



# Annual Report 2019

## 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 and the school exists to provide an appropriate alternative education for Year 10, 11 and 12 students who have been unable to successfully access education at mainstream school.

Comet prides itself on successfully fostering excellent relationships between school staff, students and their families. These relationships are based on empathy, respect and trust, which underpin the learning process. Comet runs a highly student-centered learning model with much of the learning student self-paced based on individual needs; rather than students having to conform to an inflexible educational model which may not meet their requirements. Students have access to VET learning pathways including Certificates in General Education for Adults I, II and III (22472VIC, 22473VIC and 22474VIC), in addition to, several industry specific qualifications including Building and Construction. The school also focuses on preparing students for their future pathways and assists them to transition to employment through numerous work experience opportunities, TAFE courses, apprenticeships and traineeships. Academic achievements are complemented with experiences to develop social skills required to be successful in the workplace, as well as practical and independent life skills such as Keys 4 Life, attaining driving licenses, and acquiring WHS certificates and White Cards.

## 2019 Highlights

2019 was another fantastic and successful year at Comet CaRE School both in terms of consolidating the platform of engagement, academic outcomes, personal and social development of students and improvement on previous years' work. The school also developed and grew its scope of service delivery provided to students, their families and community throughout the year.

2019 was another year of growth at Comet, not just in terms of numbers of achievements, but also in terms of sustainable expansion evidenced by demand. In response to requests from local community organisations and after consultation with community providers and local schools, 2019 saw Comet Albany established. The Albany campus opened at the start of the academic year with a small cohort of students, which grew throughout the year, and culminated in its first graduation in December attended by 80 people, celebrating the amazing achievements of students.

Students at all campuses 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 families opted for the CGEA Curriculum. This curriculum seemed more appropriate and relevant since they were seeking an alternative to the mainstream curriculum, which had not been appropriate for them. Where appropriate students are supported to access WACE through the SIDE program.

As well as the CGEA Curriculum, Comet has a robust Protective Behaviours Curriculum which supports student's personal development and the work of the Youth Support and Development Officers (YSDWs).

The YSDWs continue to work extremely hard with students to assist them towards planning for a transition out of Comet. Believing that school is only the start of a student's journey, transitions post-Comet are incredibly important, therefore, additional emphasis and focus is placed on transitioning and supporting students out of Comet and into employment, traineeships, apprenticeships and TAFE courses. This focus has led to a significant increase in work experience and employment opportunities for students and has resulted in a growing business network which provides these opportunities for Comet students.

One such ongoing opportunity in 2019 was a continued and growing strong partnership with Ertech. Through this partnership several students completed placements one day a week to complete a Vocational Certificate II in Civil Construction, including licenses to operate a range of machinery and the opportunity to obtain their White Card and WHS requirements. Additional to achieving certification, the training involved is designed to assist students to be work ready and access employment opportunities. When students complete the course, Ertech commits to finding graduates employment in the industry – a fantastic outcome for all students involved. Several who completed their Certificate II have already begun full-time work in highly sought after and rewarding employment positions.

Ertech have also very generously offered scholarships to Comet students to assist Comet in resourcing the program.



At comet Caversham students had the opportunity to complete a Certificate II in Building and Construction and were able to gain their White Card allowing them access to work sites, additional employment and training opportunities. Further to this, 15 students completed Workplace Health and Safety certificates in 2019.

Student attendance and engagement was another area celebrated by the Comet community with an increasing number of students achieving higher attendance levels. 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, as well as school staff having the ability and resources to engage with students in a safe and secure environment. Additionally, students are able to try new and enjoyable experiences such as mountain biking, visits to the gym, working with community artists and simple but healthy excursions including: the Aquarium of WA, Caversham Wildlife Centre, Perth Zoo and Kings Park to name a few.

This year, eight Comet students participated in the Pipeline Challenge, Youth Futures flagship fundraising event which supports the Nest program, housing young parents experiencing homelessness. The event is a 600km off road mountain bike ride from Kalgoorlie to Perth and although a hard and grueling affair, all students were proud of their efforts and achievement in completing the Challenge, 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 experienced cyclists on the challenge. All students who participated were proud that they surpassed their own expectations, hopefully this experience is something they can carry into future endeavors. Several students also linked this challenge directly with a component needed to complete their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award which is an internationally recognised program for young people, building their skills to equip them for life and work.



We're pleased to report that in 2019, 11 students passed their Keys for Life and 20 students received 200 driving lessons provided by the school, resulting in more students getting their 'L's' and passing their driving test, giving them a new level of independence and employability.



Over the year Comet students have had many educational excursions including the Royal Mint, Subiaco Oval, Caversham Wildlife Park, Scitech, Department of Fisheries, Fremantle Prison, art workshops and trips to the gym. All of which were well attended, with the school being commended on the behavior, attitude and presentation of students while visiting the

venues. The school also attended Career expos, accessibility expos and the RAC 'Bstreetsmart' Conference which supports the School Protective Behaviour Curriculum.



