

Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School

Student Voice Case Study 2022

Background

Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School is situated in Ashmore on the Gold Coast. We entered our second year with the “Student Voice” project, building on the strong foundation established through clarity of definition. The school has a population of over 780 students. There were two staff members involved in the student voice project with Brisbane Catholic Education, partnering with the Quaglia Institute, and throughout 2022, the team expanded to include a core collaborative (6) of teachers at GA. The collaborative worked to support systems, processes, and structures to ensure “Voice” is a way of operation at Guardian Angels Primary School.

Analysis

Through the careful integration of the conceptual elements of voice into our key beliefs about learning, including the definition of a “GA Learner” and our behavioural support plan, we ensure voice is foundational to our ways of working.

Our named GA Learner elements

A Guardian Angels Learner

- is able to talk specifically about their learning.
 - They are aware of their current level of understanding in a learning area.
 - They understand their learning path and are confident enough to take on the challenge.
 - They can select tools and resources to guide their learning.
 - knows their voice is valued and respected (sharing ideas and opinions, for the good of the whole and follow through with actions)

- has a growth mindset and uses feedback to improve and progress
- is an engaged, challenged, curious and an active participant in their learning
- shares how they use the GA Learning Powers and Qualities of Angels to support their learning and play



Examples of student understanding of learning goals



Focused communication with all stakeholders continued. Referencing through goals, professional development, communication pathways and community events continued.

The school clearly defined core high impacted practices, which are evidence

Purpose

Our goal in 2022, was to deepen voice with students, parents, and staff as a way of operating at GA. We also wanted to identify skills that our students needed to develop further to support authentic voice within the school. A strong connection was drawn to the GA High Impact practices, which aligned seamlessly with core visible learning practices.

Our journey

We looked at ways to continue to embed voice in GA language, processes and practices

- Continued references to our defined GA Learner. This was promoted at assemblies and in newsletters, classrooms, named in student diaries. Our definition clearly named what is expected of a learner at GA.
- We continued to emphasise the core elements in the definition. Key songs, literature and activities continued to be a powerful way to promote key elements and these were linked to the 3 defined areas of VOICE

Picture Books used:

- **Cay and Adlee Find their Voice** by Cali and Russ Quaglia
- Maybe by Kobi Yamada- a story about the endless potential in all of us
- Be You by Peter H Reynolds- celebration of individuality persistence and staying true to **YOU!**
- The Magnificent Thing by Ashley Spires- a story for dealing honestly with feelings, while at the same time reassuring children that it's okay to make mistakes.
- Decibella by Julia Cook- gives children a fun way to learn to be better communicators with the importance in using different volumes of their voice in different situations.
- The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig – focused on how small acts of kindness can help children feel included and allow them to flourish
- Perfectly Norman by Tom Percival - about embracing and celebrating what makes you unique.
- Link to school theme song for the year “Shine Your Way” By Owl City and key elements of our theme “Lights on @GA”



- 1 We are all unique and all have gifts that can make a difference in our world
- 2 We are all shining to our individual potential
- 3 We Promote ownership, opportunity and celebrate success

based, to provide clarity about our consistent way of operating within the school. A resource was developed to clearly define and support teachers, and induct new staff members.

Overview of GA Practices

GA HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES

OUR HIGH IMPACT TEACHING PRACTICES ARE EVIDENCE-BASED TO ENSURE WE PROVIDED MAXIMUM TEACHING AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR STUDENTS.

OUR COMMON PRACTICES

At GA we have 12 high-impact practices we follow to ensure maximum impact in learning and teaching. It also promotes a common language to provide consistency within our approach. It is intended that these strategies support teachers to translate theory into practice. When all teachers in all classrooms implement effective teaching practices consistently, all students have access to teaching and learning that improves their outcomes. The practices contained here are not an exhaustive list but rather are drawn from sound and consistent evidence base to increase student achievement. During implementation, adjustments or adaptations may need to be made to address student needs most effectively.

1. WALK
2. GA LEARNING POWERS
3. LEARNING INTENTIONS & SUCCESS CRITERIA
4. GOALS
5. METACOGNITION
6. FEEDBACK
7. QUESTIONING
8. DATA
9. CONTEXT
10. GROW
11. ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION
12. MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES

Seeing GA life through a student's perspective (shadowing a student) to refine practices, gain perspective and celebrate.

