

Annual Report

Maridahdi

2017

Maridahdi

"Thought... creating itself as it goes."

Deleuze & Guattari

School Sector:

Independent

School's Address:

3-7 Bowtell Street Toowoomba, Queensland, 4350

Total Enrolments:

59

Year Levels Offered:

Kindergarten-Year 6

Co-educational or Single Sex:

Co-educational

Characteristics of the Student Body:

Prep: 6 Female 5 Male

Year 1: 6 Female 5 Male

Year 2: 7 Female 5 Male

Year 3: 3 Female 1 Male

Year 4: 1 Female 8 Male

Year 5: 4 Female 1 Male

Year 6: 6 Female 1 Male

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Leadership Team

2017 was another exciting year at Maridahdi, with the space supporting more children and families than anytime in our short history. As the Maridahdi Ethos continued to grow locally, there has been a call from communities outside of Toowoomba, exploring possible campuses in Brisbane, Ipswich and the Gold Coast. This expression of interest resulted in changes in the leadership team at Maridahdi, including the introduction of a Business Manager and a Deputy Principal.

Founder

These introduced roles have allowed Maridahdi Founder, Louis Bradfield, to focus on supporting understanding of the Maridahdi Ethos with communities in Ipswich, Brisbane and the Gold Coast. With families in all these localities requesting more information around the 'Maridahdi Way', Louis has frequented these communities to share the thinking around ethos as well as supporting these communities to explore the possibility of creating campuses in their localities.

Deputy Principal

With Louis focusing on these new communities, the role of the Deputy has been to ensure the Toowoomba campus continues to operate in alignment with the Maridahdi ethos. This has included ensuring staff are committed to the ethos in their practice, whilst ensuring the Quality Standards for teaching are being met. Throughout the year the Deputy has met with prospective parents looking to enrol at Maridahdi Toowoomba, as well as meeting with current parents to ensure communication around commitment and contribution is taking place.

Business Manager

The introduction of a Business Manager in 2017 has allowed for the streamlining of many administrative functions including enrolment processes, employee interview processes, as well as ensuring compliance processes continued to be undertaken and followed through.

The Leadership Team made their way to Brisbane to attend the ISQ State Forum. The day allowed for the newly formed team to begin thinking around how the year could look, the possibilities that were presenting. The forum made explicit the points of difference of Maridahdi, enabling conversation around why we choose to hold true to these points of difference.

In a year that saw changes with staffing, the Governing Council and the Leadership Team explored themes around what is needed from potential employees at Maridahdi. Through thinking out loud, sharing and discussion it was evident that the characteristics needed to work at Maridahdi are similar to those that parents choosing Maridahdi needed in order to navigate their commitment to Maridahdi.

Staff

The focus for staff in 2017 was around 'Liberation of Thought' and supporting children symbolise thought through the Arts. Student Free days at the beginning of the year

allowed staff to begin exploring these concepts connecting them to the 'Purple Paper' - the thinking that is Maridahdi.

Teachers and support staff were encouraged to explore the concepts around liberation of thought, exploring encounters with the unknown - supporting children access possibilities and curriculum. Staff engaged in opportunities to symbolise thought through the arts and were introduced to a school-wide year plan for visual arts, exploring materials working towards mastery, using 'encounters' as a start point.

The staff getaway in 2016 was originally to be held in Burleigh Heads. Poor weather forced the land camping trip to a change of venue. The drier environment of a house in Mooloolaba provided staff with the environment to unpack the thinking of Immanuel Kant. 'Freedom: will, autonomy' by Paul Guyer. Conversations exploring Kant's thinking and how it connects to Maridahdi, self and students were conducted. These conversations enabled thinking to be transferred to the classroom - supporting students to see themselves as 'an individual in a community context'.

"In choosing not to cultivate your potential talents, you make what may seem to be a free choice when it is considered in isolation, but it is in fact a choice to deprive yourself of the means that the cultivation of your talents would afford to the rational pursuit of your freely chosen ends;"

Immanuel Kant



All staff participated in professional development with a focus on Child Protection and completed ISQ's online course.

Curriculum

With the arts being a focus through Student Free Days in 2017, students were invited to attend an 'Arts Day' with a focus on 'materials'. Students were given opportunities to explore different materials in different spaces. They were encouraged to use the materials and encounters with the unknown to be the protagonist for their focus. Students had a choice in where and how they worked. Staff supported students across the site, not fixed or attached to any one space or material.



