Innovative classrooms: Changing the shape of teaching

Prescription for the best educational start in life
Rewriting the book on literature teaching

2017
Welcome from the Dean

The Melbourne Graduate School of Education is truly at the cutting edge of research. As detailed on page 5, our unprecedented E4Kids longitudinal study has developed new evidence about the quality of Australian early childhood education and produced powerful insights for parents, educators and policymakers.

Since 2008, our Master of Teaching has played a significant role in reshaping teacher education through its clinical teaching approach. Building on this success, in 2016 we undertook a thorough program review and reaccreditation to further strengthen its evidence based approach.

A range of pathway options have been introduced into our Master of Teaching programs to offer teacher candidates the flexibility to pursue research, undertake an enriched placement in an alternative education setting or expand their professional knowledge through electives. We also launched the new Master of Teaching (Early Childhood and Primary), giving our graduates dual registration in early childhood education and all primary years from birth to 12 years.

I’m also pleased to report that for the sixth year in a row the Graduate School has been ranked number one in Australia for Education, and in the top 10 globally. This exceptional QS Subject Ranking is a strong endorsement of the outstanding work of our dedicated and talented staff, as well as the quality of our graduates.

Our contribution to public policy deepened considerably this year, with the four-part ABC documentary Revolution School powerfully and publicly demonstrating the power of clinical teaching and the success of our world-class research and interventions. Set in one of our network schools, Kambrya College in Melbourne’s outer south-east, Revolution School brought home the fact it is the quality of interactions with teachers, rather than populist solutions like small class sizes, that make the difference to student learning. The broadcast of the series right before the Federal Election was ideal, and helped to better inform the education policy debate.

Lifting Australia’s education standards is a critical and complex challenge, and one that I will focus closely on when I conclude my term as Dean in August 2017 after 13 years in the role.

Electing not to pursue a further term was a difficult decision, however I am pleased that I will remain on as a Professor of Education. I am honoured that I will have the title of Dean Emeritus, and I look forward to leading a number of projects within the Graduate School and the Melbourne School of Government with a focus on research, innovation, policy and engagement.

I am enormously proud of our achievements in transforming from a faculty to a graduate school, and introducing the Master of Teaching which has played such a large part in our recognition globally as a leading school of education.

Professor Field Rickards, Dean, Melbourne Graduate School of Education

To discuss potential partnerships, please contact our Business Development Director James Demetriou, james.demetriou@unimelb.edu.au.

Photography by Marcel Aucar, unless otherwise stated.

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Annual Review

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The Graduate School at a glance

- Over 66,000 alumni
- 50 awards presented in 2016
- 1.5 million+ website page views in 2016, increase of 10.4%
- Over 76 schools across four networks involved in the Network of Schools
- 893 current research grants and contracts
- Faculty of Education established in 1923
- 485 glasses of wine consumed during 2016 Dean’s Lectures
- 475 research publications in 2016
- 7 research centres and 3 research hubs
- 3,518 Twitter followers, 73% increase from 2015
- The Revolution School documentary received 2.8 million+ views
- First Diploma of Education delivered in 1909
- Over 400 Master of Teaching placement schools and early childhood centres
- 5,200+ Dean’s Lecture Series views in 2016 (in person and online)
Revolution School

The achievements and challenges of one of our network schools, Kambrya College, were broadcast in June 2016 in the four-part ABC documentary Revolution School. For the first time in Australia, fixed and roving cameras captured the inner workings of a typical suburban public high school over the course of an entire school year.

This unique partnership clearly demonstrated the complexities and challenges of teaching, as well as the power of networks, collaboration and research. Revolution School shows our academics working with the school to take a clinical approach to teaching, and supporting them to trial new teaching innovations and interventions, including classroom management and wellbeing approaches that improve the quality of education.

Our staff have engaged closely with Kambrya College since they became a Master of Teaching base school in 2011, and the school’s ongoing program of change was further supported when they joined our Network of Schools at the start of 2015.

Revolution School aired in June 2016, and is available on iTunes and Google Play.

Inaugural Professor of Science Education

World leading scholar Professor Jan van Driel joined the Graduate School in September 2016 as our inaugural Professor of Science Education. A former chemistry teacher, Professor van Driel has a PhD in Chemical Education, and until recently was Professor of Science Education and Director of the Leiden University Graduate School of Teaching in the Netherlands. He is working closely with other faculties including science, engineering and medicine to provide leadership in science education reform and the development of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) teachers.

Launch of studioFive arts education space

The Graduate School’s long-awaited arts education space is now in use, and is truly every art teacher’s dream. Comprising specialist studios for drama, music and visual art, studioFive is multi-purpose built and can be tailored to teaching styles in each artistic discipline. Led by Professor Susan Wright, Chair of Arts Education, this unique space brings together visiting fellows, artists-in-residence and over 50 doctoral and masters students to generate teaching practices that will meet the needs of 21st century.

Australian Research Council (ARC) funding success

The Graduate School received outstanding results in the 2016 ARC grants. Professor David Clarke and his international colleagues received great success with $1.165 million for the following two lead grants:

- Learning from lessons: International study of mathematics teacher learning, and
- Social essentials of learning: Collaborative learning in Australia and China.
Minister James Merlino, Professor Stephen Dinham and Dean of Education Professor Field Rickards at the book launch of Leading, Learning and Teaching

Minister Merlino launches Professor Stephen Dinham’s new book

The Victorian Deputy Premier and Minister for Education The Hon James Merlino MP recently launched Professor Stephen Dinham’s latest book *Leading, Learning and Teaching* which details how school leaders should lead the charge to improve education outcomes. This new book builds on extensive research in Australia and around the world, and follows the success of Stephen’s popular 2008 book *How to Get Your School Moving and Improving*.

Network of Schools success

The University of Melbourne’s Network of Schools, based in the Graduate School, has grown strongly since its launch in 2014 and now involves more than 76 schools from all sectors in four network groups. A new network of 11 schools was established in the Goulburn Valley in 2016.

Schools receive strong benefits from collaborating with and learning from a diverse range of other schools, and working together with our world class researchers to improve student learning. Each network decides its priority focus area, such as data informed practice, reading and comprehension, writing, positive psychology and lifting the performance of highly performing students.

For more information, or to express an interest in joining the network, please contact the Network’s Director Katherine Henderson, katherine.henderson@unimelb.edu.au

Miegunyah Fellowship Professor Anna Sfard

The Graduate School successfully secured a Miegunyah Distinguished Visiting Fellowship, with Professor Anna Sfard visiting from the University of Haifa, Israel in 2017. A professor of mathematics education, Anna Sfard will deliver a Miegunyah lecture in partnership with the Graduate School’s Dean’s Lecture Series in 2017 on the topic of *Learning about human learning: How to know more and why we will never know enough*.

Dean’s Lecture Series

Learn about some of the biggest issues in education by attending one of our lively Dean’s Lectures. In 2017 we will hear from internationally renowned experts from Australia and overseas. To keep up to date join the mailing list by emailing education-events@unimelb.edu.au.

You can view our previous lectures on our YouTube channel, including the very popular 2016 address by Laureate Professor John Hattie, which was also the Jack Keating Memorial Lecture.

Growing accolades

A high number of staff and students received prestigious awards in 2016. These include:

- **Laureate Professor John Hattie** topping the Australian Financial Review’s most powerful in education list
- **Professor Lyn Yates** was awarded the title of Redmond Barry Distinguished Professor in recognition of her outstanding leadership
- **Professor Joseph Lo Bianco** received multiple high profile awards including:
  - The University of Melbourne’s Excellence in Engagement – Public Value Award
  - The Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes (FIPLV or International Federation of Language Teacher Associations) 2015 International Award
  - The Universitas 21 Award for excellence in the internationalisation of higher education for his international Peacebuilding and Language project, where he has pioneered a method of conflict mitigation in three South East Asian countries, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand, in which language issues are a source of tension
- **Nathaniel Swain** won the University of Melbourne’s Three Minute Thesis competition (3MT®) and came second in the Asia-Pacific event for his thesis titled *Speech-language pathology intervention for young offenders: A series of empirical single case studies.*

Going online

We proudly launched a number of wholly online education courses in 2016, to join our existing Master of Evaluation course, including:

- The Master of Clinical Teaching and the Professional Certificate in Teaching (Clinical)
- The Graduate Certificate and Master of Education (International Baccalaureate) Diploma Programme
- A suite of Tertiary Education Management courses, including the Master of Tertiary Education (Management).
We know that quality early childhood education is critical, but what is actually happening in kindergartens, childcare and homes across Australia?

Over five years, dozens of researchers from the University of Melbourne and Queensland University of Technology have ventured deep into family homes and early childhood education services, tracking almost 2,500 children aged from three to eight in an unprecedented Australian investigation.

