



Evaluation of MindMatters at Glastonbury High School

(Fictional Name)

Report on a study from 2001 to 2004

This school was one of fifteen schools that agreed to participate in a case study as part of the evaluation of MindMatters across Australia.

The evaluation was conducted for the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council by the Hunter Institute of Mental Health

Principal Evaluator: Trevor Hazell

Evaluation and Education Consultant: Deborah O'Neill

Data analysis and report: Karen Vincent

Contact:

Address: PO Box 833, Newcastle, NSW, 2300

Phone: 02 4924 6721

Web: www.himh.org.au

Hunter Institute of Mental Health

Evaluation of MindMatters at Glastonbury High

Summary

Glastonbury High is a metropolitan government school (years 7 to 10) set in a semi-rural outer suburb.

At the time MindMatters was identified in 2001, the staff at Glastonbury were concerned about a number of student issues including declining attendance, poor behaviour, alcohol and marijuana use. Staff morale had also been declining. It was decided that the school needed to change in ways that would provide more support to the students and the staff. Certain structural changes including a change from a vertical to a horizontal pastoral care structure were being considered.

Nearly one third of staff attended the two-day MindMatters training. This enabled a team of teachers to develop concrete ideas about how the school could become provide more effective support. Previously considered changes gained momentum and new ideas were also developed and implemented.

While plans to introduce MindMatters curriculum into the year 7 pastoral groups did not eventuate, the teachers in the health faculty did adopt elements of the 'Bullying' and 'Resilience' and 'Loss and Grief' resources. Changes in the statewide curriculum frameworks enabled many elements to become formally embedded into a new curriculum introduced in 2005.

Over the time of the evaluation, informants reported a very positive change in the climate, improvements in behaviour, improvements in attendance. Some positive changes in alcohol use were identified from the student questionnaires.

'Mum said, like, the whole school looks much neater.' Student 2002

'It's quieter, it's sort of a nicer feeling. We get in early with most of those things ... we are holding onto a boy we never thought we could hold onto ...'

'It was a normal school. The change is enormous. You walk down the corridor and you can feel it and see it.' Staff 2003

'Last year, our suspension rate had declined dramatically to 5.7% (42 students). This was less than half the rate of secondary schools.' Newsletter 2003

(MindMatters) was the catalyst. It produced the information that told us that if we made these changes and made better connections with the kids, then we would get better outcomes. Staff 2004

Table of Contents

(If viewing on screen, click on the heading to go straight to the section you want.)

[1. This school's characteristics at the start of the study](#)

[2. How the evaluation was undertaken at this school](#)

[3. Why did this school decide to adopt MindMatters?](#)

[4. What did this school do to introduce MindMatters into the school?](#)

[5. What changes were made during the first two years of implementation?](#)

[6. Sustainability of changes at the fourth visit in 2004](#)

[7. What issues did this school face during implementation?](#)

[8. Issues identified at the fourth visit](#)

[9. What impact did the changes arising out of MindMatters have?](#)

[10. Further views on impacts at the fourth visit](#)

[11. Indicators of change from student questionnaires](#)

[12. Key learnings from Glastonbury](#)

1. This school's characteristics at the start of the evaluation

Overview

Glastonbury High is a government school, located in an outer suburb of a capital city.

The school enrolls approximately 700 students in years 7 to 10. The school is co-educational and has approximately 12% of students who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. There are few students from ethnic backgrounds other than English-speaking. Glastonbury High has an inclusion program which means that it enrolls a higher than normal representation of students with disability.

The school was established in the 1960s and the majority of buildings date from this time. The surrounding country is very scenic and the grounds of the school are extensive, providing large grassed areas for recreation.

Administration

The school administration comprises the principal and three assistant principals.

Educational setting

In the state in which Glastonbury High is located, the traditional organisation of secondary schooling is being challenged by emerging educational theory about the need for greater integration of the skills of each subject area, and the provision of rich tasks for learning across the curriculum.

Turnover

Both staff and student turnover at this school is low. Administrative positions have, in recent years, been filled by acting personnel, as the principal and one of the assistant principals have been seconded on a number of occasions to work in other schools and in the state administration.

Pastoral care arrangements

At the commencement of the study period, the pastoral care program had a vertical structure, incorporating students from all year groups. There were 40 pastoral groups divided into four 'houses' and students remained within the same house and with the same pastoral care teacher throughout their stay at the school. The system was largely used for administrative tasks with insufficient time to address student wellbeing.

Other welfare supports

The school has an 'equity team' which is chaired by one of the assistant principals. The team meets weekly to discuss individual students who are identified in a number of ways as needing to be provided with extra support.

Glastonbury has also benefited from a federally funded initiative called the Managing and Retaining Secondary School Students (MARSSS) Project. Part of this program was a targeted intervention with teachers identifying boys in year 7 and 8 who were involved in bullying.

