



# Port School 2016





## Principal's Reflections – Barry Finch

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2016 has been a big year for Port School, having completed our first full year of 6 initiatives, most of which were first introduced in the second half of 2015. We have now reached that point where we are able to offer support to our students in a variety of ways that best suit their needs.

Port is now a Registered Training Organisation (RTO), delivering Certificates I and II in General Education for Adults (CGEA). These courses allow us to tailor our delivery, enabling our students to achieve qualifications that will help them enter into further education options post-school. We are also delivering industry-based courses that offer real employment options. In conjunction with this we have successfully implemented a School Based Traineeship Program, which is putting students into the workplace. We have already seen some students being offered full-time employment.

Our Early Learning Centre and Young Parent Centre have also completed their first full year. After some expected teething issues, both centres are now running extremely well. We are currently offering up to 20 young mothers and their babies a supportive environment for them to flourish.

The Mobile Classroom Program, our off-site operation, taught from a converted bus, is staffed by one teacher and a youth worker. This program offers a transition space for up to 8 students, who are unlikely to succeed in re-engaging, back into the school community. We operated this for the first time in 2016, and are happy with how it has developed. Our other new initiative is the OutReach Program, which is coordinated by a full-time staff member and supported by other staff. OutReach is working with students who, for a range of reasons, find they are unable to come to school. We have successfully re-engaged a number of students, who are now attending classes regularly on campus. They offer others much-needed emotional and academic support.

These new initiatives, along with a well-resourced dynamic school program that has been developed over 24 years, have resulted in Port becoming a school with which I am extremely proud to be associated.

**Barry Finch**

**Port School Principal**



## **Port School Incorporated Overview**

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Port School is an incorporated body, overseen by a board of directors who guide and assist in the direction of the school and who ultimately performance-manage the Principal. The Principal is the strategic and operational manager of the entity, known as Port School Incorporated.

Port School Incorporated operates the following entities:

Port School and Port School Mobile Classroom Education Facilities

Port School Young Parent Centre [YPC]

Port School Early Learning Centre (fully ACECQA registered childcare facility) [ELC]

Port School Registered Training Organisation [RTO]

Port School OutReach Program

### **Port School**

Port is an independent school that aims to engage at-risk students in years 8 -12 who have not been able to achieve success in mainstream school settings for a variety of reasons and circumstances. The students at Port are successful because the school operates in a very different way to most others: small class sizes, hands-on vocational learning, personalised and flexible learning groups, community projects, excursions. In addition, individual pastoral care and social support in a myriad of formats is offered from a variety of networks and external agencies.

### **Port Mobile Classroom**

The Port School Mobile Classroom is an innovative and progressive educational program, aimed at engaging our community's most at-risk, disadvantaged and disengaged youth. The program operates within the community from a customized, converted bus. It is a structured educational program that encourages its participants to re-engage with the community and achieve educational outcomes. Port aims to do this through the building of strong relationships and placing decisions and consequences in the hands of our young people.

### **Port Early Learning Centre**

A brand new facility exists at Port School's innovative ELC. This targeted provision aims to assist young teen mums stay in education, undertake parenting programs and improve the health of themselves and their child through a variety of health and social well-being initiatives. All this is happening, whilst their baby and/or toddler are at the ELC.

### **Port Young Parent Centre**

The YPC aims at providing 'flexible educational and training opportunities' to young parents who have disengaged from their education and training having become pregnant, or being a mum. These young people are also supported in transitioning into their parenting role by being provided with healthy and evidence based knowledge, effective parenting skills and empowering confidence in themselves.

### **Port Registered Training Organisation**

In 2015 Port School achieved status as a Registered Training Organisation (number 52718) through the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) of Western Australia. It trades under the RTO name Skills Development Services and delivers Nationally Recognised Training. Throughout 2016, Port has been consolidating its offerings as well as determining what should be in scope for 2017 and beyond.

### **Port OutReach Program**

Port School's OutReach Program aims to help encourage disadvantaged adolescents of the community to re-engage back into the education system. The program is also designed to complement a student's existing school plan. One aspect of the program is to help young students via positive mentoring and the use of a mobile education model where activities and enrichment projects are usually done off-site. Ideally the program works with small groups with an option of one-on-one support when needed. Using a variety of educational, social and emotional well-being programs, the students are invited to participate in the OutReach Program if the school feels there is a need.

## **Information about the School**

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Port School Incorporated was established in November 1992 and is celebrating 25 years in 2017. It was originally situated in the heart of Fremantle. The school is a co-educational, private day school for students in years 8 – 12. Port School is one of Western Australia's 'Curriculum and Re-engagement in Education' (CARE) Schools, specialising in working with adolescents at extreme social and educational risk. Students are referred to the school after encountering serious problems in mainstream schooling. These difficulties may arise from academic, social or behavioural issues.

