



# Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)

## Snapshot:

### Clontarf Beach State School

Clontarf Beach State School is a diverse community located at the southern end of the Redcliffe peninsula, approximately 30 km north of Brisbane. The school currently has 486 enrolments from Prep to Year 6, and continues to grow each year. The school community is diverse with a large range of housing including state housing and high-cost waterfront new builds. The area also houses a women's shelter which provides secure short-term accommodation for women and their children.

#### Looking at the data

The school has been consistently engaging with the AEDC data since 2009 and has developed strategies to reduce oral language vulnerabilities in their community. Their focus had been on responding to a high proportion of children who were vulnerable on the communication skills and general knowledge domain of the AEDC. Schools in the peninsula developed networks with Early Childhood Education and Care providers to work together toward improved learning, development and wellbeing outcomes for children. The Peninsula Early Learning Strategy (PELS) brings together educators to provide professional development to the sector around specific areas of early childhood development. The school also had an internal focus on developing students' oral language skills in the early years of school with a range of evidence-based language programs that had been developed through engagement with the Age-appropriate Pedagogies program.

When looking at their school AEDC data, Clontarf Beach State School has seen an overall reduction in the proportion of children who are developmentally vulnerable over the last three collection cycles. In 2016, the school sought to review their strategies against their data to regroup and refocus their efforts.

Upon engaging in a systematic review of their data, the group found that although they had seen a decrease in the number of children who were developmentally vulnerable, they had seen increasing proportions of children who were developmentally at risk. The school recognised that these children were likely to experience significant challenges when starting school and may struggle to make the most of the learning environment.

*We needed to consider in our planning how we were going to address their needs.*

Principal Leanne Ordorico.

Clontarf used the AEDC data to help inform strategies, which would help achieve their long-term goal to have all students succeeding by the end of Year 2 by 2020.

How does the AEDC help inform your planning?

Find out how the AEDC links to the Queensland Supporting successful transitions framework and Age-appropriate Pedagogies program at [www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/about-us/publications-and-research/australian-early-development-census](http://www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/about-us/publications-and-research/australian-early-development-census)

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The Clontarf school's goal is to have all students succeeding by the end of Year 2 by the year 2020. To achieve this, they recognised that they needed to look at the enrichment of strategies already in place and how they are working in partnership with others to address those needs.

“What we then needed to consider was what else do we need to do? Who else do we need to work with in order to achieve our goal of success?” said Principal Leanne Ordorico.

“We had a number of effective supports in place to develop children's skills prior to commencing Prep, however we identified we wanted to focus on working with parents to meet their children's needs,” she said.

Leanne described how research indicates that if parents are well positioned to support their children before they enter school then the children will have increased potential for success. They decided they needed to support and build the capacity of parents to become more aware of the needs of their children before commencing formal learning in school.

## Connecting with the community

Clontarf Beach State School is viewed as a valued part of the community, with a strong sense of community within the school and a high trust of school staff. Parents are known to travel to the school for the level of connectedness, with a number of multigenerational families attending. The school also reflected that parents engaged with services on the school site but tended not to engage and connect with services outside of the school.

The challenge for the school was then to find out what services are available in the community and establish a partnership with those who were able to support parents in their role. The school's vision was to establish connections between home, school, and

support services by building on the existing trusting relationships between parents and school staff.

## Working collaboratively

Will the strategies you have in place help you achieve your aims?

Who else might be able to support you to reach your goals, or might have a similar vision?

The school identified a number of existing relationships with stakeholders and transition partners including early childhood services (through Peninsula Early Learning Strategy), health services and speech pathologists. They also identified new potential partners outside their current professional network who had expressed interest in providing programs to families, but had seen themselves as standalone services.

The school invited these services to discuss the vision of the school and highlight that they were all “in it together”. By approaching other community partners with a listening agenda and identifying a shared vision for the community, the school was able to collaborate with services in the area to work towards a common goal.

*It's not our school's agenda, it's a collaborative agenda. Bringing all of those people together around the table, including our staff and our early childhood and Prep teachers, enabled everybody to hear the story, enabled everybody to see that they were all on the same playing field, that we were all parts of a jigsaw puzzle that were all supporting each other in order to achieve a better outcome for our local community.*

Principal Leanne Ordorico.

After completing the stakeholder meeting, the next steps involved planning timelines, goals, resources and making sure everyone knew their areas of responsibility. The plan included timelines and specific roles for those involved and allowed for discussions which either affirmed and enriched their current understandings, or identified further areas that needed to be improved. This involved drawing on the expertise of various organisations and using the strengths of each, with no one being superior to another. The school also evaluated their current strategies to make sure that they were aligned to their new goals and could be complemented by their new strategies.

## Moving forward

As a school leader, Leanne believes it is important to ensure the school's plans are informed by data. Leanne looked critically at their school and community AEDC data as well as their Prep data to make sure they were making informed, proactive decisions. This enabled the school to focus on the intent behind their actions rather than making assumptions about what they thought the data was telling them or about what the community needed.

One of the school's strategies involves collaboration with Queensland Health, where the hospital midwives will deliver their antenatal services at the school site in an effort to help parents in the area connect in with the supports available to them. Through this strategy, parents will be connected to the school and health services from pregnancy. Using their connections with the community and existing relationships, the school hopes to increase parental engagement and reduce barriers for families accessing health services.

The school hopes to build parent and children's capacity in the community, to promote a successful learning experience. They hope to see this impact reflecting in their data, for example attendance records, NAPLAN, AEDC, parent surveys, informal feedback, and use of health hub.

Find out what strategies other schools have used. View their stories at [www.education.qld.gov.au/about-us/reporting-data-research/data/aus-early-development-census/school-resources](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/about-us/reporting-data-research/data/aus-early-development-census/school-resources).

## Take the next steps

1. Explore your community data at [www.aedc.gov.au/data](http://www.aedc.gov.au/data)
2. Critically reflect on your AEDC data and your knowledge of the students and families at your school.
3. Work collaboratively with your teaching team to plan and implement student-focused programming and practice.
4. Identify community groups and organisations who may partner with the school.
5. Explore the AEDC community data with community partners to identify areas of mutual concern and benefit.

To find out more about how you can start incorporating the AEDC in your planning download the suite of AEDC resources online at [www.education.qld.gov.au/about-us/reporting-data-research/data/aus-early-development-census/school-resources](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/about-us/reporting-data-research/data/aus-early-development-census/school-resources).

