



The Silkwood Way

Handbook

 school
silkwood
Be inspiring... get connected... make a difference.

CONTENTS

WHAT IS ‘THE SILKWOOD WAY’?	3
VISUAL OF OUR TEACHING AND LEARNING FRAMEWORK	4
SCHOOL VISION STATEMENTS	5
School Vision	5
School Mission	5
School Motto	5
The Silkwood Graduate Vision	5
OUR EDUCATIONAL DRIVERS.....	6
OUR FIVE DIFFERENT LEARNING FRAMES	8
FLEXIBLE LEARNING TIMETABLES	12
THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM AND THE SILKWOOD LEARNING CONTINUUMS	17
TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES	18
STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING	19
A STUDENT’S PERSONAL LEARNING PROFILE (PLP).....	20
OUR ADVISORY APPROACH	21
Learning Advisors	21
Advisory Groups	22
THE SILKWOOD CAMPUS.....	23
TECHNOLOGY AND STUDENT LEARNING	24
Our three purposes for ICT use in the learning environment	24
A general overview of ICT use for Learning	25
OTHER UNIQUE SILKWOOD FEATURES	27
A Partnership Approach	27
LTI – Learning Through Internships.....	27
LTC – Learning Through Community	28
School Festivals and Significant Transitions.....	30
Specialist Programs – Music and Italian.....	30
Music	30
LOTE - Italian.....	31
Religion and Personal Philosophies	31
The School Management Model	32
OUR ENROLMENT COMMITMENT.....	32
CONCLUSION.....	33

WHAT IS 'THE SILKWOOD WAY'?

Silkwood works in partnership with Big Picture Education and has developed its own unique teaching and learning framework modelled on the Big Picture Education design called 'The Silkwood Way'.

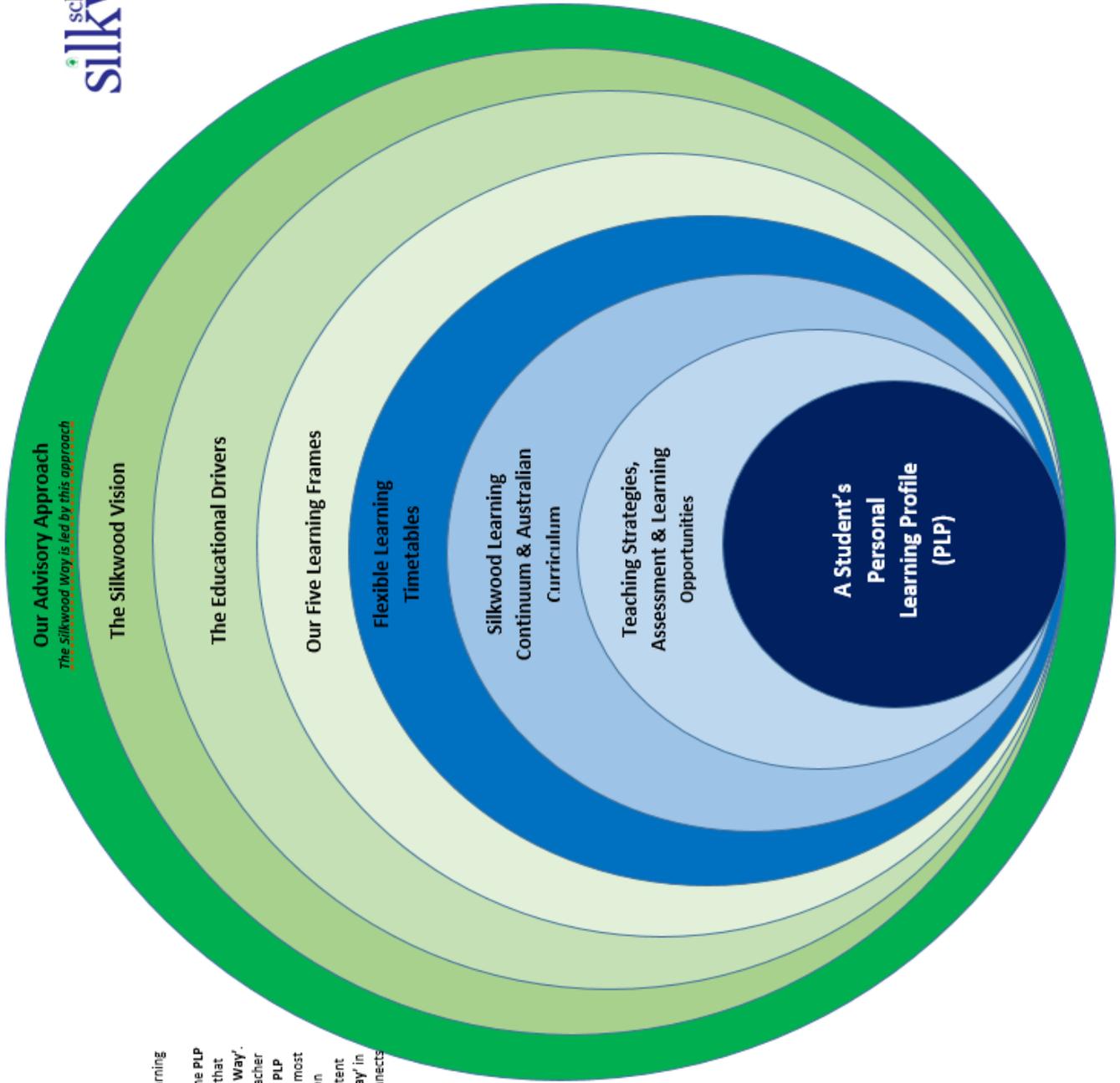
'The Silkwood Way' places the student, their needs, and interests at the centre of teacher planning through the design of a **Personal Learning Profile (PLP)** for every student. This profile is developed in collaboration with the Student, Teacher/Advisor and Parents and includes both individualised and personalised learning pathways for every student that cover teaching the Australian Curriculum in a way that intentionally enhances every student's learning adventure.

As students increasingly acquire more knowledge and their self-awareness grows, the student-designed personalised learning pathways increase. When they reach their senior schooling years the entire learning plan is personalised by the student with the support of their Advisor. We call this learning phase our **Big Picture Academy**.

Our teaching approach is **developmental** and **student-centred** with a focus on **learning how to learn** and uses student engagement and their progress as a measurement of success. **Local and Indigenous Cultural Integration** connect our students to their place of learning this and **Learning Through Community** opportunities then extend learning to outside the classroom. These approaches inform our curriculum, student assessment, teaching systems and strategies that support the integration of the 'The Silkwood Way'.



