



# Arethusa College Annual Report 2017



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# Managing Director's Report

2017 has been a very exciting year for Arethusa College. This year the College made a conscious decision to change its direction and desired outcomes for our students. The commencement of this journey has been challenging and exciting. As a result of these changes, we have already seen significant benefits for the students we serve.

Arethusa College's mission statement is one school with many campuses, that all exist to reconnect disengaged students by creating school communities that facilitate *Real connections, Real Learning, Real Futures*.

Our philosophy is summed up in our motto of **Believe, Expect, Celebrate**.

At Arethusa College we believe our students are capable of great things. Rather than define our students by their past or their struggles, we will define them by their strengths and opportunities for the future by identifying that they already have qualities and experiences that can be built upon.

At Arethusa College, we see a creative and flexible approach to education being the mode of transport to facilitate this journey. We are committed to being an educational community that creates alternative educational pathways to empower students to have a positive experience and outcome throughout their high school years. This will be achieved by providing the best staff, the best resources and the best facilities.

Arethusa College has committed to increasing its' teaching and educational staff over the coming years that specialize in bringing out the best in our students.

When it comes to the best resources, this year we have put in place a plan to populate our classrooms with new and modern educational furnishings as well as new laptop computers and tablets. This will be rolled out for the start of 2018.

The wheels are in motion for some brand new facilities across our campuses. The building of a new learning Hub for our Junior students at our Deception Bay campus was commenced. This is a prototype building, that was developed to assist in moving us towards a more creative and flexible model of learning for our students. This new learning space will be operational for the start of 2018.

Our goal at Arethusa College is to be a school where parents and student choose to attend because of what we offer. We want students and families to be part of our community because we think differently and work with them to offer alternative pathways to achieve their educational and vocational goal.

This is the type of educational community we are creating for our students so that they learn to believe in themselves, expect exciting possibilities and outcomes and celebrate their journey together.

As Managing Director I am excited about the journey that Arethusa College has embarked on and look forward to where it will take us and our students.

Warm Regards

Mick Cross  
Managing Director



## Arethusa College

Arethusa College is an independent, co-educational school catering for students from Year 7 to Year 12. Arethusa College is accredited as a Special Assistance School with three campuses located at Spring Hill, Barambah Creek and Deception Bay. Total enrolment in 2017 was 282 students with 36 percent identifying as having Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Arethusa College provides an alternative approach to education for students where previous schooling in a mainstream setting has not been successful due to social, emotional, physical, educational, family or situational difficulties.

The College believes that engagement in education has the potential to empower marginalised students. The aim of Arethusa College is to provide Christ-centred education in an atmosphere of love, respect and peace – encouraging students to achieve their full potential.

## Arethusa's Values

Arethusa's values motivate us today to seek social justice, serve others and transform communities through putting our Christian faith into action. We are an inclusive Christian school, which values diversity and welcomes people of all faiths and none.

We believe that it is Jesus' desire to be a part of everyone's life. Through His example, we see that those on the margins are loved and fully accepted by God. The life of Jesus motivates us to serve others, pursue justice and demonstrate His love, freely given to all. While society often discriminates against people due to disability or social circumstances, Arethusa College values the unique worth of all individuals and works to give people dignity, opportunities and choices to fulfil their God given potential. We aim to deliver services of the highest quality. We work closely with a range of regulatory and advisory bodies to ensure that we promote and retain this excellent service. Arethusa College has a commitment to a high level of professionalism. Our staff are dedicated to those who use our services ensuring that we maximise our impact as a school.



