



Kerry Street
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Swings and Roundabouts

A history of Kerry Street Community School 1981 - 2018

Dedication

This publication is dedicated to the families and team members, past and present, who have made Kerry Street Community School what it is today. Thank you for your love, enthusiasm, creativity and commitment. Our school would not be what it is without your involvement.

Copyright Information

© Kerry Street Community School 2018.

Except as permitted by the *Copyright Act 1968*, this material may not be reproduced, stored or transmitted without the permission of the copyright owner. All enquiries must be directed to Kerry Street Community School.

Acknowledgements

Kerry Street Community School would like to pay respect to the Indigenous members of our community by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which it is situated, the Wadjuk Nyungar people.

This publication could not be completed without the support of the people we spoke with to understand our school's rich history: Pam and Paul Jordan, Wendy and Ron Gorman, Kath Sugars, Helen Sugars Duff, Fran Ryce, Howard Smith, and Geraldine Stanton.

Sincere thanks go to Tom Francas for his reflections, artwork, and the re-writing of song lyrics for the purpose of our new school building's Opening Ceremony; to Ariane Roemmele for her

reflections and the time and love she has injected into the various artworks she has created for our school over the years, including that of the Kerry Street logo; to Lucas Black and his year 4/5/6 students for their excellent interview questions; to Harley Garven for her assistance with transcribing interviews; to Sally Daniel for photography; to Lisa Black for proof reading; and Ken and Louisa Bowman for writing and coordinating the publication, art direction and graphic design.

Our school is funded by the Australian Government, the Government of Western Australia, Kerry Street families, teachers and staff.

Contents

Foreword.....	3	Grants.....	33
In the beginning.....	4	Influencing public policy	36
What’s in a name?.....	10	WASICS	37
Absolutely Kerry Street	12	Coordinators, communities and conflicts.....	38
Options.....	13	The Syndicate	40
The Kerry Street logo.....	15	The plan	46
School camps	18	The build	49
Governance	20	The result.....	54
Student numbers.....	22	Today.....	59
Community spirit	24	Philosophy and values	60
Tom says.....	29	Contact details.....	63
Ariane says.....	31		

“There is a theory which states that if ever anyone discovers exactly how Kerry Street works, it will instantly disappear and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable. There is another theory which states that this has already happened.”

Tom Francas, paraphrasing Douglas Adams, 2002



Kerry Street garden, 2015

Foreword

Celebrating 37 years



Karen Kennedy

Principal

2013 - Present
Kerry Street Community School

Five and a half years ago, the potential of our school ignited so many possibilities in me that I wanted to share in its journey. I couldn't know at the time the sheer magnitude of the work that would be involved to bring us to where we are today, or fully appreciate the massive contributions made by the parents, teachers and Coordinators who came before me, or by Fran, Tom and Ariane, who are still with us today.

They say it takes a village to raise a child; in our case, it took a community of parents to build a school, and since that time, creating community has been the very essence of everything we do and strive to achieve.

This publication has been titled, "Swings and Roundabouts" as the one thought that came to mind repeatedly as Louisa and I were undertaking research for this project, is that the more things change, the more things stay the same. Over the course of the past three-and-three-quarter decades, our school has faced the same challenges, and been presented with a number of the same opportunities, in almost a cyclical fashion. What we may have lost on the swings, we certainly made up on the roundabouts, and despite, at times, some passionate debate on the way Kerry Street operates, its core values and our educational philosophies remain intact: we still cook school lunches and go on whole school camps; parents continue to be actively involved in all aspects of the school and their children's education, and Kerry Street remains small.

Now that the new classrooms, amenities and undercover area have been constructed, and the house at 18 Forrest Road renovated and amalgamated into the larger school site, we are in a better position than ever before to support our students' learning and implement the educational experiences and opportunities that will help to shape who they are in life.

With the most heartfelt gratitude, I would like to acknowledge the Syndicate families for their foresight and dedication to helping us attain the 18 Forrest Road property, and I thank the Australian Government and the Government of Western Australia for assisting us with the financial means to do all that was necessary to complete our build.

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."

Henry Ford

In the beginning...

Kerry Street Community School began its life as Fremantle Alternative School (FAS), in the last term of 1980, a response to an increasing need identified by a number of Fremantle-based families for education that would nurture and support their children.

“The state school system at the time was archaic,” recalls Paul Jordan, one of FAS’ founding parents. “A local school had 35 plus kids in preps and still used corporal punishment.”

Paul’s son, Shawn Jordan, had been attending KIDS Open Learning School^[1], based in the Perth Institute of Film and Television building^[2]. “The KIDS program wasn’t ideal, so a few families, including ours, moved away and set up an alternative,” said Paul. “The school’s first location was that of the Anglican Church hall on Canning Highway in East Fremantle.”

^[1] Knowing Is Doing Something

Howard Smith, a long time friend of Paul and his wife, Pam Jordan, and Murdoch University alumnus recounts, “There were a few of us who had been to Murdoch together, who decided to set up an alternative schooling option. The first teacher we had, Ian Robertson, was remarkable. He worked without pay in the early days because we were completely unfunded.”

The Hille family and the Wiley family, fellow FAS founders, had connections with the Labor Catholic faction in Fremantle. Their connections enabled FAS to move from the Anglican Church site to that of a disused Catholic High School down by the river in East Fremantle. The school was officially incorporated on the 2nd of April, 1981, and the founding families worked together to outline its charter.

^[2] The Perth Institute of Film and Television was based in the building that, until 1958, had been the site of Fremantle Boys School. The building is now the home of The Film and Television Institute and in 2001 was permanently listed on the State Register of Heritage Places.

“After about a year, we moved the school again, this time to the Seventh Day Adventist Church building in Solomon Street in Palmyra. Because we weren’t the only people using the venue at that time, we had to pack up the school every Friday afternoon during our first term,” said Paul.

FAS ran as a collective and charged no fees. The attending families that could afford to support the school did so. The school did not follow any specific educational model; rather it incorporated themes from both Steiner^[3] and Montessori^[4].

“Developing a relationship is what teaching is about – and literacy and numeracy evolve from that.”

Ian Robertson, 1982

^[3] Also commonly known as Waldorf education: <https://www.steinereducation.edu.au>

^[4] Developed by Dr. Maria Montessori: <https://montessori.org.au>



Ian Robertson



First graduates, 1981

FREMANTLE FOCUS

A REGULAR GAZETTE FEATURE ON COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Learning...With Interest

By Shoba

It's mid morning and there's a quiet hum of voices. Little groups of children are gathered in a large room. A few look up. Some sit on the floor at small tables, writing. Others sit with the occasional adult at clusters of tables and chairs. A tiny boy is in a corner completely absorbed in a book. The atmosphere is full of interest at the Fremantle Alternative School.

"It's like this until about 11 and then the noise level really rises," says Ian Robertson, a full-time teacher at the school which runs on a part-time and has strong parental involvement.

Situated in Sokonoo Street, Palmyra, the Fremantle Alternative School began just over two years ago with 16 families and 25 children as "an alternative to schools, both government and non-government, in the Fremantle area."

It began because parents wanted to run their own school, rather than have a teacher or a board run it for them.

"When we started we didn't have anything. Everybody brought in books from their home libraries and donated tables, chairs, bookshelves, tape recorders — even a camera and projector. The kids were really involved in all this — in making their own school."

"On Sunday afternoon we had no place to put anything and then by Monday at 10am the kids were sitting down doing things — it was incredible."

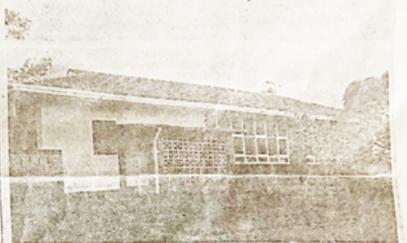
"We all wanted to be involved in our children's education," says Maureen Wiley one of the parents working at the school this morning.

"We run the school as a collective, so you've always got different people pulling in energy."

"If someone wants to do something like cooking, for example, the kids are totally enthusiastic. On Monday afternoon one of the parents came in with a lump of clay and others come in on Wednesday mornings with violins and there's folk dancing."

Right: Behind this modest facade something of a revolution is in the air.

Below: Classes are conducted in an atmosphere of cooperation and caring.



They have all day, and its demanding on them in this situation to fit in and be socially accepted — much more than in ordinary schools because they've got much more to fill in on their own."

The parents hold fortnightly meetings to discuss the running of the school, make decisions, and hear complaints.

"We're a very diverse group of people — religiously, philosophically, economically and politically!"

"When we first started, there were a lot of tensions that didn't get brought out at the meetings," said Ian. "Now that we've been together over 2 years, we are more honest with each other."

It's your own fault for not speaking up at meetings if you don't like someone's way of speaking," says Maureen. "You've got a voice and if you want something changed, you use it!"

"Wanted Dad or Alvo" shouts one of the many posters around the school's walls. "LAZY LORA — she's known to smash down buses with a gun, knock down legs with her boots..."

Probably the only criterion for deciding who can attend the school is numbers. Thirty pupils allows for a "manageable almost extended family" type of group.

People pay what they can. If the occasion arises that money is needed, those who have it at the time give it. The teachers are paid from Government grants.

From the point of view of Ian Robertson, the school is a relationship — it is not determining a series of facts. He has a personal relationship with each child at the school and during the course of a day spends some time showing them work, finding out about any problems or maybe just what happened last night.

"Developing a relationship is what teaching is about — and literacy and numeracy involve that," he said.

"The children don't just have 15 minutes at their table and an hour for lunch."

Participation is the keynote in all areas.



The Fremantle Gazette, 21 May 1982

"The state school resource centre supplied us with basic school resources, and we used the state school curriculum as a guide when developing individual learning contracts with the children at the start of each term," recounts Paul Jordan.

In its early years, FAS offered no set classes, rather children worked in small groups each morning based on their individual abilities, with afternoons reserved for creative play and learning. Lunch each day was organised by the children, who with the assistance of a parent, were responsible for walking to the shops, purchasing the groceries they could afford, returning to school and preparing lunch for everyone.

Former FAS parent-cum-teacher and later still, Kerry Street Community School Coordinator, Geraldine Stanton, noted, "A number of people over the years have suggested we get rid of school lunches, but they're an integral part of the school, and we all know that the sharing of food brings people together. And they were inexpensive; they cost fifty cents."

"The children being involved in the preparation of school lunch was important; it taught them life skills like budgeting, and how to cater for others," said Geraldine. "It was hard to take them out of class to have them prepare the lunch, but it was something they had to do."

Geraldine joined FAS as a parent to eldest son Aaron in 1983. "Initially when I applied to join [FAS], I was rejected. At the time, pre-school wasn't compulsory – you could do it or not. I was trying to get Aaron into pre-school and [FAS] wouldn't accept pre-schoolers unless you had a sibling. They said, 'People would just come and use us up and they wouldn't be dedicated.' I laugh about that now... So I couldn't join until '84."

"I hated school when I was young," recalls Geraldine. "I hated being humiliated there, so I always wanted to start my own school. That was a deep passion of mine. I came across FAS because I knew Trish and Vic Hille and Maureen Wiley, who all grew up across the road from me. I thought, 'Okay, I could go there.'"



Hanging out



at Solomon Street



in class



having fun

"That's why I came to be involved with the school. I really didn't want to send my kids to a mainstream school, although they probably could have managed it quite well."

Wendy Gorman, a teacher who also joined the school in 1984 and taught the children maths, recounts, "We eventually were evicted by the church. We had always been on a short-term lease and during the time we were in Solomon Street, our relationship with the church had had its ups and downs. Plus, with having to pack everything up at the end of each week, it was difficult to teach as [the space] always had a temporary feel to it. It never quite felt like home."

"We had to move from Solomon Street at very short notice," said Geraldine. "We looked at other options, including a house on Leach Highway out that way, but it wasn't suitable. And then eventually the Kerry Street property was found."

"When FAS was evicted from Solomon Street," said Ron Gorman, Deputy Director of the Association of Independent Schools Western Australia (AISWA), "It was unexpected. It was really abrupt. And the school had nowhere to go."

"Wendy was teaching at FAS and I was at Lance Holt School, so we shared a common interest in that she was there but also FAS was a great partner in the district. So I gave my time to assist scoping out the real estate options."

"When we came across 20 Forrest Road, the problem was that FAS didn't have the assets to support the purchase of the property. It was a school that had been being set up for five days at a time, rented its place in the church, and its numbers were small. Not because there was a problem with the school, but because that was the community at the time."

"It was a fabulous community," recalled Ron.



Nanga Camp, 1983

"I was asked to contribute by essentially lobbying the Federal government on behalf of the school, which is what I did. Wendy and I made an appointment with one of John Dawkins^[5] chief advisers – we're pretty sure it was on Christmas Eve – and we put the case to him that the school should have his support wherever possible, so that the school could find a premises and continue."

"[Dawkins'] Chief of Staff gave us the assurance that we would be heard. He went to Dawkins and ensured that the needs of the school were made clear."

"Really," said Ron, "At that time FAS could have very well just disappeared. It would have done a smoke bomb. Bang! Gone. Because numbers weren't great, which meant its income wasn't fantastic."

The acquisition of 20 Forrest Road, Hamilton Hill, was made possible via a series of small, short term loans from individual teachers and families until, with Ron and Wendy Gorman's assistance, the school received a capital grant.

