

the educator

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THE BIG INTERVIEW

Graham Eather,
Callaghan College

LEGAL INSIGHT

Your 'duty of care'
obligations explained

BRINGING SCHOOL BRANDS ALIVE

How to engage staff,
students and the
community

INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS

The change merchants shaping tomorrow's leaders

Special Report: Master of Education Guide 2016



THE CHANGE MERCHANTS

In our second annual Innovative Schools list, *The Educator* once again profiles the schools leading the charge in transforming Australia's educational framework

WELCOME TO *The Educator's* second annual Innovative Schools list.

Following the exceptional response we received to our request for submissions for our inaugural list, we were overwhelmed again this year by the number of entries from schools right across the country, telling us about the impressive initiatives they've employed to optimise their students' educational experiences.

Given the volume and quality of entries, it was a challenging task to compile a

shortlist, but we're now proud to be able to highlight the work of 40 schools whose endeavours deserve special recognition. Over the following pages, we recognise these exceptional schools, with 12 of them being spotlighted in greater detail.

Read on to discover how these schools have introduced an innovative edge in everything they do, from pedagogy to technology and all aspects of K-12 education.

MESSAGE FROM OUR SPONSORS

Schoolbox and Digistorm are proud to support the Innovative Schools report for 2016. This is a fantastic opportunity to recognise innovative educators who use technology to improve teaching and learning outcomes.

Technology continues to prove its ability to drive improvements in student outcomes, whilst supporting schools to move away from traditional methods. Schools are being challenged to review the impact and use of new technologies, whilst improving how parents are engaged throughout their child's learning journey.

Technology presents real challenges for educators and only those prepared to embrace change and embody innovation in a variety of forms and try new approaches to teaching and learning will shape the educational landscape of the future.

It is great to see that again this year many of the schools showcased are both Schoolbox and Digistorm clients who are at the cutting edge of applying creative and innovative practices. We extend our congratulations to these clients and all the entrants that made this year's Innovative Schools list – well done!

We encourage all schools to draw upon this year's examples, share initiatives, and reflect on the stories about educators on the edge and their big ideas for change and innovation through technology.

A big thank you to *The Educator* for pushing the education industry forward and for the opportunity for Schoolbox and Digistorm to be a major contributor to this initiative.

Sean Richards, Co-founder, Schoolbox

Tim Oswald, Managing director, Digistorm Education

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INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS 2016



AITKENVALE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Aitkenvale, Qld

Programs have been implemented targeting behavioural issues in the culturally diverse school population. The programs have helped the school make significant gains. Notably, over two terms a drop of 60–70% has been observed in the number of student suspensions.

ASPECT HUNTER SCHOOL

Thornton, NSW

Aspect Hunter School for Children with Autism has received international recognition for developing a new learning resource, 'Explore Everything with Pokemon Go', the first learning program in the world to utilise the enormously popular app for the social, health and academic benefits of its students.

HUMPYBONG STATE SCHOOL

Margate, Qld

Humpybong's Step-Up (Schools Transition Experience into Prep) program focuses on properly preparing children for school life during the six months before they commence prep. Both parents and children gain valuable readiness skills through teaching and support.

BENDIGO SOUTH EAST COLLEGE

Bendigo, Vic

This college of over 1,450 Year 7–10 students is located in regional Victoria and works hard to offer its students opportunities and experiences to match or exceed its non-government, metropolitan and global counterparts. It has launched programs to offer eager artists and athletes avenues to grow expertise in their chosen field while also maintaining a high level of academic excellence.

The school's Athlete Development Program represents a significant investment in building an athlete-friendly elite training facility, creating a new level of opportunity for young athletes in country Victoria.

The Academy of Creative Arts provides specialist learning facilities, high-performance workshops and production studio environments that enable participating students to have contact with elite professionals as role models and mentors, and to have the opportunity to perform at competitions and other performance events, as well as to attend camps and partake in other practical experiences.

And then there's The Inn, Bendigo South East's refurbished library space, which has been designed to foster innovative learning contexts (collaborative workspaces with digital displays, independent workspace settings and reading places). It hosts the school's Professional Discussion and Engagement Program, the goal of which is to focus staff attention on discovering and discussing contemporary strategies for improving learning and the level of curriculum delivery.



