

# EDUCATION RESEARCH DRAWS INTERNATIONAL INTEREST

The authors of research that examines the effectiveness of the Bendigo Education Plan (BEP) say that there is considerable international interest in educational outcomes in the city.



The British Educational Research Journal has published a paper on research conducted by a team of 12 researchers from La Trobe University Bendigo and Monash University that examines a style of 'personalised learning' that has been implemented at Bendigo East Secondary College, Weeroona College Bendigo, Crusoe 7-10 Secondary College and Eaglehawk Secondary College under the BEP.

'Some people are under the impression that the Bendigo Education Plan is mainly series of new buildings at four schools across Bendigo,' says Professor Vaughan Prain, lead researcher and Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Education, La Trobe University Bendigo.

'The BEP uses very different methods of teaching and learning from what is traditionally seen in classrooms to enhance the academic success and wellbeing of students.'

Among other major changes, rather than using traditional classrooms, schools have been organised into learning clusters with multiple teachers. Students are organised into informal learning groups based on their pre-existing grasp of the course syllabus.

Dr Debra Edwards, lecturer at La Trobe University Bendigo and project researcher, says that the BEP also focuses on

improving literacy. 'Within the English curriculum the teachers have been refining how the flexible learning spaces enable meaningful and engaging personalised learning experiences.'

Dr Edwards and Professor Prain say that the Bendigo Education Plan focuses on using a knowledge base accrued over 20 years that considers the effectiveness of teaching to an individual, rather than necessarily a classroom.

'This is the first time that people have tried to marry this style of personalised learning to a state-wide or national curriculum' says Professor Prain. 'So there is considerable national and international interest in what we are doing in Bendigo.'

The research paper identifies the benefits of innovations that have taken place in BEP schools. It also indicates ongoing challenges in conceptualising and implementing a personalised learning approach.

'It discusses methods that have been employed by teams of teachers to facilitate changes from more traditional styles of teaching and learning, says Professor Prain. 'We compare student perceptions of their own learning as well as comparing data supplied by NAPLAN testing.'

'While we are still in the early stages of implementing the BEP we are seeing good signs in terms of enhancing the academic success and wellbeing of students.'

## MORE INFORMATION

Further information on research opportunities in the faculty of Education can be found at:  
[latrobe.edu.au/education/research](http://latrobe.edu.au/education/research)