"I remember I had just come into some money," said Geraldine, "So I gave [the school] an \$8,000 loan until we got the capital grant and a low interest loan. There were a lot of people who did the same as me; I can't recall who else did it, but there were a lot who did. And then when the low interest loan came through, we were all paid back."

The Kerry Street property was owned by Yvonne and Francis Manera. Yvonne Manera, a teacher, used the building to run her business, the Kerry Street Kindergarten. Francis, meanwhile, was the principal at East Fremantle Primary School. Prior to the Maneras' taking ownership of the property, it had been an Anglican church.

"I hated it, it looked horrible!" recalls Geraldine. "It was brown brick and it looked very churchy, sort of modern churchy. But, it was probably the best option, really, in terms of building. And we had come through a term of very high interest rates back then, in the late 80s, so properties were fairly expensive. It was a challenge to get the money together."

"There were concerns about moving to Kerry Street as no one quite knew where it was," recalls Wendy.

"Firstly, it seemed to be a fair way away, Palmyra to Hamilton Hill. All of the FAS families came from Palmyra, Fremantle, and East Fremantle and there was concern that we would lose them. Of course, when we moved, we picked up Hamilton Hill and Hilton families, so it was a good move. Fremantle was becoming expensive and Hamilton Hill and Hilton were becoming the places to go," she said.

"So, the action of the church, the reaction of the school, the presentation to Dawkins' Chief of Staff on Christmas Eve, and to open the following year was pretty spectacular," said Ron. "I mean, I would still try to this day but when you think about that in the current climate - you'd be fighting bureaucrats all the way to the banks!"

"I think it was a very healthy regard for the school, which goes to show that small doesn't mean anything other than good things are happening. Dawkins knew that. He made sure that the school was able to be heard and to continue."

"Oh gosh, I remember the night," said Ron, "It was brilliant!"

^[5] Then Federal Minister for Employment Education and Training, within the Hawke Government

FROM THE MYSTERIOUS EAST

STUDENTS of Fremantle's Alternative School have had a taste of the mysterious East over the past two weeks.

Small children in brightly coloured pantaloons and silks were everywhere when the Gazette caught up with them last week for a spot of Iranian dancing.

The culture and customs of Iran, along with its troubles, have been studied by the students in a project designed to teach children about other countries in a more realistic way.

Grant

The school received a grant of \$595 for costume making, Persian rug weaving and the cooking of traditional Iranian dishes.

Students look at other side

Last week's dancing would have brought back a few memories for Iranians at the Graylands Migrant Centre, who were treated to a repeat performance at the centre. About 55 refugees are housed at the centre.

Parent Georgina Bell, who was involved in the project, said its value had

been two fold.

"Firstly, it created a very real and meaningful experience for the children but it also let members of the Iranian community know that they are not alone," she said.

The school hopes to receive a grant for a similar project next year.



Students of the Fremantle Alternative School show how it is done Persian style.

Page 6, The Fremantle Gazette, 18 Dec 1985

"FAS had the best lunches! Quite often, when I first started at Lance Holt, I had one day off a week and I'd go and help Wendy over at FAS and the lunches were heaven. It was like, make-any-sort-of-sandwich-you-like lunch. And I just thought that was genius."

Ron Gorman

First Fremantle passenger train, 1981



What's in a name?

During a special meeting on the 5th of December, in 1989, the members of the school community unanimously agreed to change the school's name, and on the 14th of March 1990, Fremantle Alternative School officially became Kerry Street Community School Inc.

"There were a few reasons for the name change," recalls Wendy. "Even back in the 80s, 'alternative' schools weren't a popular idea. We tried to attract more people - student numbers had always been an issue - so we agreed to change [the name] to Kerry Street. That, and the building we purchased was of course already branded as Kerry Street Kindergarten, and Spearwood Alternative School was nearby and that was direct competition."

Paul Jordan recalls, "The government at the time actually wanted us to amalgamate with Spearwood Alternative School, but ultimately we couldn't reach an agreement because the state couldn't compromise on the appointment of teachers."

"Back in the 80s, when the school was started, the word alternative was the way to go," says Kath

Sugars, who joined the school in the late 90s and was instrumental in securing the property at 18 Forrest Road, that would eventually enable it to expand.

"To be alternative was the thing to be, but it became too much of a label and there was a concern that people would get the wrong idea about the school," she said.

"With the name change, the school could really emphasise the community aspect," says Kath's younger sister, Helen Sugars Duff, who was President of the Kerry Street Council for nearly four years, beginning in 2013, and whose son, Chris, attended the school.

"The building used to look very different," recalls Fran Ryce, a former Kerry Street teacher who later became its Coordinator, and who now volunteers each Tuesday, helping art teacher Ariane Roemmele with lessons. "As you would walk up the steps, there was this raised area, which had been an altar with a pulpit. We used to use it as a stage for school performances."



A.11/81 **DUPLICATE** Form 5



Certificate of Incorporation
Associations Incorporation Act, 1895-1969
Section 3 (3)

These are to Certify that **FREMANTLE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL INC.**

has this day been incorporated as an Association under the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act, 1895-1969.

Dated this Second day of April, 19 81.



[Signature]
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR CORPORATE AFFAIRS.

Cockburn City Council

20 Farnes Rd
Fremantle, WA
PO Box 14
14 Feb 90

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Fremantle Alternative school has taken possession of the Kerry St. Kindergarten as of 22/1/90. and will become the owners of the property on the settlement date 22/12/91.

In keeping with its new location and to reflect its future direction the school has officially changed its name and will now be called the Kerry St. Community School. The existing sign will be amended accordingly.

Yours faithfully
Ian Robinson
Co-ordinator.

* Please address all correspondence as per the above.

No: A0810011P

FORM 4

ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION ACT 1987 (SECTION 18(6))

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION ON CHANGE OF NAME

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT **FREMANTLE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL INC.** which was on the Second day of April 1981 incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1987 changed its name to **KERRY STREET COMMUNITY SCHOOL INCORPORATED** on this Fourteenth day of March 1990.

[Signature]
FOR COMMISSIONER FOR CORPORATE AFFAIRS



Absolutely Kerry Street

Where friends for life sometimes meet

Here's a classroom, nice and cosy.^{[6] [7] [8]}
Here's a couch, so sit right down.
The room, it feels like being home.
There's music playing, friends are all around.
And if you look around,
You can feel the whole school breathe.
There's no need to feel worried,
Now that we've all learned to live.

Absolutely Kerry Street,
Where friends for life
Sometimes meet,
Here we are at Kerry Street,
Whoever thought
A school could be so sweet?

In the playground, children playing,
Riding bikes, around the path.
And the water course is running,
Hear them splashing, hear them laugh.
If you stop and use your senses,
You can smell the school lunch getting made.
You will see the parents helping,
Children learning, as they play.

Absolutely Kerry Street,
Where friends for life
Sometimes meet.
Here we are at Kerry Street,
Whoever thought
A school could be so sweet?

Absolutely Kerry Street,
Where friends for life
Sometimes meet.
Here we are at Kerry Street,
Whoever thought
A school could be so sweet?



^[6] Sung to the tune of *Accidentally Kelly Street*, by Frente.

^[7] With apologies to Frente, and Tom, who re-wrote the lyrics for us.

^[8] Tom: "Was this your idea, Louisa??"
Louisa: "Uh, I think I forgot to leave an oven on..."

Options

Having been started as a way to nurture children and have parents and families decide how their children engaged with education, the school has always placed a strong emphasis on its guiding philosophies, values, and community participation, both within and beyond the school's grounds.

"FAS' originating values emphasised the respect of all people, and a parent directed, parent run school," recalls Wendy. "The founding parents wanted real power to make decisions about their children's education, and a part of that involved the teaching of life skills."

With Ian Robertson in place as FAS' Coordinator and responsible for the teaching of literacy and the oldest students, Wendy Gorman teaching maths, and Pru Marriott teaching the youngest students, gaps in the school day were filled by parents.

A part of the FAS and Kerry Street curriculum in the 80s, 90s, and early 2000s was a subject known as Options.

"Options was something the kids really loved," recalls Geraldine Stanton. "Parents and teachers offered students an option: a particular craft or

skill, whatever, and the students divided into those groups and went off and did that group. And they'd do that over four weeks."

"It kind of changed over the years. Sometimes kids didn't stay with the one option over four weeks and instead they'd cycle through things. But it was initially designed to be a four-week block," said Geraldine. "It could have been maintenance, or arts and craft, or fishing or surfing - it could have been anything; whatever parents were willing to offer."

"Back then you could just bundle kids up in the car and off you went."

During her time with the school, and as part of the Options curriculum, Wendy Gorman would take students to the local pool for swimming sessions.

"One of the benefits of working at FAS and Kerry Street was the flexibility," recalls Wendy. "You could bring your babies to school, or if your children were sick, you could pack up the students and take them to your home to teach them. You didn't have to worry about excursion forms - it was simple to do and so, why wouldn't you?"



learning to fish



learning guitar



Dr Carmen Lawrence at the official opening of the Kerry Street Community School playground, 2006

The Kerry Street logo

Expressing our values



The Kerry Street logo has evolved over the years, however remains meaningful to the school.

The willy wagtail logo, which followed on from the gum nut logo, was drawn by Zelda Anderson's son, Leon, as part of the *Kids Place Maps* sustainability project the school embarked on in the mid-2000s.

A few years later, Alana McNee, who was the Art teacher at the time, gave Kerry Street students the brief to express their personalities by drawing around themselves on large pieces of board. They were to strike poses that expressed who they were, and then fill their silhouettes with shapes, symbols and colours that meant

something to them. Former Kerry Street students including Rebecca Thomas and her friends in the Applecross special art program, and parents Konaquin Bickmore and Ariane Roemmele, helped with painting the backgrounds on the murals, and varnishing the final artworks.

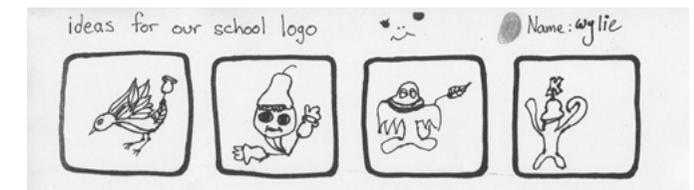
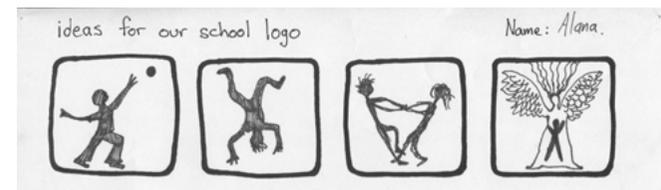
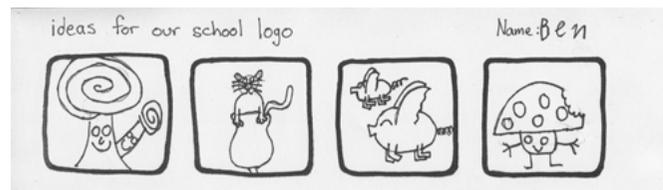
The boards were then screwed into various places around the school by Tom Francas and Bruce Maley. They were very heavy, and the whole project was huge.

"At some point, we decided to make t-shirts and a logo," recalls Ariane Roemmele.

"I picked some of the lovely designs from the boards and made them into the letters of Kerry Street. The letters have been adjusted twice now by design companies to produce the logo we have today, which I think has kept the feeling of the original logo really well."

"And now on all of the signage, next to the logo, it says 'Family Friendly Education,' which I think is a really strong part of Kerry Street," said Fran Ryce.

"We're very inclusive, and supportive of families."



1990

The aims of the school are summarised in the following policy statements:

1. We will provide a warm loving environment with the space for children to learn and grow.
2. We will develop an organisational structure which allows for adequate supervision of children at all times while still allowing for the involvement of as many people as possible in decisions.
3. We will actively assist the development of an overall education covering social, academic and creative areas. In particular we will:
 - (i) actively encourage the development of basic skills including writing, reading, mathematics, and physical and social science;
 - (ii) including music, drama and art in our programmes;
 - (iii) encourage participation in co-operative and individual forms of physical activity.
4. We will encourage each child to develop their potentials, exploring many different avenues with respect for his/her individuality.
5. We will encourage the development of self-esteem and self-confidence while simultaneously promoting respect for others. The opportunity to explore values and attitudes held by themselves and others will be provided.
6. Parental involvement will be encouraged at all levels of the school.
7. Wherever possible the children will be involved in decision-making processes. Children's ideas and views will be actively sought and listened to.
8. Students will be encouraged to follow tasks through to completion. They will be encouraged to be accountable for their actions.

Interaction with the surrounding community is felt to be important. A variety of adults from different aspects of the community will come to the school. An effort will be made to utilise resources within the wider community.



Fremantle Festival, 1991

Year 7
by Alysha

Growing Beans !!

How we grew our Beans.

- We got a clear Plastic cup and
- Put some tissue in the bottem.
- Then placed the Bean in the bottem
- bottem of the cup and Filled it up with Dirt.
- Waterd it Once a day. And waited for a sine of growth. Most of us grew some grass insted of germinating a bean, but was still fun.

Here is a Picture of OUR cups with Beans inside them.



7mm A4

Growing Beans, Alysha, class of 1999



Fremantle Festival, 2006



Fremantle Festival, 2007



Busselton Camp, 2006

School camps

Prior to the introduction of the four-term school year in 1987, years had been broken into three terms, with an extended break period occurring over the Easter holidays. The school community chose to make the most of the longer terms and planned for a school camp to be held in each one.

