

Re-imagine. Re-discover. Re-connect. Collaborating to Inspire Learners.

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Abstract

By now we've probably all seen the image of a phone on Social Media with a sticky note on it warning us that whilst it may be bringing us closer to those far away is it taking us away from those sitting next to us. Is this true in school libraries? In our determination to be at the forefront of technology are we neglecting other forms of connectedness?

Re-imagine. Library spaces, library roles, library programs. How can both the physical and digital libraries become the hub of the school?

Re-discover. Bring back tried and true activities. Maker Mondays don't always have to be about Technology. Concurrent activities have something for everyone.

Re-connect. To students, staff, local and global communities.

The libraries at an Australian International College have constantly been evolving since 2010. From a 1970's dark Senior building and a Junior classroom to the centres of their respective campuses as an Inquiry Centre and a Learning Commons.

The paper will outline how Library facilities have been reinvented with 2 purpose built buildings. The Inquiry Centre with the PYP at its heart and the Learning Commons serving to provide a third space for patrons.

Changes and improvements to provision of Library Services will be outlined. Changes explored will be the introduction of a comprehensive suite of digital databases, how research and referencing is embedded in each Unit and how Digital Technology is enhancing learning.

Advocacy and promotion is important in all libraries and some examples of how this is achieved will be showcased. Using the LMS at the school to link to newsfeeds, embed databases into unit pages and inform parents of events will be explained. Celebrating success is so important and how Library Services ensure this is a regular feature will also be shown.

In conclusion, the paper will outline the importance of collaborating at the school, local community and global levels.

According to data from ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association) in 2017, there were 9,444 schools in Australia and almost all schools have a library of some description. The best school libraries

have qualified library staff and provide a range of services to students, including safer online experiences, group discovery based learning and study spaces, and more electronic learning. (Australian Libraries State of the Nation Report, 2019). The libraries at Kardinia International College have constantly been evolving since 2010. From a 1970's dark Senior building and a Junior classroom to the centres of their respective campuses as an Inquiry Centre and a Learning Commons. Spaces, roles and programs have been reimagined, tried and true methods have been rediscovered and meaningful connections have been established.

Reimagine

Spaces

In 2010 the Kardinia International Junior school library was a converted classroom with four bays of shelving, some floorspace for presenting to students and a large open desk area. The role of library teacher was job-shared by two part-time classroom teachers. 2010 was the first time the Junior school library received any administrative assistance with a fully qualified librarian working 5 mornings per week in the Junior school and the afternoons in the Senior school. That same year, as a teacher librarian and newly-appointed Library Services Manager, I began working with The Principal, Deputy Principal and Head of Junior school to begin imagining a new Junior School Inquiry Centre, taking into account the student-centred approach of the PYP.

The school referred closely to Making the PYP happen where evidence is required that “the school is responsible for establishing procedures to assess the effectiveness of the programme and to ensure that the PYP is implemented schoolwide. Evidence needs to indicate that: that there is a well-established library or media centre that provides resources, representing wide cultural and linguistic perspectives, for teachers and students to teach and learn through units of inquiry”. (Making the PYP happen : a curriculum framework for international primary education, 2009). The four cornerstones of Kardinia International College were embedded in the planning and design of the Junior School Inquiry Centre, opened in 2012. Featuring a distinctive modern exterior, the Centre includes all the resources of a traditional library – along with the technological resources to allow for 21st Century international learning. Innovative furnishings and layout have made this a popular learning venue for primary students. (Kardinia International College : Celebrating Twenty Years - 1996 to 2015, 2015)

The emphasis in the design of the building was functionality rather than what the building would look like. "The design is about interaction, whether it's teachers and students, or when parents attend functions," says Deans. (Crafti, 2014)

Kevin Hennah (Library/Retail consultant and trainer) spent some time working with on the preliminary plans, (whilst also giving some ideas on revamping the Senior School Library on a shoestring budget).

These included: reducing excessive signage, adding bay ends with OPAC computers, adding non-fiction genre signs and some new furniture.

