

Manly Daily

‘Google-like’ classroom inspires children to think differently

Julie Cross, Manly Daily - August 22, 2016 12:39pm



Killarney Heights High has built a classroom of the future.

IS THIS the classroom of the future? It's big enough to fit 90 children, there are no desks for teachers and there are laptop desk chairs on wheels. At one end there is a lounge space for pupils to read or discuss ideas in a comfy environment, and at the other there are a number of desks with one computer, to encourage group work. Parents at Killarney Heights High School were so excited by the idea when it was suggested they funded the \$50,000 refit and the kids love it so much they've nicknamed it The Future Room.

“If you look at the Google working environment there are different spaces to encourage ideas and team work,” said Dennielle Woskanian, deputy principal. “We find when we put students in a different environment they think differently.” This flexible area is an additional room, alongside traditional classrooms and one or more teachers can book the space.



Killarney Heights High student Jack Relph 15, at work with classmates in their 'classroom of the future'.



The new flexible workspace allows students to work in groups around a computer.

“It can fit three classes, so you can have two English classes in there at once and harness the power of two teachers,” said Ms Woskanian. Other schools looking at new ways to teach include Manly Village Public. Principal Philipa Becker said they had been trialling stand-up desks in Year 6. “I know from our staff meetings there are some teachers who prefer to stand, that little bit of movement helps them recalibrate their concentration,” she said.



Katherine Ashley, 12, studying on the comfy sofas, at classmates behind are involved in discussion work.

“Particularly in schools like ours where we have small classrooms it can help some students who want to stretch their legs. “We don’t make everyone use them, students can request to do so and some are not interested in trying them at all. “Others find them really useful.”



Inside a Google office, which was the inspiration behind the new Killarney Heights classroom.