The school also had an Aboriginal Student Support Program in place.

Links to the community

Youth workers from an external faith-based service visit the school during lunch breaks, provide a free breakfast one morning per week, and provide support for students who visit their service after school hours. This is a community service provided at no cost to the school. These workers, a social worker and a youth minister were represented on school

committees and participated in the school's professional development sessions on relevant topics.

Staff thought that the contribution of these workers to the school was significant. It was their experience that students were more likely to discuss personal issues with a youth worker than with a teacher. At the commencement of the study teachers indicated that they had insufficient time to take on this role. Throughout the implementation of the MindMatters project youth workers retained their important role in the school.

Parent's involvement with the school

The parental involvement at the school was considered by teachers to be typical of secondary schools in that state. Few parents were involved in the P & C but there was still a high level of participation in parent teacher nights.

Generally, comments from parents interviewed in 2001 were positive. One parent/teacher declared:

Kids, or parents who have kids who go here, are generally quite supportive. Those who don't, they have a very poor opinion of the school. (Some parents) seriously considered actually going to another school within the region ... our school does have a very poor reputation without. We don't tend to have the nicest uniforms that, say, another school has, and our uniform tends to be a little more casual, so that automatically sort of sets a target. Parent or Staff? 2001

2. How the evaluation was undertaken at this school

Four school visits were made in August 2001, September 2002, October 2003 and October 2004. At these visits, the school arranged for various members of the school community to be interviewed, and these conversations were audio taped for later analysis. Sustainability of school change is a key focus of analysis for the data from the fourth visit.

The following interviews took place:

| Interviewees | Number interviewed | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | 1 st visit | 2 nd visit | 3 rd visit | 4 th visit |
| Principal | 1 | | 1 | |
| Deputy or Assistant Principal | 1 | | 1 | 1 |
| Senior teacher | | 2 | 1 | |
| Teacher or assistant teacher | 6 | 4 | 6 | 5 |
| Student | 8 | 8 | 7 | 14 |
| Counsellor, social worker etc | | | 1 | |
| Parent | 6 | - | - | |
| Community member | - | | | 1 |
| Other | - | 1 | | |

Over the three years of the evaluation, four telephone interviews were conducted with the assistant principal and these were also taped for later analysis.

All tapes have been transcribed and have been used to prepare the content of this report.

Student questionnaires were administered in November of 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004.

At baseline, the following participation rates were achieved:

| | |
|---------|-----|
| Year 7 | 55% |
| Year 8 | 54% |
| Year 9 | 45% |
| Year 10 | 16% |

Results from first round of data collection are used as points against which results, after three years of implementation of them program, can be compared. These results are presented in section 11 of this report.

When the evaluation was extended from two years to three, the evaluator was asked to attempt to engage teachers in a discussion about their classroom experiences of teaching any of the MindMatters lessons. This was done opportunistically by asking all interviewees whether they had taught any of the MindMatters lessons in recent weeks. If they had they were asked to briefly describe what they had taught and their opinion of the process and outcome of the lesson in question. None of the teachers who were interviewed at the fourth visit at Glastonbury had taught MindMatters lessons in recent times.

How the evaluation was undertaken at this school

3. Why did this school decide to adopt MindMatters?

3.1. Community Context

At the first visit to the school in 2001, both teachers and executive members raised a number of concerns linked to the community setting of the school. The staff and students considered themselves to be a middle-class outer-suburban community where there was considerable community breakdown.

Key concerns raised were: the impact on students of unemployment, de facto relationships and step-parents, single parent families, pressures on parents and substance abuse in the community impact on the student population to a degree that was causing concern.

More and more children are coming from ... not necessarily dysfunctional families ... but families that are not the conventional two adults and children situation. Quite often coming to school where they've had to fend for themselves ... probably arriving at school without any food, probably going through the whole school day without anything to eat ... and then probably finish off in the end of the day with (take-away food) ... they are not going to be able to get the best out of school. Staff 2001

At the first visit, staff asserted that the use of locally grown marijuana was accepted by many students and parents. It was also considered at that time that there was an increase in the impact of drug and alcohol use on student behaviour and the general mood of the school.

I would say that the use of marijuana and the way it intrudes into life at school has become much, much worse over the last five years ... at the start of this year we were having kids being nailed for possession or distribution of a joint or something like that probably two or three times a week. What we find when we dig under those instances, though, it's a bit like lifting a manhole cover and then having to tunnel into ... whatever lies underneath because almost as soon as you start talking to a kid about anything surrounding the issue, you're lifting the lid on a whole lot of other problems to do with home circumstance, relations with other adults and siblings, all sorts of thing ... the kid's own self esteem issues and all the rest. Staff 2001.