Signage: Walking into the Senior Library, students were confronted with a myriad of hanging signs directing them to almost everything, add to this the signs on doors and bookcases, it was no wonder that space felt cluttered. Removing the majority of these which were stating the obvious, the area became much more inviting.

Bay ends: Slat wall Panels were added to the end of four fixed shelf bay ends. A dedicated OPAC was mounted which allowed patrons to search at the point of need rather than a different location in the library. A light grey colour was chosen which also softened an otherwise dark space.

Non-fiction genre signs: Kevin writes “The Dewey Decimal system in combination with one generic ‘non-fiction’ sign might meet the needs of those who know what they are looking for. However, it does little to attract impulse loans.” (Rethink! : ideas for inspiring school library design, 2007) With this advice some in-house sub-category signs were created and shelf dividers, even creating a separate shelf for our “Theory of Knowledge books” which come from varied Dewey numbers. Highlighting key topics not only assisted in locating books but created additional loans.

Furniture: Whilst the budget did not extend to all new furniture, some tub and armchairs were purchased and configured to create some reading nooks, leading to a more inviting space and more popular amongst students and supports Leigh Hobbs’ view on school libraries in (Richardson, 2018) “I witnessed the value of school libraries not only as centres of learning and education but places of pastoral care.”

In 2014, once again with James Deans architects, planning commenced on the Senior School Learning Commons and adjoining Senior Centre. They described the project on archilovers website as “The new learning commons at Kardinia International College was created to provide a learning environment for the 21st Century. The buildings are about learning now and flexibility for the future. The concept of a stand-alone library was revisited to include Information Technology, Arts, Library, resources, classrooms meeting rooms and media teachers all integrated. The building allows for the accommodation of 2000 students to visit the buildings throughout the day to connect with the world and share learning practices, principles and social media interaction. This is within flexible or purpose made spaces offering choice. The building form is simple yet complex incorporating two stand-alone building connected by a floating metallic ribbon which relates the building while offering clerestory light internally and external covered learning spaces externally. The building entices students and teachers alike to try to determine what do we really know about our home, the world.” (Projects, 2015)

The Learning Commons has replaced the former library and boasts a dynamic approach to learning with a combination of open plan areas, discussion rooms, silent study areas and easy access to technological assistance. Student Services and other key senior staff offices add to the centralised service. The open plan environment is highlighted by a central atrium with magnificent lighting showcasing a multi-dimensional representation of the universe.

The sub-category and shelf divider genre signs have been retained and all shelving is now on wheels and totally flexible. It is often moved to accommodate large house groups using the space for a variety of reasons.

Directional signage is minimalist, and information is displayed digitally on large TV screens throughout. In choosing furniture, the elements of library design were explored with an emphasis on flexibility and ambience. As Davidson found in 2001, ‘comfortable seating, carpets, quiet corners and private niches are hallmarks of rooms where students get down to work’ (Rethink! : ideas for inspiring school library design, 2007). Three different suppliers were employed to combine booth seating for collaboration and discussion, laptop and pod chairs for individual study and various couches and stools for more relaxed seating. This approach ensured that a range of individual learning styles were acknowledged.

Roles

Prior to my commencement in 2010, the Head of the Library was a librarian assisted by a library technician, a library assistant and an AV technician, whilst the Junior school was staffed by two previous classroom teachers. A clear choice was made to employ someone who would align with the IB Guidelines for DP libraries (Ideal libraries : a guide for schools, 2018) which refer to the fact that the librarian's main function should be integrating the library with the curriculum. Being a member of the Heads of Department team has been a positive change in understanding the needs of the various departments and being able to have a positive influence in decision making. I have an integral role in the EE process and have been a mentor to students also. The DP cohort also is given advice on referencing, resources and academic honesty.

The Junior school is now staffed by a librarian who in addition to administrative duties assists in the delivery of information skills and literature sessions which follow a sequential skills acquisition continuum.

