

Mount Waverley Primary School

Aims of Innovative Learning Environment, nature and history of innovation: holistic picture of organization

Background and context of school

Located in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne and close to the population centre of Melbourne, Mt Waverley Primary School (MWPS) does not stand out at first glance from the well-cultivated gardens of the surrounding houses. The school's outward appearance, including its new buildings completed in 2009, were carefully planned to fit into the locality, with the use of pleasant colours and unobtrusive designs to ensure acceptance by the local residents and school community (See Figure 1). The school purchased the original 1906 buildings from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) to retain the look of the façade with the rebuilding program, even though these century-old buildings were not essentially useful to the school community. As the Principal commented, the external design was deliberately not 'postmodern' with lots of 'orange and green squares', but was one that 'looked lasting, stable and state of the art at the same time'.

Mount Waverley Primary School promotes itself as a 'school of choice' (Mount Waverley Primary School 2010) with students coming from a range of social and cultural backgrounds. Not surprisingly, in a city where over 30 per cent of people have migrated from more than 30 different countries (Monash City Council Website), the school has a high number of students with English as a second language. In terms of its socio-economic profile, Mount Waverley Primary School is listed as "high" in the Government Schools Performance Summary 2009. National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) - data has the school as average for similar mix schools, but well above the national averages. The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA)¹ for the school rates 81% of students as coming from the most socio-economically advantaged top quartile, 4 % from the second highest quartile, 4% for the bottom middle and 1% for the least-advantaged quartile. Where most schools in Australia rank between 900 and 1100, MWPS is ranked at 1181. The student attendance rate is 94%. These positive statistics means that the school does not have significant external pressure to improve test scores, providing some self-determination to embark on an ambitious program like Anim8tors@MWPS.

The school is a feeder school to two high performing and high profile non-selective government secondary schools to which student access is residentially zoned. While many families from outside this school's zone send their children to MWPS, some assume, incorrectly, that this facilitates access to these secondary schools. Despite the quality of these government secondary schools, many students from these zones go to private schools of which there are an increasing number in the region, including Avila College, Knox College, Wesley College and Haileybury College. MWPS's increased enrolment was a further justification for new buildings.

¹ The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is a measure that enables comparisons to be made across schools and between 'like schools'. The ICSEA measure is based on the socio-economic characteristics of the areas where students live, whether regional or remote area, and the proportion of Indigenous enrollments. It is used on the *My School* website to enable comparison between 'like' Australian schools. The average ICSEA value is 1000. www.myschool.edu.au.



Figure 1. Internal and external spaces at Mt Waverley Primary School

The school has continued to operate on a sound financial basis (see 2009 Annual Report to the Community: Mount Waverley Primary School). MWPS's high socio-economic demographic means the school community is supportive of the payment of student levies, enabling the purchase of additional curriculum resources. Use of the *National School Pride Grant* and fundraising carried out by the school's Parents and Friends Association has resulted in the installation of interactive whiteboards in 23 classrooms throughout the school. School Council funding of the Information Technology Program has resulted in a ratio of 1:3 computers to students across the school. These investments in ICT across the school are indicative of parental support for innovative technologies and why they were receptive to the Anim8tion concept which focused on the use of multi-media. Continued increases in student enrolments and an effective workforce plan generated the additional funds to employ a 0.6 Special Needs Teacher. The school has been able to support an extensive performance development culture, with strategies to support staff in accessing a range of professional learning activities (DEECD 2010, p. 8).

MWPS provides a comprehensive curriculum that focuses on the core learning areas of English and Mathematics. Other areas include Science; Information and Communication Technologies (ICT); Japanese; Visual and Performing Arts; Health and Physical Education; and Studies of Society and the Environment. Learning is enhanced by 'assertive discipline, leadership development and high self esteem'. The school was one of five schools that comprise the Mount Waverley Innovation and Excellence Cluster that work to reform the middle years of schooling (Years 5-9). In 2009 Mount Waverley Primary School began working towards becoming an accredited *ResourceSmart School* through the ResourceSmart Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative (AuSSI). This, together with the new building program, means that the school has developed a coordinated, whole school approach to environmental sustainability.

The school has 41 teaching staff, 9 non-teaching staff and a student cohort of 304 girls and 354 boys. Most teachers have taught at the school for extended periods, some for up to 15 years and many for

8-9 years. This provides continuity, but also can lead to territoriality around space and curriculum areas. The principal is concerned about lower than expected *Staff Opinion Surveys*² but is aware that in high-achieving schools people might have heightened expectations. Teachers are happy and wish to stay, but 'when people never leave, the quality of the working environment does become the new baseline of expectation'. Rather than realizing they are working with focused, well-supported children, the baseline of expectation increased as the teachers compare children with each other rather than the expected state standards or VELS³ benchmarks. Hence the dissonance between teacher-assessed judgments of student achievement and the NAPLAN data.

The Innovative Learning Environment

As in many similar schools, the pattern of a stable student intake and demographic, the high achievement scores and a well-established staff, meant there was not considerable pressure for radical innovation. But in this instance, there were several catalysts for the Innovative Learning Environment involving the Animation initiative.

The principal cited the need to improve student engagement as one of the key reasons for introducing Anim8tion@MWPS. The student survey data in the senior part of the school indicated a surprising level of student disengagement, despite overall high academic achievement. The students at the school were in his words 'generally compliant and well-behaved', so disengagement was not obvious in terms of overtly negative behavioural issues. However the principal noted that the school 'felt some children were disengaged from the learning process'. The decision to locate the program in Year 6 was to 'target that area to try and get them highly engaged before they moved on to a secondary situation where disengagement happens again quite severely'.

This student disengagement at Year 6 was attributed in a large part to the full-scale school musical production, where all of the leading roles were given to Year 6 students, and the entire year level spent a great deal of class time rehearsing. The leadership team felt that the large school production was no longer addressing the needs of all Year 6 students and indeed some felt it had become counterproductive. Rehearsals were swallowing up core learning time and the curriculum was premised upon a narrow band of discipline-based domains in ways that did not necessarily expand the students' skills and knowledge in the performing arts. In addition, the activity was not adaptive to individual student needs. Only a small group of students, "the stars", were truly engaged in the production. The remaining students, "the rocks and the trees", became bored and some became uncooperative. The ICT coordinator, and leader of the innovation, discussed this issue:

not only just the official data but you could see it with the kids. And you could see that they were just really turned off You know it was in the playground ...the kids who weren't involved as the stars, weren't connected to the school as much.

The Principal, added:

While 'most parents loved' the production, parents of the non-performers questioned: 'Is that valuable learning time for our students in year 6?'. And, in reflection, 'we thought, "Well, no it's not", so what else could we do?'

These issues were identified, and the opportunity to do something significantly different occurred with the inclusion in 2006 of the school in the building modernization program funded by the Victorian DEECD. The school leadership team needed to apply for funding and develop a design for

² Staff and Parent Opinion Surveys and Attitude to School Surveys (Students) are undertaken annually in every Victorian government school.

school rebuilding, working to strict timelines. It also meant the teaching staff and community had to be prepared for very different working spaces.

The differences between the old and the new spaces were described by the Principal, who said that 'the old school was running down badly', with its 'light timber construction' and 'the longest hallway I've ever seen in one of our wings'. By contrast, the new buildings were designed

...with the aim of giving students a contemporary education so they are equipped with the skills they will need to be successful and productive members of a 21st century workforce and society. The design of the learning areas was influenced by the need to be flexible and supportive of different learning styles

Changing the built environment opened up new opportunities to implement the ideas already being nurtured amongst the Year 6 teachers.

