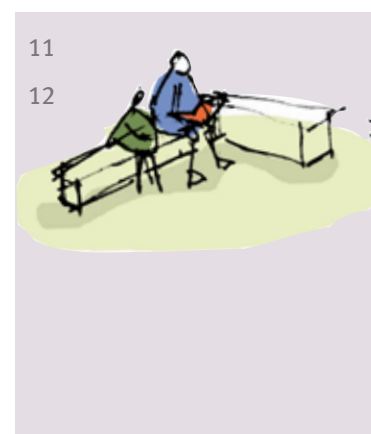
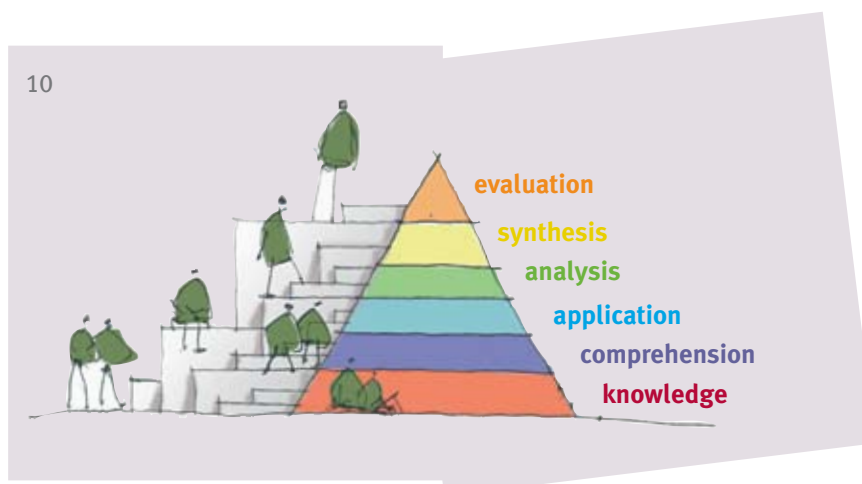
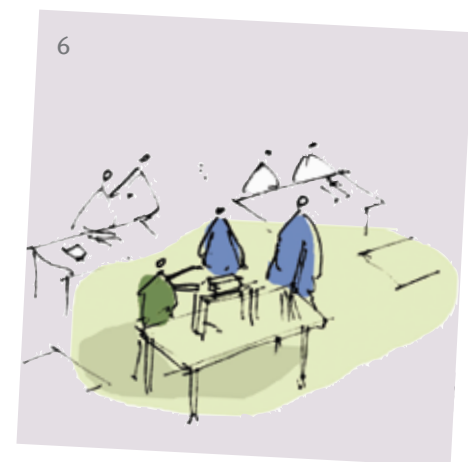
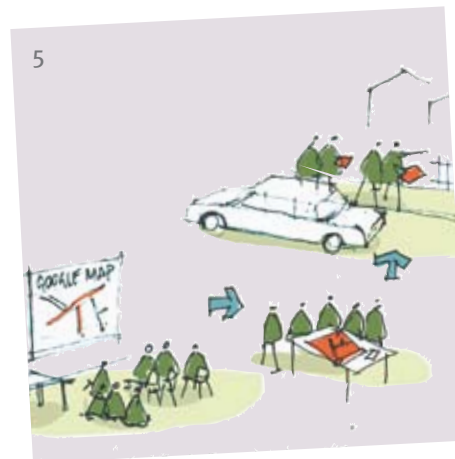
Accessible information technologies