VISUAL OF OUR TEACHING AND LEARNING FRAMEWORK



Our Teaching and Learning Framework

At the centre of our Teaching and Learning framework lies a Student's Personal Learning Profile (PLP). Surrounding the PLP are the other parts of the framework that work together to form 'The Silkwood Way'. The PLP is the starting point for all teacher planning. The parts lead out from the PLP in terms of flexibility, PLP being the most flexible leading out to the school vision which is fixed. The vision keeps the intent and the integrity of 'The Silkwood Way' in place and the Advisory Approach connects it all together.

SCHOOL VISION STATEMENTS

Keeping the intent and integrity of **The Silkwood Way - Teaching and Learning framework** in place are the school's Vision Statements.

These are Silkwood's aspirational aims that are used to guide the direction of the school. They are:

- overseen by the School Facilitator who checks decisions are made in alignment with the statements;
- used as a reflective tool to guide decision making, support clarity and alignment to The Silkwood Way;
- a mandatory consideration for all teaching and learning decisions at the school.

School Vision

A community supporting young people to realise their potential; forever learning, forever teaching, in the service of humanity.

School Mission

To provide an innovative learning environment offering a **student-centred** and **developmental** educational approach with a focus on the processes of **learning how to learn**.

Through meaningful student engagement in learning, we aspire to develop interpersonal, reflective, physical, and cognitive competencies empowering young people to lead purposeful and fulfilling lives... This is **The Silkwood Way!**

School Motto

Be inspired... Get connected... Make a difference!

The Silkwood Graduate Vision

The Silkwood Way 13-year learning journey aspires to support young people to be able to go on to:

- Use creative, innovative and critical thinking to make a difference.
- Create a future that excites them and contributes positively to the world.
- See the adventure, possibilities and connections in life.
- Act with respect towards themselves, others and our world.
- Create their own financial independence in win/win ways.
- Turn dreams and ideas into reality.
- Accept life's challenges with a resilient and flexible attitude.
- Create a happy and healthy life balance.
- Communicate with maturity, openness and integrity.
- Embrace fun and live with curiosity.

This lies at the heart of **'The Silkwood Way'**

OUR EDUCATIONAL DRIVERS

Our philosophy for learning at Silkwood is **student-centred** supported with a **developmental approach** and a focus on the processes of **learning how to learn**. These three drivers frame **The Silkwood Way** and are the big educational considerations that guide the design for all teaching and learning at Silkwood.

DRIVER 1: STUDENT-CENTRED

We are a transformative, 21st century school and, as such, are committed to, and focused on, student-centred learning.

We do this by:

- Placing a student and their **Personal Learning Profile (PLP)** at the centre of teacher planning, rather than curriculum content and teaching programs.
- Developing a deep understanding of a student using student learning profile tools.
- Individualising learning by using learning continuums for curriculum content and through active assessment and a focus on a growth mindset ensure students are working at the level that is appropriate for them.
- Giving student's choice and opportunity to learn in a variety of ways.
- Personalising learning by using student interests to develop student-led and directed learning plans from Prep through Year 12.
- Actively developing each student's capacity to take responsibility for the management of their own learning.
- Empowering students to have agency and voice with their learning.

We then use student **engagement** and **progress** with their learning goals as our measurement of success.

In terms of engagement we mean:

- Students participate in setting their own learning goals.
- Students know what they are learning and where they are heading through the use of explicit learning continuums.
- Students see the meaning and relevance to what they are learning;
- Students are invested in 'how' they are going to learn.
- Students have a clear understanding of how they will know when they have learned it.
- Students can identify they are making progress.

<p>DRIVER 2: DEVELOPMENTAL</p>	<p>We acknowledge that children and young people go through different stages of physical and psychological development as they mature into adults. These stages of development are important to be understood, considered and integrated into a student-focused learning environment to ensure students are affirmed through developmentally appropriate content and strategies.</p> <p>For this reason, Silkwood uses a developmental scaffold to support teachers to plan developmentally appropriate learning opportunities. This scaffold highlights strategies, contexts and approaches to learning that are relevant to students developmental stages.</p> <p>We use developmental teaching and learning approaches that come out of research from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science • Educational psychology • Child development theorists <p>The scaffold is reviewed regularly to keep the developmental learning approaches relevant to ongoing research in this area.</p>
<p>DRIVER 3: LEARNING HOW TO LEARN</p>	<p>The past 30 years have seen huge advances in cognitive psychology and neuroscience which have helped us understand how our brains learn and habits that can be developed to help us succeed in life. It is now clear that intelligent behaviour is not an inborn fixed trait, but rather a highly dynamic, diffuse, and ongoing process – a process that can be developed in everyone. These advances challenge the traditional focus on education in schools and in particular the focus on acquiring specific subject knowledge. This understanding puts the focus on learning is an active process, an agility that needs developing. For this reason, we define learning at Silkwood in this way; <i>‘Learning is the process of improving yourself’</i></p> <p>Given this information, we have placed the development of successful learning habits, ‘learning how to learn’, as a driver for our teaching and learning framework.</p> <p>Focusing on this driver, we combine Carol Dweck’s work on developing a GROWTH MINDSET with Costa and Kallick’s work on the HABITS OF MIND to support students to develop an awareness of what they are thinking and doing while they learn. These give students a very tangible language to make the learning process visible.</p> <p>Using this driver, Teachers support students to set goals to improve how they are learning and encourage active engagement in the HABITS OF MIND in increasingly more mature and sophisticated ways as their awareness grows.</p>

Our focus on the development of a **GROWTH MINDSET** and **HABITS OF MIND** is integrated through all the learning programs. We call these approaches our learning languages.



