

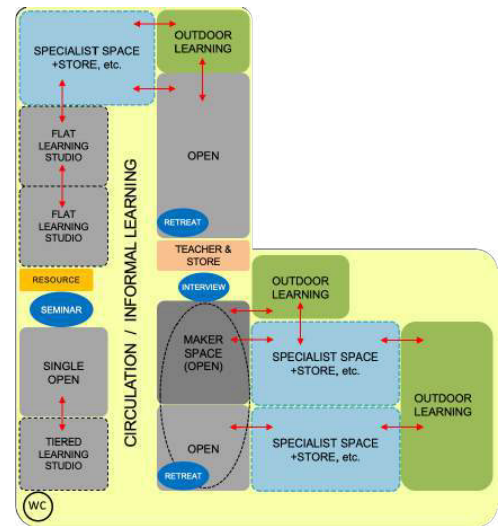
St Anthony of Padua Catholic College Austral NSW | Australia

01

Specifications

Client: Sydney Catholic Schools
 Year: 2015 – 2021
 Location: Austral NSW
 Budget: N/A
 Area: N/A
 Year Levels: P-12
 Students: Approx. 2500 inc. ELC
 Architect: Munns Sly Moore, DWP

Photo 1| Learning Hub Diagram
 Source: NLE



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Overview

In 2015 NLE was appointed as the Educational Space Planner for a new P-12 college in Austral NSW. The project was staged to accommodate a growing cohort of students in a high growth area. It commenced using an existing house on the site to accommodate the admin areas and a new pre-fab building to support the first intake of K-2 students. The early phases were completed by Munns Sly Moore and DWP took over the project in 2019. NLE continued to work alongside the school principal for the duration of the project from master plan onwards. In 2021 NLE finalised its work on the final stage of the design with construction proposed to complete the facility throughout 2022 and 2023. NLE's work on this project included educational space planning (master plan and facilities), professional learning and assistance with a new recruitment strategy to address the desired skill sets for working in the new space types.

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Process

NLE participated in a visioning workshop that included representatives from Sydney Catholic Schools and the local community including teachers, parents and parish. The outcome was the developed of Educational Space Planning Principles for the project. These were later developed into an Educational Specification for the project which remained a live document for some time as the project took shape and staging requirements were finalised. The document was revised and reissued with every new development stage. NLE continued to work with college leadership in the background with the unique opportunity to build a learning community from the ground up. We worked with the college to developed a new way of recruiting new staff that focused on collaborative planning and spatial literacy. This method is still in use by the College today. NLE closed out the project with the production of a Translational Brief that details how the final design responds to the Educational Specification.

Photo 2| Master Plan Diagram
 Stage-Related Source: NLE

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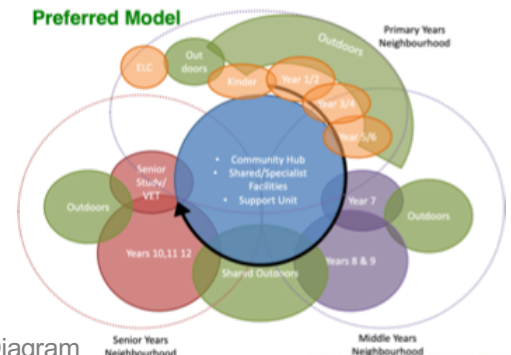
Outcomes

Learning Hubs

The Learning Hub typology is a reconfiguration of traditional classroom areas into one collaborative learning community. This typology gives prime consideration to providing a full suite of space types, both enclosed and open, with appropriate acoustic qualities for the activities taking place within. They also consider how adjacency of spaces can add benefit, particularly connecting maker spaces with general learning and providing fluid indoor/outdoor connectivity. This also allows the teaching team discretion in the amount of self direction and collaboration afforded to the learners. A learning hub typically includes:

- Maker Spaces
- Enclosed tiered or flat floor studio
- Meeting rooms
- Open Learning with diverse settings
- Resource Nodes
- Seminar Rooms
- Staff Workspaces
- Amenities & storage

Preferred Model



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Outcomes

Stage Related Learning

At St Anthony's stage related learning is defined by the following phases:

- Early Learning Pre-Kindergaten
- Foundation Kindergarten – Year 4
- Formation Years 5 - 9
- Senior Years 10-12

These phases are "defined by the developmental stages, curriculum selection and pedagogical strategies and then recognised through facility access and uniform change". The vision is for a P-12 College characterised by continuity and connectedness across all Phases. There is a stage related spatial response in that each of the phases is grouped together in the same learning neighbourhoods or neighbourhoods in close proximity. Each space strikes a balance between familiar and new space types so that students have something new to discover. Learning Neighbourhoods for Years K and 7 are more isolated to help build a strong community at key points of student intake. The learning stages progress vertically through the facility toward senior spaces on the upper level which creates a rite of passage but is also best suited to the increased independence and mobility of students in Years 10-12 with younger students being able to access most facilities at the ground floor level to minimise circulation and travel time.

Recruitment Strategy

NLE worked closely with the leadership team to develop a new method of staff recruitment. As a brand-new facility, there was the unique opportunity to build a recruitment process that would seek out skills and mindsets best aligned with the pedagogical objectives of the school and associated spaces. Following a traditional interview process required by Sydney Catholic Schools, shortlisted applicants were then assessed based on their ability to plan in teams and incorporate spatial literacy in their planning. It was fascinating to discover that those teachers who performed highly in the interviews, did not perform as well in team-based assessment and ultimately were not selected to work at the school.

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Outcomes

Community Engagement

The College aims to be at the heart of the community, engaging users of all ages and backgrounds and encouraging them to flourish through learning, pastoral care and service provision. Inviting community engagement through shared facilities was endorsed as a priority in all consultation workshops. Thoughtful location of public and private transport access can encourage visitors into the gathering spaces such as the piazza, and lead to other shared zones such as the library and well being spaces, Performing Arts spaces and adjacent cafe and COLA.

Well Being Hub

The Well-Being hub will have 5 main components:

- Year Level Coordinators Office
 - Counselling Offices and waiting area
 - Diverse Learning office and learning space
 - Informal Areas for break-out and retreat
 - Meeting Rooms for any of the above services
- Two counsellors will have each a separate office within the Well- Being Hub in which both counselling services and confidential files can be contained. The counselling suite has a discreet waiting area that can be accessed via a separate entrance to minimise the exposure of students who are in distressed or feel stigmatised in seeking support. Counselling appointments for older students will likely be made online.

The associated informal well-being area is intended to be a welcoming, relaxed space and, along with discreet waiting areas and access to year level coordinators and counselling offices, could help to overcome any student reluctance to access services such as this.

The Well Being Hub has adjacencies with the library, Sacred Space and staff workspaces.