These assessments were widely held by a broad range of teaching professionals in the school, community representatives and students themselves. Some of these reflect a rising discourse of concern about change and standards in the community. Teacher comments indicate their increasing anxiety about their role in the creation of a citizenry that is healthy, capable and ready to contribute to the building of the nation.

One staff member described the state of the school community in these terms:

... academic results haven't waned but certain indicators like attendance and truancy and suspensions have become more alarming and would indicate ... we're finding it harder and harder to maintain the standard, if you like, in terms of behaviour particularly. So we're aware there's a tension there ... the mythology and the statistical information both confirm that we're facing a more demanding, more needy clientele. Staff 2001

Many interviewees suggested the need for a change in the school culture, to a more positive and flexible outlook.

How do we effectively ... change the culture? It's a whole cultural change, we're questioning ... absolutely everything we do in our school. Staff 2001

Staff felt that MindMatters might be helpful in changing the school culture. Part of the assistance offered to Glastonbury by MindMatters was that it would provide an authoritative voice of advocacy for cultural change. It was also seen as a practical and enabling tool that would help the move toward a whole school approach in dealing with topical issues such as bullying and harassment.

The significant thing is that MindMatters has forced us to take a wide view and ... look for the interconnectedness ... (before) we were only looking at individual issues. Staff, 2001

3.2. Concerns about the students' wellbeing

Among a number of staff and executive members at Glastonbury, there was a growing concern about general health and wellbeing of students that centred on several pressing issues. The key areas of concern were established as:

- bullying and harassment
- drug and alcohol use and associated problems
- overt mental health problems - suicide and self harm
- truancy and decreasing levels of parental supervision
- inadequate counselling provision
- increase in behavioural problems
- inadequate provision of a health curriculum for students in years 9-10

Concerns about bullying and harassment

At the first visit, several staff and students reported significant and increasing concerns about bullying and harassment. The school and staff were concerned about implications for both the bully and the victim, but also about the stress caused for teachers in dealing with the issue. Students reported that they and their peers did not feel safe at school. They felt threatened by other people and by a perceived lack of control. Teachers were often not available to intervene at times when bullying might occur, such as during the lunch break. Harassment was reported to affect both sexes and to occur both within and between genders.

Students said that most young people were vigilant '*pretty much every day*', being fearful of incidents ranging from low-level intimidation to serious violence. Students felt that the school and staff were aware of the bullying problem and tried to be supportive and acknowledged the existence of a reporting system and mediation but both teachers and students perceived the system in place in 2001 to be ineffective.

The assistant principal reported that some students used the system to falsify reports and cause trouble for others, a sophisticated form of harassment. Students reported that while teachers tried to help when incidents were reported, the school was not doing enough to prevent bullying and harassment.

They've got nothing in place to prevent it. They're just like ... the possibility is open that something could happen. (They say things like ...:) 'if something happens that's very sad, come and talk to us ... we'll tell you that you shouldn't listen to those people'. Student 2001

Staff expressed concern that the issue of bullying and harassment was, in their opinion, linked with truancy. For example, the assistant principal reported that some younger girls had developed poor self-esteem and an unrealistic body-image after being subjected to bullying

about weight and had avoided coming to school as a result. Students also reported a possible link between bullying and harassment and substance use, with many incidents of harassment revolving around this issue and known substance users being more likely to be involved.

Drugs and Alcohol

At the time of the first visit, the school was participating in a drug and alcohol research program with other agencies. Staff had also attended some professional development activities about the issue.

We also became more aware of drugs in the school this year ... having been to the forum on drugs at the beginning of the year ... it became apparent that kids use drugs as pain-killers. What do we do about the pain? Staff 2001

Drugs and alcohol were considered by students, staff and parents to be a significant issue. Substance use impacts upon the school even if the use occurs off-site, through negative effects on student behaviour, truancy and learning.

There's a lot of underage drinking, we know that. Staff often make comments on a Monday, how difficult Mondays are, because there's either a high absentee rate or the kids just aren't switched on. They're recovering ... from activities on the weekend. Staff 2001

Staff and parents reported an increase, over recent years, in the frequency of drug and alcohol related problems, although many felt that this was no more pronounced than at any other school in the area. In particular, marijuana use among students and their families was thought to have increased over the previous five years and there were suggestions that plants were grown locally. Parental tolerance or provision of drugs and the resultant truancy was thought to be an issue for some individuals.

Both staff and students also noted that young people having difficulties with substance abuse often had many other issues as well, such as problems with self-esteem, peer relationships, or family difficulties. Students linked substance use with bullying and harassment, reporting that the same people were often involved. Staff reported that drug linked negative behaviours were now being seen in younger students as well as in the senior years.

Students' perception at the first visit was that the school was not adequately addressing this issue, although students acknowledged it was difficult to do so. They felt that many young people who use drugs and alcohol are not interested in changing their behaviour and gain peer acceptance from substance use. Such students come to school not for education, but to socialise and to discuss or facilitate their drug use, so they are disruptive to other students. When asked about the extent of the problem, students reported that it involved a 'noticeable proportion' of young people at their school.

