

## *Internationalising Education at Wellington Secondary College*

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'A Globalised Future:

'Preparing students for a globalised future by offering a broad range of initiatives, programs and resources that enable schools to explore the world'

'Globally ready students for Internationally-minded schools'

Department of Education, Victoria

We know that our young people will live and work in a globalised, internationally focussed world where the flow of money, technology, people and ideas across the planet happens every moment of the day. Our students need to be equipped to engage and prosper in a society and economy that is connected to the rest of the world and to take responsibility as global citizens. In order to achieve this we must ensure that our students have the knowledge and the skill set to:

- Communicate effectively across cultures and boundaries
- Understand the world and the concept of interdependence
- Speak a second or third language

At Wellington, we have created a range of programs and strategies that enable our students to connect to the rest of the world:

### *International Student Program*

Wellington Secondary College has been involved in offering educational opportunities to international students for over 20 years.

We have a dynamic and successful International Program which is an integral part of the College and operates out of our self-contained International Centre. Our Director of International Programs is highly experienced and has strong links with overseas agencies. Annual trips are made to China, Vietnam and Cambodia to provide opportunities for face to face meetings with parents of current students and families of prospective students.

There are approximately 100 students enrolled each year in Years 7-12. Students generally come from Vietnam, China, Hong Kong, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Iran, India and Bangladesh. Some students live with family friends or relatives whilst others live in homestay accommodation arranged by the College. Upon arrival most students spend 20 weeks in our WIELC (Wellington Intensive English Language Centre) where they study English, Humanities, Mathematics, Science, Food Technology and Sport. Following successful completion they transition to mainstream classes. Students remain in the College until completion of VCE and then apply for university entrance.

Students receive ongoing EAL assistance in mainstream classes. The program is supported by Vietnamese and Chinese multicultural aides who assist with communication, wellbeing issues and classroom strategies.

### *Language offerings in Mandarin and French*

The College offers both Mandarin and French from Year 7. Studies show that not only does the acquisition of an additional language enhance brain development but increasingly, the workplace demands bilingual employees.

### *English as an Additional Language*

English as an Additional Language (EAL) is offered to students from non-English speaking backgrounds that require assistance with the language requirements of their mainstream classes. It seeks to promote confidence and proficiency in all areas of English: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students are taught by dedicated, qualified teachers in small classes of up to 14 students. Classes contain both local and international students from many parts of the world. Apart from academic success, students form friendships and learn tolerance and respect for other cultures.

### *Access to the Victorian School of Languages*

Students may enrol in an additional language outside of their College electives through the VSL which operates on Saturdays at different school sites across Melbourne.

### *Overseas Learning Experiences: Schoolies with a Cause: Cambodia 2015*

The purpose of the travelling group is to travel to Phnom Penh and Chombok (west of Phnom Penh), in Cambodia is to undertake a volunteer program where all participants will be teaching English and life skills to young children in two different settings in Cambodia.

This trip endorses and supports Wellington Secondary College's visible connection with Asia as well as the College's emerging Asian Literacy Program, International Student Program and Overseas Partnership Program.

Part of the trip involves volunteering with the Centre for Children's Happiness, an organisation in a specifically developed school in Phnom Penh. <http://www.cchcambodia.org/> as well as the People's Improvement Organisation <http://peopleimprovement.org/>.

The second part of the trip will see the group travel to Chombok Eco Village to engage in working with the village children at school and in the library.

Thirdly, the group will travel to Siem Reap to visit the historical site of Angkor Wat. Survey data by our participants last year indicated that they would have like to have been given the opportunity to see this. Students will get the opportunity to meet with new international students commencing at Wellington in 2016.

Through labelling this program 'Schoolies with a Cause' to our school community, we are also hoping to embed this as an annual program which will provide a safer, healthier and more rewarding alternative to traditional 'Schoolies' celebrations for our Senior Students. We have

chosen to include Year 11 students to promote the program in 2015 to assist with embedding the program into the school's culture.