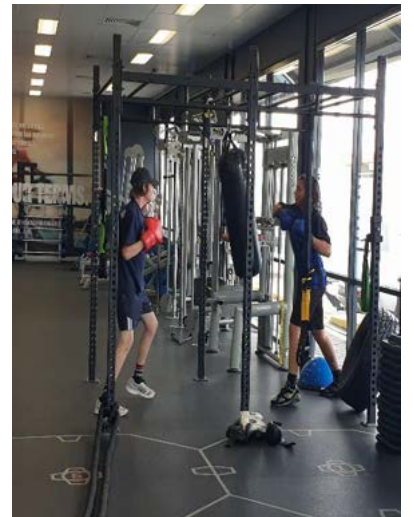
There were several incursions supporting the Protective Behaviours framework. These ranged from hard-hitting real-life stories and lessons discussing education around alcohol, drugs, driving and sound decision making to softer life skills such as nutritional literacy where students learn about healthy nutrition and had the chance to plan and cook healthy meals. Curtin University also provided an in-house science course. The Baby Think it Over program was also a resounding success, allowing students to adopt an electronic baby for a week; attending to its needs 24-hours-a-day giving them an insight into parenting and empowering them to make more informed decisions.

In 2019, the school also ran the intraschool sports carnival which this year included the Albany campus, who drove up to Perth and camped at the Midland campus. The Albany students enjoyed the sports carnival as well as the city living that Perth had to offer!





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 the physical aspect as well as experiencing the positive effects to their mental health. They observed changes in their energy levels which they also learned could be assisted by making more sensible choices regarding their diet and sleep patterns.



The school year also included several 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, zoos, wildlife centres and picnics.



Comet does not enforce a strict uniform however, we provide students with Comet Hoodies which are loved by most!



## 4 Cool Dudes

The highlights of the year are the individual students and the 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 students felt they had grown in self-esteem and confidence enough to stand up and share their reflections and stories with everyone.



Some of the Comet graduates.



## Student Achievements

123 students completed CGEA qualifications at Certificate I, II or III

1584 VET units of competency were awarded

25 students completed 'Keys for Life

38 students received driving lessons

3 students passed their driving test

53 students completed work experience placements

15 students completed WHS certificates

3 students completed First Aid certificates

27 students transferred into TAFE or training

1 student gained an apprenticeship

3 students transitioned back into mainstream education

15 students straight into employment

Comet staff continually review student learning and achievements to ensure that the best possible education is being offered to students. This has led to changes in coursework 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 I, II and III to our students' requirements. The school now offers an improved suite of certification for students which allows more access to this education, as well as preparing students for future pathways which may include traineeships, TAFE courses, apprenticeships or employment. In 2019, the total number of academic achievements in the CGEA curriculum were higher than previously and 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 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 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

Many Comet students have not regularly attended school for their entire Secondary School learning pathway and so Comet rigorously records and support student engagement and attendance. 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. Staff at Comet are committed to fostering positive relationships with students and families, to remove barriers and assist students back into school, where positive messages about school engagement can be reinforced and students can be led to success. Comet is also able to remove some physical and financial 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. Additionally, Comet also accesses ROSLA funding to promote attendance and engagement with senior school students through the provision of fitness sessions and driving lessons as incentives to attend and engage with the school.

Attendance data below is representative of actual attendance and does not include 'approved' absences.

2019 attendance

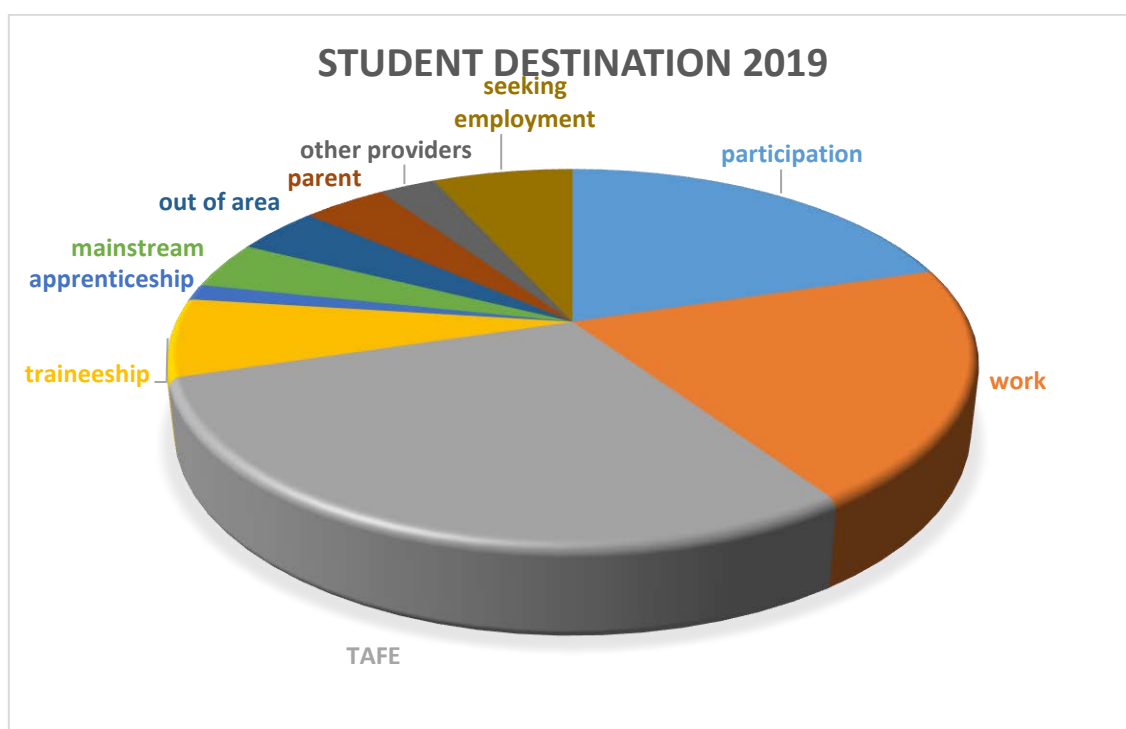
Overall Attendance	Non-Indigenous Attendance %	Indigenous Attendance %
54.6%	57.3%	51.9%