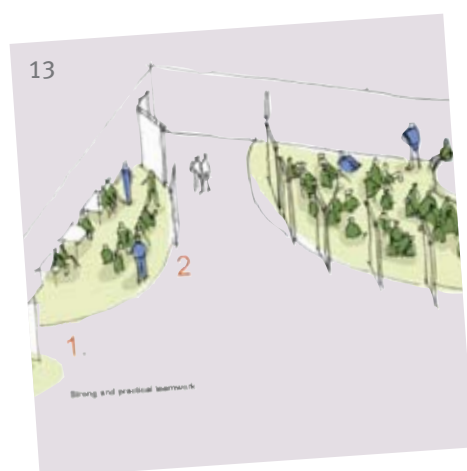
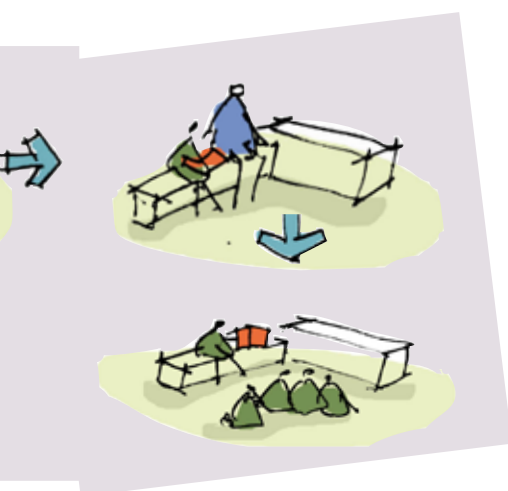
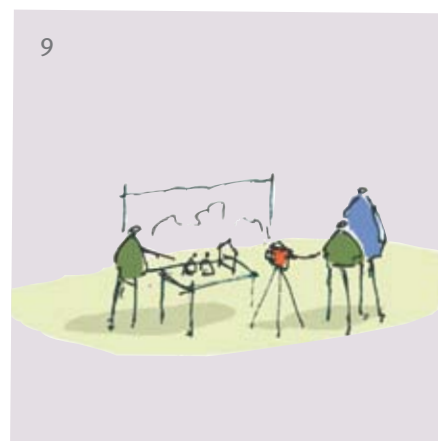
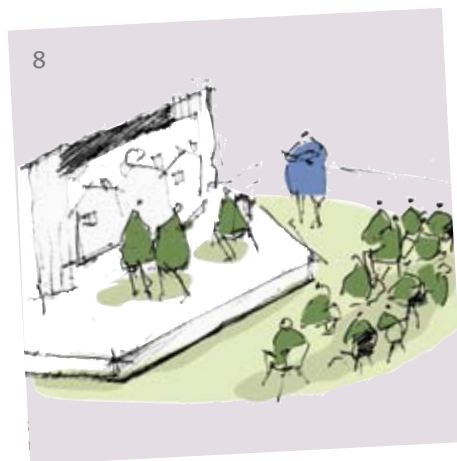
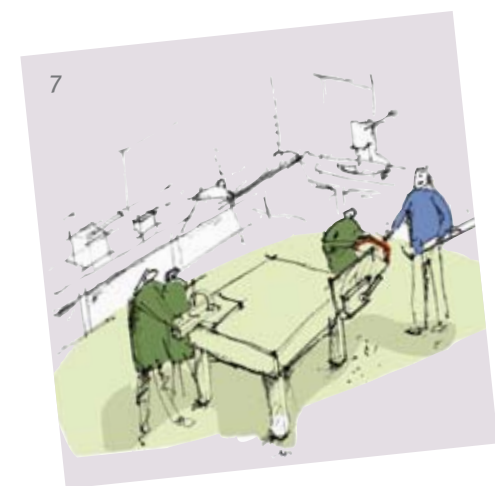
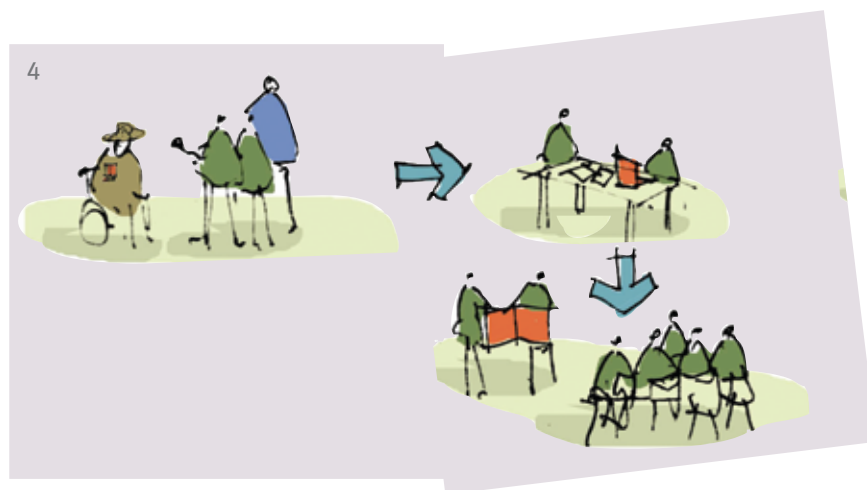
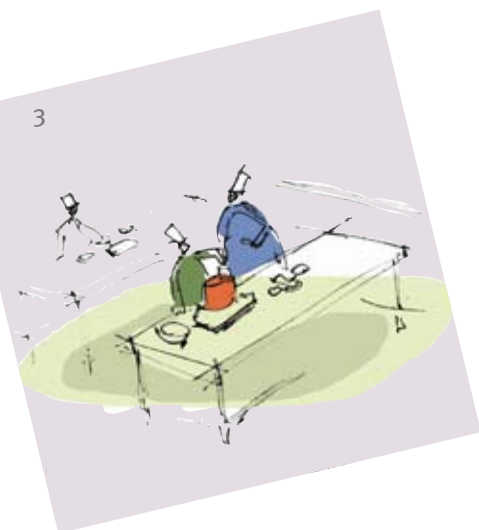
Student centred teaching

- 1 Formative assessment
- 2 Inquiry project based learning
- 3 Explicit instruction and one-on-one learning
- 4 Focus on higher order thinking and students as researchers



- 5 Immersion and rotation in diverse learning activities
- 6 Professional learning in the learning space
- 7 Active learning and positive relationships
- 8 Integrated curriculum and student presentation
- 9 Routine creative use and application of ICT





- 10 Scaffolded learning
- 11 Constructivist learning
- 12 Individualised learning
- 13 Strong and practical team work



Formative assessment

Formative assessment involves the use of data to inform teaching and learning ahead of the establishment of the teaching and learning relationship. It underpins student centred learning by providing teachers with evidence about student skills, attributes and learning needs.

