



# Comet Care School Annual Report 2018

## Context

<b>School Name:</b>	Comet Care School	<b>School Number:</b>	1497
<b>Principal:</b>	Richard Furber	<b>Region:</b>	North Metro

Comet stands for Community Outreach Model of Education and Training. The school exists to provide an alternative setting to mainstream education for students who have been unable to successfully access education at conventional mainstream schools during Years 10, 11 and 12.

Comet prides its success on the fostering of excellent relationships between school staff, students and their families. These relationships, which are based on empathy and respect, underpin the learning process. Comet runs a highly student-centred learning model and much of the learning is student-paced in relation to their needs, rather than students having to conform to an inflexible education model which may not meet their requirements. Students have access to VET learning pathways including certificates in General Education (Numeracy and Literacy) as well as a number of industry specific qualifications such as Building and Construction. The school also focuses on preparing students for their future pathways and assists them to transition into work through numerous work experience opportunities, TAFE and traineeships. The school also works hard to provide the social skills required to be successful in the workplace as well as practical and independence aspects such as driving licenses and White Cards.

## 2018 Highlights

2018 was again a fantastic and successful year at Comet CaRE School both in terms of consolidating the platform of engagement, academic and personal and social development which was laid in previous years, as well as further developing and growing the scope of service delivery we provide to our students, their families and community.

Students again achieved well in the Certificate in General Education for Adults (CGEA I, II and III). Previously the school had offered WACE units, however students and their parents have opted for the CGEA Curriculum feeling it is more appropriate, relevant and offers an alternative to the mainstream curriculum which they had already previously attempted.

As well as the CGEA Curriculum, Comet has a robust Protective Behaviours Curriculum which supports student personal development and the work done by the Youth Support and Development Officers (YSDWs). The YSDWs had a shift in focus in 2017 towards transitions, transitions both into and out of Comet. An approach which continued in 2018. This is incredibly important as we believe that school is only the start of the journey, so extra care and focus is placed on transitioning and supporting students out of Comet and into employment, traineeships, apprenticeships and TAFE. This shift of focus has led to a significant increase in work experience and employment opportunities through a growing community network which continues to provide opportunities for Comet students.

One such new opportunity in 2018 was a strong partnership with Ertech. Through this partnership a number of students have been on placement one day a week with Ertech to complete a Vocational Certificate in Civil Engineering including licenses for a multitude of different machinery types as well as their White Card and WHS requirements. When students complete this course Ertech also commit to finding their new Civil Engineers employment in the industry – a fantastic outcome for all students involved. Ertech have also very generously offered scholarships to Comet students to assist Comet in resourcing the program.

## Some Comet students at the Ertech program



Student attendance and engagement was another area celebrated by the Comet community with more and more students achieving higher levels of school attendance and engagement. This is a key focus area for students who were previously unable to attend school consistently, or in some cases at all. This success is attributed to both strong relationships with student families, school staff having the ability and resources to engage with students and provide a safe and secure environment, as well as some new and enjoyable experiences such as mountain biking, visits to the gym, working with community artists and some simple but healthy excursions. These included the Aquarium of WA, Caversham Wildlife Centre, Perth Zoo and Kings Park to name a few.

Fourteen Comet students also participated in the Pipeline Challenge, a 600 km cycle from Kalgoorlie to Perth to raise money for the Youth Futures Nest program which supports young parents experiencing homelessness. Although a hard and gruelling affair all students were proud of their efforts and achievements which can never be taken away from them. Both the boys' and girls' team applied themselves in excellent fashion and their efforts were applauded by the other experienced cycling teams on the Challenge. All students participating were proud that they had achieved things they did not think they were able to, hopefully something they can carry with them into future endeavours.







As well as the offering of Building and Construction Pathways at Certificate II level, which is run at Caversham, Comet students also have the opportunity to gain their White Card allowing them access to work sites and additional employment and training opportunities. Further to this, 23 students completed Workplace Health and Safety certificates in 2018.

On independence and employability, 42 students passed their Keys for Life and 20 students received 200 driving lessons provided by the school in 2018 resulting in more students passing their driving test, getting their 'L's and a new level of independence and employability.



Over the year Comet students have had many opportunities for educational excursions which have included the Royal Mint, Subiaco Oval, Scitech, Department of Fisheries and Fremantle Prison, art workshops and trips to the gym. All of which were well attended and the school was commended on the



behaviour, attitude, and presentation of Comet students while visiting external venues. The school also attended Career expos and the RAC 'Bstreetsmart' Conference which supports the School Protective Behaviour Curriculum.