*The name Arethusa has a rich history and derives its name from the Shaftesbury Homes' Training Ship Arethusa.*

## **Distinctive Curriculum Offerings**

Arethusa's holistic programs aim to re-engage and support students who are experiencing a wide range of risks, challenges and difficulties, aiming to establish a pathway to their employment. By providing flexible learning environments, with targeted and diverse curriculum programs, Arethusa College strives to support and develop its students both physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually and academically. All programs are underpinned by elements of quality pedagogy, targeted literacy and numeracy development, 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, design thinking and the development of responsible, global citizenship. Arethusa College offers students a 'fresh start' and an alternative approach to education, seeking to develop each student's core knowledge and skills; as well as guiding them to develop and achieve personal and career goals. The College provides supportive and educational programs to assist students' social, emotional and physical health.

The Arethusa College Middle School Curriculum Program (Years 7-9) is divided into six core components; Numeracy Skills (Mathematics), Literacy Skills (English), Australian Curriculum Units, Physical Education and Movement, Personal Development, and Extra-Curricular programs. The Senior School Curriculum Program (Years 10-12) includes a stronger emphasis on certification, work readiness and employability skills. The Arethusa College Senior Curriculum Program consists of seven key components; Prevocational Mathematics, English Communication, Recreational Studies, Personal Development Programs, Extra-Curricular Programs, and Vocational Education and Training and Work Experience. Students are also encouraged to complete the work required to achieve a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). While Arethusa College has a consistent curriculum across all campuses, each individual campus has a unique approach to the delivery of curriculum which is aimed to respond to the distinctness and diversity of the student body at each campus.

Arethusa College Spring Hill, with an inner city feel, has developed a particular focus on The Arts, offering Design, Drama, Music and Art which is incorporated into their range of extra-curricular activities on offer. Other activities include Café Discussions, a Barista Course, Cooking Programs, Individual Projects, as well as community lunches and gatherings. The inner city location allows easy access to cultural, artistic and educational centres and services which are regularly accessed as part of the curriculum program.

Arethusa College Deception Bay, nestled amongst 86 acres of mature eucalypts, has an emphasis on certification programs in Automotive, Furnishings, Construction and Animal Studies. The campus also offers programs in Outdoor Recreation and camping for students as well as extra-curricular activities such as photography and gardening projects.

Arethusa College Barambah Creek is situated in the farming land of the South Burnett Region. The majority of the student population primarily comes from Cherbourg, an Indigenous community. The programs on offer reflect the local culture of agriculture, animal husbandry, horse and cattle care and management. Extra-curricular activities included participation in the rodeo program and horse riding lessons.

# Who are we?

## Social Climate of the School

Underpinning all curriculum is an emphasis on the core principles of Respect, Safety, Value, and Participation. The College upholds the framework of Restorative Practices, an approach to behaviour management, which has a focus on promoting safe and supportive learning environments through active problem solving, ownership of behaviours and choices, and restoring relationships.

Students and staff participate in daily, small group 'Circle Time' whereby students learn skills for effective communication with others, where views and opinions are shared in respectful ways. These daily discussions form the foundational skills that are required for individual and group problem solving when conflict arises.

The College implements the processes of Restorative Conferences for addressing issues of behaviour management (such as harassment or bullying). This approach provides a voice to victims, and encourages open and honest communication about the situation, the impact on all parties, and provides all parties with a clear plan for going forward. Students are held accountable for their behaviour and the impact their behaviour has had on everyone involved.



*Students learning canoeing skills at the Deception Bay Outdoor Education classroom*



## Characteristics of the Student Body

Arethusa College caters for students who have disengaged, or are at significant risk of disengagement, from mainstream schooling. The central criteria for admission to the College is that the student has disengaged from schooling due to social, emotional or behavioural factors. The College prides itself on providing education which is innovative and which meets the needs of students with a wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities. Twenty-two percent of students have been verified as meeting the criteria of Students with a Disability. Many students who attend Arethusa College have demonstrated a desire to re-engage in education, often against the odds. The desire to overcome obstacles to gaining an education is a common characteristic of the student body at Arethusa.

## Student Outcomes

### Attendance

The average attendance rate for the whole school as a percentage in 2017 was ??%. Students who attend Arethusa College have various contributing factors which influence attendance. In 2017 the primary reason for non-attendance was mental health factors impacting on students.