A continuous process of gathering qualitative and quantitative evidence enables teachers to plan learning programs effectively and to manage the learning needs and goals of individual students. It provides clarity regarding the way in which the curriculum must be adapted to address student diversity. Sound and timely formative assessment practices guides the identification of resources which can best support optimal student progress.

The use of Assessment for Learning (AFL) approaches take a more holistic account of addressing individual student learning needs along a learning continuum. These approaches describe more specifically the relationship between evidence and learning. Successful practices involve the provision of disciplined teacher and peer feedback to the student during the learning process and assessment of student understanding using:

- one on one or group discussion,
- open ended questioning,
- pre-testing,
- checklists,
- presentation of project work,
- role plays, or
- thinking tools.



Inquiry project based learning

Solving problems using inquiry methods to ask questions, investigate a topic, and using a variety of resources to find solutions and answers involves higher order thinking, exploration and scaffolded learning. Successful inquiry learning approaches are challenging, fun, interesting, relevant and purposeful.



Explicit instruction and one-on-one learning

Explicit instruction is used when students need to learn content and theory in order to have the skills to solve a problem. Teachers can decide to use explicit instruction spontaneously or in a pre-determined arrangement ahead of a learning activity for different size groups of students depending upon learning needs.

Explicit instruction requires direct interaction between teachers and students to address an individual or collective need. The learning needs of some students may attract one-on-one learning support.



Focus on higher order thinking and students as researchers

In problem-based learning the focus is on higher order thinking. The problem or task can be developed into a learning goal which may take one of several forms, from least to most complex:

- Question or issue
- Case study
- Long-term project
- Problem (multiple cases and projects integrated at the curriculum level).

Students need to be supported to move beyond the lower-order cognitive skills of recall and comprehension to the development of higher-order processes required for creative problem solving, decision making and conceptualising. In addition, they need to develop the capacity for metacognition; the capacity to reflect on and manage their own thinking.

This requires clear understanding that learning is continuous, cumulative and accessible to all students.



Immersion and rotation in diverse learning activities

Quick rotation and immersion in interrelated learning activities enhances engagement and caters for learning diversity. Activities are structured around students' learning needs, are organised thematically and involve co-constructing knowledge, skills and understanding. The learning program is characterised by versatility, a blend of passive and active experiences and creative use of resources. Enhanced opportunities to engage with the community lend authenticity to the learning experience. Learning environments can readily expand beyond the classroom.



Professional learning in the learning space

A culture of learning supports and enables learning relationships to flourish between students and teachers, students and students, and teachers and teachers. The practice of shared teaching enables practitioners to learn from and with each other through coaching, modelling, and train the trainer approaches. Team work enables teachers to provide each other with feedback on new and emerging skills and practices, with the collective effort leading to consistency of approaches and building of a shared culture.

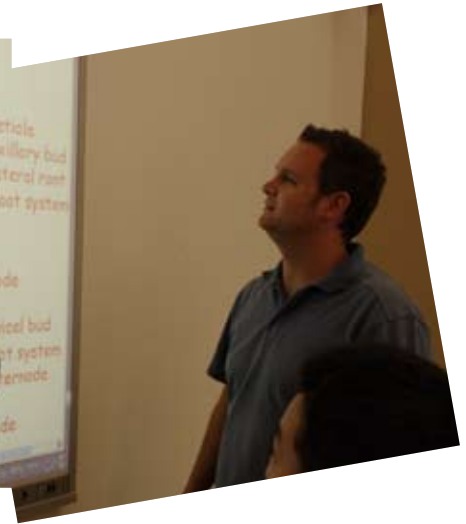
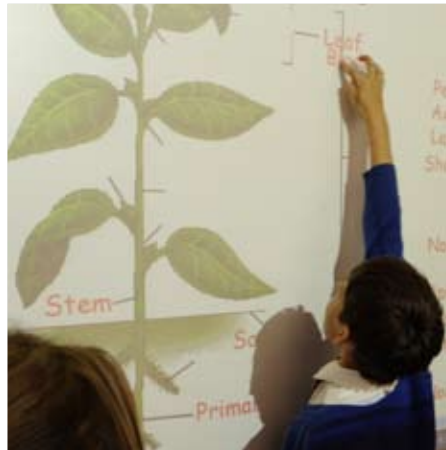


Active learning and positive relationships

Active learning leads to agile thinking. When the learning experience moves along a continuum from knowledge and understanding to skills and practice, then enjoyment of learning is enhanced and student engagement is more likely.

Active learning involves the student in doing, thinking and interacting. In this way learning is focused on building student capabilities through knowledge of how to do something, the experience of doing it successfully, and knowing why it was important and what the next steps are.

Positive relationships between students and teachers and students with each other are more likely to flourish through active learning experiences that are fun and purposeful.



