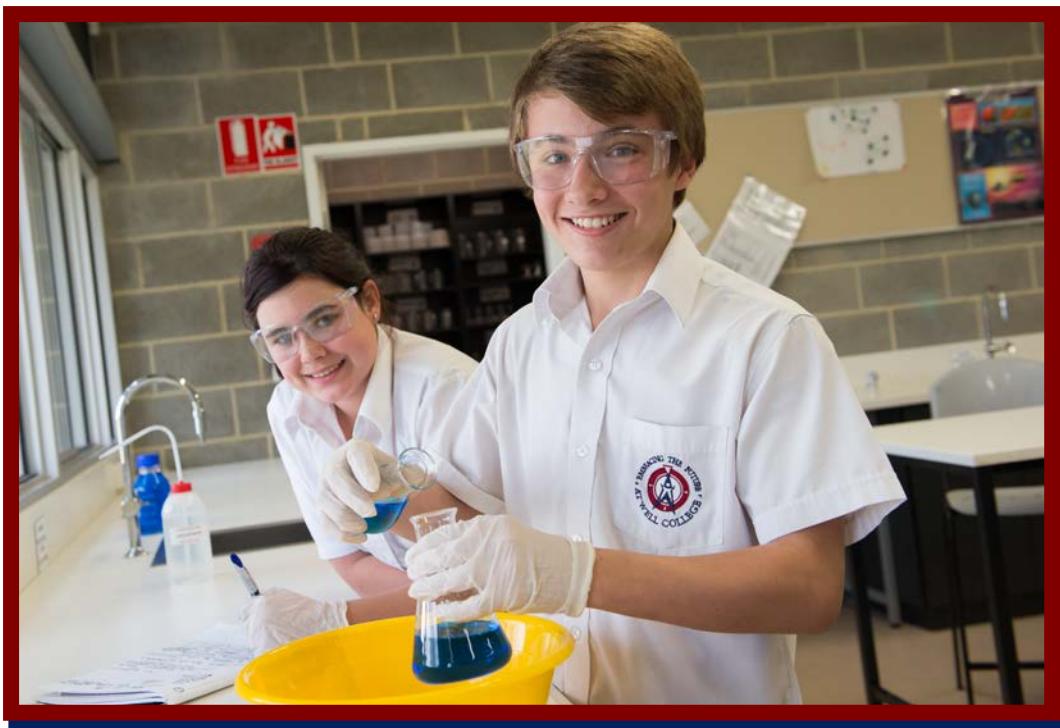


ATWELL COLLEGE

Year 7 Program

2012-2015



Background

In 2008 Atwell College commenced with a foundation cohort made up of Year 7 and Year 8 students. The college was established inclusive of Year 7 students reflecting future Education Department policy regarding Year 7 students and local community needs. At that time Atwell College's partner primary schools (Atwell PS, Harmony PS and Jandakot PS) were growing at a rapid rate, and were supportive of having Year 7's located at Atwell College. This decision alleviated educating and housing Year 7 students in the partner primary schools and allowed the primary schools to develop and support rapidly increasing enrolment rates in the earlier years of schooling. Two new primary schools, Success (opened in 2009) and Aubin Grove (opened in 2011) followed the pathway and precedent set for their Year 7 students to enrol and attend Atwell College. The Atwell College Zone (ACZ) was formed between Atwell College and Atwell, Harmony, Aubin Grove, Success and Jandakot Primary Schools.

The rationale and philosophy behind Atwell College's Year 7 Program is research based and is generated by Middle Schooling theory and practice with an emphasis on team structures. As students transcend from pre-adolescence towards emerging adolescence students undergo a series of dramatic social, emotional, physical and intellectual changes. During this transitional stage learners develop at varied rates. At the next phase of development, students progress from the lower secondary curriculum to the upper secondary curriculum, further training or employment.