Continued use of the iKnow survey allowed teachers and students key skill areas to focus on and development. Teaching these skills allow richness in authentic voice and ownership. The process was refined in 2022 and there was opportunity to link to building the key focus skills in planning. Short cycle review process enabled GA to close the loop and empower students to know their impact/progress with focus goals. It was linked to class goal setting as a focus. *Example of classes focused iKnow Survey goals*

Example of iKnow Survey data tables showing observed and wondered categories for various activities like 'START OF THE DAY', 'FIRST BREAK', 'MUNCH AND CRUNCH', and 'ENGLISH ROTATION 2'.

- Clear links to GA Pedagogical Practices. Time was invested to unpack "WHY, HOW and WHAT of these practices in our context.

Some sample pages from our key document

PRACTICE 1: WALK

WE RESPECT
ACT RESPONSIBLY
LEARN TO BE BRAVE
KEEP SAFE

WHY - OUR BELIEFS

- We foster right relationships and partnerships between students, parents, staff and the broader community to improve learning outcomes.
- We believe a positive environment is achieved through descriptive feedback and positive role modelling.
- Behaviour is a learnt process and needs to be explicitly taught.

HOW - OUR PRINCIPLES

We TEACH, REMIND, SUPERVISE and FEEDBACK. All practices at Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School should be:

- Fast and just
- Clear and concise
- Regularly communicated
- Modelled and reinforced
- Used consistently
- Linked with reflective and restorative actions

WHAT - OUR PRACTICES

- We use Universal and Targeted Practices. These are: Zones of Regulation, Affirmation Bring Tag, Classroom, Teacher Toolkit and Conversations.
- We use minor and major behaviours to determine next steps.
- We set consistent expectations to focus reflective processes for our students.
- What are you doing?
- What should you be doing?
- What choice are you going to make now?
- Restorative conversations to support recovery of our process.
- Communication of expectation and acknowledgement at assemblies, newsletters, playground signs
- Areas of WALK are explicitly taught through picture books, media, and activities linked to the AC

PRACTICE 3: LEARNING INTENTIONS

LEARNING INTENTIONS AND SUCCESS CRITERIA CAN HELP TEACHERS ENSURE THAT THEIR PRACTICES ALIGN WITH WHAT THEIR STUDENTS NEED TO KNOW.

WHY - OUR BELIEFS

- Learning intentions give students clear direction and understanding of the learning - promotes ownership.
- Learning intentions provide teachers with direction for explicit teaching. They enable teachers to plan and implement lessons with greater clarity.
- Research shows that the impact of using Learning Intentions is 0.88 effect size - double the growth with a year.

HOW - OUR PRINCIPLES

- Learning intentions are constructed from the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards, in Prep, simplified language is used to enable students to access the learning intention.
- Learning intentions are deconstructed with the children - verbs, concepts, skills
- Learning intentions are visible, interactive and referenced during learning opportunities
- The purpose of the Learning Intention is communicated
- Using the stem, "We are learning to..." to begin a learning intention indicates to students that we value learning collaboratively and that we all are responsible for learning.

WHAT - OUR PRACTICES

- Learning intentions are visible and continually used in the classroom to support learning. Consideration of the text size is essential so students use the classroom space as the "third teacher".
- Time is devoted to writing, unpacking and referencing Learning Intentions. Handwritten learning intentions/unpacking has a more powerful connection to the learning for the student.
- Students refer to Learning Intentions and understand what they are learning and why.
- Learning intentions can be testing or unit specific.
- Learning intentions are visible and continually used in the classroom to support learning. Consideration of the text size is essential so students use the classroom space as the "third teacher".

Opportunity to shadow students to look ascertain and view processes from their perspective was begun in 2022. Reflections recorded and shared - example below

START OF THE DAY

OBSERVED: Amira arrived at school right on the bell. Other students were outside talking and setting up for at least 10 minutes. When Amira came in, she retrieved her pencil case straight away. We got to choose where we sat, and Amira and her friends went to the back high table. They said they love this table as it is high, and you can see everything. Amira started a conversation about Spider Man as she really likes the actor that stars the character.