Integrated curriculum and student presentation

Integrated curriculum provides students with the opportunity to access skills and knowledge across several learning domains. Organising learning programs in an integrated way enables students to more readily identify the connections between skills and knowledge and apply them to different areas of learning. Evidence of student learning in student work involves a number of dimensions, including presentation. The outward expression of student learning validates, shares and celebrates the learning experience with a wider audience, including parents. This gives student voice a natural expression.

Routine creative use and application of ICT

Ready access to resources including ICT enables teachers and students to experiment with new learning tools, engage in joint learning experiences and to diversify the demonstration of learning.

Ready access to resources means that teachers and students need the knowledge and skills to use them for teaching and learning. Recognition of individual capacity and methodical development of capacity into demonstrated capability maximises the creative use of ICT as a tool to enhance learning outcomes and to diversify practice.

Students and teachers can then use information and communications technology tools and techniques to plan, research, develop and communicate ideas.

Sound ICT knowledge, skills and behaviours enable students and teachers to access, process, manage and present information, model and control events, construct new understandings and communicate with others.

Creative demonstration of learning can involve presentation using a variety of media, including performance.

Students' learning experiences are organised so that they can collect information from a range of sources, demonstrate visualised thinking and creatively use ICT for problem solving and communicating in all areas of the curriculum.



Scaffolded learning

Scaffolded instruction involves “the systematic sequencing of prompted content, materials, tasks, and teacher and peer support to optimize learning” (Dickson, Chard, & Simmons, 1993).

The decisions that teacher teams make in response to a range of qualitative and quantitative student data are central to successful student-centred learning. It is important for the use of data to translate into pedagogy and curriculum with the built-in flexibility to meet the needs of individual learners. This is best achieved through scaffolding.

Teachers scaffold learning programs to enable students to:

- Make individual and collaborative decisions about how they will undertake and develop learning tasks
- Set relevant goals for their learning, to monitor their own progress and to demonstrate evidence of goal attainment. Students are then able to create relevant individual learning plans
- Contribute to the development of clear criteria or rubrics for assessment prior to the learning activity
- Investigate what they already know in relation to the planned learning
- Build on their knowledge in manageable steps
- Build understandings about the process of learning, how, why and what they are learning and use this knowledge to inform improvement
- Select and participate in learning activities that appeal
- Demonstrate and apply learning in a variety of interesting and challenging ways
- Participate in learning experiences that challenge them to apply and improve their ability to work as a team
- Participate in a combination of teacher facilitated experiences and learner directed experiences.



Constructivist learning

Constructivist learning actively engages students in the construction of knowledge rather than passively receiving it. Ahead of the learning relationship teachers have collected data which outlines each student’s knowledge, ideas and understandings. Teachers are then equipped to pose questions and present problems and to facilitate the process of learning by guiding students to help them find their own answers.



Individualised learning

Learning is based on the learning needs of each student. This involves pre-engagement with the student and the curriculum, the establishment of a shared goal, active diagnosis of student needs and understandings, provision of tailored assistance, monitored pursuit of the goal, and the provision of mutual feedback. It is contingent upon the creation of an environment in which the students feel free to take risks.



Strong and practical team work

Teachers work collaboratively to design, develop, deliver and reflect on teaching and learning practice. Shared understanding of goals, priorities and strategies within the team, is reflected in practice. Development of new skills and a collaborative culture are the focus of team work, feedback, coaching and mentoring in teams.

Modelling by teachers of genuine learning partnerships in teams fosters sound team approaches and attitudes and willingness to work collaboratively amongst students.

The learning experience is more a participatory partnership with joint ownership and responsibility that can further be shared with parents.

The educational impact of the design, quality and adequacy of facilities



The research shows that the sustainability of successful student centred learning approaches is affected by the design, quality and adequacy of facilities. Whilst the primary indicator of high quality learning environments is high quality relationships, these relationships can be tested and distracted by inflexible spaces and poor infrastructure. This in turn affects:

- Learning outcomes
- Student and teacher behaviour and attitude
- Access to resources
- Professional learning opportunities for teachers
- Individual needs and interactions
- School climate
- Curriculum, pedagogy and pathways.

Educational design considerations of 21st century learning spaces



It is therefore important for the design of educational spaces to reflect the functions performed by sophisticated 21st century learning environments. Proactive thought and collaborative planning in a design process takes account of the range of activities characterising successful learning programs at each developmental stage. The capacity of learning environments to accommodate groups of varying sizes at any one time, to enable ready access to and use of diverse resources, to blend active and passive learning

opportunities, to stimulate creativity and inquiry, and to provide specialist learning opportunities are all key considerations of functional design. Added to this are the needs of parents and the wider community, plus the aesthetics and design responsibilities to be safe, efficient and welcoming.

Functionality of learning space design considers the interrelationship between a range of complementary spaces that will meet the needs of the diverse range of individuals that will occupy the spaces for significant periods of time.

Pedagogy connected with space



Innovative flexible space and furniture

Within one space students are able to engage in a range of activities at one time.

Ready access to resources is available so that students can demonstrate learning in different ways. The opportunity for working alone, in a small group, or large group exists.



Multipurpose spaces

Spaces can be easily reconfigured to accommodate different size groups from large to small to one-to-one. These spaces can also be used for parent and community interaction at different times of the day.

