

## Child Side School:

### 2017 report for the 2016 school year:

The Australian Government requires the school to report on the following items as part of our accountability to them and to the Child Side School Community.

#### **Contextual Information about Child Side School:**

Child Side School is an independent, co-education school covering K-6 year levels in 2016. Child Side is an intentionally multi-aged setting based upon research about the developing brain and quality learning environments for living and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Our school is 'small by design' and approaches learning 'one child at a time' within a personalised learning community. We are a member of Big Picture Education Australia (BPEA). We are also a member of AISWA (Association of Independent Schools in Western Australia). Our focus is on developing responsible, engaged life-long learners and we utilise Dr. Louise Porter's 'Guiding Children's Behaviour' approach, Maggie Dent's emotional resiliency approach and restorative justice approaches to develop social competence/responsibility, work place skills, life skills and emotional intelligence. We view literacy and numeracy as sets of essential, useful and exciting tools to utilise to interact and thrive in our current world. Children are offered a quality, personalised approach to learning literacy and numeracy in real life contexts. Our Vision is congruent with REIEA's (Reggio Emilia Information Exchange Australia) vision.

*"REIEA (and Child Side School) has a vision for a just and civil society that values our shared humanity, fosters strong democratic communities, recognises the uniqueness of each individual, and appreciates diversity.... We recognise that all children have a right to be heard, to be respected, and to feel a sense of belonging to their family, school and community. We see this as a foundation for becoming responsible citizens of the world."*

The objects of our school:

- To maintain the rights and responsibilities of each child within the group of children and staff that makes up their learning community. To help each child develop the skills and approach to being a constructive co-contributor to their own learning and personal well-being *within* the well-being of the learning community at our school. We maintain and further the rights and responsibilities of the learning community of children as a group and we view each individual child as part of this community, not separate to it.
- To maintain and further the rights and responsibilities of the family in society, in particular the right to have support, encouragement and positive involvement in the education process of their child who is an integral part of the children's learning community within a group setting at our school.
- To maintain and further the rights and responsibilities of the staff at our school, in particular the right to have support, encouragement and appropriate professional learning to work within our particular school context.
- To ensure that each part of this support triangle structure of children, families and staff have equal dignity and are all treated with integrity.

Characteristics of the student body include:

- The family as a whole is 'enrolled' - as per BPEA (Big Picture education Australia) – we believe that 'education is everybody's business' and that the family is an essential part of the education process. Families enrolled at our school are considered to have endorsed our vision, our philosophy, our practice, our codes of conduct... The Child Side Way. Learning outside of school hours and within a range of community settings is sincerely valued and families are requested to value their own families'

contributions and keep track of the learning experiences available in everyday life surrounding them. Therefore we consider both students and their families as part of our active learning community.

- Families and their children travel from surrounding areas such as Bunbury, Capel, Donnybrook, Harvey and Busselton as well as locally in and around Boyanup. The richness and diversity of this 'regional catchment' enable us to offer students many connections and authentic experiences that reach beyond the physical school environment.
- We have a core, stable group of long term, active families committed to the idea of the value of Child Side as being the 'whole' experience over many years; hence we have a strong interest from the early years. We also have a number of families whom travel for work purposes (including internationally) and similar to other schools, we have had a small cohort of transient families. Long term families value the authentic team approach and placing each child at the heart of their personalised curriculum, choosing our school as their "first choice" place of education. These families share similar 'images' of the child as being capable, competent, transformative, social, emotional, intellectually curious and active beings whom deserve an authentic childhood whilst learning to become literate, numerate, socially and environmentally responsible.
- Families and staff value the active implementation and respect of the terminology regarding a '*wholistic*' education which supports each child at developing their strengths whilst developing strategies to self advocate for areas of interdependence and collaboration. 'Diversity' is not just a word at Child Side but a visible action. Our current student body encompasses children across a diverse range of learning styles and abilities, including those with additional needs to both support and enrich learning. Families actively seek out the whole school pedagogy of Child Side to personalise learning and support each child as an individual within the active context of community.
- Our current student body and our teaching staff demonstrate high engagement levels both within our own community and actively within other communities with long term commitments, for example, sporting groups, music, the arts...

#### **Teacher Qualifications:**

All education staff have undertaken a 100 point police check, a Working With Children Check and are registered with the TRB (Teacher's Registration Board)- which is a legal requirement. All teaching staff hold a recognised teaching qualification. Qualifications of teaching staff range across the following:

- Bachelor of Education (Primary)
- Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood)
- Diploma of Education (Bachelor of Arts)
- Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Education)

#### **Work force composition:**

Senior educator x1

Primary Classroom Educators x2

School administrator x1

Office Assistant x 0.2

Education Assistant x 0.8

(no indigenous staff)

All staff are female.