The Senior school is also supported by a library assistant and AV technician. The circulation desk area is shared with the school's IT services which supports David Loertshcher's philosophy (Loertshcher, 2014) where he urges libraries 'more that ever to be at the very centre of teaching and learning, being a collaborative hub; a learning commons; a place that everyone owns and contributes to; and part of one giant conversation that is both a social and a learning network.'

Programs

In 2011, an assessment was made as to the use of the over 45 periodicals which were on an annual subscription. As suspected, whilst some were being used for leisure, most of them had not been borrowed at all and were not being used for research purposes and the resources themselves were definitely not dynamic. The money saved by cancelling these subscriptions was redirected into upgrading the EBSCO suite of databases and introducing the EBSCO discovery service (an all-inclusive integrated search facility). Students can now not only research more efficiently and effectively, but can all collaborate and build curriculum. As outlined in (O'Connell, 2010), the more flexible and collaborative characteristics of new media makes teaching in dynamic ways possible, to engage students and facilitate information inquiry.

Library staff were all given training in the new features and I attended each Department meeting to in-service the staff. Whilst some are quite happy to show students how to use Discovery and the databases, I am still booked heavily, as the teacher-librarian, to instruct students at the beginning of assessment tasks. Senior staff are also able to make bookings at various times to guide students in selecting issues for orals (VCE) and in undertaking research for TOK and EE essays (IB).

The look and feel of the Discovery interface was carefully designed to reflect a similar landing page to that of our local university (Deakin) and our local TAFE (Gordon), so that students have a positive head start to continuing tertiary studies.

Links are also made to the State Library of Victoria resources through the Library Homepage, directing Senior Students to specific databases that they are able to access by becoming a State Library member. When teaching the Kardinia specific databases, time is also allocated to introducing the databases offered by the State Library.

From 2012 as the two classroom teachers who were teaching Library classes in the Junior school moved back into the classroom in a greater capacity, the opportunity arose for the Librarian who was previously only providing administrative support to begin to develop a more pivotal role in developing and

implementing both literature and information literacy lessons. This coincided with moving into the newly-built Inquiry Centre.

As the IB tells us on their webpage, In the PYP, students learn how to think for themselves and take responsibility for their own learning through an inquiry-led approach. With this in mind, sequential information skills sessions are continually added and adapted to support the Units of Inquiry being studied in the classroom. As the Junior School Inquiry Centre is staffed by three different staff members making up a full-time load, the staff use Microsoft teams to store files and collaborate where face-to-face meetings are not possible.

Rediscover

David Lankes (Lankes, 2017) states Libraries house, catalog, coordinate and distribute many kinds of resources, physical or virtual, and not all directly related to the content of the curriculum. The collections in a library help learners make sense of their environment, their learning, and their own personal and academic objectives. Acknowledging this, the Junior Inquiry Centre started the ball rolling with a Junior Makerspace initiative with Maker Mondays. Whilst there are many technology related activities such as making light up name badges and Lego Robotics, it also acknowledges other forms of ‘making’. Activities have included pom-poms, Beados and craft activities. Inquiry Centre staff have been instrumental in the development of a more permanent facility.

In 2010, Kardinia purchased and established its own campus in Chiang Mai, Thailand (although the actual ‘Chiang Mai Journey’ program actually began in 2003). The facility boasts many facilities for the students, but did not have a library or book collection. In 2013, students attending the campus would each take two books in their luggage to begin to build a fiction collection. There was a small budget allocated for the initial set up and any good quality weeded books were also sent over. In 2014, when analysing borrowing data from our two e-book platforms, Wheelers and Borrowbox, it was encouraging just how many Chiang Mai students were downloading e-books and audiobooks. This data led to moving from an ‘in perpetuity’ model with Wheelers to their e-platform one which is a consortium of libraries when students now have access to multiple copies of popular titles. Borrowbox is also hugely popular and all students can access e-books and audio books on various devices. As a school where the majority of students are bused in and out each day, this has greatly increased the downloads, with many students enjoying listening to novels on their devices, without the need for a laptop on the bus.

