ICAS

SARAH REDFERN HIGH SCHOOL

Sarah Redfern High School uses ICAS as part of the school's growth and improvement strategy.

DISCOVERING A NEW TOOL FOR UNLOCKING THE TRUE POTENTIAL OF STUDENTS

Sarah Redfern High School was facing a declining student population from Years 10 to 12. Furthermore, whilst only a handful of students applied for university, school data indicated that more students had the skills and ability to do so.

To help address this, the school established—amongst other initiatives—a program for high achieving students, which included:

- A formalised process for using ICAS as a diagnostic tool to obtain a true measure and external validation of where students are excelling; where they need additional support or focus; and how they are progressing year-on-year
- A partnership with a local university, to give students (and their parents) information about the options available at university and the experience of being in a university setting
- Collaboration with the business community through which students engage with and are mentored by employees from corporate businesses.

"ICAS has enabled us to get a true measure, and external validation, of how students are progressing year-on-year. With ICAS we are able to measure their individual growth and also the growth of the school and school improvement."

Paul Gavin
Strategic Planning Manager
Sarah Redfern High School

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sarah Redfern High School is a public co-educational high school in the suburb of Minto in New South Wales, Australia. Established in 1981, the school serves a multicultural community and prides itself in providing a variety of meaningful learning experiences that promote the development of all children towards their full potential.

SARAH REDFERN'S JOURNEY: FROM DATA TO DIRECTION

In his role as Strategic Planning Manager, Paul Gavin is responsible for analysing all of the school's assessment data. Having identified a considerable variation between student results and teacher estimates, he wanted an independent, external body to provide a triangulation point for their internal assessments.

Paul developed a formalised approach to using ICAS with a focus on English and Mathematics and initially trialled ICAS with the top 20 students in each year group, to establish a 'control' group.

Paul analyses the school's ICAS data and presents it to each faculty. As a group they discuss the results and possible reasons behind the analysis. Staff also consider the extent to which ICAS data tallies with what they have observed in the classroom. Teachers are then responsible for working on their own personal teaching plans – considering questions such as: Which areas need improvement? Was it a certain part of the syllabus? Was it all students or a percentage?

The school also recognises student achievement in ICAS. Alongside school assemblies, school staff also focus on personal praise and discussions with individual students on their strengths, areas for development, and their growth and improvement from year to year.

THE INITIAL RESULTS

ICAS data has given the school insights into two key elements: the students and their individual ability; and the relevance and effectiveness of teaching. As a result of these insights, the school is realising benefits in:

Inspiring students to take their rightful place in the world

ICAS results have revealed students who aren't necessarily high achievers in class, but who have the latent capability. The school has been able to focus on and develop this.

The independent, external nature of ICAS and the benchmarking against other students are powerful motivators for both students and their parents. They contribute to the school's goal of inspiring students to reach their true potential and take their rightful place in the world.

The overall program has resulted in increasing numbers of students wanting to go to university, securing work placements, as well as increasing student enrolments into the school.

School growth and improvement

Faculty discussions about ICAS data have stimulated a professional dialogue amongst teachers that flows across subject areas. This is proving invaluable to the school's improvement and development.

For example, a deeper look at ICAS data often reveals a combination of factors that need improvement. ICAS is also another tool that helps the school look at teaching styles, teaching abilities and teacher effectiveness.

NEXT STEPS

Subsequent to the success of the ICAS 'control' group, Sarah Redfern is planning to make ICAS available to more students each year and is looking at the possibility of covering more subjects annually.

Analysing assessment data from a variety of sources is now a specific part of the School Plan and the school is investing in professional development to develop this skillset in all staff.

> "ICAS diagnostic reports provide us with invaluable information that allows us to delve down into layers we don't have access to in the school. To be able to really identify the areas that the students are excelling in and also identify the areas that we need to provide additional support and tuition for."

Paul Gavin
Strategic Planning Manager
Sarah Redfern High School

LEARN MORE

Contact your nearest Macmillan office:

T: +91 9560 416 111, dial 6 for ICAS
E: icasonline@macmillan.co.in
W: www.macmillaneducation.in/icas