Their ambitious mission? To determine the interactions, environments and experiences that give a child the best educational start in life. Or as chief investigator Professor Collette Tayler sums it up, to write the prescription “for the development of a child’s mind”.

They found that across the landscape of childcare and early learning – that’s everything from family day care to pre-school – Australian children generally enjoy high levels of emotional and social support. But only one per cent of them experience high-quality instructional engagement with adults in their play, and this ingredient is fundamental to their cognitive development and future learning.

Further, the children who most need these quality moments – “those who have more risk factors, who are most disadvantaged” – are the least likely to encounter programs capable of delivering them, says Professor Tayler, director of the landmark Effective Early Educational Experiences (E4Kids) study, which has just published its conclusions after almost a decade of work.

These findings provide powerful insights for parents and educators seeking to advocate for children’s needs, Professor Tayler says. “This is the first time we have formal, empirical evidence of that link to children’s outcomes.”

They also represent a profound challenge to policy makers.

“We know that quality early childhood education is critical, but what is actually happening in kindergartens, childcare and homes across Australia?

Prescription for the best educational start in life

Pioneering study finds that how we interact with young children during play can have a huge impact on their cognitive development. By Jo Chandler

The rhetoric around early childhood and early intervention and its importance for a child starting well is there in the policy, but the planning for services is largely left to the market.

“The result is that the most disadvantaged children live in areas where the market fails them – it doesn’t provide them with the better quality education and care that they need.

“Governments and authorities need to be a little more directive in closing the gaps,” she says. As the final report observes: “There are few social justice issues more vital than building a better life for all children, and a more prosperous nation.”

Work on the E4Kids study began in 2008 with the recognition that there was a gap in understanding how the quality of early childhood education and care plays out in driving children’s outcomes. So began the mammoth task of designing the investigation and recruiting into it 2,500 three-year-olds and their families, carers and teachers from the social and geographic spectrum.

The exercise required intimately exploring the health, home-life and socio-economic circumstances to control for variables. The nature and organisation of the programs each child attended were recorded, and the quality of adult-child interactions observed and assessed. The children’s cognitive abilities were tested over three years, and then all the findings were evaluated against grade three NAPLAN scores.

At the core of the analysis were the observations researchers made of the exchanges between children and the adults teaching and caring for them. Their challenge was to distinguish emotional/social support, as distinct from instructional support.

“I know it sounds like school, but we are not referring to it in that way,” explains Professor Tayler. “What we are talking about is the way an adult talks to a child when they are in a play situation, and what they are drawing out in their thinking and in their language development.”

For example, in an emotional support situation, the adult – be it a childcare worker or a pre-school teacher – might perceive that a child is hesitating to join in play. That adult may go in to help the child connect, or remind them to use their words – such cues reassure and support the child.

“But with instructional support, the educator is probing and pushing the child’s thinking, asking them about something they are doing rather than just saying ‘well done, good

Parents can help develop their children’s minds by using instructional support during play. Picture: Shutterstock
Instructional teaching explained

Also known as “intentional teaching,” instructional support is thoughtful, informed and deliberate.

Everything that early childhood educators do in their daily interactions with children teaches them something. If you listen carefully and respond sensitively, children are taught that you really care about them as people and believe they have worthy opinions and ideas. If you notice that children are interested in a new idea and follow this up in your interactions with them, you’re making opportunities for children to learn and test new concepts. You’re beginning to be instructional.

Being intentional about maths: An example:

• Several preschoolers were talking and comparing about who was bigger than whom.

• An educator who was listening was aware of early math concepts and keen to include the language and ideas of maths in the children’s everyday experiences.

• Planning for a small group activity, she intentionally chose to use playdough for maths talk because it is familiar and popular.

• As children rolled their play dough she engaged them in conversation—“mine is longer than…”?, “Luke’s is as long as the table”? “whose is longest”? “we need to join them together to fit the big table” “who is tallest out of Ben, Kylie and Luke?”

• By creating an opportunity for children to make comparisons and draw and test conclusions the educator was intentionally teaching important ways of thinking mathematically.

• By engaging children in shared, sustained conversation, she extended their understandings, providing new language to describe things and showing that she valued their thinking.

The study found that access to instructional support was extremely low across all settings — childcare and kinder environments — although in the latter it was marginally better. Professor Tayler hopes the E4Kids report helps to break down distinctions between the “care” obligations in childcare versus kinder programs.

She also urges policy makers to recognise the social and economic benefits of investing in professional development for adults who work with children to refine their instructional techniques, and also in outreach to families so that the same strategies are ingrained in daily routines at home.

Such investment should target the geographic and socio-economic gaps identified in the study. There is a strong justification to prioritise investing in programs in the least advantaged neighbourhoods, and to put more focus on programs for toddlers, says Professor Tayler.

“The bright children who have been developed this way at home will do well anyway,” she says.

“But the children who don’t get much of this interaction are the ones who most need it, and who then make great gains from it.”
Research in focus: Educational technology

Our growing suite of evidence-based educational software is designed to support teachers and teacher candidates across all sectors of education – from early childhood, primary and secondary education, to tertiary and vocational education and training.

Developed by internationally renowned educators and academics in consultation with the local and international educational community, our products respond to students’ identified needs. They each have the common goal of improving learning and life outcomes for students across all sectors through the continuous improvement of educational knowledge, methodology, review, and teaching programs through tailored modification.

Assessment Research Centre Online Tools

A range of online assessment and reporting tools that teachers can use to assess and receive feedback on the learning progress of their students has been developed by the Assessment Research Centre.

21st Century Skills (C21)
C21 uses a set of collaborative problem-solving tasks to facilitate individual social and cognitive growth. Recommended for students aged 13 and over, the tasks focus on the skills and knowledge needed by today’s students to become productive citizens of the technological age.

* Read the story below to learn about how C21 tasks are being piloted across grades 5 and 9 in Columbia and Peru.

Numeracy Tests
Numeracy Tests provides linked online multiple-choice tests for assessing primary and secondary school students’ numeracy skills. The targeted tests cover the areas of number, geometry, measurement, and chance and data. Students are placed on a learning progression ranging from basic skills through to sophisticated skills.

Reading Comprehension Tests
Reading Comprehension Tests comprises a set of ten reading comprehension tests for primary and secondary school students. The targeted tests report against a single learning progression that caters for the range of diverse reading skills within a classroom while also providing information about what each student is ready to learn next.

Students with Additional Needs (SWANs)
SWANs provides assessment, planning, and teaching advice to assist teachers working with students with additional needs.

21st Century Skills (C21)
The C21 assessment system is being used in a pilot study of 800 students across grades 5 and 9 in Columbia and Peru from September 2016 to July 2017.

The regional project, Building comparative methodologies and indicators to measure the use and impact of ICT in the classroom, is led by the Foundation for Higher Education and Development (Fedesarrollo), Columbia, and funded by the International Development Research Center.

Claire Scoular, a Research Fellow at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, presented findings from the use of C21 in Latin American countries at the Regional Technical Network Meeting of the project in November 2016 in Lima, Peru. The meeting involved project representatives from Argentina, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Uruguay, Peru and Mexico as well as international educational experts in the area of information and communications technology (ICT).
Educator Capability Assessment Tools (EdCAT)

These new online tools are being developed by our Centre for Program Evaluation to support the continual evaluation of teacher skills and capabilities, from the time a prospective teacher candidate first applies for entry into a teacher education course through to the advanced levels of professional practice.

TCAT

Teacher Capability Assessment Tool (TCAT)
TCAT uses a sophisticated mix of data, methods, analysis and interpretation to enable informed teacher selection and development.

TEXCAT

Teacher Exit Capability and Assessment Tool (TEXCAT)
TEXCAT uses a secure web-based platform to enable teacher accreditation authorities and educational institutions to assess a graduating teacher candidate’s pedagogical knowledge and skills. It supports teacher recruitment processes, assists initial teacher education institutions in planning and refining course offerings, and can be used by graduating teacher candidates to inform their professional development.

Specific Mathematics Assessments that Reveal Thinking (SMART::tests)

The SMART::tests system provides online diagnostic mathematics tests for middle-school students. It provides reports to teachers about their students’ current understanding, and flags the occurrence of common misconceptions. This information assists teachers to plan to meet the learning needs of their students.

A 2015 data analysis found considerable evidence that the SMART::tests system improves teacher’s knowledge about their students’ learning, such as tasks suitable for learners at different stages. Interestingly, expert teachers benefit from the system just as much as graduate teachers, with no clear link between improved knowledge for teaching mathematics and the number of years spent teaching.