Anim8tors@MWPS

The rationale for the program focused on using the new learning spaces well, as the ICT Coordinator and leader of Animation@MWPS explained:

We had the flexible learning spaces. We had the idea for the claymation program... timing was perfect.

The aim was to develop a broad pedagogical repertoire, facilitated by the flexibility of the new learning spaces, in order to maximize student engagement and learning outcomes. The desired outcome was to draw on the full range of student capacities and provide opportunities for those students, typically not successful at school, to see themselves as achievers. The focus of the ILE was Year 6 students aged from 10-12 with a range of learning needs and personal interests. In order to improve literacy success for all students, the ILE acknowledged that students come to school from digitally rich environments though many were disengaged from traditional literacy activities. The core learning aims as stated by the ICT Coordinator, were:

- to improve literacy, ICT, interpersonal development, personal learning, thinking skills and performing arts outcomes, and to interweave these domains in an authentic manner
- to develop a collaborative approach to program based teaching and learning
- to strengthen connections with community.
- to apply 21stC multiple literacies: critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication, collaboration, information literacy, media literacy, flexibility, initiative and self direction
- to improve student engagement and strengthen student/teacher relationships (Anim8tor@MWPS).

The initiators of the program were the ICT Coordinator, the Assistant Principal, and two year 6 teachers, who had been thinking about alternatives to the school production. The ICT Coordinator reflected:

In my role as ICT coordinator I was able to step back more and look at the production itself...I got involved in research and looking at how kids learn and what engages them... I went to a lot of professional learning courses, a lot of reading I did myself and looked at innovative technologies...

This, she said, coincided with the arrival of the new Assistant Principal,

who's quite visionary and she saw exactly what I meant so she gave me the clout and she said okay, we're not doing this again, not doing the production. And we went with the idea of the claymation

Having an Assistant Principal with high-level ICT skills and experience in using the Mac platform, facilitated both the design of the program and secured wider school support for the team. The first impetus to focus on film animation with clay figures, also known as claymation, came from the two year 6 teachers. One had already experimented in New Zealand with claymation in her primary classroom, which she described as 'pretty much the same thing but a much, much smaller scale, just with my class'. She saw the Animation program as

our way of providing something that all of the kids could participate in, that took advantage of the fantastic spaces that we had available, and that involved a lot of technology

The Animation program both exploited students' out-of-school digital culture and integrated the range of pedagogical tasks the teachers sought. Animation also coincided with the ICT Coordinator's desire to use technologies as a source of innovation and to use her new position in this role to undertake whole school change.

Because the new Grade 6 building was purposefully designed to create flexible learning spaces, the shared 'Great Space', as the gallery-styled space has come to be known, facilitated working across all learning spaces, integrating multiple disciplines, co-operative learning for students and a team-teaching approach. A range of collaborations developed around the animation program involving all four of the Year 6 teachers, the ICT coordinator, Art and Music Specialists, the Leadership team, the Ultranet⁴ Coach, the local business (Applestore) and parents. The Oscar-winning film-maker, Adam Elliott, lent his time and professional expertise to the program.

At the same time, while most teachers welcomed the program, some community members and students expressed concern, in the form of a petition and phone calls, about the demise of the Annual Production. Many students were disappointed by not being in the production as the 'Stars', and this was confirmed in our student interviews, despite general student enthusiasm with animation. Otherwise, there was considerable support from the Parents and Friends Association and School Council and the Principal, who was forward thinking:

What this program big picture is trying to show staff is the merit of working in this way and moving to a far more integrated sort of delivery. And that's a challenge here because people really in primary school hang on to Maths and English.....

The Program team were, as the principal, also conscious that

it's harder to persuade parents about the true merit of integrated curriculum. Parents especially round here still see it should be stand-alone and then you can observe it, get a mark for it, and it's clear.

Therefore information about the program was sent home and an information night organised.

Outside partnerships

Three strong partnerships have developed through, and are critical to, Anim8ators@MWPS.

⁴ The Ultranet was established in all Victorian government schools in August 2010 to improve communication online between schools, parents, students and teachers.

Firstly, the school has developed a unique relationship with the Academy Award winning Melbourne-based animator, Adam Elliott, who won an Oscar for his clay animation *Harvie Krumpet* in 2004 and more recently acclaimed production *Mary and Max*, set partially in Mt Waverley. As film director, Adam Elliott has given talks and run workshops at the school. In 2009, he worked with the students and presented the Adam Elliott Award at the school's Film Festival. In 2010, his workshops showed students the importance of facial expressions and emphasized the need for a strong storyline. Adam Elliott felt he had a role to play at the school in promoting a positive awareness of careers in the creative arts and in validating students' filmmaking work. He was also a strong advocate for the integrated educational benefits of claymation:

The good thing about claymation...it's a combination of ground breaking technology...with a very traditional and tactile art form. Claymation has been around for over 100 years...it's a blend of the old and the new, and then combining their story telling skills...incorporating other subjects like English and a bit of mathematics... so the teachers love it because it is a combination of all these subjects and the students don't even realise what they're doing...(interview with Adam Elliott)

Two other animators were involved in the program: one from Adam Elliott's team and another a father of a Year 5 student in 2010.

Secondly, the school has developed an important relationship with the local Macstore. The school felt that Apple had the best computers for animations and music as well as editing and design. Given MWPS was largely a PC school this required leasing 15 Macbooks. The ICT coordinator and Assistant Principal were trained in the Apple One-to-One program in editing and movie-making, and the Year 6 students went on field trips to Applestore. This provided students with hands on access to Mac computers with specialists where they could create new programs and showcase their existing work, the focus still being on software for animations and movies. A Mac specialist from the local Applestore and the Assistant Principal ran familiarisation workshops with the students in other software, e.g. Photobooth.

Thirdly, the broader school community has been extremely supportive of the program, helping with the funding of equipment and support of the program in other ways such as attendance at the Film Festival. Parents who are animators have run workshops and have been freely available to work with students and staff. A key issue was the cost. The Parents and Friends Association supplied digital microscope cameras, USBs, lights, additional software and funded a visit from Adam Elliott.

A fourth outside influence was the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) which provided teachers with their original in-service in animation techniques. In some cases, teachers who were uncertain about their skills in this area were greatly encouraged by the ACMI support they received at the workshop. An additional media connection has been with Channel 7, where a film about the animation program appeared on *David Brown's Schooldays*.

The program commenced in 2009 with a Launch Day when the Ultramet Coach from Waverley Region provided a session on camera angles and storyboarding. The students watched *Wallace and Gromit* as an example of high quality full-length commercial claymation movies, and designed their own group lanyards. The ILE after 20 months in the new buildings had in late 2010 reached the stage of consolidation (Blackmore et. al., 2010) as the pedagogies developed within the new learning spaces around the claymation program have become embedded in practices and are now in the process of evaluation.

Structured patterns and characteristics of ILE: layout, sequencing and mix of learning activities

The organisation of the learning is premised upon project-based learning around the Animation program (Accessible at <http://china.globalteacher.org.au/category/claymation/>). Creating an animation, the co-operative task that is the focus for all students, involves music, visual arts, script writing, story development, mathematics, science, spatial awareness and ICT problem solving as well as higher order thinking skills, personal and interpersonal development and self-direction. There is a dedicated time to undertake the program allotted on a weekly basis each Wednesday for a part of the year. The activity is largely in the Great Space that also houses the computers and equipment - clay, materials for scene building, video and photographic tools - as students flow in and out of their designated class rooms.

