

Lance Holt School - talking the same language

Themes and threads of student wellbeing

One of the core shared values of Lance Holt Schools is *respect and concern for others and their rights* which is a theme that threads through the activities of the school.

In 2007 the school applied to participate in the KidsMatter pilot because the focus on health and wellbeing reflected the school's values and philosophy of supporting students in their learning. Having access to professional learning about mental health in the context of a school community was a particular attraction.

The staff wanted to support students, and also provide assistance to parents who asked for ideas and strategies about parenting.

Staff members have been trained in all four Components. The school priority on student wellbeing means that KidsMatter Primary will continue to provide an 'umbrella' for all other aspects related to social and emotional learning.

It builds the sense of belonging to the school community for students and parents.



Recently I downloaded an article about children and anxiety. I feel confident when I give parents a KidsMatter information sheet because I know it has been well-researched. I can download one or email it as a pdf, and refer parents to the website. I also pass on the sheets to Learning Support staff, where applicable, so that they can understand more about what affects interactions in the classroom, and why we take an approach to working with particular students.

Kathryn Netherwood,
Coordinator

Educating the school community in wellbeing

The school believes it is essential to provide parents with high quality information about mental health and wellbeing. Information sheets and articles accessed through the KidsMatter Primary website are valuable resources.

Sharing learning with the community

The school offers a range of opportunities to involve the community and reinforce Component 3. Students prepare for a Learning Journey event annually at the end of Term 1. Students prepare a presentation on work that has been important learning and share it with an adult family member whom they invite into the school. They work in pairs for the first part of the morning and come together as a class before a whole-school celebratory morning tea.

Talking the same language

KidsMatter Primary in Lance Holt School provides a framework for all the work in mental health and wellbeing across the school. In every classroom students learn about social and emotional learning (SEL).

Teachers researched programs as

age-appropriate, and there are three SEL programs: *Promoting alternative thinking strategies*(PATHS) program is used in Kindergarten to Year 3; *Bounce Back* is for Years 4 and 5, and *Aussie Optimism* is part of Years 6 and 7 curriculum.



KidsMatter really draws together our focus on being a 'connected' school and developing rights and responsibilities. Teachers and students are talking the same language. Previously, we reacted to friendship issues in Year 4 and 5 girls' groups. Now we use the skills in the social and emotional learning programs to build understanding and skill the children with strategies they can use with friendship issues before they arise as difficulties.

Kathryn Netherwood,
Coordinator

Building student leadership

By the time a student leaves Lance Holt School she or he will have chaired at least one 'Morning Meeting'. The whole school community participates in this meeting to share stories; celebrate

achievements; communicate information; perform; and learn new things. Students learn skills and strategies required to manage the meeting, and the chair may be as young as six years old. This is an opportunity to develop leadership skills and support the experience of belonging and inclusivity described in Component 1. Kathryn said that the responsibility for running Morning Meeting gives children a voice and it enables them to learn about other students in different age groups. Students receive support from other students and teachers in the role of chair, and they become more connected and confident in their leadership skills.

Contact with parents

The school has regular contact with parents. Through class newsletters parents learn about what students are doing in lessons. This is particularly helpful in social and emotional learning classes. For example, a teacher emails parents with tips on friendship after a lesson on

'belonging' and what it means to be a good friend. Regular email contact has become an effective source of communication. It is also a way of educating parents about the social and emotional curriculum and the KidsMatter Primary framework used across the school.

School Profile

Lance Holt School
Western Australia

Is a small community school in the heart of Fremantle

Was established in 1970

Has a strong reputation for participating in the local community and encourages family involvement in school activities and programs

Has an enrolment of 120 students from Kindergarten– Year 7.

<http://www.lanceholtschool.wa.edu>