"I recall in the 80s, we were part of what was then called the Priority Schools Program, which granted us funding for all sorts of things, including school camps," said Wendy Gorman. "We went up to one of the remote community schools one time, using that funding. It was great."

"Some of them were even moving camps, where you'd camp along the way to wherever your destination was."

"My favourite time at Kerry Street was the camp at Nanga Bush Camp, seeing the kangaroos. I also liked the bushwalking; it was fun. I slept in one room with lots of kids and then my mum and I went to a room by ourselves. The funniest thing was when Woody had a centipede on his back. I have learnt a lot of things."

Sam Collins, 2009

"The Rottneest camps were always good ones to go on," said Geraldine Stanton. "We always went in winter because it was cheaper and we stayed in the houses over there. And we'd use the camps in our teaching, getting the kids to write and draw about the things they'd experienced. It was a way we could incorporate the curriculum into the other things we wanted to do."

"We had built a relationship with the Strelley School in the Kimberley, so there was a biannual camp at Strelley," recounts Paul Jordan. "We also had a hippy bus at that stage, so we could take the kids to the beach when it was hot."

"My memories of those days are held with great affection," he said.



Nanga Bush Camp, 2003



Nanga Bush Camp, 2003

OUR MARGRET RIVER CAMP SONG.

Here we are on camp in Margret River
Oh what fun to be together
Walking in the Sun
Having lots of fun Fresh air peace for everyone.
RAINA ALWAYS KEEPS US ON OUR TOES
BARBRA HELPS US WERE TO GO
the boys like fishing.
we will all do lots of wishing
we no they'll bring some for tea.
Every day we help with the chores
Though it makes us feel very bored
But jobs must be done
We always work as one This makes sharing so much
Easier
chorus lovely ; lovely margret river
lovely lovely margret river
walking in the sun having lots of fun fresh air peace
for everyone.

the KARRI forest stands so tall.

makes us feel very small
just like the surf wonders of mother earth
thank you for such a HOLIDAY
CHORUS LOVELY LOVELY MARGRET RIVER
lovely lovely margret river walking in the sun
having lots of fun fresh air peace for everyone.
It was good that we all could share some games
spotlight ; guess who and charades singing by the fire
our spirits feeling higherr relaxing; knowing
we all care.
chorus lovely lovely MARGRET RIVER.
lovely lovely MARGRET RIVER walking in the sun
having lots of fun fresh air ; peace for everyone.
THE END....

Nanga Bush Camp, 2005

Governance

As time moved on, the need arose for the school to introduce policies and address its financial situation. Funding and the school's subsequent budget had always been an issue, not only in its FAS days but also later, after becoming Kerry Street.

"The school at the time was still very much pay what you can," said Wendy Gorman. "We had a letterbox into which parents would place envelopes containing money. You could choose to keep your contribution anonymous or to ask for a receipt. There was never any comments about set contributions, and it was really only in the very late 80s that that had to change and a nominal school fee was introduced, when the various Treasurers worked to tighten up school funding."

"I can't quite recall how much that fee was," says Wendy. "Forty five dollars keeps springing to mind but it might not have been that much."

The teachers and support staff were paid as much as forty percent less than what they could have earned working in government schools, making them some of the school's most significant donors over the course of its 37-year history.

A need for more structure in the school day was both a requirement to maintain the school's registration and of the Department of Education. Kerry Street teachers faced the challenge of balancing curriculum requirements with the wants of an involved and vocal parent body.

"The parent collective transitioned into a School Council around the time I left Kerry Street," said Wendy. "The school had some strong leaders within it, with Ian [Robertson] as Coordinator, and Vic Hille, for example. Vic was a wise and considered person. He brought a sense of calm to the school. He was the grown up out of all of us!"

Since its inception, Kerry Street has always been directed by the needs and ideals of its community members. In its FAS years, the Parent Collective would meet fortnightly to discuss and debate various matters of concern, ranging from budgets and curriculum to camps and school values and everything in between, with students themselves meeting weekly to have their say on matters that affected them. As time moved on, and regulations were introduced, the Parent Collective formalised itself into a School Council, complete with a formal Constitution directing its conduct and activities.

Due to the importance placed on directing the school's activities in the best interests of its students and families, and a tendency to attract strong-willed and determined people, governance matters have always roused the most heated conversations, with many a change in school leadership arising due to conflicts of opinion and fractured relationships. And yet, passionate and dedicated parents and teachers looking to make a positive contribution to their children's education continue to join the Council and volunteer their time, talents, and resources.

"Ariane [Roemmele] was President of the Council at one point in time," recalls Fran Ryce. "They [the various council members] have all put in endless hours without pay, and so much positive energy, into the school over the years. Without their work, we wouldn't be here today."

"I was on the school council when we looked at the computer use policy," recalls current year 4/5/6 teacher, Lucas Black. "It was a real compromise situation so that we could meet everyone's needs. Some of the community needed computers, and some of the community needed to know the computers would be safe. So everyone worked together to make decisions so that everyone's needs could be met."

“Lots of ideas have changed through the years,” says Fran. “I can’t imagine now not having computers in the school, but there was a whole period of time in which there was a lot of debate and discussion about whether or not we wanted to have any at Kerry Street.”

“The computer policy conversation was, at its core, about who decides the curriculum - parents or teachers,” said Kath Sugars.

“It highlighted to us that times were changing and that schools could no longer be ‘parent-run’ the way they had been until then; which was a significant change in governance, and for us meant a period of growing pain.”

Council processes and school policies have been a work in progress for years and continue to evolve with the times. Kath Sugars, in the late 90s and early 2000s, in her various administrative roles over the years, and in consultation with innumerable parents and teachers, helped the school to formalise many of its early policies, taking inspiration from those of like-minded schools and organisations.

“Kath [Sugars] and Fran [Ryce] had been working closely for years to help run everything,” recalls

Geraldine Stanton. “They were instrumental in formalising a number of policies and giving the school some structure which was becoming increasingly important, not least of all to ensure that we could retain our school registration.”

“Up until then, [policies were] all being passed on via word of mouth. People also used to stay in their positions for quite lengthy periods of time, too, so we tended to retain the institutional knowledge, so to speak.”

Helen Sugars Duff, during her time as President of the School Council, has also been a key contributor to school policies over the years, with her most recent work focused on the review of the School’s Constitution.

“The review of the Constitution took the Council several years of steady work, but Helen’s commitment to the process ensured it was completed well ahead of its June 2019 deadline,” said Tania Ivey, current Kerry Street Community School Board Chair.

“A number of small changes and clarifications were made, along with new clauses inserted to comply with new regulations. But probably the only thing anyone will notice is that Kerry Street

now has a Principal instead of a Coordinator and a Board instead of a Council.”

The Board now boasts a completed Board Manual and an Induction process, designed to ease new members into their governance roles. “We hope with some of the changes we’re making at the Board level that our Board members will serve three-year terms,” says Tania.

“Not only will this enable Board members to properly learn their respective jobs, but it will also give them the time to become really good at them. It can take a whole year for a person to learn a job and in introducing three year commitments, not only will we facilitate better, more informed governance and Board members, but we hope to mitigate any unintentional disruption to the way school matters are handled and reduce instances of Board member turnover,” she said.

“Importantly, we hope to make joining the Board a more approachable prospect for people.”

Student numbers

Student numbers at the school have always fluctuated according to micro and macro environmental factors. Community conflicts, gender imbalances in the student body, physical space limitations, new schools, and developing existing schools have all affected enrolments at Kerry Street at one time or another.

“Enrolment numbers have always been an issue we’ve faced,” says long-time Kerry Street teacher, Tom Francas.

“At one stage, in the 90s, I think it was, we had as few as eight students and part of the problem was a lack of boy students. The one boy student we had, their family decided to move him to another school because there weren’t any other boys here for him to play with.”

“Eventually a new family arrived who had three boys, and that helped a lot. Everything righted itself again after that,” said Tom.

“It was often vice versa, too,” recalls Geraldine Stanton. “Lots of boys and no girls. And each year, after your graduates left, you would worry about whether or not they’d be replaced by new enrolments. The only thing you could really

do each year was to just roll up again, fingers crossed. I mean, we would try to get families to commit to coming back, but sometimes they would wander off during the holidays and would end up being replaced by new recruits.”

“That’s actually how we came to join the school,” recalls Kath Sugars. “At one point there were so few students in attendance that the school was on the brink of closing down. Denyse [MacNish] rang me in a panic and asked me to bring my children to the school for just drama! And then we kind of stayed and together built everything up again from there.”

“For me, it has been a rewarding year, seeing the school flourish and stabilise with well over 30 students. Those involved with meetings in the last Christmas holidays will attest to the nervousness I felt at committing to three classes instead of two. Not only was it a financial risk, not knowing what numbers we would have in August, in January, but it was a huge physical, emotional, negotiational and logistical undertaking.”

Kath Sugars, 2002 Yearbook

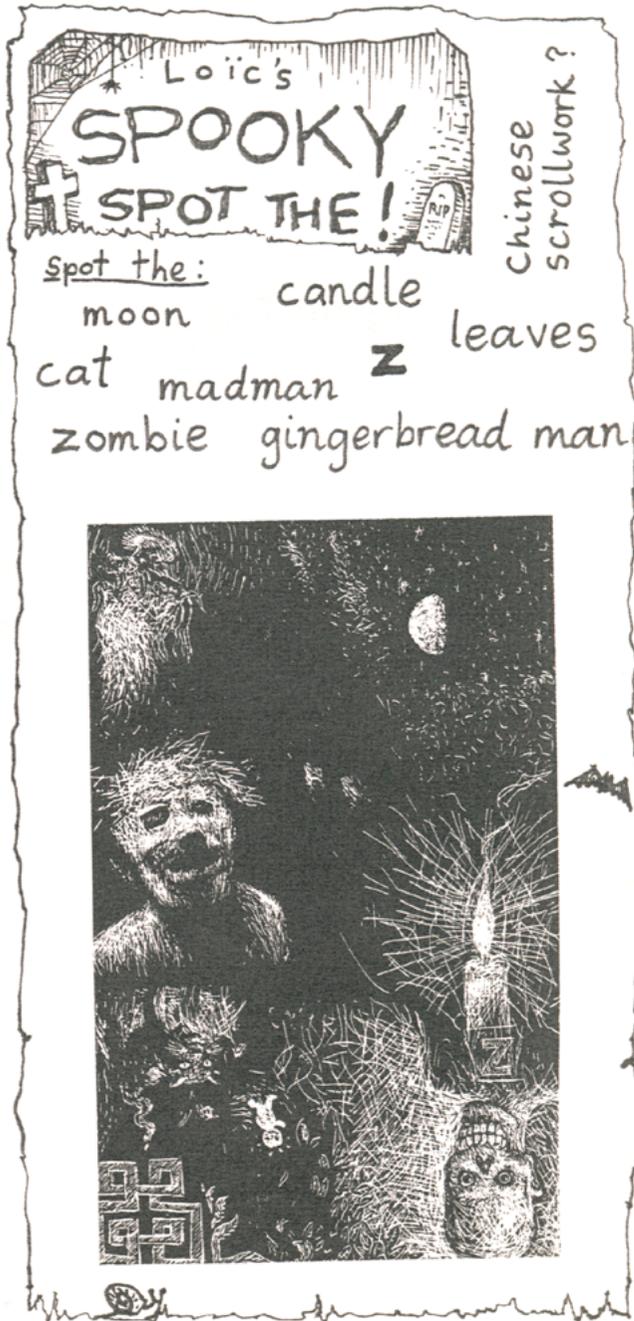
“[Denyse] was key in moving us from two classes to three, when we did that in 2002, as well as many other things like making sure we had art, drama, and music lessons,” said Kath.

More recently, as at the end of 2017, the school had 72 students in attendance, from 55 families.

“We now have the capacity to grow to as many as 80 students,” says Karen Kennedy, Kerry Street’s current Principal. “That was the reason we had to expand the school’s footprint. If we hadn’t acquired the 18 Forrest Road property, we would have continued to be severely limited in the number of students we could enrol.”

“We had a record 11 year-6 students graduate at the end of 2017, which was a wonderful milestone.”

Tania Ivey, 2017 President’s Report

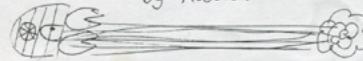


KOOKABURRA KIDS NEWS WITH A LAUGH

TERM 3 2002

5,4,3,2,1 Science Blast Off

28th of August Kids of Kerry Street named Alayha, Rebecca and Richard went to the Murdoch University and College. One group in first class went to do animal physics and the other went to construct the Simpsons DNA. Second class we went together and catapulted milk mattresses into containers, unfortunately we shot only five so we are the rest of our ammo. At the end we had a quiz with four rounds, we tried our hardest but we didn't end up on top. Other things we did was in third class we did acids and bases and chromatography when we split one colour into many other colours. After that we went to the magic science show, that wasn't so exciting. At the end all the schools got a book called "the world science encyclopedia" then went back to school at 3:00pm by Rebecca



Did You Know?????

- ❖ Georgi has been a Kerry Street parent for two years.
- ❖ Alana has been teaching art for three years.
- ❖ Ella has only been to the Royal Show once.
- ❖ Wara is five years old
- ❖ Ben likes Tom.
- ❖ Geraldine has been teaching at Kerry Street for two years (this time).
- ❖ Rebecca has never broken a bone in her life.
- ❖ Googooplex is the biggest number in the world.
- ❖ Seychelle is seven.