[Link explaining](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZ1mZgysqnA) both approaches.
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZ1mZgysqnA>)

OUR FIVE DIFFERENT LEARNING FRAMES

The **Silkwood Way** uses **five** different learning frames to deliver the Australian Curriculum requirements and personalised learning pathways:

Learning Frames	
<p>Integrated</p>	<p>The goal of our Integrated Frame is to foster a ‘love of learning’, expand student interests and deepen knowledge by introducing new curriculum content in ways that generate curiosity, enjoyment, and enthusiasm for learning.</p> <p>Integrated study is an innovative way of delivering content. It is developmental, multi-modal, and authentically contextualises content to improve engagement in learning. Various modes of learning and lines of inquiry are explored to intentionally enhance the student’s learning adventure.</p> <p>The integrated learning frame uses learning approaches that include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interdisciplinary, • integrated themed units of work, • active learning styles, and • inquiry and project-based learning. <p>The curriculum strands integrated include, but are not limited to Science, History, Geography, Economics and Business, Technologies, Media Arts, Civics and Citizenship.</p> <p>Learning in this frame is demonstrated through engagement and the creation of learning artefacts/exemplars - written pieces, artistic work, constructed items, multi-media presentations and a range of other modalities.</p>
<p>Core Maths and English</p>	<p>Silkwood has taken the Australian Maths and English curriculum and developed them into their own sequenced Learning Continuums that reflect their educational approach. These are deliberately designed to be viewed as a continuum of learning as opposed to subject year levels.</p> <p>Silkwood has then worked to identify the CORE Maths and English learning concepts in each of these continuums. CORE learning concepts are defined as the foundational and functional building blocks that students require mastery over to support success in life. With this focus on mastery, CORE concepts</p>

	<p>have rigorous assessment processes set by the school to ensure students are making tangible progress.</p> <p>The teachers use this Core Learning Continuum to work alongside stakeholders to develop individualised Maths and English learning plans for each student. They are specifically targeted to effectively progress a student. The teaching team then develop their Core Maths and English learning program around the student's Individual Learning Plans for their year level.</p> <p>In this learning program, Silkwood supports students to develop mastery by using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevance of learning to real life; • Researched effective online learning programs that offer improved opportunities for learning uptake and individualisation; • A range of different teaching and learning styles; • A growth mindset approach; • Rigorous assessment measures. <p>Every Student's Personal Learning Profile will include CORE Maths and English learning goals unless a student has completed the school's CORE program. If they have completed the CORE learning program, Maths and English goals are included as exploring and extending options related to the student's interests and needs.</p>
<p>Experiential</p>	<p>Silkwood's Experiential Learning Frame plays a very important role in a child's development and is offered in order to give students an experience of a wide range of real-world enterprises and connections so they develop valuable life skills and broaden their life experience.</p> <p>This is enlivened by creating a range of engaging, fun, and challenging learning experiences that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect students to a wide range of experiences to help them explore and build on their dreams, curiosities, and interests; • Learn real-world working skills; • Build a range of quality skills that enable students to perform, make, create, and design. <p>As a student moves through this program from Prep to High School, they go from engaging in broad classroom experiences set by the teachers to have increasingly more choice over their experiences as they develop. This aligns with the student's growing skill development and understanding of themselves as a learner. It culminates with the student working with the teacher to develop their own unique learning experiences in the High School. These areas can be taught independently, or in combination, and can cover broad areas of inquiry eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts (Visual, Manual and Media); • Digital Technologies/Literacy; • Performing Arts (Dance, Drama, Choir, Ensemble, Orchestra);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Education; • Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship (SEED) • LOTE (Language other than English); • Music (individual instrument and the language of music)
<p>Discovery <i>Personal and Social capabilities development</i></p>	<p>Discovery learning time is set to give explicit time to empower the student’s voice, community work, personal and social development, health management and well-being. Here students embark on a journey of discovery that helps expand their awareness of themselves by giving them opportunities to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • see life through different perspectives; • develop or increase resilience to life’s bumps; • find inspiration; • improve their communication skills; • develop awareness of how their behaviour impacts their life; • improve their strategies to self-manage; • develop knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their health and body; • participate in solving real-world community challenges by engaging in service learning opportunities. <p>Using their growing awareness, students build connections to self, others and place. This frame includes explicit skill and habit development, activities, camps, and community projects designed to give authentic opportunity to develop character, build self-awareness and offer adventure and challenge.</p>
<p>Personalised Learning Time <i>Students use their ideas, interests and curiosities to create their own learning projects and plans</i></p>	<p>Our Personalised learning frame is our student-led and directed part of our learning program. It is designed to give students the opportunity to explore enterprise, innovation, and the spirit of entrepreneurship in areas of interest to them. It supports students to create their own personalised learning projects and plans, starting with their interests and growing curiosities in ways that give them a meaningful link to real life.</p> <p>Silkwood begins this learning frame in Prep in simple ways with the children exploring their interests through play options. As the student begins to articulate what their interests are, a simple project plan is then introduced. Then, as the student’s skill and self-awareness develop, the projects grow in complexity and this, combined with the mastering of the core curriculum, leads to the student-designed personalised learning pathways increasing in a student’s timetable. When they reach their senior schooling years, The Big Picture Academy, the entire learning plan is personalised by the student.</p> <p>To ensure the rigour of learning, the learning frame is designed to create a depth of inquiry and enough challenge to keep the student engaged and curious. To achieve this, projects or plans run for extended lengths of time and include an essential question to be answered, What Idea do I want to test? and age-appropriate goals for:</p>

- Empirical Reasoning;
- Quantitative Reasoning;
- Social Reasoning;
- Communication;
- Developing Personal Qualities

Adding to this rigour, Fostering links with the community is also an expected part of the process. This link is vital for both the development of the entrepreneurial spirit and creating a meaningful connection to real life for their work.

In the Primary years, this is done in developmentally appropriate ways with family and school connections. In the High School years, students are encouraged to draw on the expertise and experience of mentors in the wider community and, where possible, include mentorship relationships and opportunities to leave the classroom to extend their learning. As they move into **the Big Picture Academy** this process develops to include more complex or advanced **Learning Through Internship (LTI)** opportunities. These are distinctly different from work experience because they offer authentic opportunities to work on a project in a real work environment where a genuine need has been identified.

In short, our Personalised learning frame is a **rigorous and highly personalised approach** to learning that increasingly combines academic work with real-world learning and exploration.

To aid students with the development of their personalised projects they meet regularly with their **Learning Advisor to discuss progress and parents are involved in the planning phase of the project/plan**. Learning covered in this frame is backward mapped to the curriculum by the Teacher/Advisor.

In this learning frame, individual expectations for students are set at a high, but achievable standard. Assessment and progress on projects are presented in student-led conferences in the Primary School, which lead into twice-yearly student exhibitions of learning in the **Big Picture Academy**.

FLEXIBLE LEARNING TIMETABLES

Year level timetables at Silkwood are flexible, evolving and responsive to student need and teacher specialisation. They are designed and individualised collaboratively with Students, Advisors and Teachers to meet the needs of the students and to fulfil the responsibilities to our Teaching and Learning framework.