This increase in digital e-book access and an expanded suite of databases accessible from anywhere and any time means that the Kardinia International College library is never closed. In fact, most e-book borrowing occurs after school hours.

Students at Kardinia have always been involved in library focussed co-curricular activities, but in 2018 we re-imagined what that might look like in terms of digital technology. A team was entered into the Victorian Schools Games and Apps Challenge. It was seen as a fantastic opportunity to assist students in creating digital solutions for real life problems. It was believed that this would meet the objectives of the DigiTech Learning Area which seeks to empower students to move from being confident consumers of digital systems to being discerning and creative problem solvers. I worked with the students on the research aspect and design brief, leaving the very able team to create the game and accompanied them to Melbourne to showcase their game. The game and promotional tri-fold material was displayed in the Learning Commons, where students who are not necessarily recognised for other endeavours had the opportunity to be congratulated by the school community.

Reconnect

Libraries/ians create networks of information within and outside the school community, and support IB requirement that schools be connected to the wider community in a variety of ways. Librarians by design or default are also tasked with providing opportunities and space for students to learn about themselves, their learning, and the world around them. Therefore, the library/ian manages or supports multipurpose spaces, pastoral care, “just-in-time” learning, and a wide range of activities relevant to student life. At its core, the library/ian supports reading, inquiry, multiliteracies, approaches to learning, and approaches to teaching. They also are integral to Learner Profile development. All services evidence how these core elements are supported and energized by the library. (Ideal Libraries : a guide for schools, 2018)

- **With students**

At Kardinia, student clubs have always been supported whether it be providing a venue or facilitating the club. Bookies (bookclub) has always been popular with students run by either the library assistant or teacher-librarian. Various activities have been undertaken alongside reading and the club has evolved many times. Three years ago the focus was on digital stories including Fanfiction and WattPad and its current iteration is more of a writer’s club facilitated by the students. Staff have encouraged those students to use the State Library’s Inside a dog site as a base. The students have set up blogs and are actively reviewing Young Adult fiction.

During orientation week, Year 7 students are introduced to searching the Library Homepage and Oliver (our library management system). They learn how to download e-books, print and use the self-checkout facility. This early training ensures they feel comfortable visiting the library and getting to know their way around, so they are more inclined to use the facilities and resources we have available.

‘Showbags’ are provided for the students with postcards and bookmarks conveying information about our services and all students enter a raffle. In the past, our generous suppliers have provided some amazing prizes for the raffle. A coffee machine, drones, speakers and tablets have been given as major prizes with books, stationery and office supplies being donated as minor prizes. Often there has been in excess of 20 prizes on offer. This sets off a fun and positive relationship with the library.

The showbags also include ‘Seedsticks’, which are bookmarks where the top is removed and then planted. A competition was run to see how the lettuce and parsley were growing and there were more prizes – just so the orientation wasn’t seen as a once off and forgotten. Students really enjoy this activity.

In their introduction to Oliver, our library management system, students are given a basic overview of searching, placing a hold and creating interests. All Year 7 students participate in sessions with the teacher-librarian when they undertake their first assessment tasks, and are given more detail then.

The students feel much more in control of their borrowing with Oliver, as it allows them to renew, reserve and search from home. It is very intuitive, and students feel they can have a go without always coming to ask staff for help.

Other competitions are run throughout the year, during Library Lover’s week, Bookweek and as an incentive for classes to return books. The library tries to ensure that notices on the Daily Bulletin are not just about overdue books!

Various celebratory weeks are celebrated throughout the school and the Learning Commons is often the major venue for displays for weeks such as French, Japanese, Spanish, Indigenous, Families which are

student led and ensure the displays are lively and the venue is a hub all throughout the year, not just Bookweek.

This year a Yard Library competition is being run in conjunction with the Technology Department where students are asked to build a Yard library for the school where novels either weeded from the Learning Commons or brought in from home are housed. Each student is required to read at the beginning of their English lessons, so this initiative will support the English department also.