~Maya



You Will Be Eating Disco Stew With This Disco News

Friday 16th August the school had a funky disco, limbo was the highlight and lots of cool music and stars were dancing everywhere. Watch out DJ's because here comes a Kerry Street Kid with a CD called "Rock Together".

~Rebecca

Kookaburra Kids Magazine, 5 Jul 2002

Community spirit



Patchwork quilt gifted to Asma, 2002

Being a school built by a collective of families, service to and for community has always been a core value and priority at Kerry Street. From its very first day, parents have supported teachers and staff by helping with cleaning, assisting children to source and make lunches, organising and supervising camps, with busy bees and grant projects and everything in between. Not surprisingly, then, Kerry Street Community School has always embedded some degree of community service into its curriculum work.

In early December, 1985, the school participated in a grant-funded project designed to teach students about a culture other than their own. The community collectively decided to focus on Iran and over a period of two weeks, was busy learning rug weaving, ceremonial dances, and how to prepare traditional foods. The project culminated with the school sharing what it had learned with Iranian refugees who were then living at the Graylands Migrant Centre on Lantana Avenue in Graylands.^[9]

^[9] In 1985, due to its perceived undesirable reputation, the City of Perth and the City of Nedlands requested that the suburb reinvent itself as Mount Claremont. In January 1986, the change was approved. Source: *Graylands: the evolution of suburb* by Pamela Mikus.

“It created a very real and meaningful experience for the children but also let members of the Iranian community know that they are not alone,” parent Georgina Bell said at the time.

Similarly, in March 2002, Kerry Street held a number of activities to celebrate Harmony Week. One such activity saw a guest speaker, Peter Specks, visit the school to discuss the subject of refugees in Australia. The school community subsequently gathered together to create a gift for a child living in the Port Hedland Detention Centre: a patchwork quilt that was a collaborative effort between the students, Denyse MacNish, who worked closely with each child to choose fabrics, cut out designs and help pin them into place, and Jane Stevenson-Marsh, who sewed the final quilt together. Before being gifted to its eventual owner, a five-year-old girl named Asma, the quilt formed part of the *Art of Refuge* exhibition, held at the Moores Building Contemporary Art Gallery in Fremantle.



Silver Chain residents welcomed to Kerry Street Community School, 2017



Sand Mandala, 2002



Kath Sugars and Hannah Thomas



Captain Cleanup, Waste Wise Schools, 2004

More recently, in 2015, the school community came together to create boxes for Syrian refugees. "As with everything we do, we built the curriculum into the project," said Karen Kennedy. "We had the students think about the things that they themselves might need if they were refugees new to Australia, and we encouraged them to also include little things that they themselves liked that a similar aged child might enjoy."

"It's important to remember how lucky we are and understand that not everyone is."

"Living our values is in our DNA at Kerry Street. We act out of love and you see that quite clearly when we focus on helping those around us," said Karen.

"Zelda Anderson, her dog Mango – who is on the murals – and her chooks, were an institution. I have never met anyone so selfless! Once I gave a speech at a concert about how great she was and all that she did at school (to huge applause) and she missed it because she was in the kitchen washing dishes! She never wanted attention but always did things, like sorting the rubbish in the bins, separating the recycling from the manky rotten sandwiches, and having the kids over to her home to learn about and pat chooks, and watering the lawn in the holidays and just being around and supporting everyone - she's amazing."

Kath Sugars, 2018



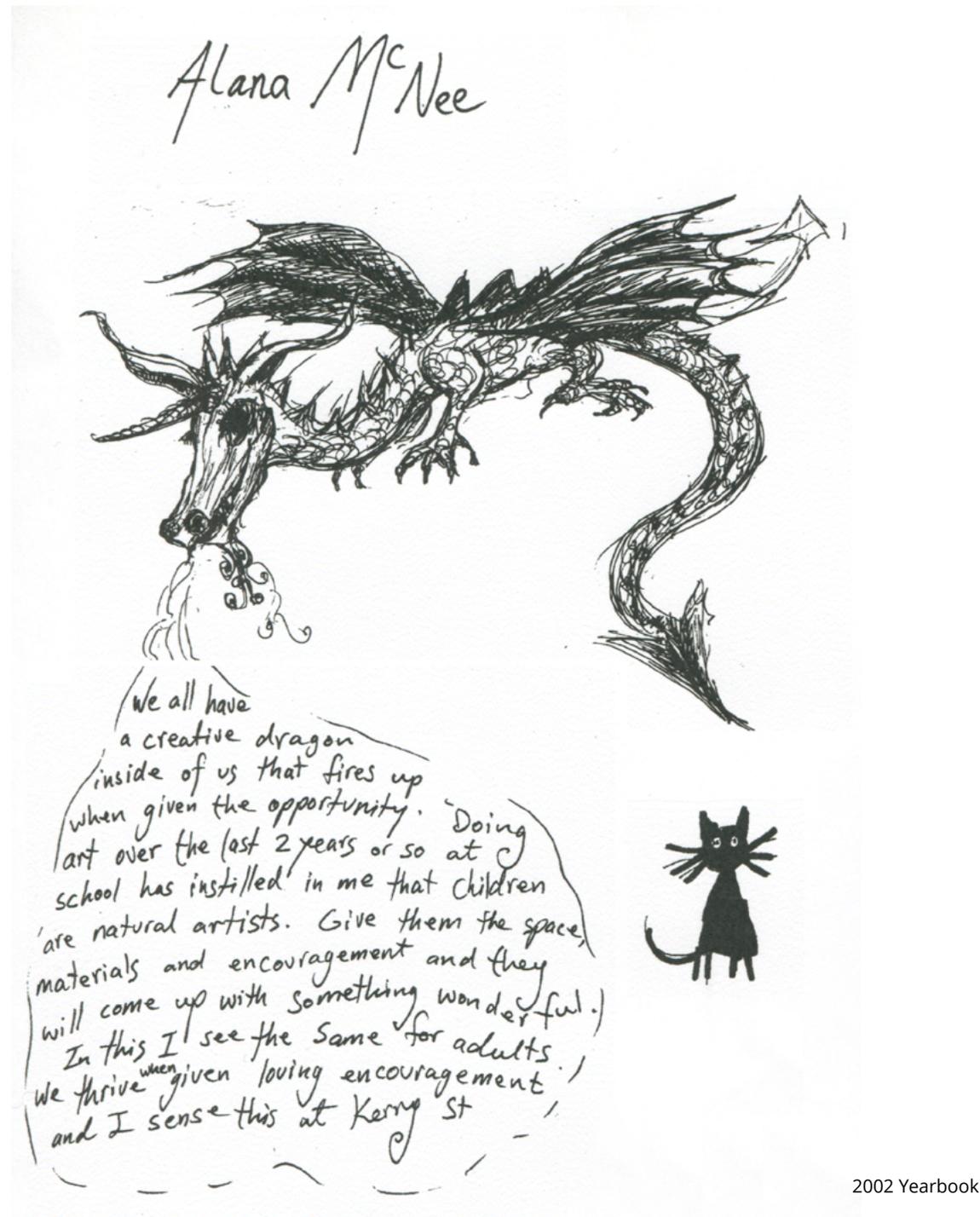
Shear Heart, 1995



Tom Francas and Alana Francas McNee

"Kerry Street is good because it's waste wise, water wise, and just plain old wise."

Harry Francas, 2009



Tom says...



Tom Francas

Teacher

1997 - Present
Kerry Street Community School

The look of panic that you can't see right now is my reaction when asked to write something about Kerry Street. After over twenty years, you would think it would be easy, but something so amazing, enigmatic, and complex makes this a difficult task.

I joined Kerry Street in 1997 and since then, I've met hundreds of wonderful people, young, old, and everywhere in between. I met my wife at Kerry Street and our children, now young adults, came here. The added bonus of that is I get to see the friends they made as five-year-olds blossom

into amazing adults, studying, travelling, playing music, and being creative.

I could tell that my job interview was important, because more than half the interviewing panel wore shoes. Little was I to know this interview would change my life...

It was the ideal job for me because the school philosophy and ideals aligned (as they still do) with my beliefs. I could be myself and encourage the children to be THEMSELVES.

The school was even smaller in those days, probably about fifteen children in two multi-age classes. I taught pre-primary to year three, although a kindy-aged sibling was here most of the time. I've probably taught every child and every subject during my time here. Flexibility has always been a pre-requisite of the job.

I had an incredible young man called L oic as my assistant. On Fridays, he would bring in his rather impressive Lego collection as a special treat for the children.

The back room (now the Learning Lab) was a rumpus room, with pillows, blocks, dress-ups, and

an assortment of toys and games. The "kitchen" consisted of an oven, a fridge, and a counter. School lunches were already happening and at the same cost as they are to this day - \$2!

When we eventually updated the kitchen, it was parents and teachers spending their weekends knocking down walls with sledge hammers. There was always something to change and was generally us that did it! Over the years, we've removed and built walls, moved fences and gates, laid paving and paths, rolled out grass, built pergolas, spread sand, woodchips, gravel. You name it, we've done it!

Buying the house next door to the school was always a pipe dream and it's still hard to believe it has actually happened. As with all the changes over the years, it has come about due to the hard work of parents and staff: people going beyond their duty for the good of the school and the community.

"I'm glad I came to Kerry Street because of everything they do here."

Aquilla Sorenson, 2005



Ariane Roemmele, Alana McNee, Tom Francas and Monica Elberink, 2006

Ariane says...



Ariane Roemmele

Teacher

2004 - Present
Kerry Street Community School



Kerry Street is a truly wonderful community.

From the moment we walked through the gates 13 years ago, we felt supported both educationally and personally.

Fran [Ryce] was the first person I met, and her gentle, calm introduction to the school helped us to settle in straight away.

Tom's hilarious sense of humour and fun lessons were a perfect start to my son Will's school life.

All the teachers had children or grandchildren at the school, and that made it really easy to get to know everyone and become part of the school community.

We have met so many incredible people, eaten a lot of delicious food, had loads of fun and laughs at school camps, and shared people's joys, celebrations, and sad times, too.

I think Kerry Street is a place of opportunity and sharing, of growth, and a place where ideas are welcomed, encouraged and supported.

The school is built with the vision, passion, immense effort, and hard work of many dedicated people, and I feel amazingly lucky to have seen the wonderful changes that have taken place.

There is one thing that hasn't changed, though, and that is the Kerry Street vibe. It's that feeling of freedom, opportunity, support, fun, good food, amazing people, and lots of love. And the fact that you can wear PJs or fancy dress to school if you like!

"I really like art with Ariane and my favourite piece I've done this year is a painting on a canvas."

Twilight Ryce, 2009

Jane Davies' Puppet Workshops



at Kerry St Community School



supported by ArtsWA in association with the Lotteries Commission

Grants

Over the years, Kerry Street staff and parents have proactively searched and applied for grant funding with which to achieve further development of the school and its educational offerings. Kerry Street has been the grateful recipient of grants from local, state, and federal governments and organisations that have funded health education programs, environmental sustainability education, puppetry classes, the redevelopment of the school kitchen, enhancements to the school's playground, staff professional development opportunities, and much, much more.

In more recent history, in 2003, the school received a grant to bring community artist and puppeteer, Jane Davies, in to teach puppet making and puppetry. Jane had been working at Spare Parts Puppet Theatre in a number of shows, including *Fortunata*, and made puppets for the *Bugalug's Bum Thief*, *Cat Balloon*, and *The Deep* productions. Jane taught students many inventive ways of creating movements and introduced them to interesting construction materials such as polystyrene balls, papier-mache, crumpled brown paper, scarves, wire, foam, and leather. Her sense

^[10] Then Minister for Education, Science and Training within the Howard Government

of humour and rapport with the children made the experience a successful one, with the students creating their own wonderful and unique puppets.

On the 2nd of May 2005, Dr Brendan Nelson^[10] announced a series of grants awarded to schools across Australia with the purpose of making values education a core part of schooling. "Education is as much about building character as it is transferring skills, knowledge and the thirst for learning," said Dr Nelson in a media release. "We should not be surprised to find that a values-free education risks producing a values-free adult."

Lance Holt School, Strelley and Kerry Street Community Schools, Nyindamurra Family School of Creativity, and Moerlina School together received funding for their students to embark on a journey to explore not only their own values but also how to respect the values of others. The work that was achieved, featured on the <http://www.kidsplacemaps.wa.edu.au/> website, was led by school Cluster Coordinator

Kathryn Netherwood from Lance Holt School

^[11] Netherwood, K., Buchanan, J., Palmer, D., Stocker, L. and Down, B. (2009) Valuing diversity in children's voice: a case study of children, stewardship and mapping care of special places in the Western Australian Community. In: Lovat, T. and

and was detailed in a chapter in the book, *Values Education and Quality Teaching: The Double Helix Effect*, edited by Terry Lovat and Ron Toomey.

"Other projects were a little bigger. For instance, children built a debate about the issue of grass in the school-yard. The incentive for the debate came about because the school has quite small grounds. The largest single area, bounded by a pergola, playground equipment, sandpit and shrubs, was for many years home to struggling and mostly dead grass. Two years ago the school decided to put effort into trialing better maintained grass which involved large effort in churning the area, laying turf, buying a bore, installing reticulation, applying top dressing and other regular maintenance.

