



Ms Deb Magill, BEd MECh MACE MACEL
Principal

Personalisation of Learning.

A remarkable quote by Latin philosopher Seneca the Younger, who lived at the time of Christ, is translated as "We do not learn for school, but for life".

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Surprisingly, this is not how education has looked for much of those 2000 years. Many bright, promising students have struggled with the one-size-fits-all curriculum of their age's education system. As I welcome our students to school each morning I am reminded, and delighted, by the uniqueness of each girl, by the breadth of talents and gifts they represent; be they academic, social, cultural, sporting and/or creative. Each girl is known and loved for so much more than what she knows and, most importantly, for who she is. Her own person. At Roseville College, our response, then, has to be personalised.

Today, global education consultant Charles Leadbetter says personalised learning is putting humanity back into the heart of schools; humanity and learning are "about empathy, creativity, collaboration, joint enterprise and moral purpose". He says the learner is central to the education system of which she is part; students belong at its heart, not its feet.

What is important to each child?

As our girls graduate from Roseville College, they often take time to reflect on their teachers of influence. They speak of teachers who go 'above and beyond' their subject area, to truly know each girls in their class. Last week on learning of her class' HSC results (which were impressive), a teacher said to me, "You know, I don't teach English, I teach the girls". And her student's response, "We just wanted to make you proud". And they did.

Thinking about this, I am reminded about the things that are important to children as they learn:

- Each child wants to be known and understood by those who influence her.
- Each child wants a sense of control about how and what she learns, according to her talents, her interests and her aspirations.
- Each child benefits from being equipped with skills particular to how she learns well, incorporating the effective use of technology to enable and facilitate the process of inquiry and learning
- Each child feels a sense of accomplishment and reward from self-discovery in learning. This experience, in turn, then motivates, empowers and equips her to collaborate with peers and teachers as co-learners.
- Each child identifies a sense of purpose, seen through the useful accumulation of experiences and knowledge, to her educational journey.

What does this mean for education in Australia?

A smarter, connected approach to learning benefits all young Australians and bodes well for the longer term health of our workforce. The reality is that a one-size-fits-all approach to education is redundant and, for many, the point of a child's education must – by necessity – be a personal one. Knowing this, families and students expect more from formal education in term so how learning is delivered, and how it should position and equip children for the future. At the same time, the fast adoption of technology – by all Australians, not just the younger population – means that learning must be flexible and perpetually evolving so that it stays relevant in light of the availability, pace and breadth of today's information.

The implication for schools is that professional development and staff training must first embrace personalisation of learning, so that it first affects teacher pedagogy and curriculum planning. The output of weaving personalised learning into a school's culture is the fusing a formal curriculum with professional development of staff resulting in an education that is innovative and flexible. It also inspires a culture of inquiry and ownership of learning, and, importantly, subjugation of inflexible or redundant limitations to dynamic, agile and innovative learning.

How can personalised learning work for each child?

(Professor Joanne Wright, Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academic UQ)

- Timing of learning – when
- Pace of learning – fast paced vs time for diving deep
- Place for learning – within and beyond the classroom and campus
- Ways of learning – blending learning, self-paced, inquiry-based, collaborative, traditional etc.
- Support for learning – subject experts and learning mentorship
- Aims for learning – not only in what students learn, but also in how they learn
- Technology for learning - as a catalyst, enabler or connector?

Realising Purpose in Roseville College's Learners

At Roseville College, our vision is to Realise Purpose. In our vision, there is a distinct place for the personalisation of learning as we help each child realise her purpose; specifically, by how we enrich her learning through a genuine understanding of each child to maximise her learning opportunities for authentic, lasting outcomes, not only for school... For life.

The outcomes of personalised learning at Roseville College should be evident as each of our graduates departs the school gates for her last time as a student; our desire is that she leaves with broad, rich and cumulative knowledge beyond the confines of each subject, which equips her to live and serve with clarity of moral purpose and compassion, because – at the heart of it all – she, herself, was known.