There were also many incursions supporting the protective behaviour framework. These ranged from hard-hitting real-life stories and lessons relating to education around alcohol, drugs, driving and sound decision making. They also included nutritional literacy which educated students about healthy nutrition as well as giving them the chance to plan and cook healthy meals. Curtin University also provided in-house science courses. The Baby Think it Over program was also a resounding success. This is the program where students adopt an electronic baby for a week and have to attend to its needs 24 hours a day providing students with actual experience of parenting a baby and empowering them to make more informed decisions.

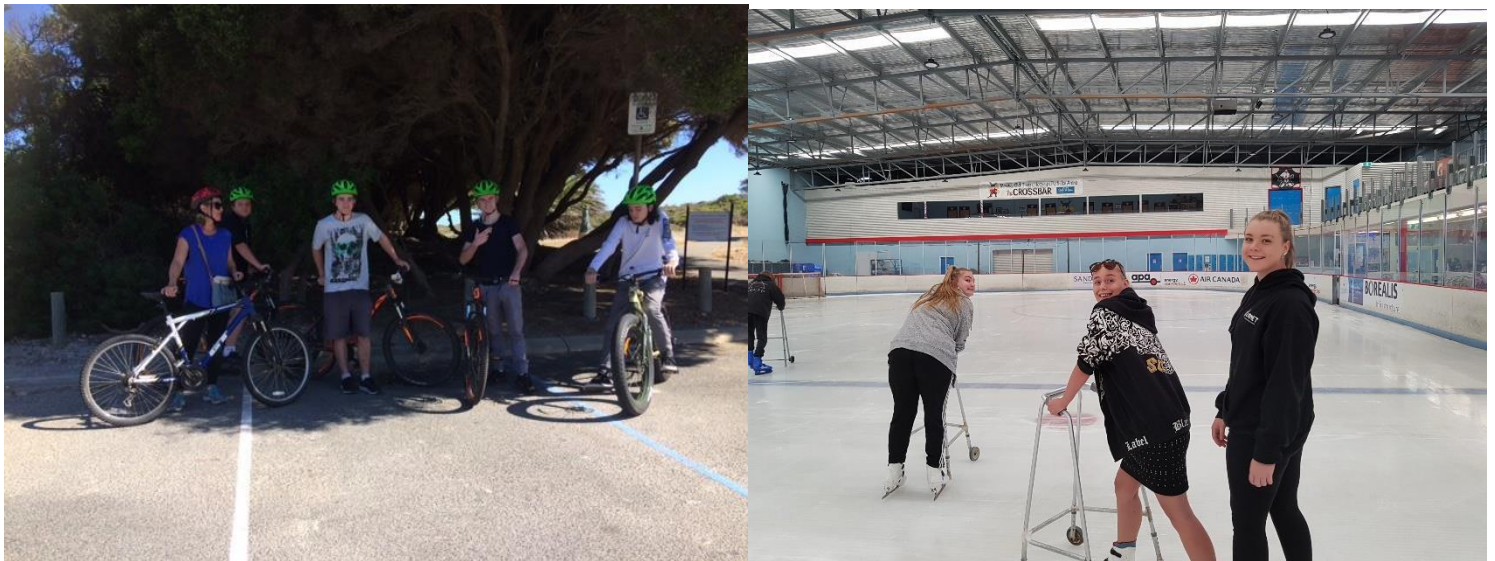




The school also provided fitness training, yoga and pilates, both on campus and at a local gym. The sessions were all led by qualified instructors and students benefitted both from a physical and mental health aspect. They also learned that these benefits could be achieved by making educated and sensible choices regarding their diet and sleep patterns.



The school year also included a number of incentive outings for students who attended, achieved and engaged well at the school. All students were involved in a number of these fun, incentive and relationship building excursions which included golf, cinema, laser tag, ice skating, sport, zoo visits and wildlife centres and picnics.



The highlights of the year however, are the individual students and the pathways they have followed and obstacles they have overcome to be successful and confident learners at Comet. Some of these successes were demonstrated to staff and students at graduation where several Comet students felt they had grown in self-esteem and confidence to the point that they were keen and able to stand up and share their reflections and stories with everyone at graduation.

Some of the Comet graduates.



## Site Improvement Planning and Development

The physical restrictions of the Clarkson Campus have resulted in student numbers remaining at 40, despite the school having a large wait list since opening as a fully registered CaRE School in 2015. We have been investigating alternate sites since 2016 and have this year identified a new site in Clarkson which has full approval from the Department of Education. This new site is currently undergoing refurbishment in order to move students and staff across in 2019. A very welcome and keenly awaited development for staff and students alike.

The Caversham site has also been limited in enrolments only by the number of available teaching areas. Permission has now been granted by the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council and the planning approval is now with City of Swan to approve the addition of two new classrooms as well as a Student Services area.

Comet has also been working with Albany Youth Services Association (AYSA) to form a partnership in Albany. The Comet Albany Campus will be opening to take enrolments from early 2019.