The focus on the arts supported a week-long residency of artist Bronte Naylor. Whilst on site, Bronte created two concept pieces, shared with the community. Students then chose which piece and theme best suited the exterior wall of the Tower staircase. The artist description is included below.

'Ecosystem (mangroves)'

"This design highlights a working and dynamic ecosystem; the mangroves. A natural environment that is cyclical in nature, mangroves generate unique resources and maintain the circle of life. This connects with the mantra "thought...creating itself as it goes" (Deleuze & Guatterri) and is interwoven with Maridahdi's approach to learning.

The Mangrove Jack features as the centre point of this design, surrounded by geometric and natural elements. The diamond and the circle connects with literal thinking, where the organic shapes represent lateral thinking, creativity and problem-solving. Collectively, this imagery illustrates one of the many symbiotic relationships (mutually beneficial) within this habitat. The layout offers an insight into the workings of this ecosystem; revealing the mangrove leaves in the top half, absorbing the sunlight and the root system thriving in the bottom half.

The topographical-esque line work featured in blue, stemmed from the 'Artist in Residence'; sparked through conversation surrounding drawing with confidence, as opposed to sourcing from the internet. This involved drawing an organic shape, then responding with another line and so on. The outcome discusses natural world patterns and the rhythm (heartbeat) of how the earth rises and falls (mountains into ocean)."

Students were exposed to a large-scale art project onsite, from start to finish. This encounter supported student thinking around visual arts, enhancing possibilities.



In Term 3, Maridahdi was visited by musician and producer Kuren. Kuren had recently won Triple J's Unearthed competition and was touring Australia. His tour brought him to Toowoomba. Students contacted Kuren inviting him to visit the school, and he accepted the offer. Students from across the school were witness to a brief performance from the artist. Kuren also explained how his music was produced, and where his inspiration came from.



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Community

Families were invited to actively participate in how community engagement could look at Maridahdi in 2017. An initial forum was held informing the community about the connection between well-being and community engagement. Data from PISA suggesting that higher rates of parent involvement in their child's learning supports increased student's sense of wellbeing.

Encouraging this contribution, parents were given the opportunity to have a voice in how community engagement could look for 2017. Parents also discussed areas of focus for further community gatherings. Parents requested four sessions, led by staff and specialists focusing on THRASS (Teaching Handwriting Reading and Spelling Skills), Talking About Sexuality and Relationships (led by True Relationships and Reproductive Health), Anger as an Emotion, and a forum with past students sharing their experiences since leaving Maridahdi and transitioning to high school.



As the year drew to a close, the community engaged in two new ventures. One was to explore 'Why Maridahdi?' the other was an opportunity to engage in and work towards creating a 'Bullying' Policy that philosophically aligns with Maridahdi.

Titled the 'Our Humanness' project, current parents of Maridahdi engaged with interviews that were filmed and shared on social media. The interviews gave parents the opportunity to share why they chose Maridahdi, and how their journey has been - the ups and the downs. Through the series of films shot on location, parents were asked to be vulnerable when sharing. The interviews captured and shared that parents choosing Maridahdi come from various walks of life, that as a community being human is what we all have in common - a call for acceptance and understanding.

The leadership team, with support from the governing council, opened up a discussion about the current 'Bullying' Policy. The aim was to ask parents to consider how to build an inclusive and supportive environment for all students at Maridahdi. Parents were asked to consider difference amongst the student population and shift away from a one size fits all approach. The community reflected on a number of considerations that can influence children's interactions, and how to best support all individuals involved.

- Marc Rosenstein (Deputy Principal)

Parent, Teacher and Student Satisfaction with the School

Maridahdi School has seen an increase in enrolments from the previous year as well as higher retention of students continuing on through the year levels.

"I see my son's skills expanding and I feel fortunate that he is in a place where he is supported to discover himself, and to be apart of a community and learn about the world that he is a part of." – Parent

"I have had the pleasure in just watching and witnessing more of [child's name]'s personality and growth unfold into more deeper thinking for what things mean to her. I am very grateful for the space and Maridahdi where [child's name] is well supported by her friends and the teachers." – Parent

"It's been fun this year because we got to learn stuff and I feel happy when I learn how to do all this stuff. This year I've changed. I've grown. I like my friends because they help me. Everyone in the school is my friend." – Student (7 years old)

Contact Person for Further Information:

Title: Kirsten Dengler, Business Management and Administration

School Income Broken Down by Funding Source:

For further information, please refer to the My School Website at <http://www.myschool.edu.au/>.