In this model, all the learning team who work with a year level come together to plan and design their timetables. At these meetings, the Advisors act as the advocate for the students in their advisory, ensuring their needs are clearly understood and considered. Then, using Teacher strengths, passions, talents, and expertise, year level timetables are designed to support students with their learning goals.

The year level timetables consider;

- Individual Student PLP needs;
- Whole class needs (particularly developmental);
- Silkwood's Teaching and Learning framework requirements;
- Teachers' expertise, development goals, talents, and interests;
- Set times for the specialist teachers to work with the class if required;
- Age appropriate break times;
- Mandated teacher release time for development and planning.

Using the year level timetable, the Advisor then works with their advisory students to develop individualised timetables that best reflect the learning needs of the student and their group. Individual student timetables form part of the students **Personal Learning Profile (PLP)** and support the progress of their goals. They are reviewed regularly in one-on-one Advisory time to ensure they are meeting the learning needs of the student.

SAMPLE: Year Level Timetable Prep – Year 6					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.30 – 9.00	Discovery Learning	Discovery Learning	Discovery Learning	Discovery Learning	MUSIC (8.30 – 9.30)
9.00 – 10.30	Integrated Unit - Year Level Teacher designed IU or alternative individual or group inquiry project				LANGUAGE (9.30 – 10.30)
10.30 – 11.00	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
11.00 – 12.00	Core Maths				Personalised Learning Time
12.00 – 1.00	Core English				
1.00 – 1.50	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1.50 – 3.10	Governed by the activities outlined in the Experiential Framework				
	Arts	Games, Sport and Agilities	Town Hall	SEED or Community Project	Performing Arts

SAMPLE: Year Level Timetable Year 7- 8 (Middle School)

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.30 – 9.00	Discovery Learning	Discovery Learning	Town Hall	Discovery Learning	Discovery Learning
9.00 – 10.30	Integrated Unit - Year Level Teacher designed IU or alternative individual or group inquiry project based			MUSIC or LOTE or Personalised Learning Project	Personalised Learning Time
10.30 – 11.00	Break	Break	Break	Break	Eating Break
11.00 – 12.00	Maths Pathways				Personalised Learning Time
12.00 – 1.00	Core English or personalised English goals				
1.00 – 1.40	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1.40 – 3.15	Governed by the activities in the Experiential Framework				Personalised Learning Time
	Arts (selection of options based on student interests)	Sport or individual fitness activity	Performing Arts (selection of options based on student interests)	Advisory Community Project	

SAMPLE: Year Level Timetable Year 9 -10

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.30 – 9.15	Discovery Learning	Discovery Learning	TOWN HALL	Discovery Learning	Discovery Learning
9.15 – 10.45	Personalised Learning Plan	Integrated Learning Frame; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher designed IU options or; • Alternative individual or group inquiry project-based or; • student personal learning subject of choice 			Personalised Learning Time
10.45 – 11.00	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
11.00 – 12.00	Personalised Learning Time	Maths Pathways			Personalised Learning Time
12.00 – 1.00	Personalised Learning Time	Core English or personalised English goals			Personalised Learning Time
1.00 – 1.40	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1.40 – 3.15	Personalised Learning Time	Sport or individual fitness activity	Personalised Experiential Options	Advisory Community Project	Personalised Learning Time

SAMPLE: Year Level Timetable Year 11 - 12

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8.30 – 9.15	Discovery Learning	Discovery Learning (Mandatory)	TOWN HALL (Mandatory)	Discovery Learning (Mandatory)	Discovery Learning
9.15 – 10.45	Personalised Learning Time	Financial Literacy (Mandatory)	Advisory Community Project (Mandatory)	21 st -century Communications (Mandatory)	Personalised Learning Time
10.45 – 11.00	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
11.00 – 12.00	Personalised Learning Time	Personalised Learning Plan Teacher support for Personalised Maths, English or other subject goals offered in this time			Personalised Learning Time
12.00 – 1.00	Personalised Learning Time				Personalised Learning Time
1.00 – 1.40	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
1.40 – 3.15	Personalised Learning Time	Can Join in Year 9/10 experiential options at this time			Personalised Learning Time
		Personalised Learning Time	Personalised Learning Time	Personalised Learning Time	

THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM AND THE SILKWOOD LEARNING CONTINUUMS

Silkwood has taken the **Australian Curriculum** general capabilities and subject areas and developed **Learning Continuums** that best reflect its educational approach. These have been deliberately designed to be viewed as a continuum of learning as opposed to subject year levels.

Silkwood has worked to identify the **CORE** learning concepts in its continuums. **CORE** learning concepts are defined as the foundational and functional building blocks that students require **mastery** over to support success in life. With this focus on mastery, **CORE** concepts have rigorous assessment processes set by the school to ensure students are making tangible progress.

All other learnings in the continuums are considered **EXPLORATION** or **EXTENDING** concepts. These are identified as valuable concepts for students to explore to deepen their knowledge, expand their interests, grow their awareness, and to foster a 'love of learning'. Assessment of these concepts is largely formative and, where possible, student-driven with a focus on self-motivated engagement and conceptual understanding.

A Student's **Personal Learning Profile** will include non-negotiable learning goals for the **CORE** learning program (unless a student has completed this program), and also a selection of **EXPLORATION** or **EXTENDING** concepts from the learning continuums that they are also covering in their learning program.

Teachers/Advisors use the learning continuums to support students in selecting their learning goals to cover **CORE** requirements and to progress a student with learning new content and concepts from the Australian curriculum.

In a student's personalised learning pathway, learning is backward against the learning continuums to ensure that a student's personal learning goals are also validated with progress on the continuums.



TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Teaching strategies relate to the 'how' of the delivery. At Silkwood, teachers have the flexibility to choose which teaching strategies are best used to bring alive the learning for the students they are working with. The decision for their choice is focused on empowering the learner, ensuring learning is engaging and contextualising learning in meaningful ways for every student. The success of the strategy is then measured using student engagement, progress, and feedback.

To help with making this decision, at the planning stage, they will have worked with the Student Advisors to gain an understanding of the individual needs and interests of the students they are working with. They will also have deeply considered Silkwood's education drivers and approach. They will also have been trained to use a range of approaches.