The new grass was an outstanding success and popular with everyone. Kids could do handstands on it, run on it, sit on it, skip on it, pretend to be rabbits on it and generally admire it. Unfortunately, despite all the effort and money, the first year's grass was back to desert by the end of third term. It's not surprising, considering the constant use it had."^[11]

Toomey, R., (eds.) Values Education and Quality Teaching: The Double Helix Effect. Springer, New York, p94.



Early in 2009, the Kerry Street team learned that building grants would soon be available for schools. By December that year, work was well underway, with a partial demolition of the original building, to make space for extensions and renovations. A new library and kitchen would see Kerry Street become greener and more functional over the course of the next decade.

On the 20th of July 2012, Chris Evans^[12] announced over \$2.1 million in Federal funding would be provided to schools to provide training and professional development opportunities that would empower principals and school communities to take greater control of their budgets, staffing, and governance requirements. Kerry Street was one of 32 Western Australian schools to receive some of the available funding.

On the 7th of August 2014, Kerry Street became the recipient of a grant for \$5,800 via the ANZAC Centenary Grants program. The funds were put toward the creation of a garden and mural to commemorate the centenary of ANZAC and those who had served in World War One.

A grant awarded to the school in early 2018 will fund a sustainability project.

^[12] Then Acting Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth and Senator for Western Australia within the Rudd and Gillard Governments



Michael Stevenson, Tom Francas and Jarrah Stevenson, and the subject of the Big Grass Debate, 2004



The Fremantle Gazette, May 2007

Influencing Public Policy

"A little over ten years ago, Dr Marie Martin and Dr Anna Alderson received some funding under the Public Education Endowment Trust to write the small schools history project," recalls Ron Gorman.

"It was their proposition that, almost drip by drip, the work that was happening in community - or alternative schools, as was once the terminology - it had very, very sudden influence on policy makers."

"And I don't think that should be underestimated. You can be small and sometimes think, 'Well, it's a big education world out there...' but what [community schools] do is of influence!"

"[David] Gonski^[13] is talking about it again at the moment, and suddenly everyone is waking up and going, 'Oh wow! Perhaps we should give kids agency.' But that's what community schools have been doing for years. It's not new."

^[13] <http://theconversation.com/gonski-review-reveals-another-grand-plan-to-overhaul-education-but-do-we-really-need-it-93119>

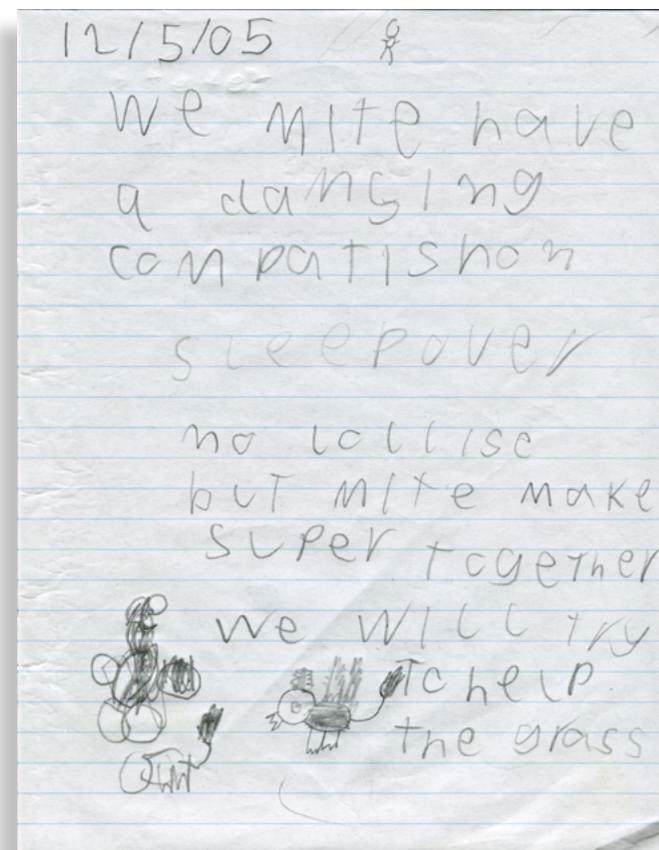
"Another example of Kerry Street and Lance Holt [School] having influence on government agenda was around the opening of Spearwood Alternative School," said Ron. "For a long time the team there wanted their time in the sun, but the parents at the time could never pull it off because they didn't have - popular word - agency."

"They never really had ownership of the school as it was a government school. They weren't responsible for payroll, they weren't responsible for buildings, maintenance, any of it."

"But that changed in 1984. The Choice and Diversity in Education project, which was a joint State and Federal initiative, worked in their favour."

"When you talk about - well, I'll refer to them as community schools - when you think about what community schools do, they do extraordinary work. They're rare and they really push a range of agendas around learning engagement and all of the things that I'm still passionately interested in."

Ron Gorman, AISWA



Minutes from Kids Meeting, 12 May 2005

WASICS

“Kerry Street and Lance Holt [School], Shenton Park Family School – which doesn’t exist anymore – and Quintilian School, were the nucleus of a small group of schools called WASICS: WA Small Independent Schools,” recalls Ron Gorman.

“That was its official title and the coordinators or principals, whatever they chose to be called at that time, came together to share what was a broad common interest in what was then called Alternative Schooling, which I guess has morphed into community schooling.”

“The WASICS, as a group, received public funding to support one another in their collective endeavours,” recalls Ron.

“That group has now grown into what is called the Small Schools Collegiate group, that is affiliated with AISWA. That is, we support the group, again, to continue that work around shared common goals like dealing with the issue of over reporting.”

“So that’s another way Kerry Street has had some influence over the years,” said Ron. “If not for banding together with other community schools, like Lance Holt, the Collegiate mightn’t have happened.”

“For me, it’s the most valuable professional development that I do,” says Karen Kennedy. “It’s only in that context of principals who are juggling the same balls as you that you can get realistic, collegiate advice about the issues that you face within your community.”

“The small school landscape is unique and the breadth of role of a small school principal is not replicated in other schooling systems,” she said.

“The assistance I have been able to provide fellow collegiate members has largely been focused on post-re-registration. I’ve had other principals contact me asking about my experiences and to share documentation with them.”

“The group is also now moving into being able to provide sporting opportunities like interschool carnivals.”

“It can be incredibly helpful and make a substantial difference to a school’s budget to pool resources and use group buying power to do things like access software licenses at reduced rates, for instance,” said Karen.

“Being part of the collegiate provides us with the opportunity to do that.”

Coordinators, communities and conflicts

Ian Robertson, FAS' first full-time teacher, was also the school's first Coordinator. The Coordinator was a figurehead who could sign off on official documents on behalf of the parent collective and was responsible for ensuring that the school remained registered and compliant with various local, state and federal regulations and legislation. The position of Coordinator has always been filled by a teacher, who would then bear significant administrative duties in addition to their teaching responsibilities.

"Really, until much later, the role of Coordinator wasn't taken terribly seriously," recalls Wendy Gorman. "Ian wore the role well, though, and had a lot of community support behind him."

"That period of time was significant for us," recalls Geraldine Stanton, "Because we had no choice but to go from having a consensus decision-making meeting every fortnight with everyone in the school to having a formal council."

"For quite a while whilst I was teaching, Kath [Sugars] and Fran [Ryce] had been working closely for years to help run everything," said Geraldine.

"Fran was more or less the Coordinator but still teaching quite a lot, and Kath was the Administrator, helping to keep the paperwork under control."

"When Kath left in 2009, the school advertised for a Coordinator who could come in and sort of pick up where she left off," said Geraldine Stanton.

"A candidate who seemed perfect for the role was offered it, but I think it was a result of realising that she'd still also be expected to teach, that she withdrew herself from consideration."

"I was the only other person who applied, and I really only did it for the experience. The next thing you know, I was Coordinator."

"I felt some confidence that I could do the job," recounts Geraldine, "Because I knew a lot about the school. One of my first briefs as Coordinator was to build student enrolments. The numbers had fallen into the low-to-mid 20s. By the time I left in 2013, the numbers had more than doubled to 52."

Geraldine was appointed the position of Coordinator in term three in 2009, initially only

taking on the basic administrative duties, before stepping into the role completely in term four.

"Wow, did we take the job for granted!" recalls Geraldine. "I had totally underestimated the amount of paperwork I'd have to do and just how much multi-tasking it required. And I wasn't doing nearly as much as Kath had been doing!"

"Kath leaving was a real loss. She and her husband Geoff [Thomas] had been so involved in every aspect of school life, from busy bees to council meetings to cleaning and organising and helping with computers and managing budgets and writing policies and grant applications – we very much missed having them around," said Geraldine.

"To that point, my time at the school had been absolutely wonderful," said Geraldine. "I got to know so many families and made many life-long friends. After I became Coordinator, though, things changed significantly for me. I found the role isolating and that the only friendships I really had were with Fran and Tom [Francas] and Ariane [Roemmele]. If it wasn't for their commitment to this type of education, it would have been very difficult to continue."

"There was a kind of divide between the parents and the Coordinator, which I found really difficult. I hated being in the office, sitting in there for hours on end, so it was really important for me to get out and talk to people," said Geraldine.

"At one point, in 1995, after a particularly difficult blow up within the school community, I approached AISWA and said I wanted to close the school. I just couldn't deal with it anymore," she said. "And Ron Gorman said to me, 'If you can keep it open, keep it open because it's really hard to open another school and you'll never get this level of funding again.' So that's kind of when we started again."

"Barbara Freeman^[14] was with us then, teaching. We had to hold information nights and invite people in to hear us talk about the school. That's how we recruited families and gradually built the school up again," recalls Geraldine.

"It was really hard work. Increasingly, I didn't know what people expected of the [Coordinator] role. But when Karen [Kennedy] joined the school in 2013, I knew she had support, including that of an external mentor, and so I ended up leaving Kerry Street knowing that she was capable of doing the things I wasn't able to for various reasons."

"Karen is proving to be a dynamic Coordinator who is supportive to the children, parents and staff; working hard to innovate and at the same time keep the unique and loving heart of the school."

Fran Ryce, 2013 Yearbook

"It was a privilege to take this job on when I did because at that time, the community was looking for something as opposed to me just stepping in and changing things," said Karen.

"An issue I had to address almost immediately was school fees. Within two months of my being at the school, because we were still trying to get all of the bank accounts signed over to me and that sort of thing done, my admin assistant at the time said, 'I just calculated, and we've got 6 weeks left to pay our teachers.'"

"That was it. No money coming in until October, we had just had a July payment, there was nothing else and I was hoping we were going to get a top-up in October."

^[14] Now the Family and Community Development Manager at the City of Cockburn

"And we did, thankfully, but one of my first jobs was to get an overdraft," recalls Karen.

"I'm lucky, comparatively speaking," says Karen. "I have admin staff to help me and I don't necessarily need to teach. I mean, I do, but previous Coordinators had no choice. They had to teach and run the business of the school."

"It's a challenging job, being Coordinator," says Wendy Gorman, "Because you're building a school. You're building a school physically and you're building a school of numbers but also you've got to build a school of education that people want to come to."

"That's the biggest challenge in a small school," says Karen, "Reaching all of the roles that are required of the Principal or the Coordinator. It's a real juggling act."

"My mum works for Kerry Street as the administrator; the only annoying thing is that I have to come earlier in the morning and I'm not the best at getting up."

Benjamin Thomas, 2008

The Syndicate



In 2006, the property adjacent to the school – 18 Forrest Road – was listed for sale. During a meeting on the 30th of August, 2006, it was minuted:

“House next door for sale. Everyone wants to buy in principle. Five apologies support buying house. Buy through consortium. School lease with option to buy. School buy from consortium (parent collective). School applies for capital grant. Also need extra toilets. Due diligence clause? Rezone? School responsibility for any required renovations, not consortium. This extra money needed to be calculated and paid back with loan.”

“The chances of a house on either side of the school coming up for sale was quite low,” said Kath Sugars. “But the people who owned 18 Forrest Road knew that we were interested in buying the property and so when they wanted to sell it, they approached us first about buying it rather than putting it on the open market.”

“We had considered other options over the years,” recalls Fran Ryce, “In case neither of the properties next door to the school ever came up for sale. At one point we considered building a second storey onto the existing classroom

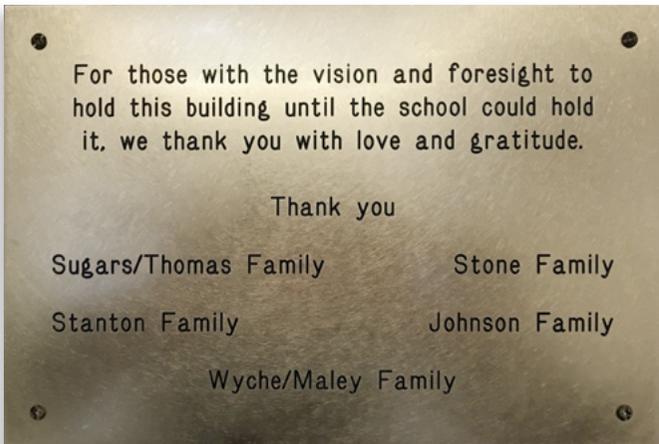
building, but that would have been quite tricky and very expensive.”

“Building another storey would have been more expensive because the current building wasn’t built strong enough to bear the weight of another level,” said Helen Sugars Duff. “So we would have had to build the ground floor all over again to put a second storey in. And even if we could do that, we still wouldn’t have had the garden and playground space we wanted,” said Helen.