The Animation program focuses on the Year 6 curriculum in a holistic approach. While inquiry based, the animation unit directly links to three domains of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS)⁵: physical, personal and social learning; discipline based learning; and interdisciplinary learning. The pedagogical framework also takes into account the E5 Instructional Model (Victorian DEECD)⁶. There are 4 Year 6 classes, each with 26 students, paired off at each end of the Great Space. For the Animation program, the classes are combined (cross-grades) and divided into co-operative learning groups consisting of 3-4 students. This resulted in 33 animation groups in 2010. Each group rotates through the activity genres - Literacy, Art, Music and ICT - with the specialist teachers working 'at the point of need'.

The sequence of learning is that the Year 5 students are inducted into the Program by using the animation software programs such as Kahootz, Scratch and Pivot Stick Figure and attend sessions at the Applestore to familiarise themselves with specific Mac programs. They then participate in a peer-tutoring session with the Year 6 experienced students in preparation for Year 6. The storyline is the beginning for the Year 6 students. The teachers immerse the students in examples of claymation animations and then offer 'genre rotations' in workshops which include:

- Comedy (slapstick, parody, satire, sitcom, mockumentary...)
- Drama and reality TV
- Documentary/current affairs
- Mystery/thriller/suspense

Students spend time furthering their understanding of the narrative genre through different reading and writing lessons and activities within their normal class group. This culminates in the creation of a personal piece of writing in the narrative genre that demonstrates their understanding of the narrative story structure critical to scriptwriting. Students then have a sequence of lessons based on developing their understanding of the narrative screenplays.

In the next stage, students organise their own co-operative learning groups that will exist for the duration of the program, identify the genre they want to use, decide upon a Production Company name and design a logo. They compare stories to screenplays, format basic stories into screenplays, learn how to change a story and how to choose appropriate dialogue. Some decided in 2010 to adapt a story or book, others to develop their own. The students use visual diagrams to represent story structures (through a plot rollercoaster diagram) and use this to write the story. They also rotate through different sessions with the 4 Year 6 teachers on basic movie skills such as the use of different angle and camera shots, storyboarding, and in 2010, critical analysis of the previous year's films.

⁵ Victorian Essential Learning Standards is the state curriculum framework that is criterion based and benchmarked.

⁶ The E5 Instructional Model allows teachers to enhance and broaden the learning of their students using 5 active verbs: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate

Teachers created big flip-books for each group which contained their story-boarding, scripts and set designs. It also had reflection sheets for each week so teachers could track progress and sign off for the next stage. The remaining sessions focus on script writing, editing and story boarding that last over a term. Editing required a couple of hours per week of class and ICT assistance. Reading rotation activities in literacy sessions also focused on animation, with articles on animators and facets of animation. Specialist art classes include the making of the clay figures, the set and backdrops. Music sessions focus on the use of Garageband for composing soundtracks. The ICT specialist trains the students in the software programs such as I can Animate, iMovie and Garageband, and the final editing process. Once completed, the students design their own movie posters to advertise the film night and write a 'tag line'. The filmed outcomes from the Claymation program are then showcased at a Film Night, 'The Moscars'. At the Moscars, all student groups present their films to the parents and community including musical performances at interval. Awards are made in a range of categories, with Adam Elliot presenting his award. Different stages of the animation process are provided at Figure 2.



Figure 2. Scenes from the animation project

Organizational factors structuring teaching and learning

Leadership

As with much innovation in schools, while the program was initiated by a small group of teachers with the necessary range of expertise who both developed and implemented the ideas and program, a critical factor was the committed support from the school leadership team. This was facilitated by the Assistant Principal being an active member of the Animation program team, providing both influence and vision. On the Council there were 'people who were on board and could see the big picture of it all. When we put the proposal to [the Principal] he trusted all of us and he gave us the freedom to fly with it'. Involvement from the classroom to the front office brought an immediate sense of ownership and commitment to the program. One Year 6 teacher attributed the success of the program to

a very supportive principal... financially he (the principal) did make the commitment to it. We've been very, very lucky in our school. We've got a higher than the department required ratio of teachers to students... from my experience of Trevor as principal he's never been somebody who's if you have made a mistake or something has gone pear shaped, it's always been oh well, how can we move on. And I think at the beginning of the program we were quite aware of the fact that ... we were taking a risk, it was calculated. The community could have hated it, the kids could have hated it...

Innovation is often associated with risks for both teachers and the school, and the openness of the principal to mistakes provided a supportive environment. The involvement of Adam Elliott gained further legitimation both within the school and the community for the program. The program leadership team saw their role as modeling the new pedagogies for the new Year 6 teachers and students. It was also evident in the second year of the program that the leadership roles were changing. The Year 6 teacher who led the program due to her earlier experience in New Zealand, felt she moved from having to anticipate issues and manage the program in 2009, to stepping back to allow the newer staff members '...[to] enjoy the process of learning themselves'.

Whole school/program based

This was a program-based rather than whole school innovation, specifically focusing on the Year 6 students to mark out their transition from primary to secondary schooling. A key aspect of this program was to prepare the Year 6 teachers to be able to model practice to the students. Even so, the ICT Coordinator reflected, there was a constant need to re-state the focus of the program because 'not everybody received the same message'. So there was explicit training, numerous meetings and planning documents. At the same time, the Animation initiative was seen to be the opportunity to showcase how an inquiry approach could be integrated across the whole school. As one of the Year 6 teachers explained:

Having the program where we are bringing everything together and the students are working through the program and finding their own paths I think is a good example for the rest of the staff as well. It kind of shows them how...an inquiry approach does require us to... let go of reading and writing and everything having to have its own segment ...

According to the ICT Coordinator, it was important to focus on the inquiry approach as a whole school process, because

... the whole school is not on the same page as far as inquiry is concerned...the leadership team are working towards ... a common vision...cause we've got staff who do the prior knowledge activities but not all feedback from prior knowledge is used to inform teaching..some staff might

still persist with a planned program rather than adjust it according to the students' prior knowledge

Team teaching

The core principle for organisation of the Animation program was team teaching. While team teaching and program work are not necessarily innovative in primary schools, the planning required for this program was significant. To reduce workload, there was a rotation scheme of curriculum planning that was facilitated by team teaching and shared spaces. A Year 6 teacher explained the process:

We have a planning rotation so I might be planning math for 2 weeks. Jo might be doing the reading rotation and one of the other two will be doing homework and then we just rotate round it for the term and we provide the other people with a specific agenda. Massively reducing the workload cause I'm only having to plan maths...Although we plan for 2 weeks what we generally do is we'll then go back at the end of first week...and say how much did we get through, was the work too hard or too easy. So I need to make the next weeks a little bit harder for that group or a little bit easier cause we have to plan 3 levels for the other people, possibly 4, cause I've an English as a Second Language group as well.

The benefits included constant reflection on, and consistency in, approaches to curriculum and pedagogy, a consistency across Grade 6 that was appreciated by parents, according to the teachers. Team teaching also required a breadth of knowledge as well as expertise. Having to learn new skills on Macs for the production of the animations meant teachers were vulnerable. But the new teachers also learnt that this was a process of co-production in which they learned from colleagues and also from the students. A teacher, who joined the team in 2010, commented: 'the students [were] able to teach us and teach their peers'. She felt that her fears were allayed because while 'I'm only learning as we...I've got in my mind the process I think the children need to get through'. Teachers were thus positioned as co-learners.

