

Recipient Details

Name of organisation or individual: [O] Hale School

Reference Type: School

State or territory: WA

Serial Identification Number: 477536

Responses

Curriculum and assessment

Hale School provides two online programmes for rural students. Hale@home and Hale Future School. H@h provides boys coming to Hale as boarders with an online transition programme. Using virtual classroom technologies the boys get to know their future boarding mates prior to the transition to the city. Critically they are provided with the same computer as the boys here. The focus is on connecting with peers and building their optimism about their capacity to cope with the transition. Hale Future School offers boys and girls across the state access to our virtual classroom and a STEM curriculum for Yr 5 and 6. There is no fee and no future connection to Hale School. Teachers and students have access to a secure cloud site and international collaborations have been most successful; as have all state based projects. Distance Learning can be transformed. Hale school has a model it will share with all who listen.

Rating: 7

Teachers and teaching

It is critical that schools and students are connected. Distance education in the 21st century can actually transform the educational opportunities for remote students but the training and hardware is lacking. Is it possible to connect rural schools with city-based schools in all sectors and build an online community...yes of course. Whether it be sponsorship ventures or Federal funding city based schools can begin to consider expanding their educational footprint to assist rural access to educational equity; the heart of the issue.

Rating: 7

Leaders and leadership

This is important of course, but the classroom teacher in the 35 student remote school must be the focus of that leadership.

Rating: 7

School and Community

Again, important.

Rating: 7

Information and Communication Technology

Critical. A reliable platform which allows for a high quality virtual classroom experience will transform distance education. A generic model, not the cheapest but the best, would ensure a cross-sectorial, even global, community can connect and collaborate.

Rating: 7

Entrepreneurship and schools

I think in rural education this is a most valid option to explore.

Rating: 7

Improving access – enrolments, clusters, distance education and boarding

Distance education has a rich Australian history and spirit of innovation. 21st century technology now exists to transform that access and not focus on delivery to regions but focus on access to quality educational opportunities.

Rating for enrolments: 7

Rating for clusters: 7

Rating for distance education: 7

Rating for boarding: 7

Diversity

Yes it is important. access to quality educational opportunities and innovations in all rural schools will provide an opportunity for all to continue their education access and achieve their potential.

Rating: 7

Transitioning beyond school

Important.

Rating: 7

Additional Comments

Online learning is the new frontier for education certainly; but we must not lose sight of its potential to build the capacity of rural schools to become independent of "educational delivery" systems and now access resources including teachers from anywhere to support their programmes. Trying to achieve this systemically is of course fraught. However, there are innovative schools and programmes who can run pilot models and build online educational communities across the country. I offer my two programmes as innovative, reliable and well regarded early steps in this process. Federal funding of such cross-sectorial initiatives would be a great idea.

Website is here www.haleathome.com.au

In 2011 I was invited to develop an idea I had to ease the transition to boarding experience for boys entering Brine House in Year 7. Hale@home commenced in 2012.

In 2017, 21 boys are participating in Hale@home, representing 100% of the cohort enrolled for 2018. This has been the case for most of the last 4 years. Hale@home enjoys a very good reputation and there are numerous parents who cite the programme as the pivotal reason for enrolling at Hale School. It has a good profile in rural communities. Our learning journey has been significant and we offer a genuine lighthouse programme utilising new technologies to overcome tangible, long-standing student needs.

Future-thinking on Hale@home

It is my belief that the Hale@home model can be developed to revise and enhance entry to boarding options at Hale School as we look to the future. Soaring fees and smaller rural populations compel us to explore a more flexible, innovative entry process for boarding. It is time to explore an initiative where parents have options to consider from the traditional Year 7 entry with "regular" Hale@home programme support; to a model with Year 9 entry with a 3 year online academic support programme. The Hale@home platform is sophisticated and academically and intellectually stimulating; it has enormous potential.

HaleFutureSchool www.halefutureschool.com

HFS has evolved into a respected and valued online programme where predominantly government school upper-primary rural students and teachers participate in a unique virtual context to collaborate with peers across the state. I design and deliver the programme to 11 school groups each week. it is interdisciplinary and project based. There are up to 6 sessions a week taking place during the regular school day.

Its origins are founded in conversations with Hale@home parents expressing regret that the engagement and substance offered by the H@home programme was not evident in their children's school experience. Furthermore, I discovered rural families had to travel great distances for their children to participate in extension programmes for capable and highly capable students. These students will never come to Hale School and currently the programme is free for all schools. The trend of 70% being girls is continuing and lends credence to our vision about sharing our expertise with online learning with the rural community.

Distance learning at Hale school "Learning is leaving the building".