Visible Classroom

Visible Classroom enables real-time classroom teaching and student responses to be transcribed and analysed, to provide high-quality feedback direct to the teacher together with relevant teaching metrics. The information is also stored in a cloud-based content management system for the teacher’s later use. In this way, the teacher acquires a trove of lessons and other information that they are able to review, compare, analyse, modify, and develop further over time, as may be appropriate for changing needs and circumstances.

Visible Classroom was developed by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education in partnership with Ai-Media, which is the global distributor of this product.

For more information about any of these software products, please contact James Demetriou, Business Development Director, james.demetriou@unimelb.edu.au
Think back to your school days. Did your teachers run lessons that taught you to understand your emotions, build your resilience and develop life skills? If you graduated before the mid-90s, odds are your answer will be no.

Yet, over the past two decades, student wellbeing has become a key part of the global education agenda. In a recent analysis of national curriculum frameworks across 37 Organisation for Economic Development (OECD) countries, 72 per cent of countries now explicitly include student wellbeing as a learning priority.

Australia’s National Curriculum includes reference to wellbeing under “personal and social capability”, which involves teaching students in ways that develop empathy, build positive relationships, enhance responsible decision-making, help students learn how to handle challenging situations and develop leadership skills.

The inclusion of wellbeing in our National Curriculum is much needed given that the Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA) – a test of more than 500,000 15-year-olds across 76 countries – shows Australian students have had a decline in both academic performance and school wellbeing (school belonging and engagement) in the past decade.

Currently, around 25 per cent of young Australians report experiencing symptoms of mental illness. Suicide is a leading cause of death in Australian youth, and 50 per cent of all youth illness is mental illness.

Now more than ever, schools need to help build the wellbeing of students in their care. The challenge is how to do this when the core business of a school has always been, and needs to remain, academic learning.

How do we infuse wellbeing into the essence of the learning process itself so that all students in all classrooms have positive and productive experiences at school?

I recently had the good fortune to work on this very challenge with Kambrya College, a state school in Melbourne’s south-east growth corridor, which has gone from being in the bottom 10 per cent of Victorian VCE results in 2008 to being in the top 25 per cent.

As you can see in the third episode of the four-part ABC documentary Revolution School, I worked with the school to put in place my new educational initiative: Visible Wellbeing.

Teachers can be trained in the Visible Wellbeing approach so that it works for all teaching styles and contexts – across early learning, primary and secondary education.

Visible Wellbeing is a flexible approach for integrating student wellbeing into the learning process across any subject matter. It is not a set curriculum about wellbeing; rather it is an evidence-based way of teaching that builds wellbeing while also delivering the academic curriculum.

Visible Wellbeing works to shift wellbeing from a subjective, internal experience, to a tangible, observable phenomenon that is visible in class to teachers and students.

As teachers discover what aspects of the learning process boost student wellbeing and can be used to build resilience, a clear link between learning and wellbeing is developed. This allows teachers to teach their academic curriculum (e.g. maths or history) in ways that also boost student wellbeing.

The Centre for Positive Psychology’s new assessment tool, the Wellbeing Profiler, was used to evaluate the Visible Wellbeing pilot at Kambrya College. Students at Kambrya who were taught using the Visible Wellbeing approach were assessed via the Wellbeing Profiler before and after the pilot.

81 per cent of students reported feeling more confident in taking care of their wellbeing as a result of the Visible Wellbeing approach. Students reported increases in happiness, life satisfaction, self-esteem, optimism and resilience. They also reported decreases in stress and bottling up their emotions.

While the Visible Wellbeing pilot at Kambrya College involved a small sample size and further research is needed, the approach clearly holds great promise and the next challenge is to bring the program’s positive results to all young Australians. I’m up for the challenge. How about you?

For further information visit www.education.unimelb.edu.au/cpp

This article originally appeared in Pursuit, the University’s multimedia news website pursuit.unimelb.edu.au

Teaching wellbeing at school

Schools will always be focused on academic learning, but research suggests it is time to make wellbeing a regular part of teaching. By Professor Lea Waters @ProfLeaWaters

Visible Wellbeing is a flexible approach for integrating student wellbeing into the learning process across any subject matter. It is not a set curriculum about wellbeing; rather it is an evidence-based way of teaching that builds wellbeing while also delivering the academic curriculum.

Teachers can be trained in the Visible Wellbeing approach so that it works for all teaching styles and contexts – across early learning, primary and secondary education.
The first years of life are crucial to lifelong learning, wellbeing and success. Yet even in a country as prosperous as Australia, one in five children are developmentally at risk by the time they start school.

Every child has the right to learn, but the process to support the learning and development of young children with disabilities is not always clear.

Launched by the Victorian Government in early 2016, the Early Abilities Based Learning and Education Support (Early ABLES) resources support early childhood educators working with children, aged 2-5, with a disability or developmental delay.

Bernadette Coles-Janess, from the Graduate School’s Assessment Research Centre, is one of a team of researchers involved in the development of Early ABLES.

“Early ABLES is the result of a shared vision and almost a decade-long research partnership between the Graduate School and the Victorian Department of Education and Training,” she says.

“This integrated suite of materials supports educators to readily assess, plan for, monitor and report on the learning of atypically developing children, something that many educators currently struggle to do.”

Early ABLES is an adapted version of the ABLES tool, an assessment and reporting program that has been available to Victorian schools since its release in 2011, and is currently being used in thousands of schools throughout Australia.

Ms Coles-Janess reports that the Early ABLES assessments, which have been aligned to the Victorian Early Years Learning Development Framework and the Victorian Curriculum, help educators determine what a child can do and where they are likely to go next in their learning.

“Early ABLES provides a wonderful aid to planning. It helps identify where children are in their learning journeys, enabling educators to create teaching and learning programs tailored to each child’s learning needs and strengths,” she says.

“Educators are particularly excited by the associated teaching strategies that are also supplied in the reports.”

Cerri May, an educational leader at the Harbour Child and Family Centre Docklands, was one of hundreds of early childhood professionals who helped review and test the Early ABLES materials to ensure they are contextually relevant.

“The Early ABLES is a simple tool that is very user-friendly and quickly identifies strategies to assist educators and families to support children’s learning,” she says.

“We’ve been trialling Early ABLES for over a year now and it’s really made our lives easier when it comes to assessing, planning and developing tailored learning programs for each child.”

Early ABLES also assists the school transition process for children with disabilities, says Ms Coles-Janess, improving how information is shared between early childhood professionals, families and school professionals to allow for more consistency and less duplication of process.

“Transitioning to school can be a particularly difficult time for families and children. Having information that bridges the educational sectors will help smooth this process for all involved,” she says.

“Parents can be reassured that their child will be seen and understood, and foundation teachers will be able to draw on information and resources to support their practice. This means that provisions to aid the learning of young children with disabilities can be in place from day one.”

Why use Early ABLES?

TO determine a child’s current progress in learning

TO assist in the development of appropriate learning goals linked to the Victorian Early Years Learning Development Framework

TO assist in the development of individual learning plans with a focus on what a child is ready to learn

TO monitor a child’s learning progress

TO improve the information shared as a child transitions between educators and especially as they transition to school.

This article originally appeared in Pursuit, the University’s multimedia news website pursuit.unimelb.edu.au
All of us have been shaped by our schooling, yet how many people actually know what happens inside Australian schools these days?

Our stake in education is strong: your children, grandchildren, nieces or nephews may be in school; you might be planning to start a family; at the very least you were once a student. Yet few of us really understand what happens inside these black boxes in our communities.

This is why, as Dean of Education at the University of Melbourne, I seized a unique opportunity to be part of an in-depth documentary titled *Revolution School*, which aired on the ABC in mid-2016. The four-part series captured the achievements and challenges of Kambrya College, a typical suburban public high school in Melbourne’s outer south-east that has been working hard to improve itself.

For the first time in Australia, fixed and roving cameras captured the inner workings of a secondary school over an entire school year. Camera people working out of an office in the school became not part of the furniture, but rather part of the school community – even competing in the annual swimming carnival.

Novelty aside, this was risky, honest and serious business. Many schools would cringe at the idea of allowing cameras into their classrooms and meetings to film everyday unpredictable dramas, and wonder if it would turn into a wild adolescent soap opera.

This quality piece of journalism can be hard to watch and you will see some raw and confronting situations. Just as nurses and firefighters have tough days, as a teacher you may encounter drugs, disobedience, bullying and anxious parents. Good teachers like those at Kambrya tackle these challenges while keeping their eye on the prize: the growth in learning of their students.

This landmark series absolutely shows just how hard teaching is. Teaching is not rocket science; it’s actually much more than that. It’s so hard in fact that here at the University of Melbourne we treat it as a graduate only qualification, with an average student age of 26 years.