The school's disciplinary policy on substance use is grounded in departmental policy but was described by a staff member at the first visit as being very 'black and white', with a strong focus on punitive action and suspension. The assistant principal felt that as well as disciplinary action the school needed a greater focus on harm minimisation and student support.

We realised that a one-off push on drug education in the school was not sufficient ... we need a much wider framework. Staff 2001

Students also reported that the punitive approach was not effective in encouraging change among those who engage in substance abuse.

And a lot of the time like ... those people ... their parents don't really care if they get suspended, so it's just like having a holiday off school. So it's not really a punishment. Student 2001

Overt mental health concerns, suicide and self-harm

At the first visit, staff reported that the school did have some incidents of suicidal behaviour and self-harm among students and their families. Some students were known to be at risk through experiences of depression or previous suicidal behaviour. The school's critical incident policy did include a framework for responding to suicidal behaviour and a list of helpful contacts in the community.

Truancy and decreasing levels of parental supervision

The school reported a high rate of truancy which appeared to affect all age groups. In some year cohorts there were significant gender differences. An example is provided in the year 10, 2001 cohort which displayed a high truancy rate in both boys and girls. Boys were likely to have longer periods of truancy and some have slipped to complete non-attendance.

Some staff speculated about the causes, suggesting substance abuse by students or their families, lack of parental concern about truancy, family problems or poor connection to the school.

In some cases we're losing parental support. We say 'kids are doing this' and parents are writing notes to say 'that's OK'. Or kids are truanting and parents are covering up for them or parents are giving the kids drugs, smokes, whatever. You sometimes ring a parent up ... and the kid might not have come home last night, and we're talking year 7's and 8's which is scary. Staff 2001

Inadequate counselling provision

Many staff and students expressed concern at the difficulty in providing students with access to counselling.

The counselling demands ... are just escalating ... the mental health area is really worrying and we need to do something about it. Staff 2001

They saw that inadequate access to counselling and support staff to address the social problems of students was one of the key issues to be addressed. At the first visit the school had a part-time counsellor available two days a week, which increased to three days per week a few months later. Staff noted the absence of a school-based social worker or guidance officer, and there was a perception that the part-time counsellor role contributed to a lack of continuity and connection with the rest of the school.

Importantly, there were significant links to community providers of support in this area of need. Youth workers from an external faith based service visited the school during lunch breaks and some students visited their service after school hours. This community service was provided at no cost to the school. The workers, a social worker and a youth minister were represented on school committees and participated in the school's professional development sessions, on relevant topics.

While staff did not actually appear to consider this service when assessing the school's formal level of counselling allocation, they certainly considered the youth worker's contribution to the school as significant. Several staff asserted that students were more likely to discuss personal issues with a youth worker than a teacher. At the commencement of the evaluation, teachers indicated that they felt that they had insufficient time to take on roles, such as counselling in addition, in addition to their perceived role as a 'normal' teacher or instructor in a particular curriculum area.

Increase in behavioural problems

In 2001, there had been a steady rise in behaviour problems leading to an increase in suspensions. The mood of the teachers is well expressed by one teacher:

We're fairly middle classed and we have got middle class attitudes as teachers. We get the full range coming into the school and a lot of us just flounder and you start looking and you think why isn't that child sitting down doing the right thing. And then you find out a little bit more about that child and you can understand why, but you still have to do the thing for the whole class too. So the more we know and the more we know when to go for it, and when to back off so it's better for us.

This year we have had more problems with our year 7s, they've taken a lot of our time. When normally you're dealing with maybe a few problems in year 10, or a couple in year 9, or maybe one in year 8. But we've got problems with a handful of kids in year 7. And these kids have got, you know, violent manners. They don't know how to socially adjust in class, so (there's) a lot of antisocial behaviour. I think also one of the assistant principals said something about 'well, you need to recognise whether he's on drugs still'. I mean, you know, and that for me, I haven't had to deal with that within the classroom situation. This kid is reacting because he's taking drugs out of school all the time. And that really hit me. Staff 2001

One staff member noted that the common knowledge of rising suspension rates had a negative impact on the image of the school. The teacher perceived a significant loss of reputation of the school attributable to the knowledge of this rise in suspension rates. She described this as impacting on people in education circles, on students within the school and also within the broader community.

Inadequate provision of a health curriculum for students in years 9-10

At the same time as discussions were being held in the school as to how the issues noted above could be addressed (including revising the behaviour management and pastoral care structure), the staff were engaged in a debate about the introduction of compulsory health subject in years 9 and 10.