Port School is funded by both State and Federal Government sources through recurring per capita grants, program grants and other individual grants. The per capita grants are allocated on a quarterly basis and are provided on the number of students enrolled and on an attendance criterion. These criteria differ between the State and Federal Governments. The students at Port also pay fees. Potentially these fees can be heavily subsidised by Government departments, depending on their living circumstances.

Port School's current Principal, Barry Finch was appointed at the end of 2009 and is the 8th Principal. Barry and his team over the last 7 years have driven a dynamic set of impressive offerings, which reach above and beyond those of a standard school.

Port is an independent school. Its umbrella organisation is AISWA, or the Association of Independent Schools of WA. This is the structure through which the Federal Government distributes funding for independent schools.

Port School now resides in the City of Cockburn. It is housed in a building which was previously squash courts and which the school now owns. Port received a Federal Government 'Building the Education Revolution (BER)' Grant of some \$936,600.00, which was used to make significant major improvements and upgrades to the building 2014/15 the school saw a major project and expansion with the purchase of two duplex properties, culminating in the development of a fully operational Young Parent and Early Learning Centre. The school has also developed its grounds with gardens, seating, outdoor areas for the students, with security fencing. A land acquisition project that started in late 2013, in conjunction with Main Roads and the Department of Transport, is still ongoing and has been constantly deferred because the land has been a potential alternative option for the Perth Freight Link. With input from local Senator Linda Reynolds and Environment Minister Albert Jacob MP, Port seeks actively to acquire that land in 2017.

Port has also grown significantly in staff size. The board has approved the development of a \$500k administrative block for its growing team and hopes to be in situ by the end of 2017.

The focus of the school has also changed since its inception. Originally the school concentrated on being an alternative school with an academic focus. Port has had to respond to and accommodate an ever-changing student profile. By 2013, there were 86 students, with more than 25% being of aboriginal descent. The funding arrangements that sustain its programs for disengaged and indigenous students have altered too. Now that Port is an RTO, 2016 has seen the successful delivery of various certificate courses, an ever-expanding folio. The Mobile Classroom facility, OutReach Program, ELC and YPC, as well as the abundant in-house facilities, have enabled Port to look at students' needs from different perspectives.

Where mainstream educational settings have failed, or have not been suitable, Port really is ensuring that its students gain the best possible opportunities to succeed.

## School Program

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Port School has become very successful at running classes for students covering core subjects and electives that give the students a chance at re-engaging with education. They also learn life skills with workshop, cooking, gardening and health subjects being covered. To achieve this, class sizes are very small and every effort is made to avoid points of conflict. All staff have a real commitment to working in this environment and are selected through a process that outlines challenges they will face. There is an expectation that all staff will make a significant contribution to the operation of the school through a highly collaborative approach to administration. Port School believes that the classroom teacher has the greatest understanding of the needs of the students. That is the basis of all decisions made in the school.

The program at Port is diverse and core subjects are very much based on ability levels. Classes are split by this method, and not by age range. For instance, groups A and B may be lower level learners. Groups E and F could be a certificate group appropriate students who potentially show more of a leadership capability within the school environment.

At Port School, there is a strong focus on 'filling the gaps' and improving the functional literacy and numeracy of the students. The school uses the Australian Curriculum and offers classes in Math, English, Science and SOSE. These courses meet three times a week and are taught to match students' ability levels. Learning at Port is often hands-on and practical so that students are able to work on the outcomes in a variety of ways, which suit their individual learning styles.

An emphasis is placed on both one-on-one instruction and independent learning at both ends of the learning spectrum. Also, the diversity of the courses offered to students allows them to have a sufficient amount of choice in how they engage with the curriculum. Port now offers a variety of certificate courses in:

- General Education for Adults
- Conservation and Land Management
- Sports and Recreation
- Hospitality
- Construction

The school has certainly emerged into a leading provider in the CARE school arena, with a multitude of offerings highlighted in the diagram below.



In 2015 Port School started working to develop an integrated program of vocational Certificate Courses for Years 10 and above, for implementation in 2016. This curriculum is designed to support students on leaving school and entering the workplace. These courses and associated workplace experience are invaluable for employers. They show that students can achieve both practically and academically, as undertaken during certificate coursework and the more practical hands-on work placements.

Graduating from Port School also indicates that students have re-engaged with education, are confident and can manage their behaviour to go on to employment, further training at TAFE, or education with private providers.