The power of networks is clear through Kambrya’s work with our Network of Schools. We view schools as our collaborative partners and work with them to apply high quality research and measure its impact. As my colleague Professor John Hattie says, there is excellence in every school. Clustering schools harnesses the power of the collective by allowing them to share success and learn from each other.

Educational improvement requires innovative thinking and world-class research, which you’ll also see as our academics roll out interventions at Kambrya College. We support the school in trialling new classroom management techniques and literacy and wellbeing programs that are already improving the quality of education. They can also be applied to other schools.

Changing, collaborating and allowing intervention is not easy, but it is necessary and valuable.

Under the leadership of principal Michael Muscat, Kambrya College has dramatically lifted from the bottom 10 per cent of Victorian VCE results in 2008, to the top 25 per cent. But it hasn’t been easy, and Kambrya’s quiet revolution is not over.

Kambrya’s teachers relentlessly persist day in and day out in their pursuit of the best for each student. They ceaselessly address under-performance and stretch their high achievers. The perseverance of Kambrya’s team highlights the respect that we need to show teachers.

The series shows a school that has been on an eight-year journey of improvement.

As Andreas Schleicher, Education Director of the Organisation for Economic Development (OECD), says, Australia’s leaders are treating “teachers as interchangeable widgets on the frontline … just there to implement prefabricated knowledge”. Harsh, but in some ways true.
High achieving education systems such as those in Finland and Singapore have developed their population over the past 40 years through quality investment in education. They have selected entry to teacher training because they prize teachers on par with doctors. They also prioritise the development of teachers and principals above things like reducing class sizes, and invest in schools with more needs.

It is my belief that Australian education is ready for transformation, with teaching becoming a true profession.

At this moment in time, there is so much knowledge about what underpins great teaching that we have an enormous opportunity to develop a new breed of teachers with enhanced capabilities.

But to develop professionals that link the best theory with their practice, we need to break old models and stop the recycling of old teaching approaches. This is why, in 2008, we introduced a program that I describe as a genuine clinical master’s degree. Our Master of Teaching produces highly skilled interventionist teachers who assess and diagnose the needs of each individual student.

This new approach requires us to change the thinking within the University and within schools, as we build a bridge between the two. Our academics work with practicing teachers in schools to train up new teachers who will have a transformative effect on their student’s learning.

While some Australian reforms are in train through the 2015 Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group report process, further work is required to esteem teaching, attract the brightest candidates into the profession and introduce professional structures that value the most able.

We also need to reconceptualise schools as a place where teaching is delivered in collaborative teams and schools are clustered to share success.

This article originally appeared in the Herald Sun in May 2016. Revolution School is available to purchase on iTunes and Google Play.
Researchers are assessing the value of modern classrooms and how teachers can use these spaces to help school children reach their full potential. By Jo Chandler

In Ms Richmond’s Grade 2 class of ’65, East Devonport Primary School, Wesley Imms got an education that set him on course for life.

His young teacher had just taken up her post in Tasmania after a sojourn in the UK, where she had soaked up some edgy educational thinking. The local schools superintendent happened to be absent, and with the principal on board, there was no one to thwart her then radical ambitions.

“She decided to turn the classroom into a ship for a year, and she sailed us around the world in the SS Discovery,” recalls Associate Professor Imms, from the Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

Day One the kids threw streamers out the windows as their parents waved them off. “I was the quartermaster – I had a little hat and used to ring the bell.” The purser would collect all the lunches as the pupils came aboard, passing them out when they weighed anchor for lunch. Lessons waited in every port.

The next year Ms Richmond transformed the classroom into a spaceship and Grade 2 spent a year on the moon. A couple of years later they ventured deep into the galaxy, inspired by Stanley Kubrick’s epic 2001: A Space Odyssey.

A few years ago, Associate Professor Imms and some of his University of Melbourne colleagues went back to interview Ms Richmond, then in her 80s, and trawled through her archive of lesson plans, slides and writing samples. They surveyed some of his Grade 2 fellow travellers and confirmed what Associate Professor Imms, drawing on his vivid memories, had long suspected.

“They all said they could remember almost nothing of the rest of their schooling, but that year was crystal clear,” he says.

“They could remember almost every day. We had that one year where a teacher really went out of her way to manipulate the environment and to introduce a pedagogy that was much more fluid and much more interdisciplinary.” The result was some transformative deep learning.

How and why these Grade 2 lessons became so ingrained goes to the core of what has become Associate Professor Imms’ professional and academic pursuit 50 years on.

“Space matters,” he says. “But more importantly, how teachers use space is the critical thing.”

Associate Professor Imms is project lead investigator of the Innovative Learning Environments and Teacher Change (ILETC) Project, a $2 million Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Project that will run for four years until 2020. It gears up just as another related ARC project – the Evaluation of 21st Century Learning Environments (E21LE), also overseen by Associate Professor Imms – comes to its end.

Between them, the two projects aim to build tools to assess the educative value of modern, innovative classrooms; and then to challenge teachers on how they might use these spaces to their full potential.

It’s an overdue investment in evaluating what works and doesn’t in the 21st century classroom – not least given concerns about Australia’s record of slow, steady decline across most educational standards.

What’s causing this shift? Do we blame the teaching, the environment, the adequacy of schools funding and resources? Digging into these questions is a central concern of Associate Professor Imms and his collaborators – educators, architects and designers – working within LEaRN.

Inevitably the backlash over NAPLAN includes calls from some quarters to “sit the kids down and read and write and do sums”.

“I’ve got no argument with that except when it’s the only teaching style,” he says. “Students facing the front, the teacher lecturing, kids writing it down and memorising it and spilling it back – we need a component of that for sure.”
But it needs to be integrated into a flexible suite of teaching styles and contexts if students are also going to graduate with the skills demanded in the changing workplace.

The next generation of workers, he says, “have to be collaborative, have to access information very quickly, have to work in teams, have to be very lateral in the way they approach problems, so they require a learning environment that builds those skills.”

Classrooms have been transformed by shifting fashions since the 1970s – free-range layouts; learning hubs and beanbag drop zones; moveable walls, to name a few. But there has been remarkably little effort by researchers anywhere to unpick the relationships between the hardware, the software, the infrastructure, the teaching and the student report cards.

This is the territory being explored by the pair of ARC projects, the information gleaned being fed back into classrooms, teacher training, and also to the professionals and companies designing, building and equipping schools.

Richard Leonard, director of the architecture firm Hayball – long-time schools specialists, and industry partners in both ARC projects – says technological drivers and shifts to collaborative teaching have thrown educational culture on its head.

“The value of being involved in what is basically global, cutting-edge research is about learning what works and what doesn’t, and enables us to move forward with design based not on hope or on fashion or on a gut feel, but on rigorous research.”

Governments and communities invest millions in educational facilities. “We have an obligation to make sure it works,” says Mr Leonard. “If you feel passionate about the transformative possibilities of education, then you have to be doing this sort of stuff.”

So what are we learning about what a 21st century “classroom” should look like? For a start, it’s not a classroom, says Associate Professor Imms, it’s a learning environment.

“I’m still an advocate of lecture theatres and of didactic teaching spaces, because there are times where it is more efficient to teach big groups, where a teacher just has to say sit down, write this down, memorise it and give it back to me.

But then you need to move quickly into getting five kids to go and nut it out together. Or for the walls to move to cut a space for 60 students down to groups of 20. Or for students to retreat into private cubby holes to research on their own. So the ideal space has that flexibility.

The key development from the first ARC project – evaluating learning spaces – is an online portal that performs like a teaching tool for educators, asking them questions about their school, its structure and layout, needs, purposes, ambitions.

“What they are really doing is evaluating the space in terms of the teaching and learning that happens within it,” says Associate Professor Imms.

The portal then connects them to the existing information on evaluating different environments – and there is depressingly little which illustrates the poor state we are in internationally,” says Associate Professor Imms.

“The fact that there are almost no evaluation mechanisms out there for learning space design begs the question – why are we spending billions if we don’t know what success is?”

The ARC teams are delving into resolving some of those questions, for instance by tracking teachers and students at one school across a year, surveying and comparing results in traditional, mid-level modern (student-centred, clusters of tables) and highly informal classrooms (beanbags, whiteboards around the walls, no teacher table).

One interesting snapshot result is that the kids in the flexible spaces had the best outcomes in their mathematics; and one teacher who had been a die-hard opponent became an evangelical advocate.

“It’s an example of the scenarios that underpin this project,” says Associate Professor Imms.

“Teachers don’t quite realise the power of potential they have to use in the physical space.”

The ILETC project is a massive undertaking, involving more than 6,000 schools across Australia and New Zealand. Having dug into some of the environmental questions through the earlier ARC research, Associate Professor Imms says the project is moving into a much more contentious area – “challenging teachers about their own teaching in these spaces.”

