

# STRETCH PROGRAM

*"Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." - John Dewey*



At Cornerstone College we offer a range of enrichment and extension learning opportunities to meet the needs of gifted and talented students.

In line with the goals of the Australian Curriculum, we wish to see all our students become **successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens.**

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.”

*Benjamin Franklin*



## WHAT IS STRETCH?

STRETCH (**ST**udents **R**equiring **E**xtension **T**hrough **CH**allenge) is an innovative and exciting program that: stimulates, extends, enriches and engages young people with high intellectual ability and potential. Unique to Cornerstone College, it is offered to selected students in the form of Year 7/8 STRETCH and Year 9/10 STRETCH.

Students are invited to take part based on meeting **one** or **many** of the following criteria:

- Subject / Home Group Teacher referral.
- Results and recommendations from psychological assessments.
- Strong performance in the MYAT (Middle Years Ability Test).
- Information received from parents.
- Specific information and recommendations for extension from primary schools.
- Strong academic performance during the year at Cornerstone College / school grades / results from external competitions eg University of New South Wales subject competitions.
- Strong performance in NAPLAN or other testing from Primary school.

## HOW DOES STRETCH WORK ON A DAY TO DAY LEVEL?

The STRETCH program (facilitated by the College's Gifted and Talented Coordinator) is presented via an online learning system - edmodo. Edmodo offers a safe, secure and reliable digital platform by which students can interact with their teacher as well as each other. Once granted access to a STRETCH group, students can log in with their own device, home computer, phone or iPad.

Students are encouraged to complete STRETCH work when they have completed all their required class tasks. This can be done discretely without the need to be withdrawn to a separate program.

Every day, new information is added to STRETCH. This could be: interesting articles on current affairs, ethical dilemmas, latest scientific advances, university style lectures, quizzes, brain teasers, inspirational quotes, challenging problems, fascinating photographs, TED talks and much more. This information is sourced from: BBC, TIME magazine, National Geographic, NASA, a range of world universities, Khan Academy and a wide variety of other sources.

**"STRETCH has been an amazing extra-curricular for this year.**

**It has been interesting and challenging. The constant stream of fascinating articles, pictures and interesting facts to look at has been awesome. There was always something to see or do whenever**

**I had a free moment, whether that moment lasted a minute or an hour. The modules were also**

**a great idea and something I thoroughly enjoyed. There was such a variety, so no matter what my interests I found plenty of modules that interested me.**

**It is definitely something I would recommend to others, and I think all would thoroughly enjoy."**

*Rachel Oertel*

In addition to the material posted by the STRETCH coordinator, students are encouraged to add their own daily or weekly posts. These posts could include: "Word of the day", "Quote of the day", "On this day in history", "Inventor of the week", "Brain teaser of the week", "Artist of the week", "Composer of the week", "Architecture - past, present and future." etc.

Students often will access STRETCH material in class, but many also choose to read through / watch / interact with the material at home. Most choose a combination of both.

The advantage of this program is that students from across year levels and across classes can build relationships, and a thinking community is fostered.



"Keeping a teenager with a busy and active mind happily occupied can sometimes be a challenging task for parents. However the STRETCH program has ensured that there are regular weekly activities, along with some longer term goals for the kids to participate in.

The use of the Edmodo system creates an effective sharing environment for the STRETCH kids where they can freely discuss their points of view, this also leads to fostering of friendships that are then built upon during normal class time.

The STRETCH program has turned out to be a fun time not only for our oldest who is a member, but for the whole family, as ideas, fun facts and much more, are openly communicated in the comfort of home ... Finally, if the effort is put in by the kids, the rewards are many... As parents we have been thoroughly impressed by the program and enjoyed watching our child grow in both knowledge and strength of character."

*Mr Wayne Bishop (parent)*



## HOW DOES STRETCH WORK ACROSS THE COURSE OF THE YEAR?

As well as interacting with STRETCH material on a daily basis, several extension modules are available for students to work through. Students can choose modules that interest them, and complete them across the course of the year - entirely self-paced.

An example of some of the modules available to complete:

“Tell me a story” - with a focus on preserving oral histories.

“Enriching maths module” - with a focus on problem solving using materials from the University of Cambridge.

“Imagination module” - with a focus on creative writing.

“Labcoat module” - with a focus on interacting with materials from the Nottingham Trent University, “How Stuff Works” podcasts and Science Daily - information about latest advances in science.

"I have found STRETCH really helpful this year ...in primary school I used to enjoy doing extra-curricular activities but always disliked missing out on class time, meaning I would have to catch up later. But luckily enough, this year we have been using an online way of communication, directed at schools, to catch up and do extra work. This meant no time missing out on lessons or lunches. I have enjoyed doing the 'modules' we have been set..."

*Brooklyn Hassold*

"Virtual tours" - with a focus on taking virtual tours of museums and exhibitions around the world.

"EDITION module" - with a focus on writing creatively with the view to publication in the Cornerstone English KLA publication "EDITION."

"Choose your own adventure module" - where students can design their own module, focussing on their own passions and interests.

"Debating matters module" - with a focus on learning about debating and structuring arguments with well-considered evidence.

"TED talks module" - with a focus on watching talks from a range of gifted young people and using the medium of TED talks as a springboard for learning.

“Photo challenge module” - with a focus on using creative prompts to develop skills in photography, thinking creatively but also improving composition.

This is just a sample of the modules available. New modules are released throughout the school year.

In addition to STRETCH, there is an incredibly wide range of extra-curricular opportunities available to students at Cornerstone College.





*Opportunities for extension and enrichment at Cornerstone College.*

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