“We also talked about moving,” she said. “And then of course, can you really be called Kerry Street Community School if you aren’t based on Kerry Street?”

“[The purchase of 18 Forrest Road] all happened quite quickly,” recounts Kath. “They needed a decision right away.”

“I remember Geraldine saying, ‘We’ve been wanting to buy this house for 20 years! We have to do it!’ So she put some money in and I did and a few other families did, too, because the school couldn’t afford to buy it and we didn’t have time to apply for grants or anything,” said Kath.



"We split the \$393,000 purchase price into nine shares, with my husband and I buying four shares, Dave Johnson buying two shares, and then Geraldine Stanton, Brooke Stone, and Bruce and Emily's mum and dad, Sue and Joe Wyche, bought one share each."

"It was a really big thing for me to do. I'd never borrowed that much money in my life before," said Kath.

The Syndicate families, keen to do the right thing by themselves and each other, prudently set to work to write a contract they could all agree to honour.

"[The Syndicate] was very much about trust," says Kath. "Because we were Kerry Street people, we had a lot of trust, which was important, but we also wanted to formalise our arrangement."

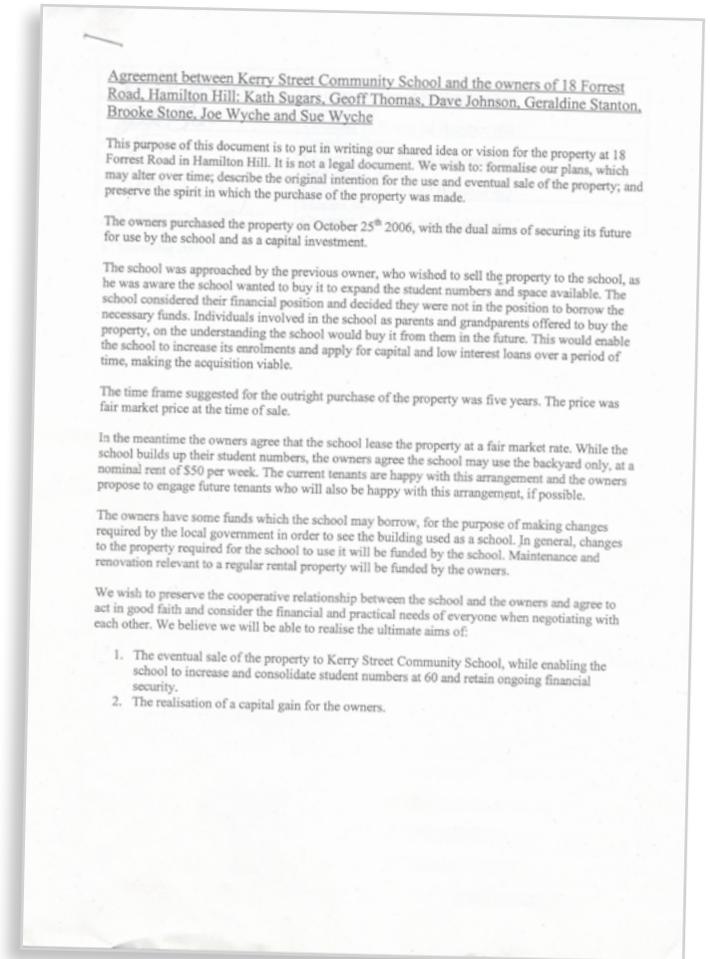
"We thought about all of the possible problems that could arise, beforehand, and we tried to work out what we would do in that situation," recounts Kath. "And if we had to vote on anything, it was always one vote per share."

"We didn't have a lawyer write anything up for us, but we did have my cousin, who is a lawyer, look it over and she said that it was a pretty good contract despite it not being formally written."

"In purchasing the property by way of shares, the way we did, it meant that any one of us could sell our share to someone else at any time, so people could get out of the Syndicate if they needed to," said Kath.

"That was the intention, anyway. In reality, it was much harder because we were never quite sure how much a share was worth and also how many shares we were willing to transfer into the hands of people who weren't Kerry Street people and who might not care about the school eventually buying the property from us."

"Because we were all taking a financial risk in buying the property, it was important to us that we wouldn't lose money on it," said Kath. "So if the property market fell, we wouldn't sell the property to the school until we could make some money."



The property purchase settled on the 26th of October, 2006, after which time the Syndicate families tenanted out the house and rented the backyard to Kerry Street so that the students would have more yard area in which to play.

"The garden was overgrown with weeds and there were what felt like a trillion bricks in there that I had to move with my bare hands," says Kath.

"The house was nice when we bought it," said Kath. "It had a nice feel to it. But then we proceeded to have two tenants who were men in their fifties or sixties who thought that they were really good at renovating."

"They were junk collectors!" says Helen Sugars Duff.

"And they just kept on doing things and without asking me," says Kath. "And I was like, 'Oh my goodness! What are you doing?!' It was all so random and strange!"

"At the end, I just tried to ignore it and thought, 'Well, the school's going to buy it and knock that bit down anyway, so...'"

"There were all kinds of things in there that you wouldn't expect to find!" recalls Fran Ryce.

"But it had potential," affirmed Fran.

"I was managing everything at that stage," says Kath, "Not only because I would do that sort of thing anyway, but because my husband and I held the most shares."

"When the time came, the Syndicate was very nice and sold the house to the school for market value, when they could have charged us more," says Helen. "Although they did say, 'We're putting it on the market in a month-and-a-half, so buy it or not.' It was a pressured decision, just like it was when they bought it!"

When the Syndicate announced it wanted to divest itself of the 18 Forrest Road property, Helen and Karen Kennedy, on behalf of the school, explored a number of different financing options to fund its acquisition. Securing finance proved difficult, and despite even attempting to set up another syndicate, the pair continued to run into brick walls.

"It wasn't until we met with a representative from ANZ that things started to fall into place," said Karen.

The school purchased the property from the Syndicate for \$520,000 plus stamp duty. The property settled on 21 March 2014.

"At the end of the day, Kerry Street is about relationships. Relationships between parents, grandparents, teachers and children; many and diverse relationships. Throughout the years, if you asked the young people attending the school what they liked about it, they would most likely say their friends, camps, outings, cooking, options, art, and maybe a few wild science experiments.

They will remember the fun times, the sad times, and the times when someone was mean to them. They will remember their wonderful teachers, the times they got up to mischief, and the times they were told off. Those are the things that they will remember. And along the way, they also learned to read and write, and do maths."

Geraldine Stanton, 2018

"Kerry Street Community School Inc. is a nexus where many amazing and diverse people (both adults and children) have come and gone over the years, all contributing something of their unique essence and skills, all contributing heart, all leaving a footprint that we can see in the school today and every day. Much gratitude and many thanks go out to all those, past and present, visible or behind the scenes, who have given so generously of themselves so those who come tomorrow can share this special place that is Kerry Street."

Helen Sugars Duff, 2018



RETHINK
PERTH
FREIGHT
LINK

For more info visit: www.rethinkperth.org
Contact us: info@rethinkperth.org | rethinkperth.org



HAMILTON HILL
COMMUNITY
GROUP

creating beautiful
environments &
promoting pride
in our community

VILL M
HRU RO
HERE

.com.au

Support

I DON'T WANT ROES
IT EFFECTS OUR PLAY SPACE
AND ANIMALS

Roe 8 will make us sick!

I don't want roe 8
because it will let us all die

Too much smoke!
I can't stop coughing!

NO ROE 8! Lots of noise is bad!

WE SAY NO TO ROE 8!

No Roe 8 because we can't play

Roe 8 will hurt the Animals.

No Roe 8 because of the noise

ROE 8 MEANS ASTHMA

by Logan Steah
Kye Rumble
by Maya WHITE
Sally B...
Lydia...
Walter J...
Megan De P...
Sara O'Keefe
Amel, Tania, Doris
Lynne...
Kylie...
Michelle...

Hello

Kerry Street

Community

Kindly to you

9335 1471

FRIENDLY
EDUCATION
FOR
MILLS

Kerry Street student posters at a Hamilton Hill Community Group meeting, 2015

“To complicate things,” recalls Karen Kennedy, “it was a few months later, in May, that the Roe 8 debate began and it was looking increasingly likely that we’d have a four-lane truck passageway adjacent to two sides of the school.”

“The Hamilton Hill and Kerry Street communities really banded together on the matter. I remember spending a lot of time discussing ways we could convince the state government to reconsider, and thinking about what we would do if it didn’t.”

“My staff and I spoke a lot with our students about the impact Roe 8 could have on our school, and at a meeting of the Hamilton Hill Community Group, I presented a number of posters the children had created detailing their arguments as to why the project shouldn’t proceed,” said Karen.

“Things were getting quite heated! To the point that as a collective, we considered commissioning a documentary crew to put together a feature for *Australian Story*. It never ended up getting that far, but it came close,” she said.

“When the Winterfold Road [Coolbellup] tunnel was announced, the Council and I decided we would proceed with an application for a capital grant to develop 18 Forrest Road,” recalls Karen.

“Roe 8 was definitely still a risk, but we pursued the application anyway, and as it turns out, it is just as well that we did. We were subsequently awarded the grant, and were then in a position to consider the next phase of the project.”

“Unfortunately, it was then that the relationship between us and the tenant living in the property broke down,” recalls Karen. “When he finally vacated the place, what had once been a sweet and well cared for home was run down, damaged and dirty.”

“We had to go to the Magistrate’s Court over a bond dispute. That was stressful. I was personally threatened over an amount of \$600... it just wasn’t worth it,” said Karen.

“We decided to walk away from that particular battle.”



OPEN DAY
SUNDAY
5 NOVEMBER
10am - 2pm

Independent school offering an alternative learning experience

Kerry Street Community School
WHERE CHILDREN CAN THRIVE AND FLOURISH

An active, accessible community for nurturing and inspiring authentic learning and living. With low student/teacher ratios, multi-age classes, active parental involvement, and a strong commitment to individual, community and environmental wellbeing, Kerry Street students enjoy rich and unique learning opportunities in all aspects of their academic, social and personal growth. Education programs focus on authentic learning experiences, while meeting the requirements of the Western Australian Curriculum. Specialist programs that enhance the curriculum include Italian, Art, Music and Gardening.

Please contact Karen Kennedy, school coordinator, for a tour of the school phone 9335 1471.

Kerry Street

Family Friendly Education

20 Forrest Road, Hamilton Hill
www.kerrystreet.wa.edu.au
coordinator@kerrystreet.wa.edu.au **9335 1471**

The plan

Once the purchase of 18 Forrest Road had settled, the Kerry Street team lost no time in preparing the grounds for work.

“From the second we found out [the school] could buy the house, things were very busy with planning,” recalls Helen Sugars Duff. “We were quite limited in what we could plan because the grant money came with limitations saying we could only have two classrooms. But it was very fast paced and exciting and stressful.”

“I got to work with Karen so it became a team thing and I found that very exciting,” she said.

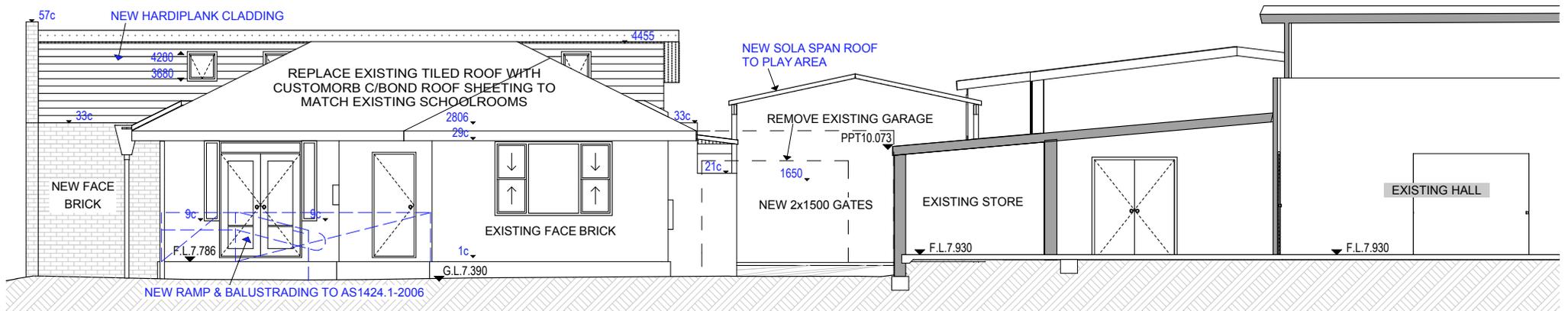
“In terms of the school, growing the size of it was crucial for financial sustainability,” says Kath Sugars. “Having only 35 students meant that it was very hard to afford to pay the teachers. We barely had enough money and historically we have never been able to afford to pay them what they could make elsewhere. But when you get a bit bigger, it makes all of that financial juggling a bit easier. That was one of the reasons the school had to grow.”

“We also had no garden space,” says Helen. “Nowhere for kids to run and play. So the purchase of the land next door meant that we’d be able to factor that play area in.”