The capacity to divide up the spaces is enabled through operable walls, mobile trolleys of resources such as laptop computers and mobile furniture.



Specialist focal points

Specialist focal points can be found in both large and small spaces. They are located adjacent to flexible space and are used for activities that can only happen in that space, such as cooking or certain aspects of technology or science.



Home bases, learning communities and neighbourhoods

A group of students occupies its own space, known as the home base, for most of the time. This group of students might co-exist with two or more such groups in a learning community.

If the building accommodates different cohorts of students in separate learning communities then it is known as a learning neighbourhood.



Community orientation

Community orientation relates to spaces in a school that can equally accommodate and cater for different sections of the community. Co-located facilities, such as resource centres, can play an important role in meeting the needs of all developmental stages.

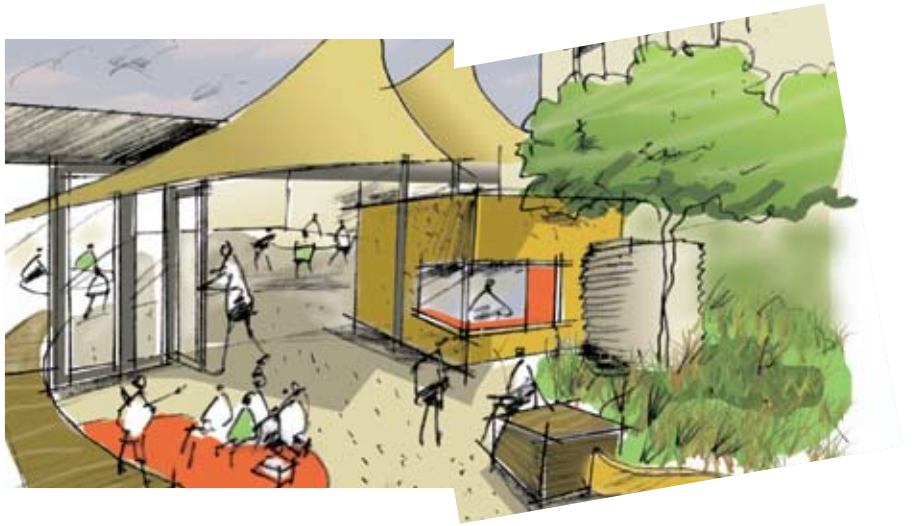


Accessible resources including ICT

A diverse range of resources has been identified to support teachers in meeting the individual learning needs of students in each learning program.

These resources include ICT hardware, software, equipment, books, toys, and games. Resources support assessment for, as and of learning, and demonstration of learning outcomes including presentation.

They also support teachers to plan, scaffold and deliver programs that cater for passive and active learning and enable students to demonstrate progression using a variety of media and tools.



Teachers, students and support personnel have ready access to a variety of resources so that students can demonstrate learning in different ways.

Multimedia and ICT are sophisticated, diverse and readily accessible to multi-age, flexible groupings of students. This includes projection devices, digital cameras, scanners, printers, hand held devices and interactive white boards.

Indoor/Outdoor learning

Access to external spaces and resources expands the range of active learning opportunities available to stimulate imagination and the development of social and motor coordination skills. Therefore, the connectivity between indoor and outdoor learning spaces should be fluid and conducive to exploration and activities in small or large groups.

Complementary indoor and outdoor learning environments diversify in the range of resources that students can use to demonstrate play-based learning, team work, social networking, authentic inquiry and physical fitness.

The design of external facilities can support student learning needs at all developmental stages through the provision of soft, quiet places for reflection, equipment and resources to meet recreational and fitness needs, and seating and shelter to encourage social and recreational pursuits.



Welcoming entry and display

Clear signage denotes the entry to the school for the range of visitors who may be accessing the school for different purposes. The spatial relationships in the administration area can readily accommodate the needs of visitors for meetings, interviews, inquiries, waiting for teachers or students, refreshments and toilets. The entry to the school reflects the character of the school as a learning community and pathways around the school buildings welcome all stakeholders and are safe for staff and students.

A welcoming entry maximises the opportunity to display student work and cultural or community events. The design of the entry to the school minimises the potential for congestion and differentiates between students and members of the community.

The capacity of all learning spaces to easily display a diverse range of student work safely and securely should be maximised.

Social interaction is important in the learning process. Therefore a sense of 'audience' and spaces to display achievements for students, teachers, parents and the community are important considerations.

Brentwood Secondary College

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Watsons Road, Glen Waverley,
VIC 3150

Email: bsc@brentwood.vic.edu.au

Website: <http://www.brentwood.vic.edu.au/>

2007 Enrolment: 1335

Region: Eastern Metropolitan



Brentwood Secondary College operates a VELS based interdisciplinary approach at Year 7 incorporating studies in English, Humanities, and ICT whilst also addressing the development of students' thinking, personal and social skills. The Thinking, Learning and Creativity (TLC) program which operates for 1/3 of the week develops year 7 students' capacity to communicate confidently in a range of mixed media whilst laying down a strong foundation in the skills of the Humanities and English. Students are taught by a core team of teachers with support from specialist staff.