Currently, at Silkwood, the following approaches are used in various areas across the school:

- Play-based learning
- Reggio Emilia approach
- Bush and forest school approaches
- Big Picture Education Advisor and project-based learning approach
- Adventurous learning
- Project-based learning
- Inquiry-based learning
- Integrated lessons
- Instructional teaching – explicit
- Narrative – storytelling, Place Responsive Pedagogy
- Learning support strategies
- Kids Teaching Kids (peer to peer learning)
- Philosophical Inquiry
- Higher Order Thinking Skills (Critical and Creative Thinking)
- Aboriginal Ways of Learning
- Co-operative and Collaborative Learning Strategies

STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

With assessment, Silkwood's approach is primarily formative, where they apply **authentic learning experiences** to identify and improve outcomes and focus on **student-led assessment processes** as much as possible. However, at times, summative assessment practices are used by the school, particularly where they need consistency of data across the school or standardisation for research or reporting purposes.

CORE learning is one such area. Rigorous assessment processes focused on mastery are required throughout the school to measure a student's successful integration of Core Learning. Given the importance of foundational and functional learning concepts, a consistent approach for assessing these across the school is needed. For this reason, the school has established assessment tasks in this area which include both formative and summative processes.

Most other learning frames are assessed formatively by Teachers and or Advisors.

To reflect **Silkwood's student-focused learning**, all students develop a learning portfolio to highlight their progress and their work. This is part of the student's **PLP (Personal Learning Profile)**. Portfolios are designed in developmentally appropriate ways and expectations increase and become more formalised as students move through the school.

Student-led Exhibitions and Conferences are a big part of the learning culture. In the Primary and Middle school years, the students hold a student-led parent conference mid-year to discuss with their families their learning progress. At the end of the year, Advisors organise an Advisory exhibition where students can showcase their learning to the community and they can take their parents through their work for the semester.

In the Big Picture Academy, at the end of every semester, students prepare an hour-long **Exhibition** to present their learning progress and receive feedback. They invite their Parents/Carers, Advisor, Mentors and other self-selected people to be a part of the feedback panel. Delivering their learning progress to a panel in this way provides a process that is highly accountable for the student. Improving the standard of their exhibitions is an expected part of their learning and forms part of their learning goals. The growth of the student and their progress with their learning is very evident from one exhibition to the next. It is a highly visible and authentic way to demonstrate student-centred assessment.

Over time, our Families will also have online access to a student's PLP, enabling them, at any time, to view and comment on the student's Portfolio of work and current Learning Plan. Our intention here is to enable a closer connection for families to what the student is learning at school.

As an **accredited school**, Silkwood is required to participate in Year 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN testing. Parents have the option to withdraw their child from these tests, and the school supports parents in their decision. The school does not actively encourage participation in, nor teach to the tests, as they are of limited use to the school in improving individual student learning.

Silkwood **complies with the standards of** State education legislation set out **for all accredited schools** and issues parents with a **formal school report every semester**.

A STUDENT'S PERSONAL LEARNING PROFILE (PLP)

At the very centre of Silwood's Teaching and Learning framework lies the Student's Personal Learning Profile (PLP). This is a unique individual learning profile for each student that is a narrative of their learning. The PLP informs planning, drives progress, and enables student self-management and ownership over their learning. These profiles ensure that young people are developing the necessary skills and attitudes needed for lifelong learning and success and are authentically connected to their interests.

Each student's PLP is developed and progressed using a partnership approach with the student, their parents, and their Advisor. As a student moves through their Silkwood learning journey their ability to self-manage and develop their own PLP grows and the learning process becomes increasingly more student-led in response to this. However, no matter where the student is on their self-management journey, they are always central to the process of developing their PLP.

The PLP includes;

- A Student Learning Plan:
 - Goals for Core, Integrated, Experiential, and Discovery Learning;
 - Personalised Learning Project;
- Goals related to habits of mind (learning how to learn, behaviour, attitude);
- Assessment Dashboard – students track their current learning goals on Continuums;
- Reflection and Feedback – student, parent and teacher sections;
- Attendance and Behaviour records;
- Portfolio – artefacts from their learning program;
- Personal Profile – student written personal interests, strengths, and challenges – what works for their learning and what doesn't.

This is reviewed in response to student progress, feedback, and needs.

As students increasingly acquire more knowledge and their self-awareness grows, the student-designed personalised learning pathways increase. When they reach the senior schooling years, the entire learning plan is personalised by the student. We call this learning phase our Big Picture Academy.

OUR ADVISORY APPROACH

Underpinning 'The Silkwood Way' is the innovative **Big Picture Education Advisory approach**. This approach design's the year levels around small learning communities called an **Advisory** of between 16-18 students which are led by an **Advisor**.

Our '**Advisory Approach**' sets us apart from traditional school settings because it;

- It places personalised learning (Our P.L.P) as opposed to the curriculum and its delivery at the centre (or starting point) of teacher planning;
- It places real-world mentors and learning experiences at the forefront of all learning so views the world, not the school campus and its teachers, as the learning environment.
- It focuses on the relationship between the Student and their Advisor on learning as opposed to teaching by;
 - developing a student's self-awareness of how they learn;
 - ensuring the student feels connected to and responsible for their learning plan i.e 'It is my plan, not something I have to do because a teacher has decided'.
 - planning and supporting the student to link their learning goals to the best possible way for them to achieve them.

Learning Advisors

Each student is assigned a dedicated **Learning Advisor** who works directly with the student's and their family to develop a strong understanding of the student's in their care. Their focus is on developing student awareness through the processes of learning and ensuring the student feels connected to and responsible for their Learning Plan.

The Advisor is committed to;

- Developing a deep understanding of how the student learns, behaves, is motivated;
- Understanding their personal life circumstances;
- Supporting the student with developing an understanding of themselves so they are able to self-manage;
- Acting as an advocate for the student in the teacher planning processes with the teaching team;
- Developing processes to empower the student's voice;
- Encouraging a growth mindset;
- Working in partnership with the student, their family, the school and the wider community.

Advisors meet one-on-one regularly with students on the development and management of their **Personal Learning Profile (PLP)**.

One-on-one Advisory time is generally set at the following;

Beginning of term	In the first few weeks of the term the Student, Advisor and Parents meet to support the student to develop their PLP , and to explore their learning goals and interests for the upcoming term.
Throughout the term	Advisors set aside dedicated time throughout the term to meet one-on-one with students to discuss their learning progress. In the High School, in response to the increase in personalised learning time, this is structured into a weekly timetable.

Advisory Groups

Students work in their Advisory Group with their Advisor as much as possible so that they form a strong learning community and the Advisor has the time to get to know the students well.