We are concerned that health and phys ed. is not compulsory throughout the school ... kids that don't select it as an option in (year) 9, and (year) 10 do not have any health-type education in those senior years. I suspect we can't accommodate that properly next year, but we are mindful of it. Staff 2001

The statement also indicates an awareness of the timetabling, curriculum, staffing and funding issues necessarily arising out of the anticipated curriculum change.

3.3. Organisational concerns

A number of organisational stresses were identifiable at the time of the first visit. They included a dysfunctional behaviour management structure (as mentioned above) with overworked assistant principals and an over-reliance on senior management for leadership and discipline.

One teacher explained her view of the causes of this problem:

... previously ... this school had had an AP (assistant principal) who was a key mover and shaker. He did everything, and people relied on him totally to do everything. He transferred because of a promotion and suddenly there was for two years a gap that was so big. He would have admitted it himself, his biggest fault was that he did everything, rather than delegate. And because of that there was a feeling within the school that discipline had broken down, that there was not sufficient communication and a whole lot of difficulties existed in the school, which altered the way in which the educational program was taking place. Staff 2002

In particular, the workload of the assistant principals was overloaded because of an over-reliance on these individuals to effectively manage behavioural difficulties.

... they (the APs) had so many issues that most of them didn't get addressed. It was the ones that were significant now, that had to be sorted out now, that were done. Staff 2002

Interviews also revealed a level of change fatigue due to a number of factors including a recent history of instability in the occupancy of the principal and assistant principal positions and the inclusion of increasing numbers of students with disabilities. Some staff expressed cynicism about the capacity of the school to manage change effectively. This manifested itself in the form of conflict for some staff between current leadership styles and directions compared to previous management approaches.

In addition, there were several voices of concern about poor or outdated pedagogical practice. As one teacher noted:

For some people change is really difficult and the perception is that there is going to be change and it may not necessarily be to their advantage. Either it might affect their (the teacher's) position of power or it might ... simply just make them have to modify the way that they deliver the curriculum. And that can be confronting. Staff 2001

In response to these multiple concerns, and with an awareness of both the challenge of and the need for change, the school determined to significantly alter pastoral structures and management structures simultaneously.

Preparation for change to pastoral care structures

Prior to the adoption of MindMatters, there had been a growing awareness at Glastonbury of a pressing need to change the mood and culture. One of the key changes being proposed was the re-structuring of pastoral care from a vertical to a horizontal system. This was to be supported by changes in the administration structures. Staff reported that this change arose from staff members who had seen differences in the pastoral care structures of other schools and their own internal assessments.

Staff varied significantly in their degree of support for this change. Following staff discussion, the decision to adopt the change was taken in a secret ballot which revealed 'significant support'. As awareness of the MindMatters program spread across the staff there was a growing awareness that the change to a horizontal pastoral system would better accommodate the implementation of MindMatters across the whole school.

The complexity of the issue of change management was amplified as the proposed changes to pastoral care were to be implemented along with changes in the roles of certain staff, particularly the year coordinators and executive members in relation to behaviour management and discipline.

While the preparation for change to management structures and attendant discipline and leadership issues were addressed as an entire staff, and a high degree of consensus about the change plans was reached, there were still a significant number of dissenting voices.

Staff have agreed that we will change from vertical pastoral groups and there will be a year supervisor in a management role for each of the four years with an assistant, and an increased pastoral group time. Now, we need to work the details of all this yet but what we're hoping is to really beef up our year group programs. So that is a significant change. Staff 2001

Staff wellbeing

At the time of the first visit in 2001, it was clear that there was some tension between general staff members and those in executive positions. In addition, there was concern about the level of the demand on teachers to take on more roles apart from instruction in curriculum. As one teacher bluntly stated:

I'm not too pleased about the ... top brass and some of their sort of decisions. Yeah. There's a bit going on between the top end and the rest of us. We're a little bit tired of having to do everything and anything, and all this stuff that comes down from the department and 'you've got to deal with this' ... and people say 'well whatever happened to us just teaching ... that thing we're supposedly trained for'. Staff 2001

Several staff expressed similar concerns about how change had been poorly managed in their past teaching experience, and expressed that change was often driven by forces outside the school and not by student or teacher need. Concerns regarding the seemingly whimsical and short-lived funding of, and emphasis on, particular initiatives were also raised.

While bullying and harassment are most often considered in terms of impact on students, the staff commented that they were also significantly impacted by the presence of a bullying culture in the school. As one teacher viewed it in 2001, bullying was:

... the primary cause of friction between teachers and students. Staff when

The tension between those who seek change and those who resist was evident early in attempts to address bullying and teasing that did not work as hoped.

The sceptics on the staff looked at what we were doing and basically, we confirmed to them that we were do-gooders not doing good. Staff 2001

Another teacher reported feeling harassed by students at the canteen. As she stated:

... staff are in ... totally unexpected situations and you need support from the top. Staff 2001

Two other issues reported by staff as affecting their health and wellbeing were time constraints and workload, with most teachers considering that their workload continually increased.