The first step is to explore how teachers are using these fast-proliferating innovative environments. Arguably, many are teaching just as they always have. “We believe many aren’t utilising all the benefits those spaces give, often because of their mind-frames. They have a particular view of what good teaching looks like, what works, and they refuse to deviate too far from that.

“So this is an intentionally provocative project, in that we are going out to teachers and saying ‘your students might benefit from a shaking up’,” says Associate Professor Imms.

“While the project is about space, it is really about our teachers adapting to change, about rethinking how they teach in light of the future needs of their students.”

To find out more about this project visit www.iletc.com.au

This article originally appeared in Pursuit, the University’s multimedia news website pursuit.unimelb.edu.au

Wes Imms on safari as part of SS Discovery explorations. Grade 2 class of 1965, East Devonport Primary School. Picture supplied
I was born in Gunnedah, New South Wales and grew up in Toowoomba, Queensland. My mother is a Gamilaraay woman, also born in Gunnedah where her grandfather was the last tracker for the local police. My father was Scottish. He passed away when I was very young, and my brother and I were raised by mum and her family.

I was the second person in my family to finish high school... after my mother. She worked as a brickie’s labourer, as a cleaner. She did everything. One day she was laying bricks in a carpark across the road from an Indigenous student support centre at a local university. She walked across the road and applied and eventually graduated with a degree in journalism. She would finish work, pick us up from school, and we’d sit up the back of her tutorials doing our homework.

Education is the best way to change health and socio-economic outcomes for anybody, it doesn’t matter where you come from. For me, education is the key to creating opportunities, and I’ve experienced the profound difference it made for my own family.

When I was eight years old, mum said to me: “It doesn’t matter that we’re poor, that we don’t have the things other people do, the only thing that will change anything for our family is getting a good education.”

And it has. So if I can use my work to help open up educational opportunities for other Indigenous people then I’m going to do that.

When I started my PhD research I was interested in social networks, in particular social networks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that either support or inhibit our transitions into education.

For any marginalised community, there are challenges and barriers. Sometimes those barriers are external, imposed for instance by school systems and society, in the form of institutional racism.

But sometimes those barriers seem to emerge from within a community, and it often looks like these social pressures are worse in immigrant, refugee or poorer communities.

In the broader Australian community, we might call it the “tall poppy syndrome”. In Aboriginal communities, you might hear it sometimes manifest as people using terms like ‘flash black’ or ‘coconut’.

Of course these are often things that people outside the community hear without knowing the social, cultural or historical reasons for them. All communities set boundaries, so everyone knows what they can and can’t do, to keep a community coherent and cohesive, and their particular cultural practices strong.

In an educational context this has profound implications, which sometimes looks like peer pressure not to achieve highly, or other social sanctions that are intended to inhibit people from doing well.

But instead of coming from within a community, my research shows that these ideas usually come from mainstream society.

For example, if Aboriginal young people are exposed to stereotypes, if their teachers have low expectations of them, and if they haven’t been shown role models who are successful Aboriginal people, then we start to believe those things about ourselves – that we are poor, sick, or fail at maths. We doubt our ability to achieve.

We’re seeing increasing rates of tertiary enrolment of Aboriginal people, and fantastic outcomes. In particular, once Aboriginal people get to postgrad study, our success rates are just as high as anyone else’s.

Aboriginal people often invest in education and come to university later in life, leaving already established jobs and careers, and often already having had families, so the decision is significant. Our patterns of investment tend to be different, although we’re seeing increasing numbers of year 12 school leavers coming to university.

One of the most fascinating things to see is the diversity of strategies which universities across Australia are adopting to support Indigenous students and academic staff.

Victoria is interesting. There are much larger populations of Indigenous people living in NSW and Queensland, and as a result university support programs are a bit different in other places. Only seven per cent of Indigenous Australians live in Victoria, so universities are able to play an active role in forging links to communities, providing financial assistance, and intensive student support.

As told to Katherine Smith.

This article originally appeared in Pursuit, the University’s multimedia news website pursuit.unimelb.edu.au
Studies show that social and emotional learning programs that have a clear and deliberate focus on positive relationships, incorporate a whole-of-school approach, and implement strong teacher training strategies, can create positive change for a whole generation of young people. They can improve academic outcomes and reduce rates of bullying, violence, depression and anxiety.

While respectful relationships has been on the Australian political agenda for some time, Victoria is clearly leading the way in rolling out the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program to support a mandatory provision of respectful relationships education in primary and secondary schools.

This initiative has the potential to be a catalyst for generational and cultural change, particularly as it is backed by the Victorian Government’s firm commitment to end the vicious cycle of family violence.

This article originally appeared in Pursuit, the University’s multimedia news website pursuit.unimelb.edu.au
The Graduate School’s outstanding academics are engaged in a number of high quality, high impact research projects, and are at the forefront of Australian education. Meet some of our rising early career academic stars.

Ms Leanne Higham, PhD candidate

Early into her career teaching history and social sciences in a Melbourne boys’ school, Ms Leanne Higham was impelled to investigate the complexities of masculinity and identity, and their relationships with schooling. She joined the Graduate School to undertake the Master of Education, balancing teaching and leadership commitments at school with research and writing her thesis, submitted in 2015.

Ms Higham received the Graduate School’s 2016 Freda Cohen Prize for the most meritorious thesis, and after successfully applying for the Youth Research Centre’s Gender and the Body strategic scholarship, she is currently undertaking her PhD, attempting to better understand different kinds of violence and masculinities in schools.

Teaching and research interests

A sociological blend of gender and education, Ms Higham’s research draws on social theory and philosophy. She is especially interested in how practices and processes in and around schooling are inter-related with those of masculinities, reflecting her engagement with new materialist theories and methods. Ms Higham tutors in the Master of Education subject Reading Educational Research, and delivers guest lectures on young masculinities.

Ms Higham remains involved with education through her continued work with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority in both examinations and study design development for the VCE subject, Legal Studies. She was also one of the authors of the teacher resources developed for the Victorian Department of Education and Training’s Respectful Relationships Education initiative, released in October 2016.

Dr Jason Lodge, Senior Lecturer in Higher Education

With expertise in psychological science, the learning sciences and higher education, Dr Jason Lodge teaches and conducts research on enhancing higher education using educational technologies in the Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education.

Having completed his PhD in 2012, his research focuses on the cognitive and emotional factors that influence student learning and the student experience in adult educational settings.

Dr Lodge is a recipient of numerous grants and awards, including the University’s Early Career Research grant, the 2014 Australian Psychological Society Early Career Teaching Award, and the 2016 MGSE Teaching Excellence Award.

Teaching and research interests

Given his multidisciplinary background, Dr Lodge’s research focusses on translating laboratory research on learning to applied educational settings. This work is highlighted in the book *From the Laboratory to the Classroom: Translating Science of Learning for Teachers*, co-edited with Dr Jared Horvath and Laureate Professor John Hattie and released in August 2016.

Dr Lodge also conducts research on the use of learning analytics, visual aids and video in higher education, and has specialist knowledge in academic and curriculum development, and design for learning and assessment.

Dr Lodge teaches in the Graduate Certificate of University Teaching and coordinates and delivers the University’s teaching induction program, The Melbourne Teaching Certificate. In doing so, he draws on the science of learning, the design of instruction and the art of teaching in higher education.

Dr Shiralee Poed, Senior Lecturer in Learning Intervention

As one of Queensland’s youngest teaching graduates, Dr Shiralee Poed commenced her teaching career at the age of 19. Committed to working with children with disabilities, for almost three decades Dr Poed has worked in primary, secondary and specialist schools, as well as tertiary institutions, spanning Australia’s eastern coastline. Dr Poed joined the Graduate School in 2011, and has helped shaped the direction of the learning intervention courses.

Dr Poed received her PhD from Griffith University in 2016, earning the Dr Ann Shorten Award for Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation in Law and Education from the Australian and New Zealand Education Law Association. Her thesis, awarded without amendment, explored the reasonableness of adjustments to curriculum for Australian students with disabilities. Her study examined the upward trend in disability discrimination litigation in Australian schools, and provided insights for educators and parents on how to improve educational outcomes for students with disabilities.

Teaching and research interests

Dr Poed is widely recognised for her work supporting Australian schools to implement the Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports approach. In Victoria alone, she has supported over 400 Government, Catholic and Independent schools to review the way they respond to students who have behaviours of concern.