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EAST HILLS GIRLS TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL

Panania, NSW

East Hills provides students with rigorous teaching programs online. Year 7 students access their learning on the iTunes U platform. Digital feedback, assessment and communication between student and teacher are delivered via the Showbie app, and assessments allow students to address learning criteria by using iMovie, iBooks Author and App Smashing.



CATHOLIC REGIONAL COLLEGE, SYDENHAM

Sydenham, Vic

A highly varied VET curriculum is delivered in an environment where no one academic, vocational or technical stream dominates. Instead, a mix is offered to provide better engagement and pathway outcomes. There are 930 students in Years 11 and 12, plus another 700 students a week coming across from up to 19 other schools in the region to access the college's programs.

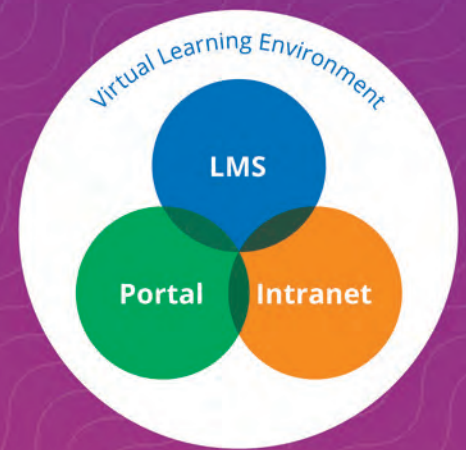
SCOTCH OAKBURN COLLEGE

Newstead, Tas

The college continues to strengthen its links with Asia and Asian education on the basis that its students live in a country where relationships with Asia are increasingly important. Currently, it's developing a virtual collaboration between classes at the school and a school in Beijing, which will involve students Skyping and emailing in order to work on projects together, while in their respective classrooms, with the intention of fostering cultural understanding and real-life learning opportunities for everyone.



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INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS 2016



KNOX GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Wahroonga, NSW

Knox Grammar's efforts to innovate are focused on enabling students to develop their creativity, critical problem-solving skills and the ability to work collaboratively, to prepare them to face the challenges of the

future with confidence and a growth mindset.

Knox has implemented programs attracting both national and international recognition. Its Total Fitness model holistically connects students' physical, spiritual, social and academic fitness. The model is grounded in positive psychology and was this year presented in France. Knox is a founding member of the Positive Education Schools Association, working with schools across Australia, New Zealand and Asia that are considered key pioneers in implementing positive psychology.

Knox's Years 7–10 Da Vinci program challenges students in all subjects and includes mastery programs promoting creative thinking. The school's Da Vinci Decathlon is a regional, state, national and international academic event that involves students competing in 10 disciplines, including ideation, cartography, engineering and science. Over 10,000 Australian students and 1,500 students in the US, UK and India today participate.

Knox students also undertake innovative cross-disciplinary tasks, challenging them to use design thinking and prototyping to solve problems and develop original solutions. Its Year 9 students have recently worked on a STEM biomechanics project with the University of Sydney.

MALLACOOTA P-12 COLLEGE

Mallacoota, Vic

The 16 teachers at this small school are driving improvements in teaching quality by collecting and analysing data on their effectiveness in their classrooms by adopting Pivot Professional Learning's student survey approach. This then allows school leaders to allocate learning resources where they're most needed.

INABURRA SCHOOL

Bangor, NSW

Innovations at Inaburra have impacted on its pedagogy, built environment, the curriculum, and use of ICT for learning. With respect to its pedagogy, the school has developed and is now implementing a school-wide design approach to teaching and learning. That shared framework was created through an iterative design process.



BETHANIA LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Bethania, Qld

The school has eschewed the concept of static classroom desks as outdated, instead opting to create completely agile learning spaces. In order to promote the needs of individual learners, each learning space features standing desks, movable soft furnishings, stable tables for floor work, adjustable tables, fit balls and stools, as well as a range of writeable surfaces and digital technologies.