The focus of professional learning undertaken by teachers is to improve ICT and assessment skills, and students' skills in thinking creatively. Teachers work with students to develop thinking routines, have developed team teaching approaches, and are using ICT hardware and software for innovative curriculum

delivery. Stronger bonds with primary feeder schools help promote effective transitions.

The initiative has been extended to students at Year 8, students with learning disabilities and ESL students, and teachers beyond the initial TLC program have taken up the skills.

A new, purpose built, state of the art facility, the Thinking, Learning and Creativity Centre supports the new approaches to teaching and learning adopted by teams of teachers. The bold colours, modern design and light, airy atmosphere make this a very pleasant learning space and is the learning hub for year 7 students. This environment is rich in technology which assists students to become highly skilled in using a broad range of multi media. The flexible learning areas easily cater for different groupings of students working on diverse tasks.



Innovative flexible spaces and furniture enables students to engage in activities individually, or in small or large groups.



Complementary indoor and outdoor learning environments enable students to blend their learning experiences.



Flexible groupings and quality access to ICT supports individual and group student learning.

Shepparton High School

Telephone: (03) 5821 4322

Address: 31 – 71 Hawdon Street,
Shepparton VIC 3632

Email: shepparton.hs@edumail.vic.gov.au

Website: <http://www.shs.vic.edu.au>

2007 Enrolment: 907

Region: Hume



The focus for improvement at Shepparton High School is on literacy, numeracy, engagement, real retention and attendance. Commencing at Year 8 the school is personalising learning through the development of research skills, project based learning and the ability to work in teams. Each term the successful completion of a performance task culminates in a class presentation.

Teachers have changed their approaches to teaching. These changes have been supported by reorganisation of the timetable, curriculum, assessment, staffing and learning spaces. Teachers mentor, model and share practices within the learning environment. In this way they fully utilise their individual and collective expertise. Reflection on the active professional learning occurs in regular team meetings. Teachers build a profile of student learning styles and provide students with the opportunity to choose from a wide range of activities to support their strengths and practice new skills. Students are guided in their

choices regarding learning opportunities and encouraged to develop multiple skills and interdisciplinary insights.

A new learning centre contains a large open space, a multimedia laboratory and a multipurpose classroom, teacher offices and amenities. This facility features networked ICT infrastructure, six ICT workstations, a central pod of computers, printers and an AV studio. All spaces are equipped with data projectors and sound, so can support the delivery of multimedia rich content. The use of interactive whiteboards enhances the potential flexibility and creativity of teaching and learning at all levels and in all learning programs.

Students are provided with the scaffolding and tools to make decisions about their own learning. The program is tailored to meet their individual needs, interests and aptitudes. Students are taking greater ownership of their learning through the selection of a performance task, a range of activities

based on learning styles and literacy aptitudes. They have the opportunity to complete tasks in greater depth undertaking a six period, theme based, interdisciplinary unit each term. They have choice within each theme based framework.

‘Studywiz’ is an online software package which supports mapping of student progress through individual learning plans developed by teachers and made available to parents. Studywiz provides students with their own ‘eLocker’ which enables them to transport work between school and home with ease, communicate directly with their teachers and work in teams using the online environment to share ideas. They have access to their own personal learning space through Studywiz and through the development of a portfolio. Reflection and self assessment tasks are completed as part of learning.



Modern materials and creative use of colour and texture denote a bold and striking entrance to the new facility.



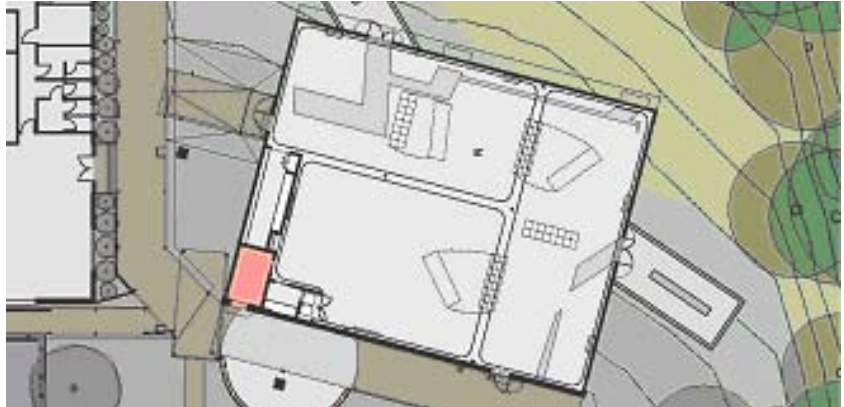
Explicit one-on-one learning addresses the personalised needs of students.



Students can undertake learning through research, design, production and presentation of projects.

Timboon P – 12 College

Telephone: (03) 5598 3381
Address: Bailey Street,
Timboon VIC 3268
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gov.au
Website: [http://www.
timboonp12.vic.edu.au](http://www.timboonp12.vic.edu.au)
2007 Enrolment: 621
Region: Barwon South Western



Timboon P-12 College has organised students into a sub school structure based on the developmental stages of P - 4, 5 - 8, and 9 – 12. In order to identify and address the educational needs of the students, teachers work in sub schools teams to plan curriculum, share pedagogy and develop learning programs.