Average attendance rates for particular year levels					
Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12
%	%	%	%	%	%

### Non-attendance management

Student attendance at Arethusa is monitored through the use of attendance software. Parents and carers are required to report non-attendance on the morning of the student's absence. A staff member contacts parents and carers of students who have been unaccounted for through the delivery of an SMS alert. The Head of Campus monitors students who have been away for a number of consecutive days, or where a pattern of absenteeism is emerging. The Head of Campus works with teachers to ensure that students are followed up, and that the College provides support to students as required. The College has clear processes for recording the reasons for absences, and follow-up to report student attendance to government agencies as required (e.g. Centrelink).

### Student retention rates

In 2017 the student retention rate represents the number of students who were enrolled in Year 10 (2015) and then in Year 12 (2017). The Year 12 student retention rate across these 2 years was 97% with 44 Year 10 students in 2015, and 43 Year 12 students in 2017.

This figure accounts for a number of students who transitioned to employment before completing Year 12, those who re-engaged in mainstream education, enrolled in full-time TAFE, or those that were unsuccessful in re-engaging in education for a variety of reasons. New enrolments of senior students in Year 11 and 12 occurred in 2016 and 2017.

# Students



*Students from the Barambah Creek Campus.*

## **NAPLAN 2017 benchmark data**

The NAPLAN results for Years 7 and 9, and information can be found by visiting the My School website at [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au)

## **Year 12 outcomes**

Outcomes for the 2016 Year 12 cohort (2017 data will be available in September 2018)

Number of students awarded a Senior Education Profile	44
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement	-
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) at the end of Year 12	2
Number of students awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD)	-
Number of students who receive an Overall Position (OP)	0
Number of students who are completing or completed a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SAT)	6
Number of students awarded one or more Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications	25
Percentage of Year 12 students who are completing or completed a SAT or were awarded one or more of the following: QCE, IBD, VET	57%
Percentage of Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre applications receiving a tertiary offer	-



# Students

## Post-school destination information from the current Next Step Survey

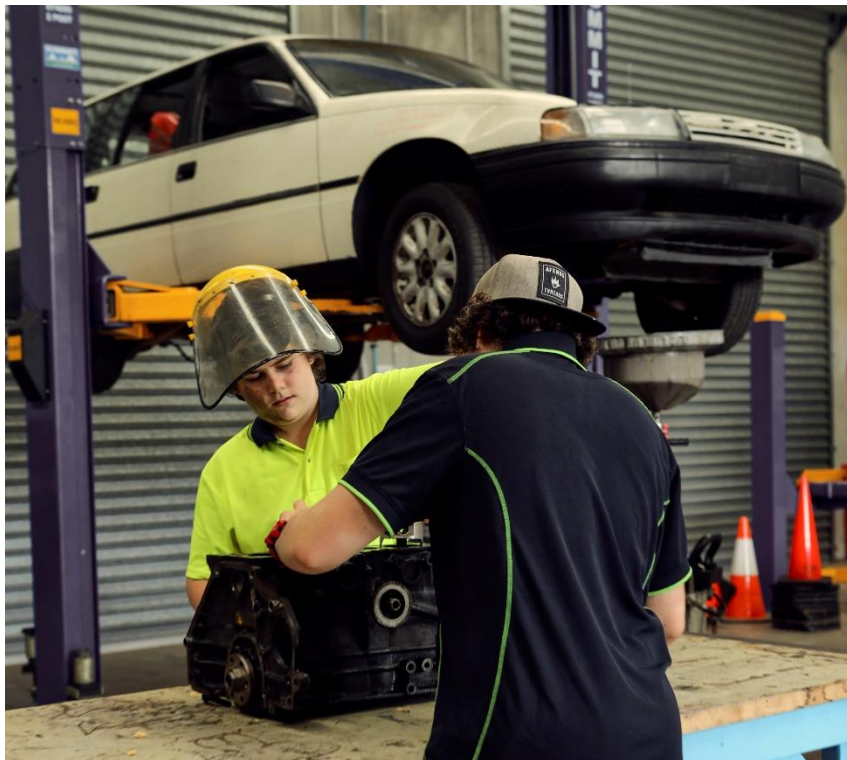
At the time of publishing this School Annual Report, the results of the 2017 post-school destinations survey, *Next Steps – Student Destination* report for the school was not available. Information about these post-school destinations of our students will be uploaded to the school's website in September after release of the information.

