

BOLDER, BRIGHTER



Students at Kilvington Grammar School have a vibrant new learning hub with the recent completion of a middle school of excellence at the school's Ormond campus.

Designed by leading educational architects ClarkeHopkinsClarke, the new centre accommodates Kilvington's middle school curriculum, with varied and adaptable learning spaces supported by audiovisual and IT infrastructure in an environment of abundant natural light, airflow and colour.

Kilvington, a smaller, co-educational, independent school, caters for students from early learning to VCE. The school developed a reputation for innovation as one of Australia's first laptop and wireless schools and since its 2011 transition from girls-only to co-education there has been strong growth in student numbers, with enrolments expected to be capped at about 800 by 2017.

Federal Goldstein MP Andrew Robb is scheduled to open the centre on October 17.

Year 9 students moved in at the start of last month and Kilvington principal Jon Charlton says students and staff are excited and inspired by their new environment. Charlton says students and teachers from junior and senior years are equally enthused about the new centre and will use it when year 9 classes work on their external "Challenge and Explore" program.

"I'm very proud of this building. We have an exceptional relationship with our architects and we have already seen how their long experience in educational design benefits learning in the school. They have translated how we teach and learn here into the best possible environment," he says.

"The middle school years are often challenging – students can feel the pressure of expectations

(SUPPLIED)

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with senior years ahead. It is important they feel well supported so they are engaged and productive. We wanted our centre to facilitate creativity and abundant ideas, with robust discussion, collaboration and, of course, academic excellence.”

Charlton says the school is conscious of investing parents’ money wisely and the centre represents exceptional value. “For \$2.2 million, we have four brand new classrooms, a quiet learning space, open collaborative learning and meeting spaces, two staff offices and a lift, and downstairs we have renovated another three classrooms and the staff lounge and added another staff office.”

ClarkeHopkinsClarke associate Simon Le Nepveu says the school identified its middle years as a priority within its master plan, begun with CHC in 2010. The school wanted the centre to provide connection and community for its middle-years students, in varied and flexible learning spaces.

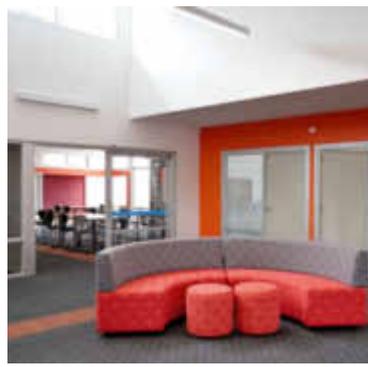
“We have designed a lot of visual transparency and connection into the centre,” Le Nepveu says.

“Educational research finds that learners learn better when they can see how other learners are learning and teachers also learn from watching other teachers teach.

“Open learning spaces also allow for personalised learning and provide students flexibility in the way they work.”

Visual connections and natural light and airflow are apparent in the centre’s large sliding internal glass panels and a multitude of windows positioned to draw in light and air. Two classrooms have full height and width glass panels to the central, collaborative space, with a quiet room or seminar space in between where students can work individually or in groups.

Flexibility is a central element in learning



“THE COLOUR SPECTRUM WITHIN NATURAL LIGHT HAS DIFFERENT WAVELENGTHS, WHICH STIMULATE THE BRAIN” – ARCHITECT SIMON LE NEPVEU



New look:

As well as open and interactive spaces, Kilvington’s new middle-years hub uses a distinctive colour palette. (SUPPLIED)

spaces divided by sliding glass panels and with an opening wall to the central zone allowing division when required. Each night, high windows open automatically to purge stale air and ensure there’s fresh air in the centre for the next day.

Le Nepveu says providing natural light and fresh air is a priority at CHC. The latest research reinforces its importance to the quality of learning.

“I recently heard a neuroscientist speak about the science behind natural light and learning,” he says. “The colour spectrum within natural light has different wavelengths, which stimulate the brain to retain knowledge where artificial light does not.”

On the centre’s street façade, skewed bay windows provide a modern take on the school’s design elements and draw in diffuse and glare-free southern light. Seating within the bay windows is already popular with students, providing ideal nooks for study, reading, discussion and quiet reflection.

A bold colour palette of red, orange and maroon is used on the façade and on internal pinboard materials that – along with acoustic ceilings – absorb sound. Technology in the centre moderates and localises sound within learning zones, as well as augmenting it for students with hearing issues. Technology also promotes learning via connectivity, using features such as interactive projectors.

Future projects include refurbishing the school’s science laboratories in term four and extending the VCE study centre next year. \

LIZ MCLACHLAN

lmclachlan@theweeklyreview.com.au

» **Kilvington Grammar**
2 Leila Road, Ormond, Victoria 3204. 9578 6231
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