Whilst curriculum development is occurring across the school, experimentation with different types of student grouping is specific to the 5-8 sub-school. Staff routinely plan for proximal, friendship home groups, together with random and gender groupings to foster cooperative learning. The flexibility of the facility enables teachers to provide students with a range of personal learning experiences. Students can work independently, in cooperative small groups, in larger teams and as whole or mixed classes depending on the activities involved. These groupings promote an innovative culture and a positive perception of working in the facility.

The greatest achievement of the project to this point has been the development of team teaching within the facility. Staff operate largely as a team, sharing their time, strategies and experiences and exposing students to multiple teaching styles and perspectives. Teachers monitor the progress of large numbers of students in various learning spaces, and can lead large-group activities at the same time as individual tuition and small groups are operating. Teachers have reflected that team teaching reduces the professional isolation experienced in traditional classroom practice and allows sharing of different planning, questioning, resources and assessment styles. Teams now display a strong identity and ownership of teaching and learning, and are positive and motivated about their work.

The teaching and learning ethos that has developed in the 5-8 facility is particularly conducive to restorative student welfare and discipline practices. The building is calm, warm and open,

and is staffed by teachers who are working cooperatively with each other and a wide variety of students. Individual and group behavioural conferencing, and the principles of Covey's Habits, are explicitly and implicitly used by all staff.

Ready access to ICT, including desktop and laptop computers, gives students use of a range of applications including PowerPoint, Word, Access, Excel, digital portfolio and digital whiteboard software which support students with individual and group research.



The Years 5 – 8 sub school has been designed to reflect the natural environment.



The open plan design of the Years 5 – 8 sub school maximises options for flexible delivery and student groupings.



The new learning space supports both team and individual learning in an ICT rich environment.

Ballarat High School

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 Website: <http://www.ballaraths.vic.edu.au>
 2007 Enrolment: 1427
 Region: Grampians



Ballarat High School has a whole school focus on leadership. Teaching teams specifically focus on improving student outcomes by developing leadership attributes in both staff and students. The learner has been put at the centre of the teaching and learning relationship and pedagogical practices that encourage deep learning have led to a shared commitment and dialogue about learning. A Learning Framework emphasises the following principles: *Know how and why they learn; Believe all students can learn; Use higher order thinking tools to solve problems; Seek feedback and reflect on learning; Learn in a range of contexts; Develop positive relationships.*

The staff and students are a learning community working in a collaborative environment. All professional learning teams are interdisciplinary and are developing learning programs based on shared understandings of effective learning and which are reflective of the six learning components.

Learning teams in Year 7 and 8 are run by five team leaders who are directly responsible for 100 students in their team. Two main teachers are engaged with the learning team for over half the week and work with the same group of learners for two years. In year 9 the students work with two teachers for more than 2/3 of their time. Learning programs reflect learning preferences, learning needs and positive relationships. The ARCH program at year 9 is focused on building active, resilient, connected and happy students and provides opportunities for students to actively display leadership.

Teachers are engaged in a dialogue which emphasises what good teaching looks like and what makes good learning for students. Teachers are now moving around the classrooms, students are working collaboratively and up to 12 students can be using ICT at any one time.

The new learning environment contains flexible home bases which accommodate fifty students and two teachers at all times. Teachers from different learning areas are working together. The space is also used for 250 students to undertake immersion activities in three thematic areas- Number and Science, Communications and Culture, and Thinking, Learning and Communicating (TLC). The facility redevelopment enabled teachers to change practice and to challenge traditional pedagogy.



Planning in teams aims to ensure consistency of curriculum development to meet the needs of all students.



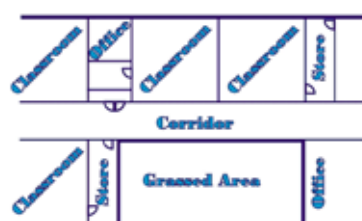
Students and teachers work in collaborative teams.



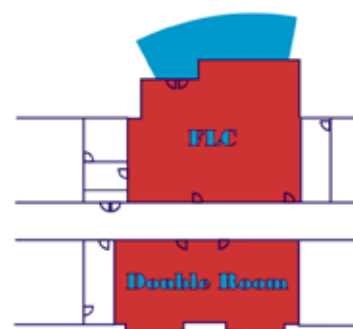
Large sliding doors enable the flexibility of multipurpose learning spaces. Visibility and effective lighting are features of the learning centre.

Korumburra Secondary College

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 2007 Enrolment: 503
 Region: Gippsland



Before



After

Korumburra Secondary College has implemented a coaching professional development program and built a flexible learning centre to encourage new pedagogical approaches and in particular, team teaching. The focus of professional learning is on literacy, numeracy, student engagement and teacher effectiveness.

The flexible learning centre is a two-classroom space designed for flexible groupings and activities. It houses staff offices, an SSO work space, a number of small group work spaces with computer access, and space for larger group activities including video conferencing.