Children have been given a voice in how the furniture in their rooms is used, and where it is positioned, in order to assist them in maximising their learning experience.

These learning environments include purpose-built outdoor spaces where students enjoy fresh air and natural light, and Wi-Fi facilitates seamless learning between indoor and outdoor areas.

All of Bethania Lutheran's teachers have been professionally educated on contemporary agile learning spaces and the pedagogy necessary to successfully teach in these environments.

Additionally, the school's kindergarten and Year 1 students engage in phenomenon-based learning, with the 'phenomenon' being a real-life experience that occurs within the student's learning space. Makerspaces have also been developed in each learning space, allowing students to engage with learning experiences that require them to design, reflect and refine solutions in a relevant and meaningful way.





LOMANDRA SCHOOL

Campbelltown, NSW

Lomandra is a Year 5–12 school for students exhibiting severe and challenging behaviours and/or suffering from serious mental health conditions.

The school's 'Outside Classroom' approach involves every student

engaging in learning activities off-site each week. These include travel training, surf and water safety programs, visits to worksites, work experience, participation in TAFE courses, excursions to city museums and art galleries, and volunteering at aged care facilities.

Students are taken outside school grounds not necessarily because they're ready to go but because their behaviour demonstrates their need to go, and to develop their social emotional capabilities so that when they leave school they're better placed to be confident and successful members of the community.

Lomandra is the first behaviour school in NSW to have taken students overseas. In 2013, it took five students to walk the Kokoda Track. The trip was repeated in 2015 and plans are now underway for a 2017 trek.

Last year, the school commissioned Western Sydney University to research the effectiveness of its Outside Classroom approach. The findings reflected the outcomes Lomandra seeks for its students – a greater sense of belonging, higher levels of resilience, and an increased sense of achievement and success.

GIANT STEPS

Gladesville, NSW, and Kew, Vic

Giant Steps educates children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Therapists work alongside teaching staff in classrooms across the full school day, and together those professionals combine their expertise to enhance the support offered to young people dealing with complex issues that include not only ASD but also intellectual delay and mental health issues.

IMMANUEL COLLEGE

Novar Gardens, SA

The college has opened a new senior school building, but it's more than just bricks and mortar. The new facility includes studio spaces, an open plan learning hub, a conference facility and a 200-seat lecture theatre, and aims to prepare students for life and learning beyond Immanuel. Its design endeavours to allow students to make responsible decisions as to how they study, and to assist in preparing them for the less structured world of tertiary study as well as the workplace.



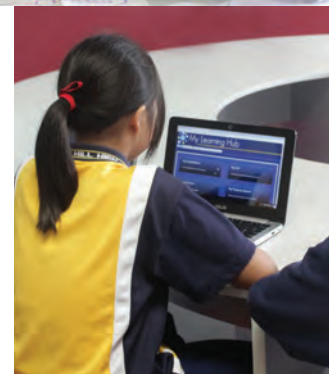
ROOTY HILL HIGH SCHOOL

Rooty Hill, NSW

Rooty Hill High School continually works to ensure every student achieves their best. The school is one of eight across NSW and Victoria identified as 'Powerhouse Schools' by Social Ventures Australia, recognising their commitment to innovation. In 2014 and 2015, the school hosted visits from school leaders from all sectors across NSW wanting to adopt or adapt one or more of the approaches currently used at Rooty Hill.

This year, the school was featured in the AEU report, *Getting Results: Gonski Funding in Australian Schools*, for its efforts to ensure students have the literacy skills and support needed to achieve academically. When the current Year 10 group (approximately 220 students) started high school, only 10% of those students were at or above grade level. That year group was the focus of a program and, thanks to new programming and pedagogical approaches, at the end of last semester 70% of those students were at or above grade level and only 9% still require intensive intervention.

Rooty Hill High School is the lead school in a partnership with 11 other schools, the Mitchell Institute and Professor Yong Zhao from Harvard University, which was formed to develop 21st century skills in entrepreneurship and collaboration.



INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS 2016



PULTENEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Adelaide, SA

Pulteney's new senior learning centre is an 'adult space' characterised by flexible furniture options, shared breakout spaces, ubiquitous technology, and small pods for reflective work. Its aim is to promote multimodal learning and to 'de-privatise' the classroom, so that learning becomes more transparent and dynamic. As part of the design, a conscious decision was made to remove traditional hierarchies associated with teacher desks and private offices. Staff have thus been co-located into a communal space.



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

Preston, Vic

St John's has worked hard to improve learning outcomes for its senior students. In 2013, it introduced its three-year Strategic Directions program designed to improve VCE results. It has seen the median study score increase by eight points over three years, and the school has improved its overall ranking from 424 (in 2011) to 66 out of 528 schools (in 2015).

MABEL PARK STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Slacks Creek, Qld

Mabel Park State High School is situated in an area confronted with a high youth unemployment rate (15.2%). Its leaders were determined to provide students with viable pathways into the workforce or into further study upon leaving school, and were cognisant of the fact that the health industry will suffer critical workforce shortages over the next two decades as a result of the growing, ageing population. Additionally, the area is said to have a shortage of Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) providing health qualifications.

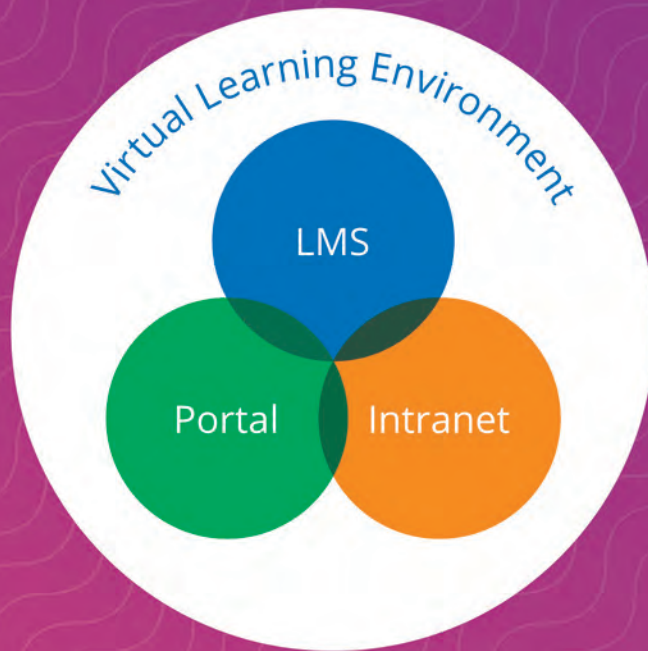
As a result, the school has collaborated with local industry to establish a health training facility, the Health Hub – the first of its kind to be founded on school grounds in Southeast Queensland. Careers Australia is the RTO and delivers a Certificate II in Health Support Services, providing students from all schools in the area with an opportunity to pursue a pathway to the health sector. At present, 65 students from nine schools are enrolled in the course, and a number of other schools have shown interest in duplicating Mabel Park's Health Hub concept.





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HALE SCHOOL

Wembley Downs, WA

Hale School has implemented a range of initiatives, both technological and social.

The teaching approach and curriculum design for maths for Years 7 and 8 have been completely transformed by using Microsoft OneNote and Office 365 to support a problem-based blended learning paradigm. Students access problem sets designed by teachers and are required to find solutions to those problems without any teacher input in the first instance. Students must be able to justify their answers to each problem. Subsequently, the teacher formalises the learning through sharing of student responses and direct teaching, and students then make effective entries in their learning journals. This develops each student's ability to summarise learnings in their own words, and provides great references that students can use for their revision.

'Service learning' is integrated into Hale's curriculum from Years 1 to 9 (becoming voluntary in Year 10). The school has partnered with the Path of Hope Foundation, which provides mentoring programs for women and children who've been victims of domestic violence. That partnership involves Hale boys visiting the women's refuge and mentoring, playing with and assisting children with homework. For many of the children it will be their first experience of a positive male role model. Over half of Hale's students continue volunteering in their senior school years, and the culture of 'giving back' has meant many ex-students have even formed their own alumni to continue giving back to the community.



