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# Arethusa College Annual Report

2021

Doing School  
*Differently*

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# Introduction

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## 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 six campuses located at Forest Lake, Maroochydore, Spring Hill, Windsor, West End and Deception Bay. Total enrolment in 2021 was 1,040 students with 15% identifying as having Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Arethusa College offers a safe, caring environment for students to experience positive educational outcomes. We take a flexible and innovative approach to support each student with their individual learning needs and a program tailored specifically to them.

We respect and encourage difference. We know and understand that all our students are unique. They have different backgrounds, ways of learning, goals for the future, skills and strengths. We are committed to helping students find their strengths, achieve their goals, and to value their own uniqueness.

## Arethusa's Values

Arethusa College is an inclusive Christian school, which values diversity and welcomes people of all faiths and none. We uphold the principles of respect, good morals and worthwhile values and serve our students to ensure they unlock their strengths and reach their potential. We value the unique worth of all individuals and believe these principles are fundamental to a young person's social and emotional wellbeing, growth and development.

We work closely with a range of regulatory and advisory bodies to ensure that we promote and retain this excellent service. Arethusa College is committed to a high level of professionalism and our employees are dedicated to those who use our services, ensuring that we maximise our impact as a school.

## Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

Arethusa College prides itself on being innovative, flexible and agile in its approach to teaching and learning. We aim to respond in service of our students in a way that stubbornly reflects their value and the immeasurable potential they carry; where we prioritise their needs above what is easy, traditional or expected.

By placing students firmly at the centre of everything we do, we ask new questions around curriculum, pedagogy, staffing, and resourcing. We draw upon research and the expertise of others while also investing into developing new paths that hold to our mission and values. Arethusa offers students from Years 7-12 individualised and personalised educational and vocational pathways. Students are included in the development of their own educational journeys where staff seek to empower them to achieve their goals and fulfil their potential.

By providing flexible learning environments, with targeted and diverse curriculum programs, Arethusa College strives to support and develop its students physically, emotionally, socially, spiritually and academically. All programs are underpinned by elements of quality pedagogy, targeted literacy and numeracy development, real-world skills and problem-based learning.

In Junior (Years 7-8) and Middle (Years 9-10) School, students engage in a modified version of the Australian Curriculum, designed for students to work at their own level and pace and cover any gaps in their learning. They study English, Mathematics, HPE and an Integrated Subject which includes rotation of Science, Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS), The Arts and Technologies. Students can also pursue Independent Projects that allow for numerous elective choices and flexibility to accommodate students' learning, interests, passions, and needs.

In the Senior (Years 11-12) School, students can work towards completing their Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). Students are also able to work and learn in our state-of-the-art workshops to complete different Certificate Level courses. Subjects offered differ at each campus but include Essential English, Essential Mathematics, plus a variety of other offerings. Students have access to a range of VET, TAFE, Certificate Courses and School Based Traineeship opportunities. Campus staff work closely with students to support the successful completion of their senior schooling and have positive options available to them for life beyond school.

In addition to six campuses, Arethusa College has the Anywhere Learning Team (ALT), Arethusa Adventure Academy (AAA), and Arethusa Sports Academy (ASA). These are unique and highly individualised programs which give students the opportunity to learn outside of the classroom.

## Social Climate of the School

Underpinning everything we do is a genuine care and concern for students as well as a stubborn commitment to set them up for success.

Our philosophy is summed up in our motto of Believe, Expect, Celebrate. We Believe in our students; until they believe in themselves and believe in others. We raise the bar and Expect of our students, until they can expect of themselves and step towards the exciting possibilities that surround them. We will Celebrate our students as they grow, until they can celebrate their lives and their journey and be part of celebrating those around them.