The furnishing of the centre consists of lecture theatre style seating for up to fifty students which can be rearranged to accommodate a variety of student groupings when working cooperatively. ICT access and functionality are enhanced by an electronic white board, data projector and two sets of fifteen wireless laptops, plus additional ICT

equipment which students can borrow. Teachers book the space in pairs to work in teams with access to all resources. Digital portfolios have been created for students in Years 6, 7 and 8.

Transformation of teacher practice is evident through team teaching, interdisciplinary sharing and very effective professional development programs within and across neighbouring schools. Ongoing professional relationships have been established based on reflection of performance, professional dialogue and substantive data. Teachers have implemented collaborative and co-operative learning strategies, new teaching models and differentiated curriculum to include learning styles and thinking curriculum.



The capacity to readily rearrange furniture supports a variety of individual, small group and large group activities.



Flexible groupings and wireless access to ICT supports the diverse learning needs of students.



Active project based learning supports higher order thinking and social networking.

Brimbank College

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 2007 Enrolment: 716
 Region: Western Metropolitan



Brimbank College is using '9 Gateways to Personalising Learning' developed by David Hargreaves' as a framework for improving teacher and school effectiveness. The school initially focused on four of the gateways - Learning to Learn, Assessment for Learning, Technology and Student Voice. Students operate in a project based learning program, comprising units of work integrating Learning to Learn and Assessment for Learning. These units are designed to bring authentic issues into the classroom.

Students in Year 8 spend significant time in the program which integrates Humanities and English with the Personal Learning, ICT and Thinking dimensions. Approximately one hundred students work with a team of six teachers. Information regarding student learning styles supports teachers to personalise learning programs and to build upon their skills. Students engage in diverse learning activities and work in groups of varying sizes and

arrangements. They can exercise greater choice in the content of their learning and have ready access to a wide range of ICT tools and resources.

Teachers in the Year 8 team share and plan together. Coaches provide support and guidance to the team and assess resources to help the staff up-skill. They are particularly focused on one-to-one professional development for staff in student centred approaches, assessment for learning and integrated use of ICT.

The new learning space consists of open plan and flexible spaces which support active learning. It is ICT rich with access to notebook computers, interactive whiteboards and data projection equipment.



Presentation of students work and the opportunity for students to work in flexible groupings is supported by the spaces.



Students have ready access to a variety of resources to address learning needs.



Flexible and comfortable furniture arrangements complement group table arrangements for more passive, quiet learning opportunities.

Taylors Lakes Secondary College

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2007 Enrolment: 1052
Region: Western Metropolitan



Taylors Lakes Secondary College has established a team approach to program development which incorporates ICT and inquiry learning. A coaching model is focused on developing new teacher skills to improve literacy and numeracy, learning behaviours and social competencies informed by ‘Habits of Mind’ approaches. Curriculum development is based on VELS and integrates English, Maths, Humanities and LOTE learning materials.

Teaching in teams enables staff to provide each other with feedback to enhance skills and practice. Multiple sources of feedback include student views from PoLT surveys, team analysis of the Transformation and Development Matrix and explicit feedback from coaches to improve teaching practice. Teachers have incorporated ICT and inquiry based learning into literacy and numeracy curriculum materials and teacher practice.

Students work individually and in groups to plan, research, and communicate in a variety of settings which range from small spaces to a larger presentation space. The program is designed to extend students’ higher order thinking skills.

The learning space consists of flexible indoor and outdoor areas which support individual and group work, and student presentation. It is an ICT rich environment with a mix of desktop computing and flexible notebook use enabled by wireless connectivity and fast broadband internet access.

It is a centre for professional learning that enhances and adds value to the development of the thinking curriculum being implemented across the middle years and beyond. Its multifunctional design supports multiplicity of uses.



The open learning environment enables teams of teachers and students to engage in a range of diverse activities.



Active inquiry based learning enable students to explore and think in teams.



Students can work in groups to research, construct and demonstrate learning.

Lowanna College

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2007 Enrolment: 1100
Region: Gippsland



Lowanna College has implemented a program to improve student literacy, numeracy and retention by personalising learning through an inquiry based learning model trialled and applied in an ICT-rich learning environment.

A new learning centre provides a flexible environment for Year 7 and 8 students facilitated by a team of teachers who have developed an integrated inquiry based learning program. Mobile ICT resources are distributed throughout the school with the provision of laptop computers and trolleys.

The focus for the Year 7 and 8 teams is on embedding learning to learn skills, personalising learning for each student, and building relationships.

The school has a clear focus on teacher effectiveness underpinning the professional learning processes and has introduced new strategies to align professional learning to new pedagogical approaches, including having teachers experience or observe team teaching in the centre. The focus for the dynamic and connected teaching team with common goals is the use of interdisciplinary, inquiry learning using thinking skills and student voice.



The building design has enabled natural lighting to be featured throughout the main entry and within learning spaces.



Students are immersed in interrelated learning activities at different locations in the learning space.



Specialist focal points are located adjacent to the flexible space to diversify the learning experience of students.