The teacher-librarian ensures a positive presence amongst the students not only through implicit teaching of Information Literacy with classes from Years 1 – 12, including a full day of teaching in the Junior school, but in other various capacities. I am often called upon to attend various excursions where I not only provide assistance but learn so much more about the curriculum content in the various units and often refer to in the delivery of the information literacy skills.

In addition to teaching the IB DP cohort how to access and source appropriate resources, citation and referencing, I am often a mentor in the EE, supervising students in their EE. Individual students are also able to book times to ask other questions in relation to their other subjects or TOK essays.

I have also taken various students to excursions at events at The Geelong Library, The Geelong Technology School and The Victorian Games and App challenge. It is important for the teacher-librarian to be seen as an integral part of the teaching staff. Other library staff are also encouraged to participate in school life with attendance at and involvement with sporting events such as the Swimming, Athletics and Cross-Country carnivals, school assemblies and productions.

- **With staff**

Just as important as being a positive presence amongst students, is to have a positive profile amongst the staff. I am a member of the Heads of Department committee, offering input into areas of curriculum and teaching and learning.

I also attend Staff Advisory Council meetings regularly where members provide feedback and advice to the principal on all areas of K-12 curriculum and operations and bring their own areas of expertise to the discussions.

In 2017 I began a Professional reading Bookclub where interested staff joined to read the same book with a teaching/learning theme. The group met four times per Term and shared ideas and resources through the Teams app in Microsoft Office.

For two years I also chaired (and although not currently chairing am still a member of) the Technology PLT which has now morphed into the Steam PLT. This PLT fosters interdisciplinary learning and showcases the achievements made by students. My project from this PLT is now using that knowledge and teaching a group of 16 Year 6 students in their preparation for the PYP exhibition in my Make, Create and Digital Design sessions.

- **Locally and Globally**

Professional development is vital to stay relevant and ensuring that I participate in conferences other than only in the area of Librarianship helps to ensure this. In the last two years alone, I have attended the Women Leading Learning Conference run by Apple which led to obtaining a scholarship an App

Development Course at a local Institute of Technology and completed a number of modules in an on-line Leadership course.

Being members of various Library Associations is important to foster the connection between people. Kardinia International College is a member of IASL (International Association of School Librarianship), ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association), SLAV (School Library Association of Victoria). Personally, I also belong to many library interest groups on social media and networking sites such as the International School Library Connection which has been such a godsend when navigating through the IB requirements.

Along with sending good quality weeded books and materials to our own campus in Thailand, we have sent materials to East Timor and Fiji. In 2011, a group of 7 teachers/librarians from Viqueque spent some time with me learning the very basics of library set-up and management. Kardinia International College still has connections with the schools involved with students travelling there annually.

Making connections with local networks has dual benefits, students are able to access the resources offered further afield and the community is aware of what is on offer at the College.

Library Services at Kardinia International College has a dedicated page on the Learning Management System. It is on this page programs and services offered at the Geelong Regional Library are promoted to students.

In this age of on-line shopping it would be too easy to solely rely on websites to order books, but I believe that it is in our best interests to support our local booksellers and suppliers, not only for the resources they offer but the wealth of knowledge they have in regard to books and readers. Three local bookstores will still visit with book-tubs and regular attendance at ‘what’s new’ evenings at a local store by staff is encouraged.

The SLAV (School Library Association of Victoria) Geelong branch is very active as a network, with its leader recently receiving an award for contributing significantly to the governance, collegiality, network and learning community of the association. The branch offers both formal and informal professional development opportunities and a fantastic opportunity for networking.

Beyond the library I have been a member of the Geelong Digital Learning Network in 2017-18 which was a group of teachers who got together to share ideas and support digital technologies and STEM in schools.

I am currently Kardinia’s key contact for the recently opened Geelong Technology School and contribute to its curriculum committee. The school works with local partner schools to enhance student learning and build skills needed in future workforces.

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Biographical Note

Adria Juros (B.ed Librarianship) has been Library Services Manager at Kardinia International College since 2010. She is passionate about ensuring the library is at the centre of the school, physically and digitally.