



FACT SHEET

Week beginning 29 October 2007

**Education and Schools
Career Education Lighthouse Schools Project**

*Kate Castine
National Coordinator*

*Broadcast Monday 29 October at 8.30pm
Repeated Friday 2 November at 9am
89.7 PBA FM in Adelaide*

Introduction

During 2004 I was appointed National Coordinator for the Career Education Lighthouse Schools Project Lighthouse Project, an Australian Government initiative intended to recognise good practice and encourage innovation in school career education programs and managed by the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council (APAPDC).

Schools selected for Project funding, Lighthouse Schools, act as champions and demonstrators of good practice in quality career education. A key aspect of the Project is the sharing and dissemination of information and professional learning with other schools, teachers, career advisers and wider networks. Over the three years 104 projects have involved 211 schools in implementing good practice in career education.

Definitions

Career development and career education are terms used with differing meanings. Career development incorporates the whole gamut of development of a person including well being, work, leisure and life-long learning.

Career education

Career education is concerned with the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes through a planned programme of learning experiences in education and training settings which will assist students to make informed decisions about their life, study and/or work options and enable effective participation in working life.

Good practice in Career Education

The Lighthouse Project has encouraged schools to use the Careers Education Quality Framework (found at <http://www.dest.gov.au>) to undertake a school self-assessment on their career education program. As well, the Lighthouse Project considered a list of principles of good practice published by Education Queensland. Good practice Career Education programs:

- **Are led by executive management**
There are significant achievements in schools where the principal or member of leadership leads the implementation of career education.
- **Are mainstream.**
If there is one element which contributes to sustainability of career education it is that it is integral to the school curriculum and not an 'add-on'. The Australian Blueprint for Career

Development provides a framework against which to map curriculum. A further development is where each Key Learning Area has career education as a significant part of the curriculum eg in Science there are links to a range of practicing scientists, who work with students.

- **Are coordinated, monitored and evaluated.**

Schools with career education as an inherent part of the curriculum are those with an identified career coordinator, with a system for monitoring and revisiting proposals, where evaluation of what is implemented occurs and improvements are data-guided, planned and implemented.

- **Are student focused**

To be student focused programs should:

- be based on identified student needs;
- be developmentally appropriate;
- actively involve students;
- cater for a variety of learning styles and ability levels;
- provide programs for students with special needs; and
- provide on-going one-to-one support for students-at- risk of leaving school early.

Brooks High School in Tasmania where students study for 2 days appropriate literacy and numeracy and skills development at school, 2 days at TAFE and then one day in work experience. This has been so successful it is being copied around Tasmania.

- **Use appropriately trained personnel and schools invest in professional learning.**

Personnel providing career counselling in the school should have formal qualifications.

- **Are driven by, and use, ‘real life’ applications, whether through bringing the ‘outside world’ into the school or through real examples by going ‘beyond’ the school.**

The most engaging strategies for students involved activities which had direct links with ‘real-life’, that is, the activities had meaning for the students. Many schools are using Service Learning as the outcomes are almost the same as for Work Experience and it extends the number of possible placements.

- **Include members of the school (particularly parents) and wider community.**

A paradigm change is occurring across Australia in the recognition of the school as quintessential to its community as the key to the economic future and well-being of both the immediate and wider Australian community. Schools work with the Local Community Partnership to form strong links with industry. Students say family are their main advisors on careers, parents say they do not feel competent to advise. Schools organize parent training eg PACTS Brotherhood of St Laurence train trainers to run courses for parents.

- **Incorporate up-to-date, accurate and user-friendly career information mostly through use of modern technology.**

Range of websites and tools on web through the home page of Department of Education, Science and Training, follow prompts through Career and transitions.

- **Use a variety of curriculum resources.**

Again there are many examples including The Real Game Series for all age groups.

Conclusion

Each year The Career Education Lighthouse Project has made a difference for many students both involved directly in the project and indirectly when their schools adopt ideas from the project. As the skills, attributes and knowledge gained through the project are preparation for life this project has contributed significantly to how schools implement good practice career education.