Atwell College is a fully inclusive campus that caters for all levels of students with Special Educational Needs through the Kim Beazley Learning Community. The Middle School Education Support Program focuses on establishing literacy and numeracy skills and fundamental behaviours. Students with high needs are situated in the Kim Beazley Learning Community Block while Education Support students have inclusive programs in the middle school mainstream learning teams and the senior school.

College Vision Supporting Year 7 Students

Atwell College will seek to fully develop each child's intellectual, physical and social/emotional capacity to enable each to become active, world citizens with an informed concern for the Earth's environment and each person's impact upon it. The College will foster a strong connection to society and its values, a strong sense of personal self worth and a valuing of each individual demonstrated through respect and concern for all. The following core beliefs form the pillars of our College development:

Pillar One: Connection

To feel and understand how the college links to the outside world requires a relevant curriculum and a connection to the wider community.

Pillar Two: Opportunity

Atwell College recognises that people need opportunity to achieve their vision and goals. Atwell College students need to be determined to make their vision work.

Pillar Three: Environment

Atwell College has a commitment to develop an awareness of the interactivity of all elements of the environment.

Pillar Four: Holism

"The whole is more than the sum of its parts" - Aristotle

Values Development

In supporting the college core beliefs and pillars TRIBES is embedded in the curriculum at Atwell College.

Year 7 is an opportunity for students to embrace the TRIBES philosophy and for agreements of Mutual Respect, Attentive Listening, Right to Pass and No Put Downs. All Year 7 teachers have been trained in TRIBES and use it in daily lessons.

"It (TRIBES) is a valuable tool in guiding our expected behaviours and values in the College" (Mrs Rhonda Humphrey, Year 7 Teacher, 2012).

Education Department Policy Year 7 2015

"In 2015 Year 7 public school students will move to secondary schools. Many private schools in Western Australia and schools in other states and territories successfully educate Year 7 students in secondary schools.

Year 7 students are, on average, six months older than in previous enrolment models before the school starting age was raised; and currently approximately half the students have their 13th birthdays while still in primary school. The students are ready for the challenges that secondary schools can offer and have the maturity to be successful in the new setting.

With the introduction of the National Curriculum, all Year 7 students need access to specialist teachers and facilities currently only available in secondary schools.

In secondary schools, young adolescents benefit from the support of specialist teachers, pastoral care coordinators, psychologists, chaplains and other health and social services specialists.

Secondary schools also have a wide range of specialist facilities to motivate and engage students in subjects such as Science, Technology and Enterprise, The Arts, Languages and Health and Physical education." Department of Education website, 6/9/2012.

Atwell College Model

Atwell College has sought regular and timely feedback from the school community from the time the idea of a new secondary school was announced for the community. Originally wide consultation occurred in the community that included parent evenings and open forums to discuss any concerns or issues that the community may have had with local Year 7 students attending secondary school.

Year 7 teachers from local partner schools at that time were offered a one year tenured position (with the possibility of extension) as a trial to see if they would enjoy working as part of a secondary campus. Their teaching positions were kept open at their original school so staff had the option of returning at the end of 2008.

From this consultative process the initial middle school program was developed and was based around the following key point. Year 7 students would be based in homerooms for Mathematics, English, Science and Society and Environment subjects and have access to specialist staff and facilities for other learning areas.

Surveys from current and past parents indicate that parents find this structure reassuring as they know that if their child faces difficulties then parents have a primary point of contact in the college. In this context a home room teacher knowing their students thoroughly provides parents with the reassurance that their child is well known to the college.

The next phase of development involved the appointment of two Level 3 Program Coordinators to manage the middle school teams, followed by the appointment of a Level 4 Deputy Principal, Middle School. This team of school administrators work with students, parents, teachers and other members of the college community to ensure that learning

experiences are matched to individual student needs and students are prepared for the challenges of tomorrow's world.

It is acknowledged that the educational needs of today's students are changing, with an emphasis on technology and adaptable skills. Atwell College is a positive working environment in which students assume responsibility for their own actions with particular regard to their own social and emotional development.