The benefits derived from this trip to the school are:

- Marketing a globalised community
- Providing a safe alternative for end of year celebrations for Senior students
- Engaging with Asia by building relationships with international communities
- Building on relations with the local Khmer community
- Creating a program that can be embedded in the culture of the school through the fundraising efforts of the SRC and The Senior School students
- Supporting the building of our International program in Cambodia
- Students developing intra and interpersonal skills
- Developing leadership skills both in the students and staff participating

### *Relationships with Overseas Schools through ICT: Korea 2015*

Throughout 2015 Wellington has been developing an international 'link-up' program with schools overseas. This has involved growing our relationship with Sung Duk Middle School in South Korea with the aim of allowing our students to converse and collaborate with their Korean peers while investigating a variety of different topics and subjects. With one of our Year 9 English classes we developed a schedule of connecting via video conferencing software twice a term to report on topics that included such diverse topics as; our favourite foods and music, the political history of our nations, typical Australian/Korean superstitions and folk stories and the typical natural disasters we are likely to experience. While focusing on topics such as these we have also discovered many incidental facts – for instance, our students were surprised to learn that the average student learns from 9am until 10pm each day in Korea! While our topics focussed on areas of difference, our link-ups always left us with an overall sense of commonality – it's remarkable how similar we are despite our differences!

In November of 2015 the success of our link-up program resulted in a visit of Korean students to Wellington, a great opportunity for our school and students to further consolidate the relationship we'd been building through video conferencing. Mr Kim arrived with 5 students between years 7 and 9, who were graciously hosted by staff families for the week of their stay. Throughout the visit all of our students participated in a huge range of fantastic activities, including: visiting the War Memorial, having a Korean cultural presentation for our Year 8's, visiting Phillip Island and feeding some kangaroos, and teaching each other how to cook Aussie/Korean cuisine, among many more! The visit could not have been more successful, and students of both schools expressed a strong sense of having their horizons widened by the mutual exchange and conversations throughout the visits and activities. Mr Kim has reported that Sung Duk High School could not be happier with the visit and he and the school would love to continue to build the relationship to build further learning opportunities for students of both schools.

(Josh Coller: Korea Link Teacher Facilitator)

### *Young Leaders to China Program 2015, 2016*

The Victorian Young Leaders to China (VYLC) Program is a world-class, six-week in-country immersion program for Year 9 Mandarin Students, designed to prepare them to live and work as citizens and future leaders in an inter-connected global community.

The program is a life-changing opportunity for students and teachers to live in and attend school in China. Combining language and cultural learning with personal development and leadership skills, the program focuses on one of Australia's main trading partners, China.

### *Partnership with Asia Education Foundation*

In 2016, Wellington will work closely with the Asia Education Foundation to embed curriculum and pedagogy that promotes intercultural understandings.

### *Community Connection*

Wellington actively encourages community involvement to promote cultural diversity and understanding. 2015 saw a number of our parents supporting students with their Mandarin studies as well as the preparation of Asian cuisines.

### *Reaching out to those in need*

As part of the Year 12 Health & Human Development program at Wellington, the students host a Birthing Kit Assembly Day. With a busy year of fundraising, they are able to raise the money needed to assemble 600 birthing kits. Birthing kits save the lives and suffering of women and children by providing a cleaner and safer birthing environment in developing countries. These kits contain 6 objects which can be easily used by a birthing attendant to help reduce the risk of infection, disease or death. The kits have been packed and will be sent via sea to countries such as Sudan, Vietnam, India, East Timor and Papua New Guinea where they are needed most. Over the past 5 years at Wellington, as a community we have been able to assemble 2000 birthing kits.

The Wellington SRC also has sponsored overseas children in need for many years and has run numerous activities to raise funds for this important cause.

### *Summary*

Wellington Secondary College is committed to offering our student cohort the very best that an internationalised curriculum can provide in this world of increasing complexity and global interconnectedness. We value any opportunity that will equip our students to become active and successful participants in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.