# Students

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## Characteristics of the Student Body

Arethusa College offers students an alternative education solution for those who do not fit into the mainstream education system. This could be 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. Seven percent of students have been verified as meeting the criteria of Students with a Disability. Students must show a desire to attend Arethusa College at their interview to be granted enrolment. 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 2021 was 65.44%. Students who attend Arethusa College have various contributing factors which influence attendance. In 2021 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
71.23%	70.59%	65.03%	66.41%	63.24%	65.51%

### 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 Principal monitors students who have been away for a number of consecutive days, or where a pattern of absenteeism is emerging. The Principal 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 2021 the student retention rate represents the number of students who were enrolled in Year 10 (2019) and then in Year 12 (2021). The Year 12 student retention rate across these 2 years was 84% with 125 Year 10 students in 2019, and 105 Year 12 students in 2021.

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 2019 and 2020.

### NAPLAN 2021 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 2021 Year 12 Cohort

Number of students awarded a Senior Education Profile (SEP)	80
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA)	0
Number of students who received an ATAR	N/A
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) at the end of Year 12	10
Number of students awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD)	0
Number of students who received a Senior Statement only	70
Number of students who are completing or completed a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SAT)	10 (complete), 13 completing
Number of students awarded one or more Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications	13
Percentage of Year 12 students who are completing or completed a SAT or were awarded one or more of the following: QCE, IBD, VET qualification	45% (36 out of 80 who got Senior
Percentage of Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre applications receiving a tertiary offer	0

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

At the time of publishing this School Annual Report, the results of the 2021 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.

## School Response Rate to the Survey from the 2020 Year 12 completers

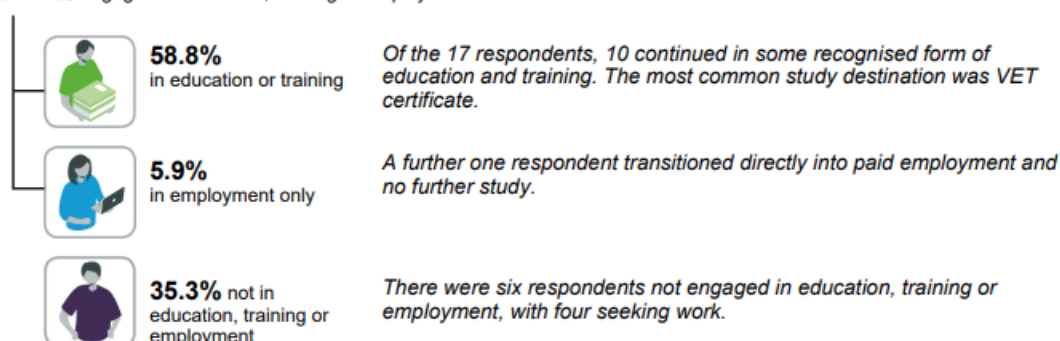
Number of Year 12 students in 2021	Number of responses received from students	Percentage response rate
36	17	47.2%

### Engagement in education, training or employment.

Year 12 completers from Arethusa College – Deception Bay, have been categorised by their engagement in education and training, or employment. Survey respondents who are both working and studying are included in education and training. Apprentices and trainees are required to undertake a study component to their qualification so are also considered to be in education and training.

#### Engagement in education, training or employment

**64.7%** engaged in education, training or employment



## 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 Principal, 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 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.

# Staff

## 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 42 registered teachers and 108 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 3% identify as having Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage.

Qualifications of teachers and school leaders				
Doctorate	Masters degree	Bachelor degree	Diploma	Certificate
1%	15%	28%	31%	26%

## Staff Professional Development

The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2021 was \$40,765.75. 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 42 teachers was \$ 970.61 in 2021.

## Average staff attendance

Average staff attendance based on unplanned absences of sick and emergency leave periods of up to 5 days during 2021:

Number of teachers	Attendance rate
42	68%

Number of teaching staff retained from previous year (2020):

Number of permanent teaching staff at the end of previous year	28
Number of these staff retained in the following year	18
Retention rate	64%

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

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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)

## Contact Us

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This Annual Report is available on our College website: [www.arethusa.qld.edu.au](http://www.arethusa.qld.edu.au). For further information about Arethusa College, please contact Lisa Coles on 1300 720 371 or via email - [executiveprincipal@arethusa.qld.edu.au](mailto:executiveprincipal@arethusa.qld.edu.au)