

Media Release

19 June 2020

St Paul's College design returns to the spotlight

VMCH's St Paul's College in Balwyn has once again been recognised for its state-of-the-art design, helping to transform the lives of students with complex disabilities.

Late last year, the school's designer ClarkeHopkinsClarke Architects secured a win in Learning Environments Australasia's (LEA) Contemporary Design in Education Awards (Renovation/Modernisation over \$5m').

On June 9, this win took them to the regional awards, where they were up against designers from Australia, South East Asia and the South Pacific.

St Paul's Principal Tim Hemphill – who attended the online awards ceremony – said he wasn't surprised ClarkeHopkinsClarke were honoured with a Commendation. He said shared spaces including staff retreats, a multi-purpose Discovery Centre, and an atmospheric Sensory Room with state-of-the-art interactive LUMES light panels had been hugely beneficial to the school community.

"The design has provided an amazing learning environment for our students and teachers. It facilitates collaborative planning and sharing of skills, knowledge and experience. It also helps our partnerships with mainstream schools for dual enrolment students by creating a warm, inviting environment for meetings and professional learning."

Tim added the design had had a profound impact on the entire school community since they moved from Kew in January 2019.

"We're most proud of the message our new campus sends students and families when they arrive each day: you are highly valued and deserve the best environment possible in which to spend each school day."

Simon Le nepveu, ClarkeHopkinsClarke Education Partner, says the key to St Paul's design success was getting everyone on board at the outset.

"Our planning process was very consultative and allowed us to condense six months of stakeholder engagement into one," he says. "We earned the support of key stakeholders by showing what's possible in a purpose-built environment, and by developing a very detailed program of requirements. Once parents and teachers understood the design process and its potential, their excitement and input grew."

We congratulate ClarkeHopkinsClarke on their Commendation and for working in collaboration with the St Paul's College community to provide the best possible environment for our students to learn and grow.

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About VMCH

Here at VMCH, our services are as diverse as the people we support.

Our values underpin the work we do. As a Catholic not for profit organisation, compassion, respect and inclusion aren't just words to us, they guide us in everything we do.

While we've been around for over a century, we're always moving forward. Always staying true to who we are by supporting people and families to live their best lives; providing a place to call home and spaces to learn and grow.

Our professional and compassionate teams are with you on your life journey; helping you with a wide range of support from early learning and therapy, specialist education, disability services, affordable homes, residential aged care, retirement living and at-home aged care.