Spatial dimension: a new pragmatic

The new buildings provided the opportunity for teachers to develop ideas that had already been in gestation around claymation. The building design was premised upon flexibility - the capacity to close off spaces, large rooms for team teaching, and a shared common space for cross-grade program work. The Year 6 teachers agreed about the value of these new learning spaces. One unexpected benefit was that it facilitated personalisation of learning to address a wide range of student needs. The ICT Coordinator explains further:

I think it makes it so much easier for the kids to move around and do different things with different teachers. And you can cater for their needs a lot more easily without kids being labelled. So if you were doing streaming...not that I'm totally advocating that...even in this setup, the kids normally move out of their classroom and go into another classroom. So you're walking out of a door, walking into another door, another space, and that kind of physical movement is kind of labelling them. Whereas I think it's a little bit easier to do that sort of thing in an open space... it's much easier to spill out and because we've got all the wireless connections and things like that it's a lot easier to pick your stuff up and move out.

Teachers also learned to be comfortable moving through all classroom spaces, so there was shared ownership of students and space and awareness of student progress across all Year 6. According to a Year 6 teacher:

last year we had a double classroom and two single classrooms that worked fantastically well at one end and we all moved around so I knew what every group was doing. Someone would come in my room and talk to my students and say what about this...and I'd be in someone else's room...

But a re-organisation of space in 2010 meant 2 Year 6 classes were each located in a double classroom at each end separated by the 'Great Space', thus disrupting this flow of communication and movement, and how teachers and students related to each other. Two new teachers were also involved in the program. The Year 6 teachers have therefore requested a return for all Year 6s to one end of the Great Space for 2011.

Teachers observed that the students made decisions about how they would use the space. For example, in their self-selected groups, once they had found a position within the Great Space for activities, they stayed in that location, providing them with a sense of ownership but also security. At the same time, they also moved around the space freely, talking with and questioning all 4 teachers. As one female student commented:

With the space ... I guess you can say that because with both sides it's really useful because there's 2 teachers as well. So say no one on this side needs help and two or three people on that side need help, both teachers can help on that side as well.

At the same time, both students and teachers regulated their activities and also their level of noise due to the increased interdependence arising from proximity as described by the following female student:

Sometimes I ask my teacher can we put on the radio to listen to music and she says no, because then the other side has to listen. And then when we ask can we play a game if everyone does their work...they say no, because it's not fair to the other side.

Depending on the physical location of the students relative to the teacher and other groups, there are added and unexpected levels of distraction. If you are on the margins of a group when there is the book reading aloud, as one student commented 'it's extremely confusing...you're trying to listen to three stories at once'. So while the assumption was that flexible learning spaces provided greater flexibility and capacity to undertake multiple teaching modalities simultaneously with a mix of group and individual work, the learning spaces, because of proximity, required both self-regulation but also synchronicity in pedagogy and type of activity.

Temporal dimension

New learning spaces are often associated with new organisational and communication practices and also use of time, such as block sessions to reduce movement and promote inquiry and program approaches. The Animation program was scheduled into a block time of one day a week, with implications for communication patterns, use of space and teacher endurance. In one teacher's words:

...that day sometimes can be hard because they're set up down that end, Shauna and I are down the other end, because you are... it's a full on day, you're on your feet, you're busy with the children, all day. Like you spend 20 minutes with one group, 5 with another, 10 with another. Like it depends on what their needs are...Then they come in and they work for the next 2 hours til lunch... It's tiring ... you don't get a lot of time to maybe pop down the other end and ask a question of other teachers.

One strategy was to send students as messengers to the teachers 'at the other end'. The decision was made in 2010 to reduce the block time to the morning as student concentration was lapsing and students were not 'cleaning up' at the end of the day.

Nature and quality of learning

Professional learning of teachers

Given the nature of the task, and the focus on team teaching, there was significant professional development required both in terms of working in teams in the new spaces and also the technological and creative/aesthetic demands of the Animation program. Initially the focus was on technologically up-skilling the teachers so that they could 'practise what they preached'. There was only one teacher with experience in stop-motion animation, so all of the staff involved attended a professional learning day at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI). The Specialist Art teacher recalls the first learning steps:

Well for me personally there was quite a few challenges cause being older and not actually... really taught this way at all. But it was just made easier because...we had one person who was definitely more of an expert ... but the whole concept of what is animation and actually putting it together was a major challenge ... we had to learn that the characters could only move in small steps. All about frames

Structuring the ACMI workshop in learning groups similar to how students would work and exploring the basic stop-motion animation, production processes and editing skills, as well as completing a short production, modelled the process for the students. Whereas the Art teacher had felt up to that point 'I couldn't really ever envisage how it was going to be ...then it really made it all come together as far as understanding what it was all about. So then it was simply a matter of putting steps into place'. Areas covered in the training included storyboarding, scripting, character, set design and construction, camera, editing, and music, how to make stars twinkle and using different sized versions of characters. These films were later shown to the students, again positioning the teachers as co-learners and co-producers of new knowledge.

All of the teachers we interviewed about the program had a strong sense of their own professional learning as a direct result of this program in both learning from each other through the team approach and in technological skills because of the nature of the program, the new software and the switch to Mac computers. Teachers also strengthened and made new connections with community and business. The relationships between themselves as professionals developed as a result of the ways in which they were working, and the relationships between the teachers and students changed as a result of both the spaces and the program. A teacher noted that the students could bring their expertise to the program: '...and there's often been times students will know something and they're the ones able to show everyone how to do it'.

In this ILE, team-teaching has resulted in some deep changes in attitudes and practice. Staff were more prepared to 'take a risk' and 'move away from the way we've always done things', a factor crucial to the success of the program. There were changes in pedagogy away from working in a regimented approach of 'this is writing time, this is maths time, this is literacy, and trying actually to really bring everything together'. One teacher recognised that without the team all agreeing to shift their practices it would not have been able to change things so quickly.

Integrated Curriculum and Assessment

Developing an integrated curriculum program like this enabled the teachers to work more closely with the VELs which are designed to promote a more integrated curriculum approach. The school worked with these standards to frame both the planning of the program and the assessment. The learning outcomes for the program were mapped onto the arts inter-domain statement. The ICT Coordinator explained how they developed the curriculum with the VELs, starting with the obvious connections between the Animation program with literacy and ICT, and then art and music. However, as the teaching team developed the program further, she noted that 'we realised how much problem-solving and critical thinking and critical literacy was involved...So the deeper we delved and the more we saw the kids at work, the more we realised what actually was going on'.

The Specialist Art teacher also spoke at length about how well this program fits in with the VELs, particularly the interpersonal learning aspects. She described that the students as

... gaining all of those sorts of skills through this program. So they're learning about teamwork. They're learning about how to problem solve. They're learning about time management. They're learning about prioritising. And those sorts of skills are coming through with this whole program

Even though the ICT Coordinator had done a lot of reading and research and knew the program would satisfy some of the curriculum outcomes, she was surprised about the extent of the learning that occurred:

...actually seeing it in action made me realise just exactly what is going on with it

She felt that she had learnt a great deal from the process of preparing the submission for the ILE as

...it made me understand more of what globally is happening with education and where a lot of research is happening and what the research is actually showing

As indicated later, there was consistent data collection and good use of a range of forms of evidence to inform daily decision making and planning.