In most Year levels you will see students working in their Advisory Groups for Discovery, Core and Personalised Learning Time. During these times the Advisor deepens their understanding of individuals and the group by:

- Leading the Advisory group
- Facilitating team building
- Planning Advisory activities with input from the group
- Helping students work on the issues of respect and diversity through activities, discussions, speakers and trips.
- Planning trust-building activities
- Helping the advisory group form an identity.
- Setting up rituals and structures to help students succeed
- Tracking student work and learning
- Enriching the advisory with an array of discovery learning activities
- Giving students a voice and choice in planning and facilitating the advisory
- Striving to build student leadership and self-management skills



THE SILKWOOD CAMPUS

Silkwood has intentionally designed its school site and learning programs to create a sense of smaller learning communities inside the larger school campus. This small by design approach is based on research that suggests **school size** matters when it comes to student learning. Creating a sense of smaller learning communities through the deliberate development of unique spaces inside the larger campus allows a small school feel.

Our small by design approach begins with the Advisory groups and then leads into year levels that are grouped into larger Learning Communities of around 150 students. These Learning Communities make up the Silkwood Campus.

Ideally, students have the same Advisor and team of Teachers who work with them through the year levels of each learning community. Naturally, people do leave, and changes are required from time to time to meet organisational needs. This sort of change is decided upon in the previous year's planning discussions. This then gives the school time to work with the Advisory group on this change.

All students are supported with transitions to new Learning Communities or with any change of Advisor. The Student's **PLP** ensures they have a smooth transition from one Learning Community to another.

Currently, our Learning Communities are designed in the following way;

Silkwood Campus		
Learning Community	Year Levels in the Learning Community	Advisory Groups
Junior Primary	Prep	2 x Advisories
	Year 1	3 x Advisories
	Year 2	3 x Advisories
Primary School	Year 3	3 x Advisories
	Year 4	3 x Advisories
	Year 5	3 x Advisories
Middle School	Year 6	3 x Advisories
	Year 7	3 x Advisories
	Year 8	3 x Advisories
Big Picture Academy	Year 9	2 x Advisories
	Year 10	2 x Advisories
	Year 11	2 x Advisories
	Year 12	1 x Advisory

TECHNOLOGY AND STUDENT LEARNING

Our motto, *‘Technology should always be in the service of learning: at school, it’s a tool’*, keeps the integrity of the intent behind digital use and gives Silkwood a framework to align questions about appropriateness. Digital technologies have three main purposes at Silkwood, all of which are in the service of learning.

- To develop the students’ **digital fluency** in preparation for the 21st-century world.
- To be used as an **administrative tool** with students to record, reflect and support the management of their learning.
- To **enhance and personalise learning** and bring alive curriculum content.

Our three purposes for ICT use in the learning environment

<p>To develop the students’ digital fluency in preparation for the 21st-century world</p>	<p>Silkwood’s learning program is developmentally based: it progresses learning through physical, emotional, and conceptual phases.</p> <p>An important outcome of the learning pathway is that students are led to establishing personal (non-technological) skills before technological skills are introduced. Thus, for example, the students would develop their handwriting before learning how to type. Observation is that the introduction of digital literacy skills into a learning sequence, prior to the development of a personal skill, can lead to poor motivation to develop that skill (with the exception of supported learners, see personalised learning paragraph below).</p> <p>This view of education can be applied to data processing, data retrieval, word processing, graphic design, communication skills and calculating. The consequence of this is that the explicit teaching of specific digital literacy skills is introduced in age-appropriate contexts through the core digital literacy curriculum. This includes the ethical use of digital technologies in the digital world. The goal is for all students to achieve digital fluency, critical skills for the 21st century, by the time they graduate at Silkwood.</p>
<p>Digital technologies for administrative tasks</p>	<p>As well as a student’s digital skill development, digital technologies are also used as an administrative tool by both students and teachers across the school from Prep to Year 12.</p> <p>The school is set-up for teachers and students to be able to access technology for the purposes of Lesson Planning, Class Timetables, Curriculum Continuums, recording a student’s personal learning plan, student assessment and portfolios for student work.</p> <p>These are more accessible, sustainable, and interactive in an electronic format so will be used throughout the school in all Year levels. Teachers assist students with these administrative tasks when appropriate to their learning program.</p>

<p>Digital technologies as a learning enhancer</p>	<p>Digital technologies are also used to enhance a student’s learning and bring alive curriculum content in a meaningful and authentic way in Prep to Year 12.</p> <p>To improve the personalisation and learning opportunities for all students, curriculum content may be delivered in a multi-modal format. For example, a teacher may choose to show students a short video clip on Ancient Rome to enhance their understanding of Ancient Roman times.</p> <p>Alternatively, a supported learner may use assistive technology, such as an iPad, to help them write a short story if they have difficulty writing by hand. This is where digital technology enhances the learning for the student and reiterates the Silkwood motto, <i>Technology should always be in the service of learning: at school, it’s a tool.</i></p>
--	--

A general overview of ICT use for Learning

It is assumed that everything in the Year levels above also occurs in the Year levels below

<p>All Year Levels</p>	<p>Electronic Devices</p>
	<p>All students will have access to devices for the purposes of Learning administration in their classrooms.</p>
	<p>Learning Communications</p>
	<p>Teachers use ICT communication techniques for the digital Learning Management System. This involves communicating class events, news, work assignments, resources needed for learning, achievements, home tasks, timetables, and learning programs. This is done in age-appropriate ways i.e. for children who can’t read, pictorial images would be used.</p>
	<p>Recording and Reflecting of work</p>
	<p>Teachers and students use technology to record and reflect on their learning.</p>
	<p>Teaching aids for stimuli</p> <p>Teachers use ICT, online and electronic technologies to present stimuli to inspire and enhance learning. In all cases, it must be developmentally appropriate and considered to be the most appropriate and empowering way to present the learning content. In Prep to Year 2, because of the students’ developmental stage, the use of oral storytelling, singing, artistic and hands-on learning opportunities are recommended as the first choice of stimuli.</p>

	<p>Learning Support</p> <p>For students who have learning or behavioural difficulties, Assistive Technology would be used across all year levels and it would be set out in the student's ILP, IBP or EAP as a response to their learning needs.</p>
Year 3	Students have their own school-supplied device (currently iPADS) in the classroom and these are used both for administrative purposes and for small aspects of their learning program.
Year 4	Students have a school-supplied computer. The core digital fluency curriculum formally begins at this year level and has a dedicated explicit learning program in the timetable.
Year 5 - onwards	Students have their own BYOD Device. Details BYOD Information Booklet
	Students can use ICT to enhance their learning. It must be age appropriate and fit with the ICT student agreement and digital literacy continuum.