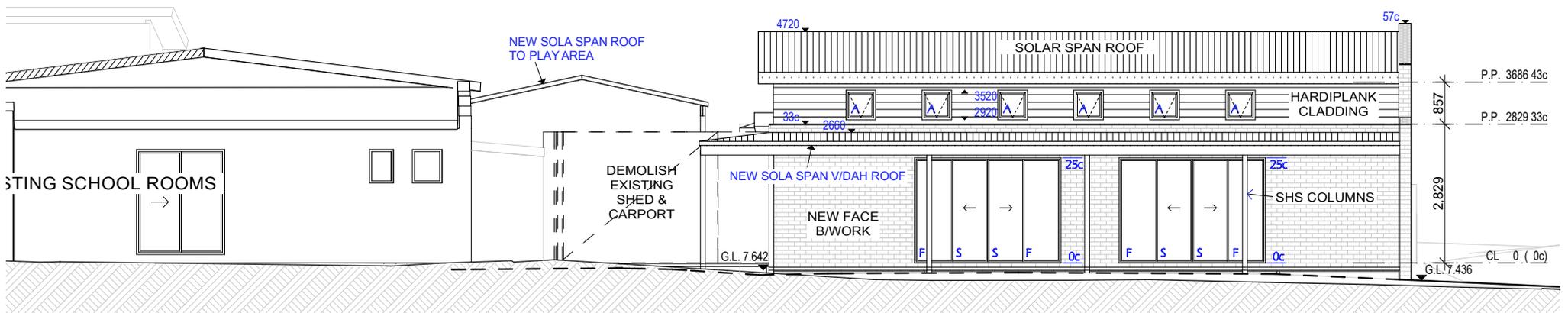
“The School Council and I spent a lot of 2015 working towards the vision of extending the facilities within the Kerry Street village,” recalls Karen Kennedy. “We made a lot of good progress towards the amalgamation of the existing school site with that of 18 Forrest Road. The change of use application we lodged with the City of Cockburn was approved, meaning the house would become available for Educational use, and that paved the way for the Administration to eventually be brought across.”

“At that stage, we had received the notification that our Capital Grant application was successful, however, we had not heard back regarding our low interest loan application,” recalls Karen. “We did eventually get it, of course, but we were nervous for a while there. Originally, we were told we would receive a capital grant of \$160,000 and we had to decide to proceed. In the end, they ended up giving us \$225,000, which was a great result.”

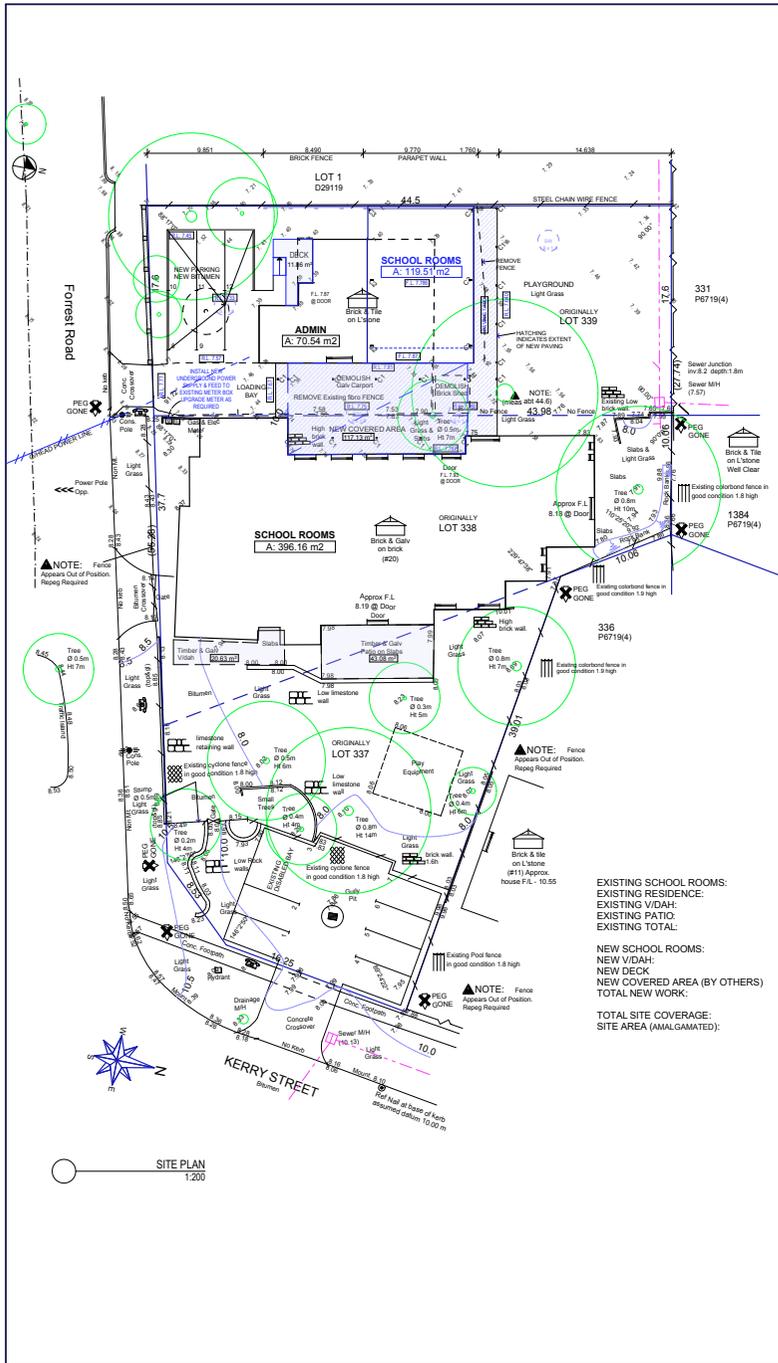




E/02 SOUTH ELEVATION
A02 1:100



E/04 NORTH ELEVATION
A02 1:100



EXISTING SCHOOL ROOMS:
 396m²
 70.5m²
 21m²
 43m²
 530.5m²

EXISTING RESIDENCE:
 117.5m²

EXISTING V/D/AH:
 27m²

EXISTING PATIO:
 12m²

EXISTING TOTAL:
 123m²

NEW SCHOOL ROOMS:
 117.5m²

NEW V/D/AH:
 12m²

NEW DECK:
 123m²

NEW COVERED AREA (BY OTHERS):
 279.5m²

TOTAL NEW WORK:
 512m²

TOTAL SITE COVERAGE:
 810m²

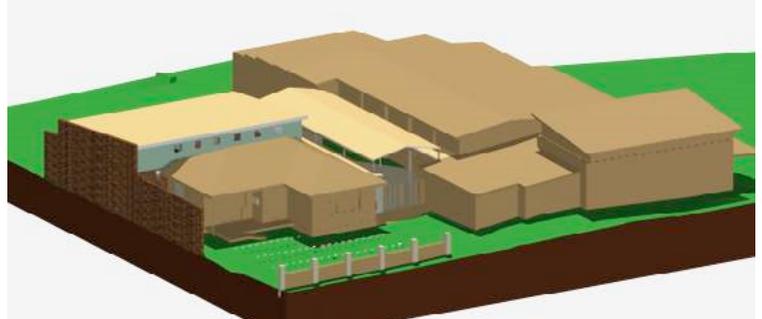
SITE AREA (AMALGAMATED):
 2264m²



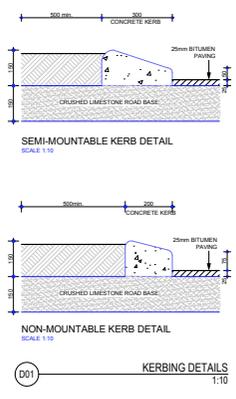
3D at E/01 - North East View



Rear 3D View



Front 3D View



KERBING DETAILS
 1:10

NOTES:

GENERAL NOTES:

1. DO NOT SCALE THIS DRAWING
2. ALL DIMENSIONS AND SITE CONDITIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION AND ANY DISCREPANCIES REPORTED IMMEDIATELY
3. ALL WORKS TO BE CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BUILDING CODE OF AUSTRALIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY REQUIREMENTS AS WELL AS THE LATEST REVISIONS OF THE RELEVANT AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS
4. ALL WORKS TO COMPLY WITH STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS DETAIL
5. REUSE THIS DRAWING IN CONNECTION WITH ARCHITECTURAL AND SERVICE AND ENGINEERING DRAWINGS

LANDSCAPING NOTES:

1. ALL PLANTINGS TO COMPLY WITH LOCAL COUNCIL PLANTING
2. LANDSCAPING RETICULATION TO BE LOW FLOW DROPPY & CONSOLE OPERATIONS TRIGGER SYSTEM
3. ALL OF ALL LANDSCAPED AREAS
4. PLANTING SELECTIONS TO BE CONFIRMED BY OWNER IN CONSULTATION WITH LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT OR SIMILAR

EXISTING PCYC BUILDING AREA:	1638.81m ²
EXISTING SHED:	92.88m ²
NEW ABLUTIONS:	109.77m ²
NEW ADDITION:	626.38m ²
NEW STORES:	65.77m ²
TOTAL NEW WORK:	680.02m ²
EXISTING SKATEPARK:	971.62m ²
TOTAL SITE COVERAGE:	3420.71m ²
EXISTING SITE AREA:	6840.32m ²

TERMITE TREATMENT IS TO BE CHEMICAL HAND SPRINKLING IN ACCORDANCE WITH AS 3601

STORMWATER DRAINAGE BY BUILDER TO COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS

Site Area: 2264m² sqm
 Building Area: 630.5m² + 281.5m² sqm

File Location:
 P:\w drive\Draw 2014\77KerryStCommunitySchool\WD177KerryStCommunitySchool2.pln

Client:
KERRY STREET COMMUNITY SCHOOL
 Project Name:
ADDITIONS & REFRUBISHMENT
 LOCATION:
#18 & 20 FORREST ROAD HAMILTON HILL 6163

Drawing Title:

SITE PLAN

Project No: 1477 Dwg Size: ISO A1
 Scale: as noted Date Issued: MARCH 2015
 Status: ISSUED FOR FUNDING APPL01

Drawing No.: A01 Revision: -

Plot Date: 18/03/2015 2:30 PM



The build

“When I first started talking to builders, a lot of them thought I was crazy,” recalls Karen Kennedy. “They thought I should just crash through the lot of it and build a new office and classrooms.”

“And in a lot of ways, it would have been much easier and cheaper to have done that. But for me, there was a history connected to the house, and also because our values are family friendly education, it makes sense to me for the entrance to our school, for the first impression that people have of our school, to be welcomed into a very homey atmosphere.”

“I had a lot of convincing to do and there was only one builder who trusted the vision of keeping the house and he was the guy who got the job,” said Karen.

“It was very important for me, too, to keep the house,” says Helen Sugars Duff, “Because I

^[15] Elizabeth Sugars, who also worked at Kerry Street. Liz started an alternative school herself in the 1980s, the Rockingham Family School, which has since evolved into what is now the Rockingham Montessori School.

had heard of this vision from my mum ^[15] and Kath [Sugars] and the rest of the Syndicate, of this beautiful entry with the homey feel. I was respecting the vision and dream they had, when picking up the project.”

The demolition of parts of the 18 Forrest Road property, the renovation of the front section of the house, and the construction of the new classrooms and amenities did not always go smoothly or to plan, however.



“There were so many times when we thought ‘Oh no! We’ve gotten so far and it’s not going to happen, something’s gone wrong!’” recalls Helen.

“Karen and I worked long hours, weekends, and holidays to meet deadline after deadline and everything seemed to be needed ‘right now.’ It became a joke that we saw more of each other than our husbands,” she said.

“It was two years before we went a whole holiday break without talking to each other!”

“I feel we were a great team,” said Helen. “I consider our partnership and achievements some of the most rewarding of my life.”

“Karen is an amazing person. And it all worked out! The new space is so beautiful and peaceful.”

“I can’t express how much Helen [Sugars Duff] contributed to the Council and school during her four years as President. She was instrumental in gaining our school a 5-year registration period, which only 8% of Independent schools managed to achieve at the time. She worked closely with Karen on our massive building project, and led the Council through a new phase in our school’s development by leading a major review of our Constitution.”

Tania Ivey, 2017 President’s Report





DANGER
CONSTRUCTION
SITE
DO NOT ENTER

DANGER
DEMOLITION
IN
PROGRESS

GCS
Ph: 138 GCS
(138 427)

GCS
Ph: 138 GCS
(138 427)

3129

GCS

- » SCAFFOLDING
- » FORMWORK
- » ALUMINIUM
- » MATERIALS
- » PORTLAND CEMENT
- » TEMPORARY STRUCTURES
- » SITE ACCESSORIES

Ph: 138 GCS
www.gcs.com.au





The result

The completion of the new classrooms enabled the school to spread out and saw the year 4/5/6 class move in. Karen and her admin team were able to move into the Administration building and no longer had to hole up in the toilets to have private telephone conversations.

The whole school landscaping project kicked-off with the landscaping work completed outside the new 4/5/6 classrooms, with the project incorporating many ideas gathered over the last few years from not just the adult Kerry Street community but from students as well. The school also secured a 5-year lease from Main Roads to use the plots of land adjacent to the school for additional parking, gardening, and sports purposes.

"I love what Lucas and his class have done with the new 4/5/6 classroom," says Helen. "It's just beautiful."

"It's so lovely seeing the children playing out there in the newly landscaped yards and learning in the new classrooms they have," says Kath Sugars. "I feel very proud every time I come back to Kerry Street, because of my involvement in holding the 18 Forrest Road property for all of those years."