Other teachers also commented on how much they had learnt from developing the curriculum and assessment for the program. One teacher described important changes that had been made in the approach to assessment:

Last year, because of the newness and experimental nature of the program, everyone was 'rolling with it and what happened, but I don't think we thought about assessment early on as you would normally. So instead of having the assessment decided on the beginning so that the kids knew exactly what they were heading for we kind of...cause we didn't know where we were heading for, it kind of all just happened

Again, the learning process for students and teachers was fluid, and the teachers adaptive to a range of possibilities.

Following the film night in 2009, there was a debriefing to discuss the outcomes, positives and negatives, to refine the program for the following year. Discussion focused on what could be done differently⁷. In particular, it was felt that there was need for a stronger focus on the storyline and for the students to stick to the script and storyboard, with the stand-alone script being specifically supported through the literacy program. This resulted in the scriptwriting to be completed in the literacy sessions. There was a specific focus in term one on narrative writing and reading and in term

⁷ From the team minutes, 28th October, 2009. Provided by MWPS

two a focus on the genre of screenplays. The students had to have their story signed off before they could embark on other aspects of the production.

The next phase required a range of expertise outside the teaching team and, after the first year, needed greater coordination. The librarian was included in the program as story-telling became part of the library session. The need for a closer link between specialist art and music skills and the stories earlier on in the production was identified in 2009. Therefore, the music teacher was encouraged to work extensively with the students using Garage Band, as well as on sound effects and musical backgrounds. The art teacher explicitly taught the students skills of artistic design relevant to their production. She initially focused on using texture in collage (and the way it appears differently in film) and then worked on the creation of the animation set boxes. These were designed to be practical (solid and easy to film in) as well as containing elements important to the storyline. The art teacher also worked with the students on character realisation and the visual aspects of character. Other issues included developing a stronger focus on the audience for the film night. One result is that the students were given time limits this year for their productions. It was also suggested that a common focus was needed, so in 2010 the theme of each claymation production is around a 'school value'.

Assessment

Assessment has evolved as an integral aspect of the program. Assessment requirements have been made more explicit to the students and teachers from the outset. The Animation Assessment Rubric (see Appendix 1) was specifically related to curriculum outcomes to focus teachers on exactly what they are looking for from the beginning and inform students about the criteria for assessment. A Grade 6 teacher, Amanda, explains how the rubric assisted her make the learning outcomes clear to the students, as the focus meant

...the children can see they're learning and achieving and developing skills for something that they are going to have to complete

Another modification has been to survey and graph student attitudes at the beginning and end of the program rather than just at the end of the program. A teacher remarked

I think that's going to be quite powerful when we get that in to ...see the changes that have occurred

Other ongoing strategies included *A Thinking Tool* or *PMI (Plus-Minus-Interesting)* that is used by teachers and students across the school. In one example of PMI, Grade 4P responded to the rehearsal of the 2009 film festival on 'Plus' side that some of the animations were funny and highly engaging, particularly those with moral stories where the characters had distinct personalities. On the 'Minus' side, they noted that the voice recordings were sometimes poor, some stories did not make sense, and some models were not finished carefully with some backgrounds not fitting the storyline. In an evaluation written up by the teacher the Year 4s stated 'We prefer a production to an animation screening because it is easier to understand the storyline and showcases the students' talents. It also helps to build confidence'. What this group found interesting was that it took 25 photos for 1 second of film and 18,000 photos for a film of 2 minutes. They also appreciated the detail of the plasticine models. Students were being encouraged here to develop 'critical literacy' in terms of evaluating their older peers' productions.

Co-operative learning

Significant thought went into the co-operative learning aspect of the program. Groups of three were decided upon because this number gives every student a chance to take a significant role in the animation process and means they have to rely on each other to complete the program. In addition to modelling, through their own team teaching, teachers helped students succeed in their group work. Because of the scope of the program, it is difficult for students of this age to work continuously in the same group over an extended time. In 2010, groups were created by bringing all Year 6 students into the Great Space and briefing them as to the role of the groups and what was expected as an outcome. They were advised to think carefully about their cross-grade groups because 'you don't just want to choose your best mates. You're going to be stuck with these people for 2 terms, so you really need to have a serious think about who you work well with...' With assistance, students essentially chose their own groups. Over time, teachers observed how the students learnt much about social relationships. One Year 6 teacher said: 'If someone has an idea, someone doesn't agree with it, they've got to work out those negotiation skills and being resilient and being compromising'. Working in groups also engaged the students in problem solving and conflict resolution. As a consequence, 'the majority of groups have just worked amazingly and independently, and have fed off each other and have worked really well'. Each group member displayed different strengths in the group: 'in a group there are those who are strong creatively and those who are literacy wise or technology wise, each have their strengths' that are drawn out in the claymation task. Teachers worked to resolve issues that arose in some groups.

This attention to group organisation ensured a high success rate with the groups, although it was not easy. A Year 6 student, attests:

It's kind of hard. They also said if you have a fight with your group you can't change and a lot of groups had fights and it's hard not to change and stuff. And it's good sometimes but it's bad at other times because we got split up with every 6... like we got to choose what we wanted to do in our groups and then they put us with a teacher so it's an even amount ... like sometimes it's good because you've got your friends with you...

Despite this ambivalence about working in the groups for so long, the teachers have been pleased with the ways in which the groups have worked and feel that social relationships and behaviour are an area where the students learn the most. As one teacher describes it:

... what we have noticed is that after they've sort of had their day where they can have sort of some freedom, some choices, what they've been doing. And so then the next day when you have...a more traditional approach maybe to some of your learning they're very, very settled and they work very, very well.

Self directed learning

While the students are provided with frameworks for the animation program, and the teachers work with them in the Great Space, the programs remain largely self-directed with the students negotiating how the group works best. This imparts significant student agency because of the authenticity of the program, the clarity of outcomes and consistency of messages from the teachers. The overall framework, a timeline and the final accountability of having to show their film at the festival also helped most students 'sort themselves out'. Some students struggled with the organisational aspects of the program, but succeeded with teacher interventions. In one class, a group of boys having difficulties with getting themselves organised benefited from developing shorter timelines and outcomes. For them, one outcome has been that they developed some agency because of their drive to complete the program. The teacher explained:

A couple of boys, like one from that group, he was struggling on a task and normally he would probably just sit there, until I came over and checked, but I've noticed the last couple of weeks

he's actually come up, taken the initiative to ask, when he's stuck, instead of just sitting there mucking around at his table, he's actually taken the initiative to come up and ask for help instead of now getting behind in things he comes to get my assistance earlier so that he can get things done...

A number of practices encouraged self monitoring of progress, negotiating skills and student relationships. Being self reliant and working with peers was encouraged by the rule that students not ask the teacher first off if they had a question, but to 'talk to three other students first'. Part of the toolkit that the teachers developed for the students to self-monitor their involvement and progress is a set of team-work pie graphs that they fill in every few weeks. A Year 6 teacher explains: 'if there's 3 people, they just decide okay that person only got a tiny segment of the pie graph cause they didn't really put any effort in today and they actually decide altogether'. Such practices also meant that the time teachers have for more explicit and focused teaching with the group was increased. It also encouraged students to share their knowledge.