NOSSAL HIGH SCHOOL

Berwick, Vic

The school has worked to heighten emphasis on learning growth and productive collaboration by implementing a range of assessment and reporting practices, including descriptive assessment and group feedback (where students receive written feedback on work but no marks, and work in groups with other students to identify how to improve their understanding of particular aspects of the assessment). Nossal has also implemented peer and self-assessment, aiming to improve critical thinking and metacognitive capacity.



MENTONE GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Mentone, Vic

Enterprise is an intrinsic part of the school's curriculum and is fostered from a young age. In July 2016, Mentone Girls' Grammar officially opened its Enterprise Academy to harness enterprising culture and facilitate collaborative, hands-on, experiential teaching and learning.

ORMISTON COLLEGE

Ormiston, Qld

Ormiston College is recognised as a leader in its transdisciplinary approach to implementing STEM in the mainstream classroom. In 2016, the college has continued building on its STEM initiatives via project-based learning. It has also received global recognition, this year becoming one of only nine fully fledged Microsoft Worldwide Showcase Schools in Australia.

Ormiston students were invited to present projects and deliver workshops for delegates attending Griffith University's Digital Technology Summit, the Australian Council for Educational Research STEM Conference, and Microsoft Australia's Redefining Learning Conference. At these events, students demonstrated how they built and coded their own 3D robotic hand, created and coded short stories, and how they designed their own hydraulic system.

Today, one third of Ormiston College's teaching staff are members of its Learning Innovations Leadership Committee (LILC), which meets regularly (both face-to-face and online) to examine new and emerging technologies, share classroom best practice, and collaborate on how to effectively lead improvement, innovation and change in 21st century schools. LILC members also engage in action research, with a view to obtaining insights into innovative approaches in teaching and learning, and developing reflective practice.



MOUNT SINAI COLLEGE

Sydney, NSW

Based on Dr Reuven Feuerstein's theory on the malleability of intelligence, the college has implemented a cognitive learning program that aims to help students process information more effectively. It focuses on how children learn, rather than just what they learn.



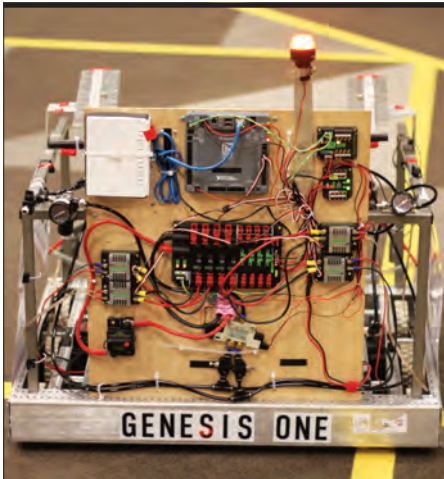
PENOLA CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Broadmeadows, Vic

The Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programs provide students studying foreign languages with additional exposure to skills needed to learn, decipher, read and write in another language. At Year 9 level, the school integrates history, geography and religious education with Italian. The content for each of these subjects for CLIL students is the same as that taught to mainstream students, except that it's delivered and assessed in Italian.



INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS 2016



GRACE LUTHERAN COLLEGE

Rothwell, Qld

Grace College has rolled out STEM initiatives that often focus on robotics, with a view to heightening student engagement in science, technology, engineering and mathematics on various levels, complete with an appropriate set of values and ethics. Students learn to program LEGO® NXT robots and more-advanced EV3 robots. They have also competed in the Asia Pacific FIRST® Robotics Competition – the only team from Southeast Queensland at the event, which features teams from over 12 countries.

WELLERS HILL STATE SCHOOL

Tarragindi, Qld

In 2014, a Japanese Bilingual Program was launched with the goal of enhancing students' learning ability through neurological brain development. From Year 1, students spend 50% of their school week studying the Australian curriculum in English, and the remaining 50% is spent studying the same curriculum in Japanese. It's expected that students will be conversationally fluent in Japanese by the end of Year 3, and technically fluent by the end of Year 6 in both spoken and written Japanese.