## Student Achievement

240 Total Students

86 Students completed CGEA qualifications at Certificate I, II or III.

1614 VET units of competency were awarded

42 Students completed 'Keys for Life

20 Students received driving lessons

3 Student passed their driving test

16 Students completed WHS certificates

47 Students completed First Aid certificates

43 Students transferred into TAFE or training

9 Student gained an apprenticeship/traineeship

30 Students transitioned back into mainstream education

23 Students gained employment

Comet staff continually review student learning and achievement to ensure that the best possible education is being offered to students, as well as to investigate how well students are achieving. This has led to changes in some course work and units of learning, to promote student achievement, and to better prepare students for their future. The development of Futures Education and Training RTO (FEAT) allowed Comet staff to tailor the units and Certificates in General Education for Adults to our students' requirements and the school now offers an improved suite of certification for students which allows more access to this education as well as more fully preparing students for future pathways which may include traineeships, TAFE, apprenticeships or employment but will certainly require the skills for students to be independent and life-long learners. In 2018 the total number of academic achievements in the CGEA curriculum were higher than those in 2016 and 2017. This was attributed to an increase in numbers of students as well as an increase in the levels of learning achieved by our students – especially those at the Certificate I level where focused teaching practices along with the newly developed materials had a very significant and positive impact on student learning. These students were also better prepared for to embark on the Certificate II coursework than they had been in the past. ACER testing results also evidenced further improvements across the board in literacy, comprehension and numeracy.



## Student Data

### Attendance

Attendance at Comet Care School is rigorously supported and recorded, as low school attendance is the predominant factor precluding students from mainstream schooling. Many Comet students have not regularly attended school during their secondary school years. To support this, Attendance Officers, Participation Coordinators, Youth Support Workers, Teachers and the Principal are constantly involved with families and external agencies to support students into school and ensure this is reinforced with positive experiences. Positive relationships are key here and staff at Comet are committed to fostering these relationships with students and families to remove barriers and to assist students back into school where positive messages about school engagement can be reinforced and students led to success. Comet School also removes some physical and fiscal barriers with the provision of a school bus run and 'Smartrider' cards where necessary to support students into school. Comet also provides incentives in the form of excursions and a range of positive experiences and awards to promote an encouraging, relevant and enjoyable educational experience. Comet also accesses ROSLA funding to promote attendance and engagement on senior school students through provision of fitness sessions and driving lessons as incentives to attend and engage with the school.

#### 2015 attendance

Overall Attendance	Non-Indigenous Attendance %	Indigenous Attendance %
59.67%	62.08%	12.77%

#### 2016 attendance

Overall Attendance	Non-Indigenous Attendance %	Indigenous Attendance %
62%	78%	52%

#### 2017 attendance

Overall Attendance	Non-Indigenous Attendance %	Indigenous Attendance %
59.3%	59.3%	60.1%

#### 2018 attendance

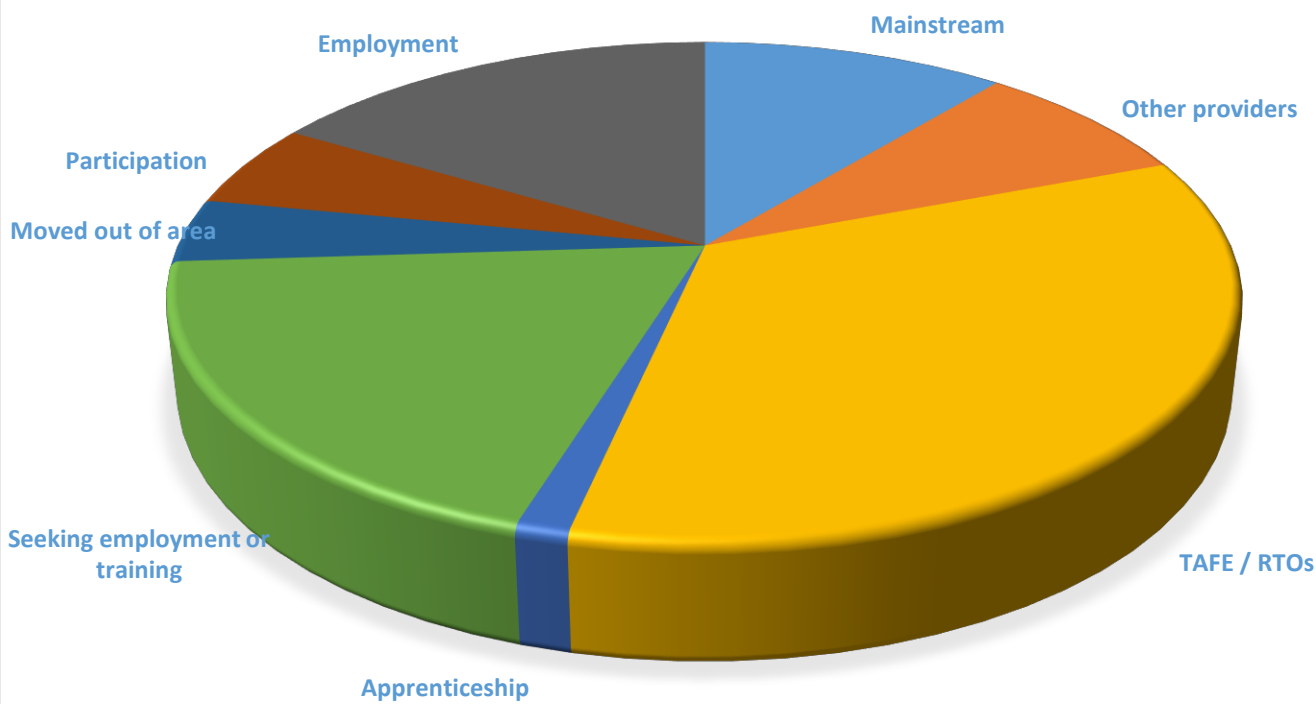
Overall Attendance	Non-Indigenous Attendance %	Indigenous Attendance %
57.39%	60.7%	37.25%