OTHER UNIQUE SILKWOOD FEATURES

A Partnership Approach

The partnership between the Advisor, Student and Families are critical to the student acquiring the most out of their learning adventure at Silkwood. Involving all parties in the development and ongoing progress of a Student's **PLP** is key to developing this. Our Advisory approach is designed to support this partnership. The expectation is that we are working together to support the student.

LTI – Learning Through Internships

At Silkwood, we believe that education is everyone's business. Learning opportunities are everywhere, not just inside the classroom. Learning Through Internship (LTI) is a core structure of our High School Academy. It involves students being placed 1 – 2 days a week in a workplace in an area of their interest. They are placed with a mentor – an expert in that work. Together the student and the mentor develop a project that is of benefit to the workplace and supports the student's learning at school.

Having a mentor gives each student the opportunity within the workplace to learn from an adult with a similar interest. The focus on real work in professional settings gives the students learning context and depth. Through genuine relationships, mentors teach a work ethic and model what it means to be an adult member of our community.

The primary purpose of the LTI is to build knowledge, understanding and skills in the context of authentic work by encouraging the student to follow their passions. Students must learn to organise themselves, motivate themselves and follow the project guidelines that they have created leading to an LTI project exhibition for their new learning each term. By making the learning process real, students are supported in taking responsibility for their own learning.

All students in our High School Academy will develop an LTI with the support of their Advisory teacher, mentor and parents.

LTC – Learning Through Community

As preparation for LTIs in the High School, younger students begin the task of learning about their own communities, through developing community action projects in their Advisories to solve real problems in the world. These projects begin in the junior years within our own school community and then as their skills develop move out into the local community and eventually lead to projects in the High School that are working on global issues.

<p>Prep – Year 2</p>	<p>In the Early Years we begin LTC by developing the capacity in the students;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to understand what a community problem is; • meet real people who do community work through incursions and excursions; • meet real people who are working to solve problems in the world; • meet the workers of the school community to find out how they can help make Silkwood better • how to identify, think about and discuss real problems; • to problem solve <p>In these year levels, each Advisory will work towards developing and managing one school community improvement project a year.</p>
<p>Year 3 - 5</p>	<p>In the Primary School Years, the Advisors continue to build on the student’s capacity to develop and manage community projects that solve real-world challenges.</p> <p>In these year levels, each Advisory will work towards developing and managing one local community improvement project a year.</p>
<p>Year 6 - 8</p>	<p>In the Middle School Years, the Advisors continue to build on the student’s capacity to develop and manage community projects that solve real-world challenges.</p> <p>In these year levels, each Advisory will work towards developing and managing one state or national community improvement project a year.</p>
<p>Year 9 - 12</p>	<p>In the High School Academy, the Advisors continue to build on the student’s capacity to develop and manage community projects that solve real-world challenges.</p> <p>In these year levels, each Advisory will work towards developing and managing one global community improvement project a year.</p>

Traditional Pathways to University

Contrary to popular belief there are many pathways to university. At Silkwood, we offer non-traditional pathways to university.

We **do not** standardise our High School learning program around a standardised assessment regime designed for university entry – this is a traditional High School approach.

At Silkwood, we focus students on their passions and interests and build an individualised learning plan and alternative university pathways through their Graduation Portfolio.

The Graduation Portfolio

Silkwood has a unique High School assessment process called a '**Graduation Portfolio**'. It is an integral part of the learning design offered at Silkwood. It is a compilation of a student's work from Years 10 through to 12, that demonstrates their capacity to explore, research and develop as a learner in their fields of personal interest.

Although it supports a student pathway to a career, further study and university, its purpose is to focus the student on the development of their life-long learning skills, interests, dreams, business skills, personal development and community citizenship.

The Graduation Portfolio includes;

- **A Short Video Introduction** - the student briefly shares their Big Picture story
- **A Senior Thesis Project** – in-depth, original research into a topic of personal interest
- **Learning through Internships Projects** - experiences and products from internships with expert mentors
- **An autobiography** – a literary reflection on the student's evolution as a learner
- **A series of project exhibitions**
- **Collaborative Service Learning Project** – evidence of the development of community engagement and social reasoning skills
- **A Post-School Project** – an exploration of future study and employment pathways and a collection of additional qualifications
- **Their University or Tertiary study pathway** (if the student wants to focus on that)
- **A series of Learning Plans** including reflections, narratives and evidence of wide reading

The portfolio can be used by graduating students to pursue employment, vocational education or university pathways. A number of Australian Universities have included the Graduation Portfolio as an entry method into their courses. For those students who are seeking entry into other universities, an individualised pathway to the University of their choice is built into their learning plan and included as part of their Graduation Portfolio.

Families and students need to understand that the Graduation Portfolio is not offered as an easier assessment pathway than traditional schooling methods. It is a substantive portfolio so will require as much commitment and effort as traditional pathways to complete. The portfolio is designed to deliver a more authentic, engaging and meaningful path to measure a student's success with their learning as all of the work involved has relevance to the student's interests, needs and life.

School Festivals and Significant Transitions

At the end of every school term, Silkwood celebrates the close of the term with a school festival, generally based around the seasons. The celebration of these festivals brings a sense of enrichment to school life by uniting the school community and nurturing the sense of reverence that is often lacking in today's fast-paced modern world.

Term 1	Autumn is celebrated with an Italian Harvest Festival, a cultural celebration incorporating Italian food, games and music.
Term 2	Winter is celebrated with a festival at dusk incorporating markets, night walks and a fire performance.
Term 3	Spring is celebrated with the Silkwood Dreaming Festival – An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's cultural celebration with music, stories, dance and traditional games, featuring 'Yugambah Country' lore.
Term 4	Summer is celebrated with a Water festival with a fun day of traditional summer games

At Silkwood, special age-appropriate ceremonies are held to honour the close of significant learning times and to welcome in the new one for the students. Families are invited to come and share these moments.

Prep	The children take a magical boat journey to the new land of the primary school.
Year 2	The Year 2 children say goodbye to the early learning years with the magic of an Irish ceremony as they are welcomed to Year 3 by their new teacher
Year 6	Primary years are farewelled with a Time and Space Primary School Graduation journey.
Year 12	Graduation ceremony from Silkwood – a celebration of the Silkwood adventure in its entirety and a time of closure and blessings for new beginnings.