OAKLEIGH STATE SCHOOL

Ashgrove, Qld

Last year, the school embarked on a community consultation process that led to design and implementation of the Young Innovator Program. The program caters for around 100 students in an after-school capacity, utilising the skills and expertise of teachers, parents, industry experts, a 'Code the Future' volunteer, university students, the area's local library, and commercial organisations. It assists students in finding their own learning niche. Workshops have included Digital Game Design, Arduino Coding, Media Production, Young Engineers, Junior Coders, Junior Entrepreneurs, Kerbal Space Program, Girls Tech and Electronics Project Design.

Coming up, the program will provide the opportunity for parents to partake in workshops so that their own learning and outlook supports that of their children. Additionally, the program is playing a role in ongoing development of the curriculum, with teachers considering students' skills when they design the curriculum as a means of ensuring accommodation of their developing skills and mindsets.



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SAINT STEPHEN'S COLLEGE

Coomera, Qld

The college has implemented an organisation-wide change to technology-enhanced learning for over eight years. Last year it hosted the inaugural FlipCon Conference, focused on flip learning and associated teaching and learning paradigm changes, and will again host the event this year, with 14 members of its own faculty presenting.



ALL HALLOWS SCHOOL

Brisbane, Qld

All Hallows utilises cloud-based technologies and stylus devices to deliver more meaningful feedback. Typed, drawn, audio and video-recorded feedback is provided to students, who can asynchronously access, review and respond to that feedback, helping them to more easily recognise mistakes and devise strategies to address the issues.

PARKMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Forest Hill, Vic

The school's social and emotional learning program, 'Positive Education', is integrated into student learning. Students engage in social and emotional learning at the point of need (for example, mindfulness prior to NAPLAN assessments or exploring character strengths, such as perseverance, during challenging tasks) on the basis of research demonstrating that this has the greatest effect on building competencies for learning and emotional regulation.



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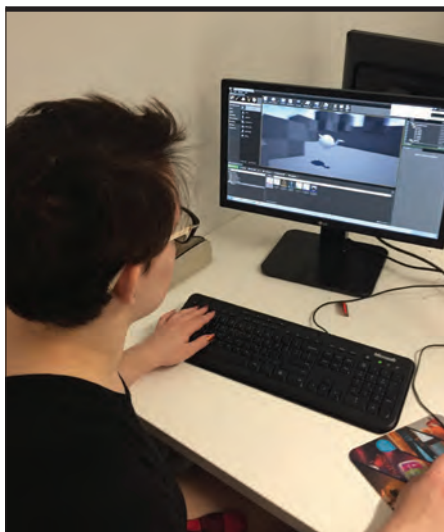




MURRINGO PUBLIC SCHOOL

Murringo, NSW

A small rural school of only 26 students, Murringo Public has led a STEM initiative in the Southern Tablelands for small schools over the past two years. It has created online courses for gifted and talented students across 18 schools and led integrated STEM unit training for teachers from 10 schools. The school teaches integrated units of work, incorporating all key learning areas and involving higher-level thinking skills and a problem-solving approach.



YARRAM SECONDARY COLLEGE

Yarram, Vic

Yarram is a remote, rural community with no public transport to or from the town. This challenge meant that exposing students to new technologies and their associated career paths was near impossible. To bridge that gap, the school now offers VET Game Design and Year 10 Multimedia, and for the first time Yarram students are considering courses in software engineering and digital design.



WONIORA ROAD SCHOOL

Hurstville, NSW

Woniora Road caters specifically for secondary students with internalising emotional disorders and other mental health issues. It offers a mainstream curriculum, as well as several engagement programs, adapted to meet student interests and incorporate the latest in mental health research. The programs aim to increase mental health literacy and directly teach cognitive behaviour therapy principles to enhance students' sense of self-worth, belonging and purpose.

CALLAGHAN COLLEGE

Newcastle, NSW

In 2016, Callaghan College continues to embrace the innovation we spotlighted in our inaugural Innovative Schools list. It's establishing the first course in Certificate III Aviation (Remote Pilot – Visual Line Sight) in schools in Australia.

Currently delivered to Year 11 students at one of Callaghan's three campuses, the course represents the culmination of two years of collaboration between the college, UAVair, BASAIR, the Regional Development Australia Hunter office and its ME Program, the NSW Department of Education, and the NSW Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards.