On a more positive note, staff reported a favourable impact from the opportunity to undertake professional development. The comments that follow indicate that the staff were actually making use of the time in the MindMatters training to build their own connections with colleagues.

It was just the time to be able to interact with colleagues in an environment that was safe and secure. Staff 2001.

They also made a number of comments about the personal and professional affirmation received from the MindMatters trainers. It appeared that staff were rarely affirmed in this way and that such recognition was very empowering.

We came away individually fulfilled ... there was a core element there of saying our work is valuable and our work is valued and that what we're trying to do for the children is a rewarding and worthwhile thing. Staff 2001

As one teacher noted, opportunities for any type of community building and time for collegiality occurred, formally, only two or three times a year. These comments indicated a perception that there was a need to address the issue of staff wellbeing.

3.4. Early expectations of what MindMatters could offer

The school executive member who was a significant driver of the early implementation of MindMatters, perceived that MindMatters offered a unified framework within which to address a number of issues.

We've had a series of issues: drugs, sex, harassment, bullying. Up until now we've attempted to work on an issue in isolation. MindMatters is going to be the umbrella. Staff 2001

This umbrella analogy enabled the staff of Glastonbury to visualise and augment the school's capacity to integrate the school's MindMatters activities with elements from other programs.

I see MindMatters as a series of strategies to generate a sense of self-worth and resilience in young people. Things like the elements of RAP that we might be using, I see simply as one of the tools ... that complements MindMatters. Staff 2001

Interviewees were asked at the first visit what outcomes they would hope to see as a result of the school's implementation of MindMatters. The range of responses included:

- a unified health curriculum which includes mental health issues (preferably across years 7 to 10) to give students strategies to deal with mental health issues
- improved resilience, independence and stress management among students
- a broad awareness within the school of risk factors which affect mental health
- greater openness among teachers and students regarding emotional and mental health issues, including drugs, depression, sexual promiscuity, family dysfunction
- greater knowledge among teachers about how to recognise and respond to mental health problems, including referral options
- an environment in which students are more aware of mental health issues and offered greater peer support for others
- reduction in bullying, substance use and other troubling behaviour among students
- stronger links with parents and the community, providing support for students

4. What did this school do to introduce MindMatters into the school?

4.1. Process of adoption

Initial decision to adopt

MindMatters was adopted at Glastonbury as a program that provided an 'umbrella' or framework for all it was doing towards promoting wellbeing. This included the incorporation of: drug and alcohol education; sex education; and inclusion of students with particular problems into a whole person and whole of school structure.

We've done drug education and we've done health ed and we've tried to slot in health into the curriculum, hopelessly, really. Because there hasn't been a unified system. Staff 2001

Staff who were involved in the 'equity team' which was principally concerned about these issues, attended a drug education workshop conducted by Michael Carr-Gregg. The team was meeting weekly and conversing using the language of resilience and wellbeing that they took on at the training. Their goals were to plan for better and more equitable outcomes for all students. It was this team which took the recommendation that the school should adopt MindMatters to the principal.

The principal at the time had been aware of MindMatters previously while acting in a district role. He supported the recommendation. Subsequently the school invested quite a deal of resources in sending around one third of staff to two-day MindMatters training.

The core team

The school established a core team of sixteen members from those who had attended the professional development training. At the first visit, the group had planned to add a community representative, parent representative and two student representatives.

The core team was meeting once per fortnight and had sub-teams responsible for consultation with parents and consultation with students.

At a follow up interview some months later a core of 8 to 10 members was still meeting once per fortnight. There was, however, a significant overlap of membership of this group with those on the equity team.

The assistant principal was the core team's leader and was the main staff member driving the implementation of MindMatters in the school. This person also directed the school's existing equity team.

Professional Development

Upon deciding to adopt the MindMatters program, the school sent eighteen staff members and associates to the MindMatters professional development sessions. More staff were interested than the school could actually afford to fund. The equity team, headed by the assistant principal chose the participants, aiming for a range of staff across faculties and a roughly equal number of male and female staff.

In preparation for the session, participants individually completed the whole school audit from the MindMatters kit.

The professional development session provided an opportunity for staff to mix outside the school, enhanced collegiality, and delivered valuable information for participants.

What did this school do to introduce MindMatters into the school?

The role plays and the involvement ... the time to be able to interact with colleagues in an environment that is safe and secure and dealing with issues that you were all familiar with ... it was very rewarding. Staff 2001

Participants spoke positively of their general impressions of the professional development sessions:

It was very personally rewarding and fulfilling and made you aware of what you are trying to do as a teacher. Staff 2001

Very affirming about what you want for kids, it affirmed all the things that we think kids need. Staff 2001

There was a core element there of saying that our work is valuable ... that what we're trying to do for children is a rewarding and worthwhile thing. Staff 2001

In addition, a number commented on the professional delivery of the session and the appropriate mix of content and activities.