"I think it was fortuitous timing that Karen and I started at the same time," reflects Helen Sugars Duff. "Because [the development] was a lot of work. It took a lot of our time, and it was lucky that I didn't have another job so I could give it all of my attention, whereas someone else might have had to juggle work as well as everything else."

"I think there was a lot of fortuitous timing involved along the way. Look at the syndicate: to find seven people to come together, all willing and able to buy the house... It's very different from wanting to buy a property and being able to."

"We have been really lucky," agreed Kath. "If Helen hadn't come along, Karen might have gone, 'This is all too hard!' and walked out. And if Fran hadn't have been here, we wouldn't have had that big heart in our school for all these years."

"And if we didn't have that one ANZ guy!" recalls Helen. "We talked to all of the banks and all of the money lenders and so many of them told us no, but this one guy from ANZ came out and sat with Karen and I and he could see what the school was, and that the [enrolment] numbers were increasing, and that what we were trying to do was important."

"That was our last ditch hope," recalls Helen. "So many little moments have come together to create all of this. So now I always feel really good when I come to the school."

"When you're working in a community, it's so very important that you have trust," said Karen. "At one time, we really, really thought it wasn't going to be possible for the school to purchase the house. And I recall standing in the kitchen with Tom [Francas], and I was so frustrated. I'm a problem solver and this was the biggest problem that I have ever had to solve, and I said to Tom, 'I just don't know how to solve this problem.' And he just so simply said to me, 'I know you'll find a way, little lady.'"

"That trust that he had in me, it just made me push even harder." Karen "And we did. We found a way."

"A part of the trust within the community is that all of the work that you end up putting in will be worth it in the end," says Kath. "And it is."

"It was a tricky balance for Karen and me, when developing the school, to work on making it bigger and yet still keep that small, community feel so





that it didn't become just another big school," said Helen.

"I think with change, you have to remember to think about what it is you really want to keep about the school, what you're willing to let go of, and what you really want to have that you don't have right now," says Kath. "And I think Fran has been absolutely instrumental in keeping the feeling of Kerry Street: that visceral, this-is-what-we're-all-about feeling and then, making the physical changes and having more students and making it more beautiful, that's fantastic."

"What hasn't changed is how nice people are," says Kath.

"The people may change," reflects Fran, "But our core values stay the same."





Today

The Kerry Street story continues and the community remains focused on moving forward, with the evolution of the landscaping project, progress being made to add a car park and nature space to the school grounds, and with the professional development of staff and Council members, and refinement of school practices and processes.

Over the course of its 37 years existence, the school has experienced many ups and downs. As a result of fluctuating student numbers and precarious funding, ever changing and increasingly demanding regulatory requirements, internal community conflicts and staffing challenges, Kerry Street has come incredibly close on more than one occasion to shutting its doors for good. The school endures due to the ingenuity, determination, hard work and long hours of dedicated staff members, parents, Coordinators and Council representatives.

“Our school obviously has its stated values, which we certainly live, but what I don’t think we acknowledge anywhere near enough, is the underlying personal attributes of the various people who make up our community. We have grit

and we are resilient and creative and passionate about the education of every child who enrolls at our school,” said Karen. “If our school community over the decades didn’t genuinely believe in what FAS, and later Kerry Street, was aiming to achieve, there is no way we would be where we are today. No way.”

“We owe every Kerry Street family – including those of the staff who have worked underpaid or without pay for so many years – a debt of gratitude for everything they have done, and I think the best way to acknowledge their personal sacrifices is to continue working hard so that we future-proof Kerry Street Community School. So that our children’s children can enrol here and experience the same nurturing, empowering education that they did.”

“That’s my goal: I strive every day to work with the community to develop our school so that it is embracing of its roots and core values, but is simultaneously preparing for its future. It is a delicate balance, and it’s really hard work, but we [community members] support each other and together, anything is possible,” said Karen.

“If anyone says you can’t go to university after going to an alternative school, then it’s just not true,” says Geraldine Stanton. “My eldest son, Aaron, is currently the Marketing Manager at Gage Roads Brewery. His brother, Dan, works for Little Creatures, managing a whole group of people as a Brewer. Chris is working for Fortescue Metals Group, doing environmental impact studies, and Callam, my youngest, is studying zoo landscaping and design,” said Geraldine.

“Don’t ever underestimate the influence of young people who have a community education, such as that of Kerry Street, for their productive futures,” said Ron Gorman. “Now productive doesn’t necessarily mean jobs. I know kids who I taught who are doing just the most extraordinary things because they were allowed to do the things that Gonski is suggesting now.”

“It really is time to wake up and smell the roses, and appreciate the impact that community schools have on their students’ lives.”

“Never give up! Not ever, not even if you have had head surgery (which I have), just never give up, not even for a second.”

Chris Duff, 2011

Philosophy and values

We communicate with trust, honesty and consideration

- We resolve difficulties through listening and negotiating.
- Parents, teachers and children work together to encourage children to express their true feelings.
- Children are involved in the decision making process through weekly meetings. Their ideas and views will be actively sought and listened to.
- Communication is open; complaints are managed through the established complaints procedure in a timely manner.

We act with integrity and courage

- Every person is equal in human worth and dignity. We value and respect each individual; each individual is expected to extend this respect to others.
- We are personally responsible and allow others responsibility for themselves.
- Individuals are encouraged to be responsible for their actions.
- Individuals are encouraged to follow tasks through to completion.

- The decision making process is governed by the School Council.

We live creatively and joyfully

- We provide an environment that encourages each individual to learn naturally and joyfully, to grow and develop to their full potential and to flourish as a whole person.
- We develop a sense of belonging to a community and encourage students to work as individuals and part of a group.
- The children are encouraged to interact with the wider community including other schools and diverse cultural and community groups.
- Opportunities to utilise local resources are actively sought; participation in and attendance at local events is a priority.
- Community member interaction is encouraged through the use of school facilities and programs.
- Parent workshops and education is facilitated to provide support with parenting strategies, children's development and insight into learning programs at school

We are caring and friendly; we act out of love

- We are a community; a connected group of families and individuals working together as a caring, vibrant and dynamic independent private school.
- We provide a safe, warm and loving environment - a space for children to learn and grow.
- We value the small size of our school and have low student/teacher ratios.
- We recognise the importance of building strong relationships and employ caring and dedicated staff.
- We create an atmosphere of curiosity, participation, cooperation, trust, respect, warmth and friendship.
- We minimise comparison and competition and avoid the use of rewards and punishments, including isolation; we use role modelling to demonstrate and encourage desired behaviour. Encouragement is given for effort and improvement to develop self-esteem and motivation.
- Cultural, social and religious diversity is appreciated and respected

We are families who contribute to the daily life and future of our school

- Parental involvement, at all levels, is an integral component of the day to day running of the school.
- Parental involvement takes many forms, such as the contribution of time, specific skills and assistance with supervision.
- Extended family and community members are welcome at our school.
- Local resources are utilised and relationships fostered within the wider community.
- Decisions concerning the effective running of the school are made at monthly meetings by the school council on a consensus basis.

We foster the growth of wisdom and wonder, mindful of our role as caretakers of the earth and our children

- Students are the focal point of the school; they are empowered to have real responsibility.
- We have a holistic approach, seeing each child as a whole person with prior knowledge and experience.
- Children are encouraged to think beyond the purely personal.

- We encourage the development of self-esteem and self-confidence while simultaneously promoting respect for others.
- The opportunity to explore values and attitudes held by others is provided.
- We aim for students to feel safe and cared for, to have fun, to be able to learn and demonstrate that learning, to be empowered, expressive, creative, resourceful and independent.
- The curriculum is broad and encompasses the Western Australian Education Department curriculum and ACARA requirements. It is implemented in a flexible way given that learning areas are interrelated and learning occurs in numerous forms
- Each student's self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity is nurtured to assist them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing.

We encourage excellence

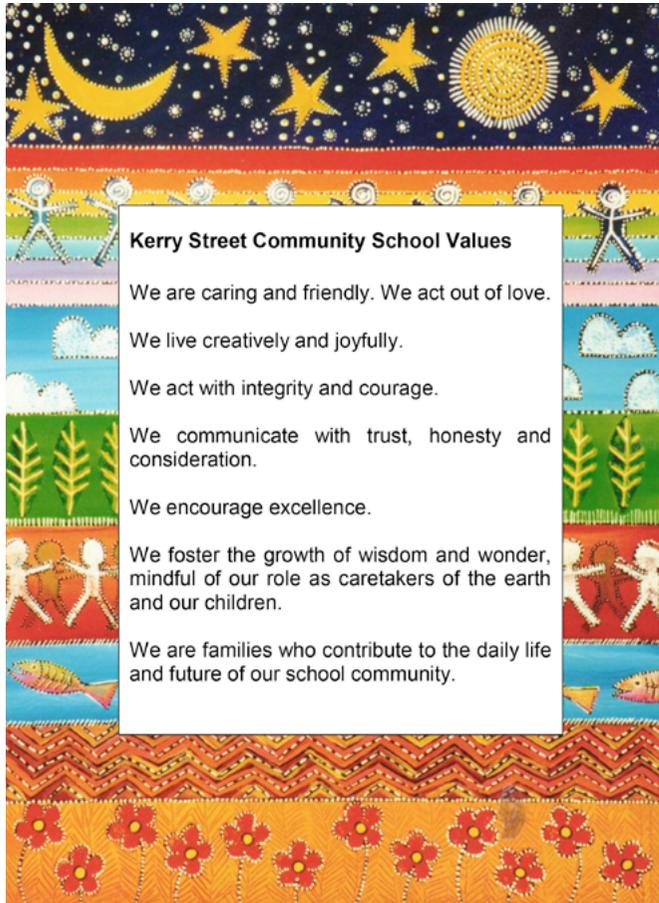
- We value and accommodate individual differences by providing a range of experiences and resources to cater for each student's learning style, ability and interests.
- Respect for the individuality of the children is of paramount importance in the development of their full potential; learning programs are developed with regard to ability, not just age.
- We actively assist with the development of the whole child by covering the social, cognitive, creative and physical domains of learning.
- Teachers engage in professional development to provide evidence based strategies and instruction that best supports student learning.
- Targeted learning support and extension is provided to ensure that students meet their potential.
- General capabilities of the Australian Curriculum, cross curriculum priorities, as well as achievement standards, are covered to provide opportunities to develop knowledge, behaviours and dispositions to become successful learners.



Sketches of children and classroom by Tom Francas, 2018

Kerry Street Community School

Kindy to Year 6



Kerry Street Community School is proud to continue to offer students a unique educational experience 37 years later. Kerry Street's welcoming environment is perfect for families who want to be a part of their child's educational experience.

Whether helping in the classroom, the garden, cooking school lunches or just enjoying daily experiences with their children throughout the day, the presence of parents contributes to a safe, friendly and vibrant atmosphere in which children feel comfortable and cared for. Teaching staff work effectively and enthusiastically to ensure children receive high quality education within this community-spirited environment, working together to provide a balance of whole school programming infused with their personal styles and ideas.

To find out more about Kerry Street, please visit our website www.kerrystreet.wa.edu.au

To arrange a tour of our school, please call (08) 9335 1471 or email principal@kerrystreet.wa.edu.au

We are located at 20 Forrest Road, Hamilton Hill, in Western Australia, 6163.

You can write to us at PO Box 48, Hamilton Hill WA 6963.

Postscript

This publication was put together with a lot of love, but in an incredibly short amount of time. The history of Fremantle Alternative School and Kerry Street Community School is far richer and more detailed than has been presented in these 64 pages. There were a number of families and staff members who we did not have the time or capacity to contact for comment, and to you, we apologise sincerely: your stories are as valid as anyone's and would have enabled us to further round out Kerry Street's history. We hope to continue revealing some of our wonderful school's history over the coming months and years, by way of regular features in our newsletters and on our website. If you would like to share your experience with the Kerry Street community (and the world online), please email us at kerrystreet@kerrystreet.wa.edu.au. We would be incredibly grateful for your stories and we truly hope to hear from you.

Disclaimer

Information in this publication is believed to be correct at the time of printing yet may be subject to change.

Kerry Street Community School Inc accepts no responsibility for and makes no representations, whether express or implied, as to the accuracy or reliability in any respect of any material in this publication. Except to the extent mandated otherwise by legislation, Kerry Street Community School Inc does not accept responsibility for the consequences of any reliance that may be placed on this material by any person.

Kerry Street Community School Inc will not be liable to you or any other person for any loss or damage (including direct, consequential or economic loss or damage) however caused and whether by negligence or otherwise which may result directly or indirectly from the use of this publication.

"The first time I saw one of our new students skip across the class, I celebrated; a subtle thing, though I just knew that this child now felt comfortable at school. On another occasion, I was invited to a "show" after about a month of this student commencing here at Kerry Street. Again, I celebrated because this little one had restored her confidence to be herself. These moments of success, are seemingly small, though huge progress in terms of wellbeing. In one way or another, schools had previously failed these students. Kerry Street has reignited a love of learning and a trust in themselves. This is my most important work; to ensure that every child finds their way."

Karen Kennedy, 2016



Our school is located south of Fremantle at:
20 Forrest Road
Hamilton Hill, Western Australia, 6163
on the corner of Kerry Street, of course

Our contact details are:
(08) 9335 1471
kerrystreet@kerrystreet.wa.edu.au
www.kerrystreet.wa.edu.au

Our postal address is:
PO Box 48
Hamilton Hill, WA, 6963