

William Ross State High School

Junior Philosophy

William Ross State High School continues to develop a common repertoire of practices that successfully engages and challenges Junior Secondary students. Successful teaching practices that respond to the needs of young adolescents along with a strong and positive student teacher relationships, will allow young adolescent learners to develop their independence within a supportive environment where it is safe to take a risk and learn from mistakes. The Junior Secondary curriculum and pedagogy supports the school's **common language of learning**, an **understanding of how adolescents learn**, **common strategies to promote thinking skills** and some **common habits and expectations for learning**.

Our philosophy recognises the individual and targets the learning styles and capacity of each and every student so they can achieve maximum potential and their own goals in life. Our goal is to establish the foundation for future learning and success within the students' secondary years of education. Those critical years formulate their future aspirations and career pathways.

The Junior Secondary school is designed to respond to the needs of the young adolescent. Every element including the curriculum, teacher learning and development and leadership is designed to respond to these needs. This period of adolescence – Junior Secondary is one of intense growth and change in the lives of young people and the school considers many developmental factors when planning for their learning. The social development of early adolescents in the Junior Secondary years of schooling is a key to self-esteem and engagement in learning. Good relationships are very important. They are enhanced by reducing the number of teachers for each child. Our teachers develop a thorough knowledge of the changes and challenges facing young adolescents and because they spend a lot of time working together, have the opportunity to foster good relationships.

Our teachers work to foster and encourage deliberate and creative thinking, problem solving skills, critical thinking and the ability to problem solve to achieve successful outcomes. William Ross State High School is dedicated to creating a learning environment that supports and directs students to achieve their potential and value success. The Junior Secondary phase of learning at our school is built around:

1. Successful transition from primary school to secondary school.
2. Engagement with learning and the school community.
3. Quality performance and achievement.
4. Positive and productive peer and teacher relationships.
5. Improved progressive, effort and behaviour to achieve successful outcomes.



Transition into secondary school can be a challenging and exciting time for students beginning in year 7. William Ross State High school places students in class groups called POD groups to foster active and full participation. Each POD class has a small team of core teachers whom encourage quality in individual performance and achievement as they work closely with our young people. The curriculum is rigorous and relevant while being tailored to meet student needs, with a goal of progressing and improving their learning outcomes.

William Ross State High school has an unrelenting focus on improving student outcomes. Improvement is predicated on having and promoting high expectations for all students and challenging the belief that 'you can't expect more from these students'. At our school there is a focus on building the capacity of our teachers to make a difference and we promote teacher efficacy to ensure that every student is given the right support. Student improvement is driven at all levels: (1) whole school (2) faculty (3) teacher (4) home.

Strong school leadership is a key to improving learning outcomes across the school. The leadership team promotes a shared commitment to quality teaching and improving student achievement. Our Junior Secondary school has a Deputy Principal assigned to manage and lead our progressive Junior Secondary school. All teachers work closely with Heads of Department around curriculum structure, planning, assessment and implementation. Teachers also work closely with Year Level Co-ordinators around supporting student attendance and student welfare.

The leadership team is responsible for developing the school's strategic direction including improvement priorities, strategies, targets and performance measures. These priorities are aligned with Education Queensland's agenda for improvement and local needs as determined by the school community.

The school leadership team ensures that:

- The academic review process is used as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching strategies, initiatives and programs.
- Evidence-based strategies are selected to meet learning needs identified in the data.
- Targets that promote high expectations for all students are established for individuals, identified groups and whole school.
- Targets aligned to school priorities are established to meet these goals.
- Student performance is continually monitored against the established targets.
- A variety of strategies are used to identify prior knowledge, progress as learning and to encourage student reflection and inform future learning potential.
- Effective practice is shared and supported across the school.