Port's exciting 2016 program consisted of the following areas:

**Core Subjects** – Maths, English, Health and Wellbeing

**Vocational Option Choices** - Technology and Enterprise, Art, Cooking and Hospitality, Fitness, Health and Wellbeing, Conservation and Land Management, Music, Community Services, Boat Building, Theatre and Drama.

**Sports Program** - PE, Gym, Female Health and Exercise, Skateboarding, Outdoor Ed, Team Sport (Training, coaching and leadership program).

**Young Parent Centre** – Parenting workshops, promotion of health support services and continuation of a variety of educational options with support from Port's teaching and pastoral staff.

**Early Learning Centre** – ACECQA accredited childcare facility offering education and care to the young mums, babies and toddlers aged from 0 – 3 years. The early childhood educators provide quality care and education through play that encompasses the early years learning framework.

**OutReach** – Selected Port staff members are working with young people, some of whom are the hardest to prevail upon, using home visits and external educational working options to try and re-engage them back into the school environment.

**Mobile Classroom** – Port is working off-site in a converted bus with some of the students who are too volatile for the school environment, or where it has been identified that this is a better option. Students are encouraged to follow the bus program's four principles and work towards re-engaging back into the school environment.

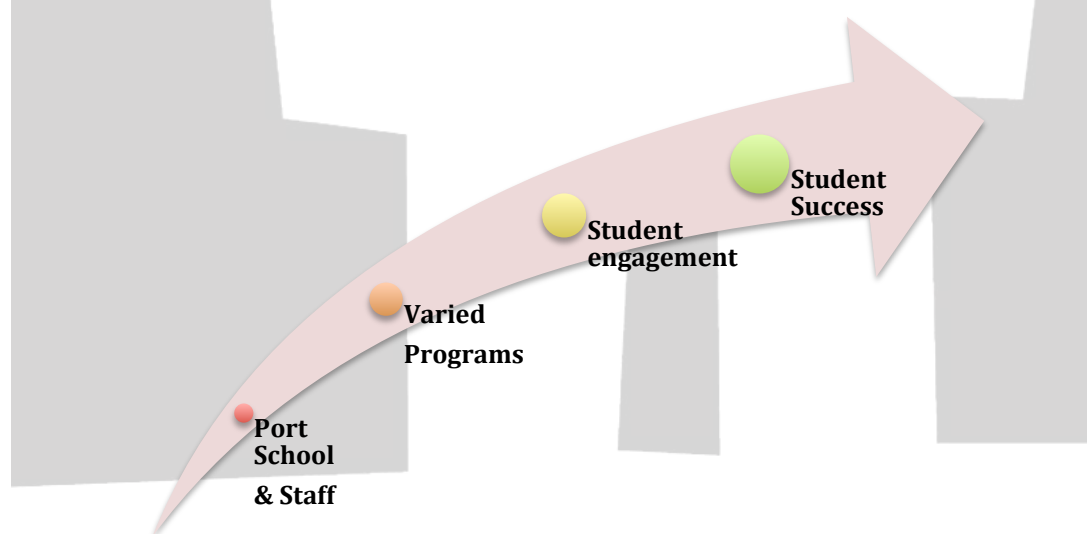
**Community Projects** - Community work (Apex Camp Jurien).

**International Projects** - Malaysia excursion (planning, fundraising and cultural awareness).

Port is flexible in its approach to learning. Through Individual Education Plans, it identifies whether it is more appropriate for a student to be partially based on work experience placements, or in the work environment.

In 2016 Port has been increasing the number of school-based traineeships and apprenticeships and has engaged a part time traineeship coordinator to assist in this approach.

At Port, albeit not always as simplistic as the table below, we believe in a good school model, great staff and a variety of options that lead to opportunities that inevitably aim to embrace positive change.





## School Development & Achievements

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Port saw an extensive building program in 2015 with the completion of the Early Learning Centre and Young Parent Centre. School business has had continued growth in student numbers throughout 2016 with over 100 on roll across the various educational areas. Despite that growth 2016 has been a year to consolidate somewhat and work towards best practice across all areas. There have still been areas developing and expanding, such as the RTO business and ever-changing Mobile Classroom and OutReach programs.



In terms of capital building projects, 2016 has been quiet in the physical build sense. However, bubbling away beneath the surface is the design, concept and final plan for a new staff administrative block, planned to start in mid-2017.

The acquisition and development of Main Road's land is still on the back burner, awaiting a final government decision on the Perth Freight Link, or alternative. This is despite support for the school from both Labor and Liberal politicians.