Dr Poed coordinates the Professional Certificate in Education (Positive Behaviour and Learning), and enjoys working with Masters and Doctoral students, supporting their commitment to improving practices for students, particularly those with disabilities.
Dr Gavin Slemp, Lecturer in Positive Psychology

With broad interest in the areas of employee wellbeing, autonomous motivation, and how people shape their experience of work, Dr Gavin Slemp received his Doctorate in Organisational Psychology from Monash University, Australia. After spending some time in management consulting, he joined the Graduate School in 2013 as a lecturer in the Centre for Positive Psychology.

Teaching and research interests

Dr Slemp coordinates and teaches three undergraduate positive psychology breadth subjects in the Graduate School, which have been voted amongst the most popular in the University by the Student Union – a vote for students by students. He also coordinates a subject in the Master of Applied Positive Psychology, where he teaches about a range of topics related to positive organisational scholarship.

Dr Slemp’s primary research activity has been in the area of employee health, job crafting and autonomous motivation. Recently his interests have expanded into studying adolescent wellbeing through social media, where he was awarded the University’s 2017 Early Career Researcher Grant and an MGSE seed grant to conduct research in this area.

Dr Jan Deans, Early Learning Centre Director

Dr Jan Deans has dedicated her career to early childhood education, investigating how young children think and learn through artistic and creative explorations. As Director of the University’s Early Learning Centre she led the development of a unique arts-based curriculum that incorporates the principles of environmental education. This curriculum, coupled with a commitment to interventionist teaching practice, has earned Dr Deans international recognition, including the 2015 Aurelio Peccei Award presented by Italy’s L’Eta Verde Association, for her long-term commitment to raising awareness of ‘big environmental issues’ amongst the very young.

In 1997 she also established Boorai-The Children’s Art Gallery, housed within the Early Learning Centre, providing a permanent venue for the presentation of children’s thoughts, ideas and feelings as expressed through their art and narratives.

Teaching and research interests

Dr Deans recently completed her PhD in dance education, an under-researched area of learning and teaching. Her thesis, investigating how dance enables the learning of young children and the role of the teacher in enabling this, earned several awards including the 2015 MGSE Doctoral Research Prize, the 2015 Early Childhood Australia Doctoral Thesis Award (Victoria), and the 2016 Early Childhood Australia Doctoral Thesis Award (National).

Dr Deans also received the City of Yarra’s 2016 Frank Fisher Award for her leadership in supporting young children to learn in, about and for the environment, enabling them to take action for matters associated with sustainable living practices. She is currently researching the impact of a unique ‘Learning in Nature’ program that is integrated into the mainstream curriculum at the Early Learning Centre.
As a young English teacher in an outer suburban secondary school in Melbourne in 2003, Larissa McLean Davies and her colleagues in the English department would often have spirited discussions about choosing texts for the school’s curriculum.

“One of the hottest issues in any school English department is what texts to select for the following year’s English classes,” she says.

“At VCE level you have to choose texts from a list provided by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. At other year levels teachers use their own discretion to select and agree on the texts within the curriculum guidelines.

“But people have very strong views about the kinds of literary experiences students should have. Some teachers have strong views that Shakespeare should be included at Year 10 or earlier, and others think that’s not appropriate. Others are concerned about getting enough Australian literature into the curriculum, or choosing texts from different cultures.”

Fast forward 16 years and Larissa McLean Davies is now an Associate Professor at the University of Melbourne’s Graduate School of Education.

The global boom in genres, from crime fiction to memoirs, from fantasy fiction to young adult fiction, presents even greater choices for English teachers faced with the task of selecting school texts. And even now some of the fundamentals remain hotly contested, such as how to teach literature and what purpose literature serves.

Associate Professor McLean Davies is leading a new research project investigating how English teachers are faring in this rapidly evolving and expanding literary landscape.

The project, Investigating literary knowledge in the making of English teachers, will track the experiences of teachers in their first five years of teaching in Western Australia, Victoria and New South Wales.

It will investigate the key factors shaping a new teacher’s literary knowledge as they move from their undergraduate English studies through teacher training and into their early careers as English teachers.

This includes how they are adapting to the demands of the Australian Curriculum, introduced in 2008, which requires English teachers to teach “Literature” as a main element of their English classes for students in Years 7-12.

Another trend in the making of English teachers – the rapid growth in the diversity of university literature courses that undergraduate students can study before they go on to train as teachers – will also be examined. Students can choose to specialise in courses ranging from feminist literature studies, to creative writing, to world literature, to multi-modal courses such as literature and film and many others.

Different universities, different ideas

“What constitutes literature in these undergraduate degrees is very different around the country,” says Associate Professor McLean Davies. “What might be considered as literary studies at one university might be very different at another university.

“In one university it may be that students undertake a survey of literature through the ages, in another university students might be looking at literature that has been forgotten, in another place it might be much more multi-modal and not necessarily only about the printed text.

“There are different ways of understanding the study of literature and we think that is likely to affect the way teachers coming in to pre-service teacher education programs understand what’s going to be the business of teaching English in schools.”

Preliminary findings from another study of mid-career schoolteachers by Associate Professor McLean Davies revealed some teachers tended to feel uncertain or less confident about their ability to teach literature compared with their confidence in teaching other elements of the English curriculum.

The new research project will be conducted over four years. It is funded by the Australian Research Council and includes a team of researchers from Victorian and interstate universities, including Professors Lyn Yates of the University of Melbourne, Brenton Doecke of Deakin University, Philip Mead of the University of Western Australia and Wayne Sawyer of the University of Western Sydney.

It will also survey representatives of state and territory-based curriculum authorities, teacher training organisations, university literary studies departments and professional associations representing English teachers.
Giving teachers a framework

Professor Philip Mead, Chair of Australian Literature at the University of Western Australia, says the huge array of literature studies at university is a reason students are attracted to the discipline of English, because it enables them to specialise.

But when these literature graduates begin their careers as English teachers in secondary schools, they encounter professional challenges in learning how to teach a set syllabus of texts.

Professor Mead says the research project will examine ways to help new teachers think about literary education in a broader, more coherent way, rather than through the prism of their specialist undergraduate course.

“Our hope is that we will be able to provide a conversation about how literature can be taught in the school classroom and talked about with students in a broad, sociable kind of way,” Professor Mead says.

“Out in society people enjoy texts in all sorts of ways, they talk about literature and they identify with it.

“We hope our project will show how teachers can go into an English classroom and talk to students about any kind of literary text; that they have a framework to think about these things that goes beyond advising students that the class’s exercise today is reading Miles Franklin’s My Brilliant Career for gender issues or class issues alone.”

For Associate Professor McLean Davies, the study continues a lifelong love affair with literature, sparked by her grandfather, Charles Marshall, a Presbyterian minister who taught her to read when she was four. “My grandfather was an avid reader and the manse was full of books. Books were my best friends.”

She says the study’s findings will be used to improve the writing of English curriculums in schools and in undergraduate university courses by providing a clearer idea of the core purposes of the teaching of literature.

“We hope this study will help to form a bridge over the historical divide between those who teach English at universities and those who teach English in schools,” she says. “We hope it will create a shared discourse between universities and schools about what we understand the teaching of literature to be.

“Research like this into the teaching of literature hasn’t been done before. The project isn’t presenting a deficit model of the curriculum. Instead it’s saying that research evidence is helpful in the shaping of curriculum policy documents and the education of English teachers.”

Emily Frawley is an early career English teacher, working at a secondary school in Melbourne’s western suburbs. She completed an undergraduate arts degree, with a major in creative writing, before graduating with a Master of Teaching from the Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

Ms Frawley hopes the study’s findings and recommendations will help teachers make literature more appealing to students in English classes. She says teachers would welcome new strategies that encouraged students to see the reading and analysis of literature as an enjoyable, creative intellectual exercise rather than as a prescribed chore.

“The study might be able to help teachers, especially those teaching senior school students, to feel better equipped to help students to engage with a text on their own terms, and come to their own interpretation of it,” Ms Frawley says.

“That’s a more enjoyable and meaningful approach to the teaching of literature than relying on the faster option, which is ‘Here’s what you need to say and here’s the answer’. That sort of learning is not what English is about.”

This article originally appeared in Pursuit, the University’s multimedia news website pursuit.unimelb.edu.au

To find out more about this project visit www.education.unimelb.edu.au/literaryknowledge

Associate Professor Larissa McLean Davies fell in love with books and reading when she was four. Picture supplied
In recent years we’ve seen a shift to remove segregation between mainstream and special schools, and encourage inclusive education in an environment: where students with disabilities and diverse needs learn alongside those without, promoting that all children should learn together, regardless of their differences.

It’s becoming increasingly important for teachers to be equipped with the skills required to support the learning needs of children and young people with a range of disabilities and learning difficulties, including those students that are deaf or hard of hearing.

Deafness is a low incidence disability, with three in every 1000 children being fitted with hearing aids or receiving cochlear implants for a permanent hearing loss by the time they start school.