Specialist Programs – Music and Italian

The learning of the languages of Music and Italian are an integral part of the learning program up to Year 8. It is known through neuroscience that exposing students to an opportunity to learn the language of music and a Language Other Than English (LOTE) supports the healthy development of young brains. For this reason, Silkwood gives explicit time every week in the students' primary school learning program to learn these languages.

Music

Because of the **integrated learning approach**, music plays an integral part in the delivery of Silkwood's unique education program – adding colour and life throughout the learning program where possible. In the primary school program, all students engage in the wonderful **sounds of song** and music and learn a musical instrument.

In addition, the language of **music is studied as a part of the EXPERIENTIAL learning program**. The specialist music teachers deliver a weekly music theory lesson in the Primary school years followed by experiential music classes in the afternoon program where all students learn to play an instrument in Year 3. This experiential music program then moves into performing arts electives with choirs, orchestras, and small ensembles in the later years.

Guest musicians, performances and excursions are frequently incorporated into the program to bring concepts and experiences to life.

Music can continue to be studied in the High School Program through elective options and in a student's Personalised Learning Plan if it is a student interest choice.

LOTE - Italian

Every Primary School student is taught Italian through the **Language Other than English (LOTE)** program. Learning the language is an important outcome of this program, however, gaining a deeper understanding of the **cultural diversity** of another country in comparison to Australian life is also valued.

This is studied as part of the **EXPERIENTIAL** learning program.

LOTE can continue to be studied in the High School Program through elective options and in a student's Personalised Learning Plan if it is a student interest choice.

Religion and Personal Philosophies

Silkwood School is an inclusive and secular school. This means it is not connected to any specific religious or spiritual faith and supports people to live their lives in ways they believe are best. For this reason, Silkwood does not oppose or support any religion or specific personal philosophies on life or health. Instead, it provides an open ground where different types of faith and philosophy can be discussed and explored openly, freely and respectfully.

So rather than provide one norm or dominant belief by which everything else is compared or which the school focuses on, Silkwood provides an equal playing ground: to play, believe, converse, and think. It is, therefore, openly inclusive and respectful of everyone's beliefs when it is not impacting or replacing societal laws, human rights or harming other people.

We state at Silkwood:

- We value the freedom of a young person to engage democratically with others who have very different worldviews from one's own.
- We value the idea that religious faiths and non-religious worldviews are possibilities that can co-exist within a community.
- We value the freedom of people to be non-religious or religious.
- We value inclusivity and equality.
- We actively seek respect for others.

The School Management Model

Silkwood is an organisation centred on learning and progress. Their focus is to ensure every area of the school embeds this culture. This not only applies to the education, but also to how the school is organised, managed and lead. For this reason, Silkwood has developed its own unique system of management. It brings together three of the most significant research ideas for change in school leadership: Distributed Leadership, Shared Decision Making and Facilitated Leadership. The model is called the Distributed Leadership Model.

OUR ENROLMENT COMMITMENT

Enrolling at Silkwood means a family is choosing **The Silkwood Way** and making a commitment to support their child to become a lifelong learner. Lifelong learning is about curiosity, delight in discovering new ways, or digging deeper into understanding how ‘things’ work - whether it is about yourself, others and our world. Silkwood firmly believes that a love of lifelong learning is the stepping stone to leading a fulfilling life and as such makes no compromises in going after this for our students.

Enrolling in Silkwood also means you are enrolling in an innovative and non-traditional school. Because we have a different focus and outcomes than traditional schools, Silkwood does look and feel different than other schools.

The Silkwood Way offers a boutique learning environment that is uniquely focused on ‘learning’ as opposed to ‘teaching’ and offers student’s authentic learning opportunities as opposed to ‘subject’ delivery.

We offer:

- A small uniquely designed learning campus that supports one-on-one personalised learning opportunities.
- Small class sizes – called **Advisories** of 16 – 18 students.
- A dedicated **Learning Advisor** for each student who works with families to develop a strong understanding of the student’s in their care.
- Core, Foundational and Functional learning programs for curriculum content delivered through the most effective and efficient teaching approaches.
- **Personalised authentic learning pathways** for each student.
- Authentic learning with real-world mentors and coaches.
- A people and innovation focused environment.
- A focus on student self-management.
- A focus on student’s understanding and valuing their learning time.
- A unique High School assessment process called a **‘Graduation Portfolio’** which supports pathways to university but more importantly focuses students on the development of their life-long learning skills, interests, dreams, business skills, personal development and community citizenship.

At Silkwood you will not find:

- Traditional school facilities.
- A program focused on Teachers and teaching.
- Teachers delivering subjects or content in traditional ways.
- High School specialist teachers delivering subject content.
- Traditional subjects sitting on a timetable.
- Timetables that move students around from teacher to teacher for subject delivery.
- A timetable uniformly set-up to cover curriculum content for the purpose of supporting students to pass standardised assessment processes for university entrance.
- Traditional school pathways to university.

To support The Silkwood Way, we ask parents to:

- Provide a home life that supports the school's philosophy of self-management.
- Support your child on their self-management journey.
- Engage in parent education about The Silkwood Way.
- Participate in working with your child's Advisor to design their learning plan;
- Support their child's/teen's Learning Team with their requests.
- Be respectful about school decisions;

We boldly state to students and families that Silkwood is not for everyone!

Students or families who want a teaching, curriculum focused, timetabled programs with standard school facilities should select another school – this is not **The Silkwood Way**.

Silkwood's continual focus on innovation, and the research and development that comes from this makes for a constantly changing and dynamic learning environment. We acknowledge that being part of a community that works on this edge is challenging, and whilst we do our best to minimise the chaos that comes from innovating, it is not always possible to overcome. This is part of who we are and what makes Silkwood so unique... so be prepared to accept that this is part of the course when you join The Silkwood Community.

Naturally, in any community, differences of perspectives do arise from time to time. Respectful consideration of each other's perspectives is sought at these times with a focus on resolution. However, after consideration, the school will make the decisions they feel are best for the student's needs and the organisation. Sometimes, after these decisions are made, a family may decide they are unable to meet their enrolment commitment. If this happens, the school is more than happy to waive the term's notice. Finding the right educational environment for your child is important.

We know and respect that children are capable of leading their own learning, we value young people's learning time, and we want families to join us who believe in what we do!

CONCLUSION

Silkwood prides itself on inspiring students to explore, innovate and thrive in their learning adventure... it is our hope that you are also inspired to learn and grow alongside your child on the Silkwood Learning adventure... it's '**The Silkwood Way**'.