2018 attendance

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

**Destination**

Student destination includes all students who leave the school whether that be in Year 10, 11 or 12. This affects the data towards 'unknown' as some Year 10 and 11s have moved on without notification. The data still 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/or TAFE courses.



## Client Opinion

Feedback was sought from students and student families in 2019 by way of surveying at "Parent/Teacher" evening in Semester 2. This was done anonymously and gladly provided some very positive and moving testimonials about how students had progressed at Comet and were now able to move on to their next goal in life. For some families this was the first time their child had ever enjoyed or succeeded in any achievement at school.

### 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.	95%	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	9.8	0	6	2	8
Persons	0	10	0	7	2	8

Staff who work in Comet CaRE schools are more than just a practitioner in their own discipline, as the challenges faced 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 holds 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’s Degree in Education. All teaching and training staff also hold Cert IV TAE allowing them to deliver VET training, as well as the demonstrated competence required to deliver VET based curriculum.

We are lucky enough to have several staff who hold qualifications in both the 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 Clinical Psychologists onsite for those students with more complex levels of need. We have continued to see an increase in the numbers of students with complex needs. The ability to access professional psychological therapy and support onsite has had a significant impact on the schools ability to support these students, and provide guidance to staff members.

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

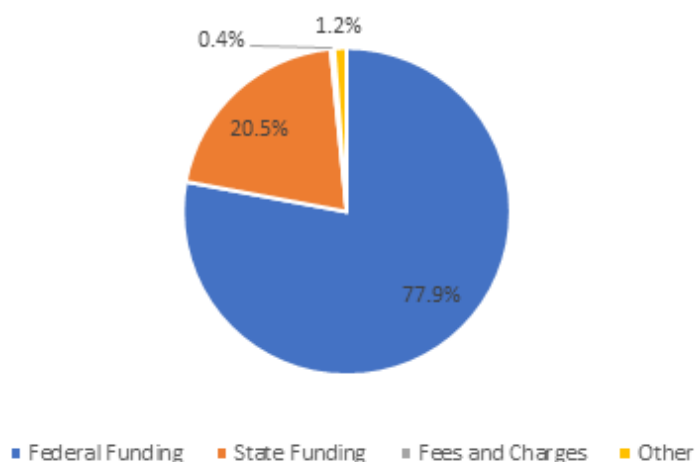
### Financial Statement

The school’s finances in 2019 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	Percentage
Commonwealth Government Per Capita Funding	78%
State Government Per Capita Funding	20.4%
Fees, Charges and Parent Contributions	0.36%
Other Sources	1.2%
Total Gross Income	100%

Comet Gross Income 2019



## Site Improvement Planning and Development

The physical restrictions of the Clarkson Campus have resulted in student numbers remaining at 40 with a large waiting list since Comet opened as a fully registered CaRE School in 2015. Since 2016, alternate sites have been investigated. Throughout 2019, a full refurbishment was carried out at a new site on Renshaw Boulevard which opened to students at the end of 2019. The new site allows for increased student numbers, provides improved facilities and equipment and a better overall learning environment.

The Caversham site has also been limited by the number of teaching areas available. In 2019, full planning permission was granted. A new building consisting of two classrooms, an office, a counselling room, server room and bathroom were installed and ready for use in Term 1 of 2020.

The Albany campus, which opened in 2019, will also have increased capacity in 2020 due to obtaining sole use to the building on Prior Street. This will allow the campus to grow due to the availability of additional classrooms and office space.