Oh it was really good. It was really professionally done. There was a good mix of written stuff we did, in groups and individually, and also practical things. I think everyone got a lot out of it. Staff 2001

Overall, the professional development enhanced staff members' confidence in their ability to address mental health issues in the school.

I'm a parent, I've been a teacher for a few years, but I still didn't quite know how to approach things. It gave me some of the steps I needed ... I can confidently challenge things, look at kids, look at behaviour, and think about where to go next. Staff 2001

By the end of the session, participants had identified a number of priority areas for their school. They also reported that it was interesting to see the approach taken by groups from other schools. Interviewees reported that while the MindMatters professional development was very motivating, they felt daunted after returning to the school.

On their return to Glastonbury, a session of one and a half hours about MindMatters was conducted with the whole staff.

The focus on professional development continued into 2002.

We have five more staff doing three days of training on MindMatters so that will give us well over 20 staff who have been through the training, and still under the framework of MindMatters we've got another five staff who are doing two day training on drug education and ... on sexual health. So we are getting a lot of PD done. Staff 2002

Altogether, this represents a significant investment in training to support anticipated change with roughly one third sharing the training and identified personal and collegial development that arose in that context.

4.2. Early Planning

Following this training, staff took time out to set priorities for enhancing wellbeing of the school community which included responding to the issues discussed more fully in section three. The main points in their early plans were:

- increasing resources for student counselling
- addressing the issue of bullying and making school a safer place
- enhancing pastoral care of students by changing the pastoral group structure to a horizontal structure and introduction of year supervisors
- introducing compulsory health across the years and incorporating MindMatters resources into this
- increasing a focus on staff wellbeing

As can be seen, issues which had been previously discussed within the school were adopted as specific goals for their MindMatters strategic plan.

Increasing resources for student counselling

It was decided early on that the group would lobby for increased resources for student counselling. This issue was raised by staff with some passion in this early phase and was acknowledged by the school executive.

Responding to bullying and harassment

The school made an early attempt to address the issue at school assemblies, using role-plays to raise awareness and to encourage everyone in the school community to challenge incidents of harassment. Questionnaires were given to students to assess the extent of the problem and the school also set up an e-mail system for reporting bullying. However, some students reacted to the material in a joking manner and misused the reporting system by making hoax reports. Staff had mixed reactions, with many being disappointed with this reaction and becoming sceptical about the new initiatives, including MindMatters.

In analysing this outcome at the first visit, the assistant principal felt that further consideration should have been given before this approach was taken. In particular, he felt that it had been counter-productive to address bullying in isolation, without placing it into the context of resilience and self-worth across the whole school, as outlined in MindMatters and the Health Promoting Schools framework.

Enhancing pastoral care and incorporating MindMatters activities into the structure

The staff had agreed to the restructure of the pastoral care structure and the increase of time allocation to this area. While there was more support than criticism for this initiative, there were a number of dissenting voices. The simultaneous shift to a structure that empowered the year supervisor to deal consistently and regularly with discipline matters appeared to have enhanced the acceptance of this new system.

As an adjunct to, or alternative strategy to formal insertion of MindMatters into the health curriculum, the school planned to integrate selected MindMatters activities into the revised pastoral care program, allowing for some material to be covered in all years. The MindMatters core team planned to facilitate this by developing a program for use by the pastoral care teachers.

Regarding the incorporation of MindMatters activities into the structure, teachers (even some in the MindMatters and equity teams) raised the issue of the additional time such activities and their preparation would consume. One teacher reported that the curriculum materials were provided and that access to the internet to get the material was available but as he put it:

What did this school do to introduce MindMatters into the school?

We've had this extra half hour, we've got to fill it in ... we'll fill it in somehow and we'll use MindMatters stuff. But it needed hours and hours of working through. It was completely inappropriate and sort of games, or team buddy thing, you know ... probably work, but gee - it needs a lot of work. You can't just drop it in - it's impossible. Pastoral care - there's no more than there was before as far as that goes. It just needs a lot of time, a lot of effort to implement it. Staff 2001

Introduction of compulsory health

Health and physical education was not a compulsory subject in years 9 and 10 at Glastonbury. It was suggested that it could take some time to change this. A proposal to make health compulsory had been previously discussed at a whole staff meeting but had been defeated. The MindMatters team were determined to push the issue further.

At the time of the first visit, parts of the curriculum resources had just begun to be used in the year 7 and 8 health and physical education (HPE) curriculum. One teacher had used some of the 'Loss and Grief' material and the 'Bullying and Harassment' resources with her students prior to the first visit and received positive comments from them. Another staff member who worked with teachers in various classrooms noted that elements of the MindMatters principles were being applied.