In Year 7, students are taught by a combination of homeroom and specialist teachers.

"The homeroom structure for Year 7's is an effective transitional phase for students and enables pastoral care and academic monitoring to be conducted more efficiently" (Mrs Billie-Jo Whitehurst, Year 7 Teacher, 2012).

Supporting this, "Having Year 7's in a high school environment gives the students opportunities they would not otherwise have had in the primary schools including specialist physical education tuition, access to science labs and experiments, and an array of option areas including woodwork, home economics, media, drama and dance." (Ms Linda Potter, Year 7 Teacher, 2012).

"This allows students opportunities for increased independence and maturity including an expectation that they carry a timetable with them and move from class to class without a teacher escorting them." (Ms Nicola Coxe, Year 7 Teacher, 2012).

A home room environment in Year 7 gives the students security and a sense of belonging.

Atwell College works collaboratively as part of the Atwell College Zone (ACZ) in the transition from primary to secondary schooling. Transition programs are held during the year for Year 6 students from each of the ACZ primary schools. During transition the whole Year 6 cohort is invited to take a tour of the campus (led by Atwell College Year 7 students) so the primary students can gain an understanding of the college facilities and campus. Later in the year an Orientation Day is held for all students who have enrolled for Year 7 the following year to attend our campus. The students meet their homeroom teacher for the next year and are provided with a range of activities and programs across the whole campus. Another key aspect of the transition process involves the interviewing of each Year 6 teacher in our partner primary schools, to determine the qualities of each of the students in their classes.

"The information gathered from these interviews allows the college to build a profile of each student and assists in establishing Year 7 classes to cater for individual and class needs"
(Mrs Alex Jones, Year 7 Teacher, 2012)



Other Considerations

The Atwell College Year 7 cohort is given an area in the school yard that only Year 7 students are permitted to access. This area has a designated duty teacher and is designated as an accessible Year 7 area for the whole year. Experience has shown that this area is generally used less and less over the year as Year 7 students begin to feel more a part of the college. Therefore the students start accessing mixed student areas in the school yard as their confidence builds and develops.

Atwell College Year 7 homerooms are part of our middle school campus along with Year 8 and 9 classes. This model allows for integration at controlled levels rather than treating the students as a discrete geographical group. The Year 7 teachers have offices as part of a Middle School Learning Team allowing collaboration with subject specialist teachers in the Mathematics, English, Science and Society and Environment learning areas. This has allowed for curriculum development understanding that the Year 7 curriculum is part of the Australian Curriculum and therefore part of the entire learning experience of the student. The Middle School also has an Administration Officer supporting a range of matters including attendance, excursions and also a central contact point for parents.

2014 and Beyond

In 2014 and looking forward Year 7 students are grouped together in classes in C Block. This area of the college is designated specifically for Year 7 students including the adjacent grassed areas. Pastoral care is provided by Year 7 teachers within the model in the table below. Year 7 students have an allocated Year Coordinator supporting teaching staff in pastoral care responsibilities. Atwell College further supports Year 7 student welfare through resources and programs supplied by full time Team Leaders. The Team Leaders along with the Year 7 Coordinator are available as additional consultants after first point of call with the home room teacher.

Subject	Periods per week	Taught by
Mathematics	4	Homeroom Teacher
English	4	Homeroom Teacher
Society and Environment	4	Homeroom Teacher
Science	4	Specialist Teacher
T & E	2	Specialist Teacher
Arts	2	Specialist Teacher
Physical Education	2	Specialist Teacher
LOTE	2	Specialist Teacher
Health	1	Specialist Teacher
Total	25	

Over 50% of the classes attended by Year 7's are in learning areas taught by specialist teachers. Year 7 students rotate through different contexts within The Arts, Technology and Enterprise, as well as LOTE and Physical Education. Home Room Teachers are responsible for the teaching and learning of Mathematics, Society and Environment and English.

If you have any further queries please contact the school.

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Atwell College

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