In Australia, between nine and 12 children per 10,000 live births are born with a hearing loss.

A further 23 children per 10,000 will acquire a hearing impairment that requires hearing aids by the age of 17 through accident, illness or other causes.

Sharon Klieve, Master of Learning Interventions (Hearing Impairment) Coordinator at the Graduate School, says although deafness is a low incidence disability, the need for qualified Teachers of the Deaf is becoming more prevalent.

“Because of its low incidence, mainstream teachers are unlikely to have the experience, knowledge and skills to support deaf children to access the curriculum in a way that will optimise their experience and outcomes,” says Ms Klieve.

“Teachers of the Deaf have specialised training and knowledge in the areas of language and literacy development, assessment and intervention for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

“Experience with audiology and audiological devices, ways of managing listening environments and deaf awareness, and understanding the social and emotional wellbeing of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, ensures they can offer the best support.”

With teacher quality widely recognised by policymakers, practitioners and researchers as the most powerful in-school influence on students’ academic performance, Ms Klieve believes qualified Teachers of the Deaf are a missing piece of the puzzle.

“Experience with audiology and audiological devices, ways of managing listening environments and deaf awareness, and understanding the social and emotional wellbeing of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, ensures they can offer the best support.”

“The fast-paced nature, listening and language demands of mainstream classes can often leave those who are deaf or hard of hearing falling behind, highlighting the need for individualised programming and teaching methods or strategies if children are to achieve their full potential,” she says.

“Experience with audiology and audiological devices, ways of managing listening environments and deaf awareness, and understanding the social and emotional wellbeing of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, ensures they can offer the best support.”

With teacher quality widely recognised by policymakers, practitioners and researchers as the most powerful in-school influence on students’ academic performance, Ms Klieve believes qualified Teachers of the Deaf are a missing piece of the puzzle.

“Experience with audiology and audiological devices, ways of managing listening environments and deaf awareness, and understanding the social and emotional wellbeing of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, ensures they can offer the best support.”

In response to the high demand for qualified Teachers of the Deaf in Victoria, the Beth MacLaren Smallwood Foundation Scholarship was offered to six Victorian based teachers interested in undertaking the Hearing Impairment specialisation as part of the Master of Learning Intervention (Stream A) in 2017 to become qualified Teachers of the Deaf.

This article originally appeared in Pursuit, the University’s multimedia news website pursuit.unimelb.edu.au
From Melbourne to Harvard

A desire to enable all Australian students, no matter their background, to succeed in education is what led 29-year-old Daniel Hanrahan to apply for the John and Eric Smyth Travelling Scholarship and move half way across the world.

Enrolled at Harvard University, the funds enable Daniel to undertake a Master of Public Policy, covering tuition and most of his living expenses.

In 1926, and with incredible foresight, Professor John Smyth bequeathed the scholarship, so a University of Melbourne education student could gain international study and research experience. Professor Smyth valued education and addressed this in his Will, writing about his belief in ‘the uplifting power of the school in modern society’.

Professor Smyth recognised the need for early-career teachers to learn from other institutions and gain worldly experience, bringing back knowledge that benefits the community. Over the course of many years, the scholarship – established in perpetuity – has grown to become one of the most prestigious in Australia.

Daniel, a Master of Teaching (Secondary) graduate, taught at Robinvale, one of the most disadvantaged rural schools in Victoria, before joining the Department of Education and Training to re-engage at-risk students back into the school system.

“My experience in teaching showed me how important it is for Australia to have a strong education system with excellent teachers present in all our schools,” he said.

During the two-year program Daniel hopes to explore how leading countries attract high-calibre graduates into teaching and develop a better understanding of how government policy and communication can be used to alter public perception. He aims to then apply this back home in Australia.

“I want to find a way to change the perception of teaching, to show people that teaching is a really exciting profession and one to revere.”

Daniel will officially be awarded the John and Eric Smyth Travelling Scholarship at the Graduate’s School’s 2017 Awards Evening.

Giving language to those who need it most

Hailing from France with a background in French literature and linguistics, Edith Nicolas undertook her PhD in Aboriginal linguistics documenting Indigenous languages in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, before meeting her husband and moving to Australia permanently.

Inspired by her own children, the mother of four returned to study in 2014, enrolling in the Graduate School’s Master of Teaching (Early Childhood).

Continuing her passion of research, Edith began investigating the factors that impact second language acquisition for young children from diverse language backgrounds in Australian kindergartens and childcares, earning her the Suzanne and Geoffrey Dawson Scholarship.

“During my placement in early childhood settings I found out there was little focus on second language learners, even though they make up a significant part of the population,” she says.

“I set out to identify who these children are, what factors influence their learning and what the risks are in terms of later school outcomes if they don’t get the support they need.”

Established by Belinda Kendall-White in honour of her parents, Edith says she was honoured to receive the prestigious scholarship that supports a high-achieving Master of Teaching student to pursue research that will enhance the advancement of social justice in educational settings and improve equal access to learning for identified communities.

“At first I thought they had the wrong person,” she laughs. “It took a few emails to confirm it was really me and when realisation came I felt immensely moved, and proud.

“It felt like a small bright light, shining in the dark night; an acknowledgement of the hard work involved in juggling intense full-time study with the demands of a large family.”

Edith hopes her research will help early childhood educators better assess individual needs and enable the development of methods to teach a second language.

“Some of these children are amongst the most vulnerable in our education system, so it is very important to be able to identify them and support their learning more efficiently,” she says.

“I would like to see my research being made available to educators, through pre-service training or professional development.”
The following award recipients were recognised at a ceremony in May 2016.

**MASTER OF TEACHING AWARDS**

- **Ada Mary a’Beckett Award**
  Donor: Friends and colleagues of Ada Mary a’Beckett
  Awardee: Marijke Van Beuge

- **Alice Taylor Scholarship**
  Donor: Miss Claire Taylor in memory of her mother Alice Taylor
  Awardee: Anthony Curnow

- **Argyle Scholarship**
  Donor: The Laidlaw Family to support a rural or regional teacher candidate
  Awardee: Allayne Horton

- **Assessment Research Centre Student Assessment Award (Primary)**
  Julia Parker

- **Assessment Research Centre Student Assessment Award (Secondary)**
  Katrina Cornelly

- **Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) Award – Foundations in Physical Education**
  Matthew Wynne

- **Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) Award – Primary**
  Anthony Curnow

- **Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) Award – Secondary (Physical Education)**
  Casey Taylor

- **Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation (ACHPER) Award – Secondary (Health Education)**
  Farween Mohamed

- **Australian Education Union (AEU) Excellence in Classroom Teaching Award**
  Sarah Lerpineri

- **Dorothy Jean Ineke Scholarship in Education**
  Donor: Ms Julie Sheldrake in memory of her mother Dorothy Jean Ineke
  Awardees: Brent Hayward and Megan Garrett

- **Dwight’s Prize**
  Donor: Henry Tolman Dwight for the encouragement of learning in ancient history, constitutional and legal history, and natural philosophy and other branches of University Education
  Awardee: Charles Dyring

- **Frederick John Gladman Prize**
  Donor: Instituted by public subscription to be awarded to students of the former Melbourne Teacher’s College (now the MGSE)
  Awardee: Gretel Tan 5.15.1

- **George Bryce McIndoe Prize**
  Donor: Mrs Harriet Hall McIndoe in memory of her husband George Bryce McIndoe
  Awardee: Grace Vining

- **Hugh Childers Memorial Prize**
  Donor: Charles E. E. Childers and Mrs Stephen L. Simeon in memory of the Rt. Hon. H.C.E. Childers, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Melbourne
  Awardee: Ching Lim

- **Ivanhoe Girls’ Grammar School Award (Primary)**
  Eliza Jonson

- **Ivanhoe Girls’ Grammar School Award (Secondary)**
  Elizabeth Zammit

- **Jennifer Duggan Leaper Scholarship**
  Donor: Jenny Leaper for a University of Melbourne Bachelor of Arts student who enrolls in the Master of Teaching
  Awardee: Sahara Bartlett-Matthews

- **Manuel Gelman Award for Teaching Excellence (Languages)**
  Donor: Mrs Sylvia Gelman AM MBE, in honour of her late husband, Manuel Gelman Chevalier de la Légion d’Honneur* (1992)
  Awardee: Rebecca Louey

- **Manuel Gelman Award for Teaching Excellence (Music)**
  Donor: Mrs Sylvia Gelman AM MBE, in honour of her late husband, Manuel Gelman Chevalier de la Légion d’Honneur* (1992)
  Awardee: Melanie Wilkinson