WONDER: I wonder if Amira was talkative at the start of the day because unlike the other students she always arrives just on the bell. The other students have time to socialise and then turn their focus to the start of the day activities. I wonder if teachers consider the affect of student arrival time. One girl said she arrives at 7:30am which seems like a long time to be at school waiting for the start of the day.

FIRST BREAK

OBSERVED: We first went to the toilet but had to wait as there were only 3 toilets with doors that shut and there was a lot of us. We sat on the floor to eat our lunch near the girls' toilets. We talked about food and animals and headed to the library to play on the big whiteboard. We draw different images commenting on them and I suggested we write a story based on the images. I mentioned that we had just learnt about onomatopoeia and we came up with some of these words to add to our story.

WONDER: I wonder about the peer influence on food. I had porridge and was the odd one out and students commented on my lunch. I wonder how a nervous student would react to comments about their lunch being weird or gross. I wonder if teachers on duty engage with students in meaningful ways that assist students to transfer learning to their physiolingual situations.

MUNCH AND CRUNCH

OBSERVED: We all went to our bags to get out our munch and crunch. I was talking to some girls while I was outside and when I came in, I was asked to sit by the door for "disturbing others". The teacher read out loud "Wonder to the class". It was hard for me to engage being so far away from the group and I noticed several students disengaged with the story after 5 minutes also sitting far away from the group. We sat on the floor for a good 20 minutes and my legs and neck started to hurt. The longer we sat the more students started to fidget and disengage.

WONDER: I wonder if teachers deliver consequences based on what one student has said without determining the full situation. I wonder if teachers consider if the consequences are then assisting students to reengage or learn. I was sitting by the door therefore the temptation to disengage was high. I wonder if teachers consider what it is like to sit on the floor for 20 minutes or more. I wonder if teachers observe disengagement and change lessons to compensate accordingly.

ENGLISH ROTATION 2

OBSERVED: We moved to our next rotation which was in a different room with a school official. We were told a definition of onomatopoeia and for different scenarios had to create sounds that might go with it. For example, a door closing to which Amira wrote "Bang". Some students had difficulty as first using the iPad toolbar. Some students finished early and chatted about the noises and some students rushed at the end as

WONDER: Moving groups was a quick minute break in which to have a conversation and stretch our legs. I wonder if teachers consider the needs of disengaged students regarding movement and breaks. Again, I wonder if we are getting the most out of the session if we don't allow students opportunities to transfer the learning.

We continued to refine our process for developing student skills. The iKnow my class survey was used and linked to "GROWS and GROWS within each room. Staff took time to unpack areas and identify strengths, areas for development and wonderings with their students. Students elaborated further in class discussion for clarification. We closed the gap this year by building in reflection on how the classes achieved their goal and teachers linking skill needs within their planning.

Our Class Goal

(As decided by the students of all)

It to improve our ability to work in teams.

How: We will discuss the pros and cons with our team members during lessons and make use of our team building strategies to implement over the next couple of weeks.

Time Length: 10 mins - an end of lesson activity using team building strategies.

Reflection: In week 1 we will discuss as a class if we have improved our ability to work together in teams.

Our Class Goal

(As decided by the students of all)

It to decrease the level of distractions in our class!

How: We will create a list of what is acceptable behaviour of what is not acceptable and what are distracting behaviours. We will agree on consequences of repeat behaviours between lessons. 1 reminder and you have a set waiting upon the return of our great lesson.

Time Length: 10 mins - 1 create agreements between 1-4 minutes and discuss to agreement.

Reflection: In week 2 we will discuss if our class distractions have reduced.

Example of individual Class Goal

Our Class Goal!
 (As decided by the students of 6G)
is to decrease the level of distractions in our class!

How: we will create a list of what is acceptable behaviour at tables in the class and what is deemed as distracting behaviours. We will agree on consequences of repeated distracting behaviours. Example, 3 reminders and you have a set seating space in the room or sit on your own.

Time Length: Week 1 – create agreement Weeks 1-4 implement and adhered to agreement.

