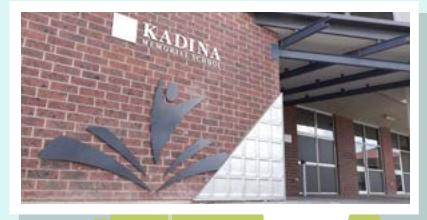


A focus on mentoring

Kadina Memorial School

Kadina Memorial School consists of 1,184 students and over 150 teaching and support staff. The staffing structure consists of sub-school learning teams for early years, primary, middle, senior, and two disability units. 5% of the student population identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders and 9.5% are students with a Negotiated Education Plan.

Kadina Memorial School advocates learning for staff, students and the community. It is a school where all members are expected to identify and develop learning improvement goals. The school commits high levels of resources to support staff development and works collaboratively with partnership schools to build capacity across the local region.



School sector Government
Location Provincial
School type Combined

“ You have the same opportunities for professional learning regardless of how long your tenure is at the school, and I think that’s a really strong point here at Kadina, that leadership really value professional learning and that translates to us really valuing it as well.



Induction approach

New staff are provided with an explanatory document that covers roles and responsibilities, student information and other foundational information.

The document is entitled TEAM:

- T = Technical aspects about working at Kadina Memorial School including policies and procedures, access to teaching resources and Occupational Health Safety & Welfare.
- E = Expectations for learning relating to curriculum delivery and performance as a professional. Also includes whole school agreements around the teaching of literacy and numeracy; school improvement priorities; and measuring the impact of learning.
- A = About students – how to access information to support student learning and wellbeing.
- M = Mentoring, where a nominated mentor is appointed to support ongoing learning and improved performance.

Inductees are supported by the staff learning team, as well as their personal mentor, to engage with this document.

The induction program at Kadina is reviewed annually to ensure its continuing effectiveness.

Mentoring

Induction of beginning teachers, as well as new staff more broadly, is largely based around mentoring. At Kadina, mentoring is defined as: 'A more experienced person supporting another person to grow and learn in their role. The mentoring process is a two-way dialogue that includes modelling, observation and feedback. The purpose of mentoring is to enhance the teaching craft of both the mentor and mentee.'

The principal takes direct responsibility for the mentoring program and ensures that all mentors receive formal training. The training is approximately four hours and delivered by a retired principal in the region. It recognises that mentoring is a complex skill, and there are many personal attributes that need to be developed and refined to maximise the opportunities that surround the mentor/mentee relationship. These include strong communication, listening and reflection skills. Each individual mentor/mentee relationship is formalised, with records kept of professional conversations, observations and goal-setting. The meetings occur weekly in the first term and later continue with one or two meetings per term. This is often extended to a second year at the request of mentees.

All inductees meet with the principal twice per term to monitor their progress and are also assigned to a professional learning community group.

Classroom observation

Mentees are observed in the classroom by their mentors for a single lesson twice per term, but also have the opportunity to observe their mentors. During these observations, mentors model practice for mentees to discuss and reflect on. Observations are supported by use of AITSL's Classroom Practice Continuum. As well as mentees in formal arrangements, any teacher in the school – including casual/relief teachers – may request a classroom observation to focus on a particular problem of practice. They may have an external teacher come in to observe their practice or elect to observe a colleague within the school.

As well as being a professional learning opportunity, the mentoring program allows mentors to engage with the latest educational theories and models by working with recent graduates.



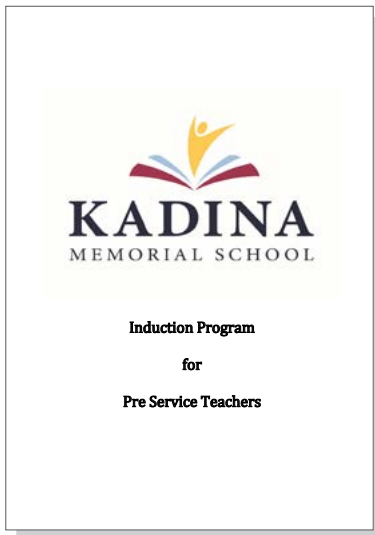
Questions for reflection

1. How can you support your mentors to be more effective?
2. What forms of mentor training are available in your context/education setting?
3. How would you approach reviewing mentoring or induction programs in your education setting to ensure their effectiveness?
4. How might you create something similar to the TEAM document in your education setting?

School documents

TEAM document

Kadina Memorial School developed a document for beginning teachers that details their induction program.



Related resources

Classroom Practice Continuum

Kadina Memorial School uses AITSL's Classroom Practice Continuum to support classroom observations. The Continuum brings the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers to life by articulating what teachers at increasing levels of expertise do in the Professional Practices domain. The Continuum provides a basis for conversations, improvement focused feedback and establishing directions for continued learning and growth.