\* Please note figures are actual onsite attendance and do not include approved absences.

Destination

Student destination data includes all students who leave the school in Year 10, 11 or 12 not just year 12. This does affect the data towards 'unknown' as some year 10 and 11s have moved on without notification. The data still however evidences a positive trend in destination where the majority of Comet Students who were previously disengaged from schooling have now embarked on employment, training or tertiary education. Year 10 and 11 were included as some of these students have also successfully transitioned into mainstream schooling and TAFE.

STUDENT DESTINATION 2018





## Client Opinion

Feedback was sought from parents in 2018 by way of post and distribution of surveys at parent interview evenings. This yielded a return of 32.5% of all parental surveys, a 10% increase from previous years. Positive feedback from the parent community has improved year on year and 2018 was no exception.

### School Satisfaction Survey

#### Parent Guardian Feedback

Teachers at this school expect my child to do his or her best	100% Agree/Strongly agree
Teachers at this school treat students fairly	100% Agree / Strongly agree
Teachers at this school work hard to engage and create relationships with their students	100% Agree / Strongly agree
My child feels safe at this school	100% Agree / Strongly agree
Student behaviour is well managed at this school	96% Agree/ Strongly agree
This school takes parents' opinions seriously	100% Agree/ Strongly agree
Teachers at this school motivate my child to learn	100% Agree / Strongly agree
This school works with me to support my child's overall development	95% Strongly agree / Agree

## Staff

### Workforce composition including Indigenous staff

Workforce Composition	Teaching Staff		Training Staff		Non-Teaching Staff	
	Indigenous	Non Indigenous	Indigenous	Non Indigenous	Indigenous	Non Indigenous
Full-time Equivalents	0	9	0	9.2	2	8
Persons	0	9	0	10	2	8

Staff who work in the CaRE school sector are more than just a practitioner in their own discipline as the challenges faced in this sector are more acute due to the nature of the students. The staff at Comet are therefore highly committed to, as well as extremely passionate about, the students they work with and the outcomes they assist students in gaining. The dedicated and professional nature of the staff and the positive and professional relationships they form with our students and their families truly are the glue that hold the school together and allows Comet CaRE School and its students to be so successful.

All teachers are TRBWA registered with either a Diploma or Bachelor Degree in Education. All teaching and training staff also hold Cert IV TAE allowing them to deliver VET training as well as school education.

We are lucky enough to have a number of staff who hold qualifications in both fields of Education and Youth Work which allows them to be very effective in their area of practice with our students.

The school also has access to two Clinical Psychologists for those students with more complex levels of needs. These students are becoming far more common and the inclusion of psychologists on staff to assist them has made a huge impact.

The school also benefits from two volunteers who donate their time to working in the school canteens. These fantastic people, as well as running the canteens, have a genuine desire to assist our students and present fantastic role models for them.



## Financial Statement

The school's finances in 2018 again demonstrate a successful and sustainable business model supported by a secure income stream from both Commonwealth and State Government education funding bodies.

### Income by Funding Source

Source	Amount	Percentage
Commonwealth Government Per Capita Funding	\$ 4,477,981.00	76%
State Government Per Capita Funding	\$ 1,343,279.57	23%
Fees, Charges and Parent Contributions	\$ 17,556.50	0.3%
Other Sources	\$ 55,412.56	0.7%
Total Gross Income	\$ 5,894,229.63	100%