- **Master of Teaching Research Prize**
  Scott Bolton

- **Mathematical Association of Victoria Award (Primary)**
  Nozomi Koyama

- **Mathematical Association of Victoria Award (Secondary)**
  James Mott

- **Olive Battersby Scholarship**
  Donor: Joan Kent and John Battersby in memory of their sister Olive Battersby
  Awardee: Rohan Schwartz

- **School of Early Childhood Studies Fund**
  Megan Bishop

- **Suzanne and Geoffrey Dawson Scholarship**
  Donor: Ms Belinda Kendall-White in honour of her parents Suzanne and Geoffrey
  Awardee: Edith Nicolas

- **Valerie and Lawrence Kennedy Bursaries (Indigenous Placement)**
  Donor: The Valerie and Lawrence Kennedy Scholarship Fund to support teaching placements in remote or Indigenous areas of Australia
  Awardees: Northern Territory (Arnhem Land): Kirsten Wade, Saskia Drake, Hailey Griffiths, and Brian Gray
  Northern Territory (Hermannsburg): Stephanie Wright, and Sophie Doran
  Queensland (Cooktown): Lauren Dobbs, and Bernadette Uren
  Victoria (Mildura): Stephanie Keswick, and Tallulah Griffin
  Myanmar: Anthony Curnow, Samantha Brownlie, Shenea Kahu, and Yann Quere

**GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS**

- **Doctoral Research Prize**
  Sophie Rudolph

- **Freda Cohen Prize**
  Donor: Brigadier H.E. Cohen in memory of his wife Freda Cohen
  Awardee: Leanne Higham

- **The Jack Keating Fund Scholarship**
  Donor: Established via a public appeal in memory of the late Professor Jack Keating
  Awardee: Samantha Simpson

- **John Smyth Award**
  Donor: In memory of John Smyth, the first Professor of Education at the University of Melbourne
  Awardee: Fiona Kotvojs

- **Melbourne Education Research Institute (MERI) Student Research Publication Award**
  Dan Cloney and Hannah Stark
DEAN’S HONOURS LIST 2015

Master of Teaching (Early Childhood)
Year 1
Michelle Jamsen
Stewart Thorn
Year 2
Eve Batchelder
Marijke Van Beuge

Master of Teaching (Primary)
Year 1
Julia Parker
Louise Taylor
Samantha McArthur
Allison Toussaint Berry
Amelia Holden
Year 2
Gretl Tan
Anthony Curnow
Nozomi Koyama
Ella Ryan

Master of Teaching (Secondary)
David Adam
Katherine Putnam
Sarah Lerpiniere
Rebecca Louey
Megan Oliver
Robert Mason
Clara Simpson
Jeremy Chong
Robert Pickup

SPECIAL AWARDS
Australian Council for Education Leaders (ACEL) Sponsorship and Tertiary Award for Educational Leadership and Administration
Adam Dunemann

Gerry Higgins Studentship in Positive Psychology
Donor: Mr John Higgins in honour of his father Gerry Higgins
Awardees: Jessie Sun and Hayley Jach

Mair Isobell Coller Award
Donor: The Coller Family
Awardee: Emma Harty

Teach for Australia Award
Laura Hepburn

William and Kate Herschell Bequest
Donor: Miss Gweneth May Herschell to commemorate her parents William and Kate Herschell
Awardees: Brent Haywood and Julia Reid

STAFF AWARDS
Engagement Excellence Award
Ms Bernadette Coles-Janess, Dr Kerry Woods, Ms Nafisa Awwal and Ms Masa Pavlovic

Mentor Excellence Award
Professor Lyn Yates

Teaching Excellence Award
Dr Jason Lodge

Early Career Research Excellence Award
Dr Jon Quach

Mid-Career Research Excellence Award
Associate Professor Larissa McLean Davies and Dr John Quay

Research Supervision Excellence Award
Dr Dianne Mulcahy

Research Partnership Excellence Award
Professor Janet Clinton

Research Excellence Award
Professor Fazal Rizvi

Research Leadership Excellence Award
Professor Liz McKinley

Distinguished Research Career Award
Emeritus Professor Patrick Griffin
China, Germany, Portugal, USA
Funded by the Spencer Foundation (USA) and ARC, the International Centre for Classroom Research’s Learning from Lessons Project, examines teachers’ selective attention as a key determinant of what a student might learn from a teacher’s lesson. Portugal and USA were involved in 2016, with collaboration to continue with Germany and China in 2017 thanks to new ARC Discovery Project funding.

China, Hong Kong, India, Thailand
Master of Teaching and Master of Education students undertake placements in these countries as part of the capstone subject Teaching and Learning in an International School.

Columbia, Peru
Ms Claire Scolar from the Assessment Research Centre has been working with the Foundation for Higher Education and Development (Fedesarrollo), Colombia, to support the implementation of a 21st century skills assessment program in Latin America.

Costa Rica
The Assessment Research Centre has been working with the Fundación Omar Dengo to support the implementation of a testing program in Costa Rica to investigate student achievement in 21st century skills.

Denmark, Italy, UK
Master of Education Policy (International) students undertook placement in these European countries as part of the elective subject Education Policy: International Study.

East Asia, Pacific Islands
Professor Joseph Lo Bianco has been working with UNESCO on a series of training programs for public officials on language policy and planning, especially for indigenous populations.

Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Thailand, Vietnam
The Assessment Curriculum and Technology Research Centre’s Associate Professor Esther Care and Dr Rebekah Luo coordinated the UNESCO Assessment of Transversal Competencies in the Asia-Pacific study, which is researching assessment practices associated with transversal competencies (otherwise known as 21st century skills) across nine Asia-Pacific countries. The set of recommendations will inform future directions in the region.

Indonesia
Dr Suzanne Rice and Ms Megan Collins delivered a Clinical Teaching and Learning workshop to teachers from Indonesia.

Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand
Professor Joseph Lo Bianco has been working with UNICEF on country specific projects on language policy and peacebuilding in three South East Asian countries, in which language issues are a source of tension.

Norway
Professor Lyn Yates and colleagues are working on a joint project with professors Peter Maassen and Monika Nerland from the University of Oslo to bring together two major higher education projects, Knowledge Building Across School and University (MGSE) and Horizontal Governance and Learning Dynamics in Higher Education. This will form a book titled, Reconfiguring Knowledge for the Purposes of Higher Education.

Philippines
The Assessment Research Centre, in partnership with the University of the Philippines established the Assessment Curriculum and Technology Research Centre to support the reform of the Philippine education system. The Centre is supported by the Australian Government under Australian Aid. It completed a three year Longitudinal Study of Learning Achievement in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (LearnARMMM) designed to track and analyse the learning achievement of students in alternative delivery model schools in rural and remote areas.

Vietnam
The Assessment Curriculum and Technology Research Centre is contributing to testing, fieldwork and data analysis for a UNICEF longitudinal study conducted by ACER on the effects of early childhood care and development programs on the learning experience and performance young children in rural and remote areas of the Philippines.

Thailand
Professor Joseph Lo Bianco has been revising the Thai national curriculum to support multicultural perspectives, by scaling up bilingual education in the southern Malay-speaking provinces and including minority language recognition national language policy.

UK
The Centre for Program Evaluation is being funded by the UK Education Endowment Foundation to work with industry partners Ai-Media and Nesta on the Making Teaching and Learning Visible project, which produces real-time transcripts of lessons, and a teacher dashboard with a detailed analysis of each lesson.

New Zealand
Of the Graduate School’s 150 international research students, the country most represented in 2016 was New Zealand followed by Vietnam, the USA China and Singapore.

Various
The Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills Massive Open Online Course involved students from 170 countries.

China, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Japan, Spain, USA
Using the Graduate School’s Science of Learning Research Classroom, the Social Essentials of Learning Project studies student problem solving and collaborative learning. Based in the International Centre for Classroom Research, this project is led by Professor David Clarke, Associate Professor Wei Tong Seah and Dr Man Ching Esther Chan. In 2016 a network of international researchers reviewed the existing literature on the Social Essentials of Learning and an ARC Discovery Project grant was awarded to fund the continuation of this project between the University of Melbourne and Beijing Normal University.

China, England, Finland, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore
Professor Collette Taylor is our Lead Researcher in the first International Comparison of Early Childhood Education and Care systems in a decade. The project, A comparative study of early childhood education in selected high-performing countries, led by Professor Sharon L Kagan at Columbia University NYC, investigates what contributes to the quality, equitable distribution, and sustainability of EC services for young children in any country.

China, Finland, Israel
Led by the International Centre for Classroom Research, the Alignment Project is investigating how cultural settings and good practice combine to produce learning outcomes in mathematics and science.
CLASaROOMS 
THAT CHANGE 
THE WAY WE 
LEARN

MADE POSSIBLE BY MELBOURNE

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