Students undertake assessments conducted by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority and, on completing the course, receive their commercial radio licence, in addition to their Certificate III. There are already plans to double the number of students engaged in the course in 2017.

On top of innovations on the drone front, Callaghan College has entered into a research and development partnership with the University of Newcastle to explore the use of virtual reality and augmented reality technologies in education – another Australian first.

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INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS 2016



TRANGIE CENTRAL SCHOOL

Trangie, NSW

Nine years ago, Trangie Central School was in a vastly different position to the one it's in today. There were 45 secondary and 60 primary school students, its student body lacked motivation, no Year 12 students were enrolled, and no high-level senior courses were offered.

It was decided to utilise the power of the creative and performing arts to develop student self-esteem and enhance learning outcomes. The thinking was that if a student could find success in one endeavour they would have the confidence required to succeed elsewhere.

Since then, a school improvement program has been implemented – a program of change that is ongoing. Actions taken include extensive professional development for staff, employment of teachers to provide music lessons and dance opportunities, and the establishment of interest groups allowing students from different years to work together on self-defence, Aboriginal art, cooking, LEGO robotics and community mural projects.

Today, enrolments have grown to 110 secondary and 105 primary students, all science and extension subjects are available, the majority of students are engaged in one or more extra-curricular activities, student/teacher relationships are strong, and students are taking leadership roles in the school and community.



TENISON WOODS COLLEGE

Mount Gambier, SA

In recent times, Tenison Woods has gone above and beyond on the sustainability front. Not only has a sustainability coordinator position been created on staff, but the college has created Indigenous garden spaces, improved paper and container recycling by 200%, designed solutions to green waste and food waste issues, created a formal Sustainable Futures Policy, and imbedded sustainability in the curriculum.



QUAKERS HILL PUBLIC SCHOOL

Quakers Hill, NSW

The school has developed an innovative speech and language program to address difficulties faced by some students entering kindergarten and the impact of those issues on their learning. It has also rolled out the Warami Community Engagement Program, specially designed to engage and enhance student outcomes for its members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

SNOWY MOUNTAINS GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Jindabyne, NSW

SMGS is facilitating a range of opportunities for students to engage in the areas in which they love to learn.

The recently introduced Academies of Excellence program for all students in Years 7 to 12 sees the traditional timetable suspended one day each week, when students attend their 'academy' of choice, learning with students across all year levels. The 18 academies include drama and theatre studies, engineering, innovation and design, equestrian and early childhood education.

Students apply their skills and knowledge to solve real-life challenges. In the School of Invention, students are designing and building a fully automated and wirelessly controlled remotely operated vehicle capable of airborne and underwater exploration via manual control, pre-programmed instructions or basic artificial intelligence.

"Some of the best ideas and designs have come from Year 7 students challenging the Year 12 students who bring experience to the challenge," says Craig Moore, head of the School of Invention.

The school's #GlobalU program invites Year 9 and 10 students to enrol in any massive open online course (MOOC). Students study courses such as forensic science, psychology of criminal justice, bioethics and palaeoanthropology with universities such as Princeton, Harvard and London, as well as local universities including Macquarie and Sydney.



HASTINGS SECONDARY COLLEGE

Port Macquarie, NSW

In 2015, Hastings Secondary College contemplated how to better tailor its educational offerings to its diverse community, investigating innovative approaches adopted both locally and abroad, and developing a range of flexible learning opportunities.

For Year 7 and 8 students, it has developed sports, STEM and creative industries academies for students. It also offers Personal Interest Project classes for students across a range of interest areas, linking learning to real-world experience.

There's also the LEAP Academy for Year 8 to 10 students who benefit from more individualised learning in a smaller group setting, and then there's the Zenith program for high-achieving and gifted and talented students in Year 7, in which staff and students work together on authentic, real-world projects.



BRIGHTON SECONDARY SCHOOL

North Brighton, SA

Brighton Secondary has a strong, challenge-based STEM program based around participation in the F1 in Schools Competition. Three years ago it won the world championship and, on top of that, has had three other teams representing Australia. Right now it has a team preparing for the upcoming world event in Austin, Texas. 🏁