## Parent and Student Involvement and Satisfaction

Arethusa College values the importance of developing partnerships between the College and home in order to understand the individual needs of students and provide appropriate support to achieve the best possible educational outcomes for all. The College promotes open communication between home and school, with teachers and the Head of Campus, encouraging parents to attend the school to discuss student needs as required.

Parent information is communicated through letters home and the regular campus newsletters which provide specific campus based information. Parent Information Sessions are held at each campus in a forum that best suits each individual campus' community, for example morning teas or information nights.

Parents and carers responded very positively (i.e. with an 'agree' or 'strongly agree' response) in all majority areas (92%) of the Satisfaction Survey, indicating that they appreciated the genuine care demonstrated for students' wellbeing, individual support provided, and feeling welcome at the school. Parents and carers indicated that students felt safe, supported and encouraged to participate in all areas of College life, and that they were given an opportunity to develop their strengths. The majority of students also reported that they felt that they had begun enjoying school for the first time since starting at Arethusa.



*Students participating in Certificate training at the Deception Bay Campus.*

## About our Staff

The staff at Arethusa are hand chosen and have demonstrated excellence in their specialty area of teaching. Many of the teachers are experienced in working with young people who may not fit into a traditional classroom setting. Arethusa prides itself on the fact that our staff promote self-discipline, believing that the responsibility to change the future lies within the individual and is not found merely inside educational policy or by applying unfair discipline.

Arethusa employs 13 registered teachers and 26 educational support staff with backgrounds in various trades, youth support, and special education. All staff work collaboratively to promote a learning community which is based on Respect, Safety, Value, and Participation. Arethusa College values the diverse cultural backgrounds of its staff. Currently 13% identify as having Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Qualifications of teachers and school leaders		
Masters degree	Bachelor degree	Diploma
35%	65%	-



*Left: One of the staff teaching the students to play the guitar*



*Right: A Deception Bay student in the wood working classroom*

# Staff

## Staff Professional Development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2017 was \$13,359. The focus on Professional Development during the year included integrated units from the Australian Curriculum, Curriculum Planning & Development, Child Protection, and Professional Boundaries for Teachers, and Pastoral Care for Students. All staff participated in professional development during the year. The average expenditure on teacher PD per year based on 13 teachers was \$1027 in 2017.

## Average staff attendance

Average staff attendance based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave periods of up to 5 days during 2017:

Number of Staff	Attendance rate
37	97%

Number of teaching staff retained from previous year (2016):

Number of permanent teaching staff at the end of previous year	17
Number of these staff retained in the following year	8
Retention rate	47%



A variety of staff with various qualifications provide real-life learning opportunities for students.

The College prides itself on promoting staff wellbeing and support for all staff. The College acknowledges that quality education only exists where there are quality educators, and therefore values the contributions made by its staff. Staff stability is also an important factor for providing students with a safe, supportive and consistent learning environment. Staff retention is an important factor in creating such an environment.



# School Income

School income broken down by funding source can be found on the My School website at [www.myschool.edu.au](http://www.myschool.edu.au)



*Above: The art space at our Spring Hill campus*

*Below: Students working on plants for the Agricultural Practices subject*



# Contact Us

This Annual Report is available on our College website: [www.arethusa.qld.edu.au](http://www.arethusa.qld.edu.au)  
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