#### **Student attendance:**

PP- 88%

Year 1- 92.7%

Year 2- 94.2%

Year 3- 95.4%

Year 4- 96.5%

Year 5- 97.3%

Year 6- 82.2%

Whole School 90.3%

Absenteeism was mainly due to general sickness. Parents are required to notify the school on the morning their child is absent via phone, text, email. If parents know ahead of time that their child will be absent for appointments, funerals etc they need to fill in an absentee slip and give to the administrator or educator. Any concerns about unexplained attendance are communicated to relevant parents by the Administrator or Senior Educator. In extreme cases the school will contact the Attendance Officer at the Bunbury Education Office.

### **Student Outcomes in Standardised National Literacy and Numeracy testing- NAPLAN:**

Current legislation requires that we report the percentage of children in years 3, 5 and 7 that achieve a result on or above the national benchmark in NAPLAN testing. As our school is small by design (Big Picture Education principle), we have very small year cohorts and we are conscious of ethical considerations such as privacy and confidentiality issues for individual children when publically reporting data without a personalised context. Results will vary from year to year due to a range of factors including: length of time students have been at the school, cohort sizes, students' personalised education histories, anxiety levels surrounding testing conditions, individual children's additional learning needs... and families exercising their right to philosophically abstain. Comparative data between year levels is unviable for our school due to low student numbers and some levels of transiency. This also impacts on the value of comparing a cohort's data over the years.

We are advised that the data is best used to view individuals in comparisons to the benchmarks and to help us to formulate any literacy and numeracy goals to meet children's specific needs. The education staff under take this NAPLAN result 'reflection' annually to see implications for teaching and learning in specifics areas such as spelling and then make informed professional decisions using a range of evidence collected throughout the year in a multitude of ways. In particular, our specific teaching practice (pedagogy), exceptionally high adult to child ratio and our highly researched learning environment enable educators to work alongside children in small groups on personal levels of curriculum need on a **daily basis**. This means educators **know each child very well** as they see and hear them in action daily and can evaluate each child's skills and knowledge as they go, without waiting for test results, which may or may not correlate with NAPLAN results for a multitude of reasons. Educator on-balance, professional judgements based on a range of evidence are used when discrepancies occur. Parents have opportunities to discuss with educational staff their child's learning and progress frequently throughout the year, including whole Learning Team Debriefs. Educators endeavour to help families interpret the NAPLAN test and results in context and in perspective for a one-off multiple choice test. The Administering Educator during the NAPLAN testing also makes observational notes about how each child approaches the tests on the day which go in an educator's observational report with the NAPLAN results to each parent. The core educator analyses the NAPLAN results in conjunction with the observations made during the testing period and along with other longitudinal observations and indicators made throughout the year regarding each individual child's progress in literacy and numeracy. This is then compiled into a written report which is handed out to parents WITH the NAPLAN results (as the requirements state that NAPLAN results are to be handed out well before end of year educator written reports are due). This enables parents to view results within the broader educational picture about their child and have an opportunity to meet one-on-one with educators.

*AHISA (Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia) have stated that: "The provision of school education in 21<sup>st</sup> Century is complex. An accurate measure of how schools are performing cannot be captured through the comparisons published on the federal Government's My School website. The use of NAPLAN data, or any single measure of academic achievement, to compare schools is not an effective measure of whether students are receiving- and schools are delivering- a quality education"*

### **Academic performance and progress of students:**

As per the above reasons of small numbers and confidentiality, the academic performance and progress of children is reported in Phase of Development Clusters as opposed to year level, some year levels may have less than 5 students. Year level information is collated, discussed and interpreted by staff and recommendations implemented. The Governing Council receives this information as part of the Senior Educator's report at Governing Council Meetings with any relevant implications and actions. The interpretation of this information is used purposefully at an operational level supported by the leadership team. We currently have a significant

proportion of children who have been identified as having specific needs which impact on their year level achievement outcomes. It is noted that the national minimal standards NMS (Naplan) do not directly correlate with year level standards or proficient standards.