Given the initial rationale for inclusiveness, the animation program featured all students. This was made explicit at the Film Festival where all students' names were listed in the credits. As a teacher commented: 'they've got something finished that everyone is going to see. Which is different to a production'. This sentiment was echoed through the teacher and leadership interviews. A Specialist teacher described the importance of integration of learning into the Animation program. 'It became part of our whole literacy program... with the musical production I always felt it was an add-on and we thought oh what's happening to education while we're doing it. The students also appreciated the focus. The ICT Coordinator observed that 'because there was more direction this year the kids have risen to the occasion'.

Impact and Effectiveness of ILE

Indicators of success

There were a number of indicators as to the success of the animation program from the student and teacher self evaluations and discussions, formal and informal assessments, teacher observations and whole school data. An immediate indicator, the measure that had been the stimulus for the new program, was the increase in student attitudinal scores from 2008 to 2009, in which the team felt the program played a significant part. Another outcome was improved student satisfaction as indicated in the scatter chart signalling re-engagement. The results were surprising:

I mean we assumed they'd enjoy it and so that's exactly what we wanted but how high it was and how much...I do the year book for the group this year and the amount of them that said the animation time is the best thing about grade 6. Or the best thing about primary school some of them have said...a high level of passion and enjoyment

In addition, there were informal comments posted on the Year 6 Blog, the 'Road to the Mosquers', in which students talk about their progress and frustrations. The pleasure gained from the program was evident when a year 6 boy from China without much English posted: 'This is best school, I'm so happy to come to school...I never want this year to end'. This blog is used by teachers as a means of assessing student responses. (Refer to [http://china.globalteacher.org.au/.](http://china.globalteacher.org.au/))

From the teacher interviews a number of anecdotes were identified indicating the range of cognitive and affective outcomes and individual needs arising from the program:

If you're looking at the different cultures, the different genders, you're looking at learning disabilities, you're looking at kids who are not very good academically...it works. I mean we've got one girl who has dyslexia and very high degree of dyslexia but this way of working has suited her down to the ground and she's really shone. And there's another girl who has struggled academically, right ... and she doesn't have a lot of self-esteem, but she is starring. She's got great initiative. She's driving the group. She's got a big picture of where they need to go. And she's been marvellous and just the difference in her, she's my pick for one of the awards already

The case of the re-engagement of a student makes this most explicit:

We had one boy last year who had a reputation coming into the school at prep. He had huge anger management problems. He was socially inept. And just didn't know how to relate his peers or anybody else. Anyway he is working in this collaborative group of 3. They're involved in that authentic team work and decision making and there's no room for that 'I like my idea best'.. Anyway there were hassles to start off, but as the program went on he calmed right down and he was negotiating properly and all of a sudden he had friends, his ideas were valued, and he was far more focused, less angry, more connected to the school. He actually won one of our Adam Elliott's awards at the end of the year...His good behaviour continued on into term 4 ...and apparently he's gone on into secondary school much happier and more settled.

There were also perceived cognitive flow-on effects. The program meant 'children of all capacities are actually happy to work together and it's now transferring back into classroom activities when they're not out doing animation'. One example was the ability to concentrate on tasks which extended across the curriculum and with other tasks. The staff's satisfaction with the program is exemplified here:

Everything we aimed for we've got and more. To be able to have our kids so much more focused at the end of the program was something that we didn't anticipate but they do. By the end of the program we can give them a task for two hours and they'll sit there and they're concentrating...even when it's something that's not so fun... They're actually able to focus for longer periods.

A major imperative for the program was the need to re-engage the Year 6 students, to improve their social relationships, and to develop their capacities to be able to transition smoothly into secondary school. A Principal Intern on a six-month training visit, considered that 'next year they'll be fragmented and they'll go off their separate ways so for them to work and to utilise these relationships...it is a really positive thing that the kids work in groups...' He focused in his evaluation on the obvious student engagement with learning and the sense of identity that such programs give to each year level. While 'the skills aren't always sequential and follow ... it's nice always for kids to be able to say: 'Next year grade 4 that's when we do such and such. They love that sense of achievement'. The notion of developing different programs for each year level was emerging among the staff. In 2010, Year 5 students who attended the Macstore to develop their skills indicated a range of responses expressing their 'enjoyment of the software and effects that could be altered'. The visit also raised anticipation and interest in the Animation program in Year 6. As one boy wrote: 'I feel excited and happy about the animation program today' and 'can't wait' for next year'. Another boy expressed similar sentiments, as did other students in Grade 5: 'I feel confident today about the animation in Year 6'. Other unexpected effects were how these skills were mobilised at home with parents buying computers and students producing their own animations and uploading them to YouTube.

There was overall agreement amongst staff that the program developed positive relationships. The Principal Intern said: 'peer relations and probably morale amongst the year sixes is fantastic because

they are mixing up...I think its very social and an opportunity for them to develop relationship with kids they probably don't work with or don't normally associate with'. Other evidence confirmed that the co-operative learning model was working for all students. The danger that less popular students would not be included in groups formed by student selection did not eventuate. In 2009, the group that was formed by 'fate' rather than 'choice' produced an amazing program that won a prize. Again, in 2010 in a group formed from a 'mish mash of leftover students', staff needed to gain parental permission to group them because of a physical altercation earlier. The experience has benefited them all according to a teacher: 'They've learnt ...you don't have to be friends, you've just got to get through the time period and how can we best get through the time period'.

Teacher renewal

There was also a sense that the program had wider flow-on effects and improved communication, reflection in, and on, practice amongst teachers. As a newcomer to the school, the Principal Intern noted that the program engaged teachers because they faced the same challenges as did the children. While initially some teachers were concerned about what they saw as reducing their professional autonomy around 'reading decisions and my writing decisions', overall the staff got on board quickly. He also noted that it is not the young teachers who are leading this innovation, but older and established teachers who all have very good ICT skills. He was astonished at the positive comments about the program and that most teachers were prepared to make effort, although some were more apprehensive as they felt out of their depth:

... as teachers again one of our biggest downfalls is we are control freaks. We like to know what we are doing and to control the kids and this is one really good program where we have to let go a little bit and let the kids explore

Impact of ILE at the whole school level

From this study, because of the interrelationships and timing of the new Animation program and the creation of learning spaces, it is difficult to disaggregate impact. Some aspects stood out according to the teachers as a major effect of the ILE.

Impact of spatial and temporal dimensions

The pedagogical possibilities created by the animation program with the use of the open learning space and integrated ICT increased significantly. A teacher felt that the open spaces forced teachers to work outside their classrooms where they had previously been insulated, and that they led to collaboration and team planning 'because we're in the same space we have to really... I mean I can't be doing a music lesson with some music going while [someone else] is trying to do something quiet'. The dedicated block time for the program in the great space also meant a change in routine. Students were excited about the animation program:

Before you even get started they're moving tables, they want to get setup and that sort of thing. So they're really keen to rearrange the room differently, they enjoy that aspect of having the space and being able to do that, it gives them a feeling that they're setting up...A different learning environment so it's not a usual classroom day. Once they found their spot on the first day that was where they worked for the whole time

Other observable effects in terms of everyday practices arose from the shared double rooms. It allowed greater flexibility moving from one end to the other, with the plan now to locate the ICT specialist in the centre. One Year 6 teacher felt you could 'wander around as well. Children are spaced out a little bit more. They're sort of set up and they just focus on their work. In their group

they've got their space'. Student interaction with staff had also improved...' Another observed that the students had:

...a greater awareness of themselves physically in a space. They actually have much more awareness of their loudness of their voice....okay I'm being a bit loud and the teacher over there is talking. So they do actually moderate their own behaviour and I think that raised level of awareness and respect I think has been huge. ... you can really tell kids who are used to that space, and you're still working with other people and having consideration or how other people are working to.

