

Case study

Kindy-Connect Project

Details

What:

The *Kindy-Connect Project* was a collaboration between Vera Lacaze Memorial Kindergarten and Preschool and a group of professional artists, supported through the Artist in Residence Program. The project aimed to help kindergarten children discuss and document regional infrastructure growth in the Toowoomba region, and then share it with the local community.

With assistance from professional painters, sculptors and musicians, kindergarten children went on excursion to the various construction sites in Toowoomba to witness first-hand the construction and local environment changes going on around them.

Back in the classroom, artists and teachers worked with children to explore their feelings and thoughts about the construction, growing urbanization and changes to the natural environment, through a variety of art genres including painting, sculpture and photos.

The work resulted in a book showcasing the infrastructure growth and changing local environment in the region through the eyes of children.

When:

July 2015 to August 2015

Where:

Toowoomba, Queensland



In-depth conversations about how glass is formed and moulded while it's hot. Artist: Sara Helsing. Photo: Belle Images

Key stats:

- 142 students
- 5 educators
- 5 artists

Arts Queensland contribution:

\$20,000 – Artist in Residence program

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Outcomes

- Teachers noted a significant increase in student's ability to express themselves creatively across different art forms. Students were excited and willing to explore and participate in all the activities. Because of this level of engagement, students developed creative thinking skills and the confidence to take risk.
- The educators improved their artistic skills, learnt new ways of teaching (and engaging) children as well as discovering different methods of using the arts.
- Future visits by two of the artists have been planned and some children are attending classes by the artists as extra curricular activities.
- Vera Lacaze has also established a partnership with the airport to bring the children for special visits each year.



We can move like aeroplanes and big machines. Photo: Belle Images.

Learnings and reflections

Vera Lacaze reported the project successfully delivered excellent arts experiences with artists working with and actively encouraging the children to experiment and create.

I think exposing children to the arts and seeing beautiful art works – painting, glass works and paper making as well as wonderful piano and dance work, allows children to dream and contemplate their place in the arts through their life.

The artists exceeded our expectations as they worked with the children. They were able to use and maintain our philosophy of allowing the children to experiment and explore the mediums and ways of representation and not provide pre-planned or prepared material for the children to copy or 'fill in'. They all worked beautifully with the age group and the children engaged with them immediately.

The children's engagement in the changing environment and their connection to the nature in the local area helped them work with ideas around construction, animals, landscape and colour.

The topic also appealed to all children because it involved construction, animals, landscape, colour and creation so all children could find appeal in some area of all the activities. This of course lends itself to learning while children are happy, engaged and supported.

The project initially planned for the artists to work with the children to write a book about the animals and machines but this particular activity proved too difficult to coordinate across the timetabling of the split cohort of children. However, direct input from the children was incorporated into the final book that documented the project.

The artists also successfully engaged parents in the experiences and assisted their understanding of how the arts can be incorporated into all areas of the curriculum while supporting children's creativity, self-direction and problem solving.