For 2016 the number of children meeting year level achievement standards across numeracy and literacy indicators:

Early Childhood Cluster ECC PP-Year3:

English- 19 out of 31 children meeting or above the standard

Maths-24 out of 31 children meeting or above the standard

Data includes 7 children with additional learning needs requiring high curriculum adjustment and targeted teaching, 5 of those with exceptionally high needs. Data also includes 2 children who were enrolled term 3/4. 31 out of 31 children showed repeated evidence of making personal progress across English and Maths remaining engaged and positive with both English and Maths learning.

Middle Childhood Cluster Year 4-6:

English-11 out of 14 children meeting or above the standard

Maths- 10 out of 14 children meeting or above standard

Data includes 4 children with additional learning needs requiring significant curriculum adjustment and targeted teaching.

14 out of 14 children showed repeated evidence of making personal progress across English and Maths and remained engaged and positive with both English and Maths learning.

All children have personalised learning programmes to enable them to have experiences, exposure and intentional teaching with both their year level curriculum entitlement and their individual point of need to cater for children who are working above and below the expected year level achievement standards.

#### **Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction with the school:**

Student satisfaction is rated as high as children are actively engaged in all aspects of school life and are reported by their parents as being keen to be at school every day. Active, constructive student involvement has been visibly noted by staff, parents and visitors to the school. Children have a 'voice and choice' with their school rights and responsibilities and are actively involved in their learning outcomes and responding to the positive learning culture. They are involved in preparing and sharing their learning through termly exhibitions shared with a real, authentic audience (BPEA). Feedback from students, families (including grandparents) and invited guests continually express positive insights into this process of students being personally accountable for their work. Educator satisfaction with working conditions and job satisfaction is monitored frequently with regular staff dialogues where staff give feedback and are part of the solution based team approach to constantly reflect and take positive and proactive action. Staff have opportunities to set their own professional goals and to request the professional support and resources they need to help them reach their goals. Staff also have 'voice and choice' with their rights and responsibilities in their work place. Parent satisfaction revolves around their understanding of our specific school culture and of our particular approach to teaching and learning, including their opportunities to stay involved with their child educationally. Parents are considered as an integral part of the education process and as integral to a healthy school community. Learning Team Debriefs with all educators are held on Wednesday afternoons, whereby parents have the opportunity to meet with the team and discuss their child's progress, class and school programmes and school satisfaction. Families and staff aligned with the school 'culture' and purpose '*The Child Side Way*' and whom are engaged with the *whole* concept and practice, choose this school as a long term commitment. Parents utilise these frequent opportunities offered to them to be engaged in their child's educational lives, in particular engaging with 'morning work' one-on-one opportunities to work with their child, accessing educator knowledge along the way. This is particularly prevalent in the Early Years cluster K-2, 5 days of the week! Attendance and participation by families (both parents and extended family as well as members of the wider community) at the Middle Years Cluster termly learning exhibitions remains high and the feedback to educators and children is deep, connected, insightful and used for forward planning by both children and staff. One of the re-registration requirements is to document children's levels of engagement. This is extremely relevant to our personalised learning approach and a high level of engagement in ALL learning areas, across all

learning clusters was observed. The pedagogy of Big Picture Education (BPE) and Reggio Emilia alongside the EYLF and early childhood pedagogy which underpin ALL what we do at Child Side, ensures children's engagement with the curriculum and their own learning is a priority. Staff, children and families continue to be involved with many school community functions with almost 100% support for events such as our monthly Enterprise afternoons, our annual celebration "A Little Day Out", our transition celebration for children entering early adolescence and our LOTE celebration, our Easter breakfast, Christmas Spiral and termly Exhibitions of learning.

Parents were the driving force behind the Governing Council's application to extend into the secondary years of schooling Yr 7-10 to keep the continuity and cohesion beyond the MCC (Middle Childhood Cluster) until children were developmentally ready for the pedagogy of Year 11 and 12 schooling at Manea Senior College. This indicates high satisfaction with the pedagogical approach being offered at Child Side and the educational confidence families have with the school.

#### **Post School destinations:**

Parent choice- home school (within a community setting continuing with the teaching and learning approach consistent with Big Picture Education Australia, Year 7-10) + local high schools around the region, in particular Manea Senior College post year 10. All children following this pathway have successfully integrated and transitioned into the Senior Secondary Years at Manea, their chosen sports and passions, University and travel opportunities. The feedback from Manea and other organisations has been extremely positive, in particular in terms of the students' engagement, confidence, and ability to persevere and to go beyond expectations.

#### **Income broken down by funding source:**

- Commonwealth Government Grants- 56 %
- School Fees – 24%
- State Government Grants- 15 %
- Other income- Fundraising +Donations- 5%

Report prepared by:

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