Another consequence of team teaching in the large space including such specialists as the ICT coordinator was that the students were seen to be 'more able to interact with numerous adults'. This was important, it was felt, as an experience that would facilitate the students' transitioning into secondary school as they would move from one class and teacher to another in one day. Students, it was observed, felt less comfortable with the flexibility of the teaming and space, and required some teacher direction.

A further impact of the program is that the different year levels now have their own developing ICT and literacy-based projects. In years 3 and 4 students write photo stories, and in year 5 students undertake multi-modal 3-D authoring projects.

Mt Waverley's ICT and literacy projects are now the subject of a joint study, under the direction of Professor Paul Chandler, by the Australian Children's Television Foundation and the Universities of NSW and Tasmania. This study is focused on building visual and narrative literacy skills and will provide some capacity for other schools to develop similar programs.

Student responses

Groups of students were given cameras to photograph the places in the school that they liked the most. The research team then discussed the photos as 'visual prompts' for a focus group with the students. Given the 'state of the art' new buildings at the school and concentration on the design of the internal spaces, the extent to which these students focused on outdoor places was surprising. While overall there was a general appreciation of the new buildings, there was some ambivalence expressed as in the case of this girl: 'It's good, but it's bad. I mean the facilities are really good now but we're missing all the stuff that we used to have'. One student commented: 'I like the classrooms because when it's hot you come inside and you cooled down and when it's cold outside you can be warm and we learn so much in the classrooms'.

There was considerable nostalgia for the old buildings and a sense of sadness about the loss of outdoor spaces as new buildings such as the gym funded by the federal government's Building the Education Revolution economic stimulus package swallowed up playground space. One boy pointed out '... there was a big amount of playground where that garden is now. We're sitting in the basketball courts...' His friend added '...and like the only thing remaining is the oak tree. That's all.' This lack of space has caused overcrowding (even if temporarily, while the new hall funded federally under the Building Education Revolution is completed) in the more popular areas of the playground such as the sand pit, where students of different age groups compete for limited space. In an effort to give year sixes their own space, dedicated times were allocated for areas such as the sandpit.

Older students in year 6 were expected to relinquish the space to the 'little kids' and be more responsible when playing more physical and fast moving games. 'It's okay being in the same areas but sometimes you wish you could just have like your own places, your own area'. Another boy liked the oval because it was away from the 'little kids' and the garden at the back of the oval 'where we

planted some of the vegetables and stuff in it and I'm just looking to see how they are growing'. One girl's favourite spot was 'the corner outside 6A which is the classroom down the very, very end. We just got it mulched and there's a lot of small trees and it's a really nice place to sit cause the sun is like always on it and yeah my friends and I like chilling out there'. The lack of attention to playground spaces by adults was summarized well by this girl who said: 'Well there's no playgrounds in most schools'. One boy preferred the wooden to the new plastic playground, and a girl complained that she loved the old school buildings as the 'long corridor would remind me of being in a high school'. At the same time, she was excited about the large Grade 6 classrooms. Inside the open spaces, while teachers saw student self-regulation of noise and how activities were planned to work together to be a positive effect, the students felt that the need to moderate behaviour limited their activities and choices.

Parent responses

Whereas there was difficulty in raising interest of parents to be on the School Council prior to this program, there has since been a flurry of increased interest and involvement of parents. This is evident in the need to have an election for School Council as membership was now sought after, the funding of the Anim8tion program by the Parents and Friends Association, and the involvement of Year 6 parents who are assisting in some of the teaching and learning activities. Even so, whilst there has been considerable financial support from the Parents and Friends Association and School Council, the Principal continues to persuade parents about the true merits of an integrated curriculum. Parents, he says, 'still see subjects as standalone curriculum areas that can and should be assessed independently. But considerable progress has been made in this area in recent years'.

Concluding Comments

A number of factors could be said to contribute to the development and implementation of this successful ILE. In particular, there was a connection between particular teaching expertise and leadership and the need for a new approach within the year six program. There was a strong and respected school leadership team who were capable and forward thinking, and a principal willing and supportive of staff taking risks. The idea about the innovation was enhanced with the opportunity to apply for a new building - one that was completed within a short time.

The well-established and stable staff were trusted for their professionalism by their school community. This trust allowed the school to try something different, and take a risk, because the students were above state average in their test scores. The new Assistant Principal, had previously worked in a school located in a lower economic status area with below state average test-scores. He considered such a program required students to have well-consolidated skills in literacy and numeracy. At MWPS, students came to school with 'basic literacy/numeracy down pat, but there's other skills they haven't got and you can then expand into that'⁸. Schools with more diverse student learning needs could not take such risks, he believed, as any backward movement would lead to

⁸ There is a counter view that it is in low SES schools with culturally diverse students that innovation is required in order to meet student learning needs, and that students will rise to the challenge of a more demanding curriculum e.g. Accelerator schools in California.

questions from the department such as 'Where's your explicit literacy practice?' and 'Can you afford to take out a day a week for a specific program such as animation?'

The ethos of the school was also receptive to such moves as the whole school was moving towards an inquiry approach and the Animation program could be seen as an exemplar of this practice. While there existed a number of small-scale but pedagogically innovative programs around the use of technologies across all levels of the school - examples included the use of wikis and blogs, the Prep Transition program and digital stories at Year 3 - these were relatively small scale. The Animation program was on a larger scale physically and pedagogically and required more teamwork. This flexible learning space was conducive to teamwork; as one teacher said: 'in our area we're forced to be open. We can't shut it off. So we just kind of get to that a little bit quicker' than if we did not have the new spaces.

While the whole school was moving towards an inquiry approach to teaching and learning, the leadership team saw this as progressing, if slowly, with need for constant referral back to what an inquiry approach meant. As a year level program, there was some apprehension as the Principal Intern noted, over the concentration of resources: 'the fives feel a little bit left out'. But the school's investment in technology over time meant that 'the resourcing ... is filtering down'. The ICT Coordinator in particular saw the Animation program as providing an impetus for cross-school initiatives involving ICT and inquiry principles and pedagogies.

Overall, the community was 'extremely supportive' of the school and was able to invest considerable funds. This new initiative responded to a pre-existing level of concern among some parents about the impact of the school production and whether it catered for all students. The focus of computers required in the Animation program also drew on the community's interest in new technologies such as interactive whiteboards (Parent interview). The Animation program tapped into this parental interest because it is a technology driven program.

There were a number of external drivers that facilitated the development and implementation of the program. One was timing. This school's innovation could be seen as part of wider change within the Victorian government system. The *Blueprint for Victorian Government Schools* (2003) instigated multiple flagship initiatives regarding new technologies, teacher leadership, professional learning, evidence-based practice and innovation, as well as VELs. VELs offered a coordinated and supportive state government policy framework around curriculum and assessment. The Animation program indicates that core aspects of the VELs curriculum including basic literacy and numeracy are evident and the program made the curriculum more explicit. In addition, NAPLAN facilitated greater use of data in analysing student progress. The Building Futures program commenced in 2006 and MWPS was one of the earlier schools participating. MWPS was a lead school in Ultrahet launched in 2010. This was expected to improve communication between schools and families and had the implicit message that the focus is on individualised learning.