Reflection: In week 5 we will discuss as a class if distractions have reduced.



Example Café and prompts discussed in class and shared at Café

Value and expecting all voices



1 What things are good at GA?

What things do we need to improve?

Think about and explain you thinking about:

- Classrooms
- Outside Spaces
- Learning Opportunities
- Resources
- Events

2 We have three main goals this term

- Lights on at GA
- Our Behaviour Process
- Writing



What has worked well? What have you liked?

What are some ideas to make these goals work better?

Each term we used voice when ideas or problems arose, also to give input into school goals and needs from the students. The GA Café meetings were embraced and valued by all classes as they had class meetings prior- and the representative came with their class voice on paper or device.

Data Analysis

Latest iKnow Survey: Most areas increased from 2021 data except questions- 4, 10, 14

Student Perceptions of Oneself in the Learning Process

Students should see themselves as active participants in the learning process. By creating an environment that encourages participation, collaboration, and exploration, teachers have the ability to engage students in meaningful ways.

Question	Total in Agreement	Gender	
		Male	Female
1. I use my imagination in class.	62.6%	60.2%	65.2%
2. I feel comfortable asking questions in this class.	47.5%	58.2%	36.1%
3. I give up when I do not understand something.	1.4%	1.9%	1.0%
4. I share my ideas in this class.	37.8%	43.2%	32.2%
5. I learn from my mistakes.	78.8%	78.9%	78.8%
6. I ask my teacher for help when I do not understand something.	63.6%	64.5%	62.6%
7. I listen to other students' ideas and opinions.	92.0%	91.1%	93.1%
8. It helps me learn when I work with other students.	52.0%	52.6%	51.5%
9. It is my responsibility to do my best in this class.	95.4%	93.9%	97.0%
10. I am bored in this class.	3.6%	4.7%	2.5%
11. I am excited to be a student in this class.	81.4%	75.9%	87.2%
12. I give my best effort in this class.	88.2%	85.7%	90.9%

Student Perceptions of the Course Overall

The course itself should be inspiring and relevant to students. Teachers can engage students by ensuring that course content is interesting and relates to students' everyday lives.

Question	Total in Agreement	Gender	
		Male	Female
13. The work in this class is easy for me.	9.6%	11.3%	7.9%
14. Students in this class listen to me.	39.8%	46.9%	32.2%
15. We use technology (computers, handheld devices, etc.) to help us learn in this class.	85.3%	86.4%	84.2%
16. What I am learning in this class helps me outside of school.	56.0%	53.6%	58.6%
17. I learn things that interest me in this class.	61.4%	61.5%	61.4%
18. Other students' behaviour in this class makes it hard for me to learn.	30.6%	22.1%	39.6%
19. Homework in this class helps me learn.	55.9%	53.3%	58.7%

Student Perceptions of the Teacher and Instruction

A teacher's level of engagement in class directly impacts students. By building positive relationships with students, designing lessons that afford students time to process and solve problems, and providing regular feedback to students, teachers can increase student engagement.

Question	Total in Agreement	Gender	
		Male	Female
20. My teacher cares about me.	92.1%	90.0%	94.4%
21. My teacher encourages students to work together.	67.6%	64.8%	70.6%
22. My teacher learns from students.	55.4%	54.5%	56.4%
23. My teacher treats students fairly.	88.2%	85.9%	90.6%
24. My teacher makes learning fun.	68.9%	64.8%	73.4%
25. My teacher wants me to be successful.	96.9%	97.2%	96.5%
26. My teacher encourages me to be creative.	80.0%	76.1%	84.2%
27. My teacher listens to my ideas.	87.2%	87.3%	87.1%

Next Steps

Guardian Angels Catholic Primary School is committed to continuing our voice journey in 2023. We will continue to deepen, enact, and engage with voice to enrich and enhance learning at GA. Through partnership and guidance from the Quaglia Institute we will focus on deepening and challenging students in their learning. This will occur through

- increased specificity and explicit use of high impact strategies.
- consistent implementation of processes and structures where voice is aligned and enacted.

We hope to increase skill development and instructional strategies which enables students to use their toolbox to ensure voice is a way of being at GA.