## **Port Registered Training Organisation**

The development of Port's RTO business has ramped up significantly throughout 2016 and the future expansion of its course scope looks exciting and promising for our students. Port is leading the way in the RTO and vocational training areas with a team of people working on this area alone. The sections below highlight the exciting changes 2016 has seen.

### **Young Parent Centre**

The Young Parent Centre has certainly steamed ahead with 21 young mums enrolled during 2016. There have been a variety of qualitative and quantitative successes, which can be seen in the table overleaf.

### **Apex Global Award**

After five years, Port School and Klang Apex Club were awarded an international accolade amongst the Global Apex Community for their support and ongoing work with Klang Special School (see article below). The Malaysia excursion has been beneficial to so many young people in both countries and is firmly embedded as one of Port's highlights each year.

### **Leeuwin**

The Leeuwin Sail and Leadership Program has been a great addition to Port's program, that offers students:

- The ability to build their work-ready skills and add to their resume. Communication, leadership, teamwork and collaboration are just a few skills employers seek.
- A safe and trusted program which has run for over 30 years.
- Voyagers are able to experience situations they wouldn't normally come across in the classroom or workplace.
- The opportunity to earn WACE POINTS.
- The ability to complete the Adventurous or Residential Journey component of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- The opportunity to earn the Outdoor Adventurous Activity or Pursuit for Venturer Scouts doing the Queen's Scout Award.
- An invitation to return as a Leeuwin volunteer.
- The chance to explore an interest in a Maritime or Marine Career.
- The ability to make friends outside regular school, university, workplace or sporting groups.
- The proven opportunity to improve social confidence for their future.

## Port Registered Training Organisation Pathways

‘Pathways’ is probably the most important word when we look at the development of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs at Port School. Previously, Port mainly concerned itself with ensuring it was giving great support and education until year 12, after which students were largely left to their own devices. It is Port’s aim now to ensure all year 11 and 12’s have plans and processes in place that enable them to leave Port with real qualifications and the flying chance at a job and a long-term career. With many of Port’s cohort coming from families of long term and often multi-generational welfare dependence, it is through these programs that we hope to give these students a real chance of breaking this cycle.

Port has for a couple of years provided Certificates I, II and III in General Education for Adults, which is a great grounding in Literacy and Numeracy. In addition to this, and from 2016 all students are given the option to study one of the following Certificate II vocational courses; Port has devoted the first four periods on Mondays to this.

- Construction/Furniture
- Conservation Land Management (CLM) studies (Forestry, Park Ranger)
- Hospitality
- Sports Coaching
- Beauty (proposed)

Approximately 70% of the school’s cohort are currently enrolled in these courses. Some students are too young to enrol and others have elected to do enrichment Math and/or English.



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In mid 2016 Port School employed Steph Daniel as Employment Coordinator. By the end of 2016 the school had 8 students out on work experience with several of these experiences translating into traineeships and apprenticeships. Steph is building a great employer community who are all eager to help the school. Many of these employers take a succession of students. In addition to the above qualifications Port has now developed contacts within the vocational education sector to the extent that, if a student demonstrates an interest in something outside our offerings, the school is able to support them in external studies.



<b>Young Parent Centre</b> <b>Academic and Organisational Success during 2016</b>	
<b>STUDENT</b>	<b>SUCCESS</b>
Year 12 Student	<p>Gained entry into Murdoch University On-Track Program to enable pathway into Nursing/Midwifery</p> <p>Also gained entry into Cert IV in Nursing Preparation at TAFE</p>
Year 12 Student	<p>Completed CGEA Cert II</p> <p>Undertaking Mental Health Cert IV at TAFE</p>
Year 12 Student	<p>Completed CGEA Cert II</p> <p>Enrolled in Community Services Cert III</p>
YPC Enrolments	21 students enrolled throughout 2016
ELC Babies	18 babies at the ELC throughout 2016 Including 1 community baby
Volunteers in the YPC	<p>Maria Quigglan – Service Manager from Visy Boxes (every Tuesday)</p> <p>Cathy Hoehn - Best Beginnings (Mondays, in-kind service)</p> <p>Kristy Mippy – SJOG (Wednesdays)</p> <p>Hayley Smith – Community Services and Education Assistant (Fridays)</p>
Drivers Licences	6 girls have passed their L's since commencing
SIDS training	10 girls have completed training in safe sleep practices with the Red Nose Association
Senior First Aid/CPR	8 girls have completed a Provide First Aid and CPR course
Mock Interviews	Students have attended mock interviews at Visy corporate and manufacturing factory in O'Connor. This has helped build self-esteem and confidence to undertake a job interview