This ILE was in a phase of consolidation in the second year as claymation as implemented was now being evaluated and adapted (Blackmore et al 2010; see also background statement). The Year 6 team had gained new technical skills and extended their pedagogical repertoires. The team felt they had shown that Animation was not just about enjoyment but also pedagogically sound. The processes of formative evaluation undertaken by the team meant there was continuous assessment of content and focus. While the team felt the program was sustainable at Year 6, even without the original teachers, questions were asked about the future of the program. It was felt the Animation program had a limited lifespan and would need to change and develop. When asked 'what if' the school hadn't gained the new learning spaces, the Principal felt that discussions around collaborative learning were already occurring. Even so, the space facilitated and supported the educational

philosophy and changing educational practices. As a Year 6 teacher reflected: 'It's probably what you do in the space, and the space itself supports what you want to do'. One of the many ways in which the space supports the program is through engendering, in the Principal's words, 'enormous' civic pride. The effects of this pride might be subtle but nonetheless significant.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 – Animation Rubric

2010 Animation Rubric - Literacy, Group work and Interpersonal Development

Student Name: _____

	CRITERIA	***	**	*	⊕
LITERACY	Story/Script	The story has a clear beginning, middle and end and the action can be clearly understood.	The story has somewhat of a beginning, middle and end and parts of the action are clear.	The story is missing significant sections and the story line is unclear.	There is no clear story line.
	Screenplay formatting	All aspects of the screenplay have been correctly formatted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sluglines • Action/Description • Character names • Dialogue • Parenthetical • Off Screen 	Most aspects of the screenplay have been correctly formatted.	Some aspects of the screenplay have been correctly formatted, or the formatting is inconsistent.	The screenplay has not been formatted correctly.
	Storyboarding and planning.	Fully developed storyboard that includes dialogue, set changes, and camera directions. It is organised in coherent pieces. Storyboard is used extensively during project development for goal setting, organisation and task-assignment.	There is a strong storyboard that indicates the dialogue and set changes. The storyboard was used as a guideline for project development.	There is a basic storyboard that does not indicate dialogue or set changes. The storyboard was referred to during the project building process.	Storyboard was not complete. The storyboard was not utilised during the project.
ART	Character and Set/Background Development	There are fully developed characters – they are correct for the set, have intricate detailing and are appropriate to the story. Richly detailed sets that go beyond the needs of the story and enhance the storyline.	The characters are aligned with the storyline, matched the size of the set and are detailed and appropriate to the story. The sets are detailed and meet the needs of the storyline.	Characters fit the story but are not scaled to the size of the set. The sets are basic and meet the needs of the storyline.	No lead characters have been defined. They do not fit into the storyline. Sparse set/s. They were not detailed and did not meet the needs of the storyline.
	File Management	Independently and routinely creates, saves, names and organises documents in personal folder on the network.	Opens personal folder on the Network and creates, names and organises new documents in a logical fashion.	With assistance, is able to create, name and organise new documents in personal folder on the Network.	Needs step-by-step instructions to create, name and organise documents in personal folder on the Network.
Information and Communications Technology	Clarity and Smoothness	Animation is smooth. Story is followed and is very clear.	Animation is smooth and follows the story.	Animation is somewhat smooth and story is evident.	Animation is jerky and the story is a little difficult to follow.
	Title and Credit Slides	Title and credits are well designed and appropriate to the 'look' of the animation.	Title and credits, for example, name of producer, director, sound effects, are added.	Most titles and credits have been added.	Title and credits are missing.
	Creativity	Shows exceptional creativity, careful planning and clear understanding of how to use the clay, images, angle of camera and other effects to create animated sequence.	Shows very good creativity, planning and clear understanding of how to use clay, images, angle of camera and other effects to create animated sequence.	Shows a fair understanding of planning, how to use clay, images, angle of camera and other effects to create animated sequence.	Shows a basic understanding of planning, how to use clay, images, angle of camera and other effects to create animated sequence.
MUSIC	Sound effects & music	Voices, music and sound effects are original, a part of the animation and relevant to the story.	Music and sound effects are a part of the story.	Music and sound effects are mostly relevant to the story.	Music and sound not included.
INTERPERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	Working in Teams	Worked effectively in a team at all times and took on a variety of roles to complete tasks. Worked cooperatively at all times to allocate tasks and develop timelines. Always accepted responsibility for their role and tasks. Provided accurate feedback to others and evaluated their team's performance accurately.	Worked effectively in a team most of the time and took on different roles. Worked cooperatively at most times to allocate tasks and develop timelines. Accepted responsibility for their role and tasks most of the time. Provided some accurate feedback to others and evaluated their team's performance accurately.	Worked effectively in a team some of the time and took on different roles. Worked cooperatively at all times to allocate tasks and develop timelines. Accepted responsibility for their role and tasks some of the time. Evaluated their team's performance accurately.	Did not work effectively in a team and/or was resentful or reluctant to take on more than one role. Did not work cooperatively to allocate tasks and develop timelines. Did not accept responsibility for their role and tasks. Did not provide accurate feedback to others or evaluate their team's performance accurately.

Year 6 Writing Planner – Term 2 Week 4 – Lessons with GRADE

Year 6 Writing Planner – Term 2 Week 4 – Lessons with GRADE			
Focus	SESSION ONE	SESSION TWO	SESSION THREE
Focus	Genre Focus: Narrative and Screenplay comparison	Genre Focus: Writing a Screenplay (formatting)	Genre Focus: Writing a Screenplay (formatting)
Teaching Points	<p>Text: <i>Story vs Screenplay Comparison</i> (WB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss whether students think a movie script (AKA screenplay) would be written the same as a story. Why? Why not? - What things students think would need to be included in a screenplay so that everyone knows exactly what they are supposed to do...brainstorm on IWB - Show <i>Story vs Screenplay Comparison</i> and use screen shade to show only story first, then show screenplay. - Use slide two to discuss teaching points <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do the texts differ? - What do you notice about the way that the screenplay is set out? - Which words are different in the two texts? - In what ways are the two texts different? - Why are they different? - What is different about the punctuation in each text? 	<p>Text: <i>How to Format a Screenplay</i> (WB) <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> by Eric Carle (WB) <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> x13 copies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show IWB pages 1 – 4 (The Basics, Sluglines & Action/Description) - Read over each page with the class - For each slide, discuss what the element is and why it would be so important to include this information in a screenplay - Leave a slide up on the IWB showing the format so students can refer to this as they work on their activity 	<p>Text: <i>How to Format a Screenplay</i> (WB) <i>Story vs Screenplay Comparison PDF</i> x13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show IWB slides 5 – 10 - Read over each class and discuss important into - For each slide, discuss what the element is and why it would be so important to include this information in a screenplay - Discuss why the class thinks uniformity in the real world is important - Leave a slide up on the IWB showing the format so students can refer to this as they work on their activity
Independent Writing Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students write their individual answers to the above questions into their Animation Workbook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a class (on the IWB) decide where you could create new scenes in <i>The Very Hungry Caterpillar</i> story. - Students get into pairs - Using their copy of the story as a guide (they must copy ruling off onto theirs and then paste this into their Animation Workbook) students write a slugline & action/description for each scene. - Students then try to write sluglines and action/descriptions for each of the scenes they created. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With a partner, students choose a simple picture book and write some dialogue sections for it in their Animation Workbook (not the whole book, just 2 sections) - Check with teacher - Then choose 2 different sections and write an entire screenplay section (slugline, action/description & dialogue).
Share Time	Go over the questions and have 2 students share their answer per question.	2 pairs to share their slugline & action/description for each scene that was created by the class.	3 groups to share their entire screenplay sections with the class.