Staffing Information

Staff Composition:

At the commencement of 2017, our Staff consisted of:

- 1 Full-time Principal
- 1 Full-time Teacher.5/Deputy .5
- 9 Part-time Teachers
- 2 Full-time Support Staff
- 4 Part-time Support Staff
- 1 Part Time Administration (Business Management) .6/fortnight
- 1 Part Time Accounts .2/fortnight
- 1 Part-Time Reception .5/fortnight

Teachers: 2 Male 8 Female
Support Staff: 4 Male 2 Female

Qualifications of all Teachers:

Qualification	Either detail the number or the percentage of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school who hold this qualification
Doctorate or higher	0
Masters	1
Bachelor Degree	8

Diploma	2
Certificate	0

Expenditure on and Teacher Participation in Professional Development:

a) Teacher Participation in Professional Development

Description of PD activity	Number of teachers and support staff (aides) participating in activity
Professional Development - Mooloolaba	9
In house student free days – curriculum	14
Thrass training	5
QUT Training	1
ISQ Forum – June 2017	2
Total number of teachers and support staff participating in at least one activity in the program year	14

b) Expenditure on Professional Development

Total Number of Teachers & Support Staff	Total expenditure on teacher and support staff PD (as recorded in Financial Questionnaire)	Average expenditure on PD per teacher and support staff
14	\$2420 (THRASS) \$2340 (Mooloolaba) \$18322 (SFD wages) \$793 QUT (Principal training) \$700 (ISQ Forum)	\$1755
The total funds expended on teacher professional development in 2017		\$24575
The proportion of the teaching staff involved in professional development activities during 2017		%100
The major professional development initiatives were as follows Staff 'Escape', THRASS, demonstrating knowledge of the curriculum and its application to the ethos in a child-driven approach.		

Staff attendance:

Maridahdi balances the wellbeing of its staff through a preference for teaching teams in every classroom. This allows for flexibility and consistency in the classroom when staff require personal leave. Maridahdi does not view staff absences as solely symptomatic of work dissatisfaction or unsatisfactory staff performance as Maridahdi understands that personal issues are not always able to be negotiated outside of work hours. Accordingly, Maridahdi does not publish this data.

Proportion of teaching staff retained from the previous year:

Number of permanent teaching/support staff at end of previous year	Number of these staff retained in the following year (the program year)	% retention rate
13	13	100%
During the 2017 school year, 6 of the 13 staff retained from 2016 resigned for various reasons including retirement and family/carer commitments.		

Key Student Outcomes

Average student attendance rate (%) for the whole school (excluding Kindergarten):

The average attendance rate for the whole school as a percentage in 2017 was 92%

Average student attendance rate for each year level:

Year levels	Average attendance rate for each year level as a percentage in 2017
Prep	88%
Year 1	90%
Year 2	91%
Year 3	90%
Year 4	91%
Year 5	95%
Year 6	87%

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A description of how non-attendance is managed by the school:

All children are signed in every morning and signed out every afternoon by their parent/carer. All parents/carers are required to fill out a "Note of Absence" after their child has been absent. Parents are also encouraged to phone in on the day their child is absent so their teacher can be notified.

Long term non-attendance is managed by:

- Maridahdi identifies that an unsatisfactory absence exists.
- If there is no positive change to absenteeism after 14 days and there is no valid reason from parent/carer, a letter (letter 1) is sent by registered post and signed by the Principal.
- A meeting with parent/carer is arranged and if there is no change in absenteeism within 7 days another letter (letter 2) is sent by registered post and signed by the Principal.
- If there is no change in the further 7 days enrolment is terminated, the matter is referred to child safety, and a final letter (letter 3) is sent to QPS

NAPLAN results for Years 3, 5 and 7 and 9 in 2017

In 2017 NAPLAN was offered to all year 3 and 5 students however all parents elected to withdraw their child/ren because of philosophical objections to the standardised testing.

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