I work with some of the teachers who are on the MindMatters team and I can see things that they're doing in the classroom ... letting the students know (that) ... we care and we're interested. Show some interest and then the student will actually show you some interest ... then he will listen to you, he will cooperate in class. Staff 2001

Increasing focus on staff wellbeing

Although this issue was raised as a concern, it is not possible to tell from the early interviews how this was to be addressed in any practical way by fellow staff or the executive.

The initial decision to support the staff on the equity team by providing resources for 18 staff members to attend the MindMatters training, clearly had a positive impact on those who attended (see above). However, the challenge of delivering the MindMatters material in pastoral groups appeared to actually be causing some anxiety for staff. This was acknowledged by the executive who were conscious of trying to avoid any fragmentation of MindMatters, while not pressuring teachers too much towards change.

We want to avoid prescriptive (material) for pastoral group teachers who see that it's important, but are uncomfortable dealing with it. Staff 2001

5. What changes were made during the period of implementation

5.1. Efforts to address school policies and structures

Pastoral care changes

In 2001 staff explained plans for a revised pastoral care structure from a house-based vertical structure to a year-based horizontal structure. Each year was to be divided into homerooms, each with a home room teacher. A year coordinator and an assistant coordinator were to be appointed to coordinate pastoral care across the year. Year supervisors were to meet weekly with the assistant principals and principal, with a clear agenda regarding student welfare. This structure was also the basis for a revised behavioural management strategy, based on a well-defined tiered level of teacher responses and student consequences.

The aims of these changes were: to provide for an extended pastoral care period, to allow for implementation of some MindMatters activities, to increase students' connection to their peers and to enhance connection with the pastoral teacher.

This change was implemented in 2002 and while the change had been considered earlier, the school's participation in MindMatters in 2001 was acknowledged by staff at Glastonbury as having added impetus to the adoption of the proposal.

As discussed earlier in this report the introduction of new pastoral care changes were somewhat controversial within the school community and the interviews drew mixed reactions from both staff and students. At the first follow-up visit in 2002, however, the overall effect of the changes were seen by most staff as positive:

It makes the kids feel that they're a part of something and they belong to a group ... all that connectedness sort of stuff. Staff 2002

However, the plan to use MindMatters curriculum units in the pastoral period did not fully eventuate. The proposed curriculum activities represented a significant challenge to some teachers who perceived a certain level of pedagogical challenge in delivering in a method other than their own usual style. Some teachers expressed a lack of confidence in dealing with matters that might arise from such lesson material.

I think a lot of staff feel inadequate in this area. It is very new ground ... and to get into the MindMatters stuff you've got to develop a very good rapport with those students. Staff 2002

Also, there were still informants who thought there had been some merit in the old vertical structure.

I was going to say there are pros and cons with it like some people might want to be with people that are older than and get to know the different years, but some people just want to be with their year - it's easier to be around all the people that are in the same situation as you are but it depends. Student 2003

Nevertheless, students' views of the change in pastoral group structure was largely very positive.

I think it's good to make all-year pastoral groups because I noticed in the last year really the whole of year 10 have become really close and everybody knows everybody now - whereas you never knew a lot of people - so you get to know all the people. Student 2003

What changes were made during the period of implementation

I think it's sort of good cause you've got your friends in your pastoral group, so you like - it's not something that you have to come to and work straight away like.
Student 2003

One year 10 student, who perhaps regretted missing the opportunity to be in the top level of a vertically streamed system, saw fewer advantages in this pastoral group change.

Behavioural management changes

In 2002, the creation of the year supervisor position provided a level of middle management between pastoral care teachers and assistant principals. The new structure was seen by many to have improved connectedness within year teams of teachers and to have taken some pressure off the assistant principals. Discipline procedures were also revised in line with this new structure and most staff considered this had been beneficial.

At the second visit, there had been some changes in the disciplinary procedures, which appeared to be beneficial. The school had introduced and enforced new, structured procedures for discipline, making use of the new position of the year supervisors. Discipline was managed via a consistently implemented tiered level of consequences: isolation within the classroom, relocation to another classroom, isolation within an established withdrawal room, or formal detention.

Disciplinary issues appeared to be addressed and resolved at earlier stages through intervention by the classroom teacher and if necessary the year supervisor. Only serious breaches of discipline were now referred to the assistant principals, a significant difference from the former dysfunctional system. While the system was still being refined, both students and staff reported that the situation had improved and that disciplinary issues were being dealt with more effectively.

These changes seemed to be well embedded and appeared to be gathering support from the majority of the staff.

Introduction of 'peer leaders' program

In 2002, a new initiative by members of the equity team who attended the MindMatters training, was the introduction of a comprehensive 'peer leaders' program that included lunchtime activities run for marginalised students by year 10 leaders on a weekly basis.

A few of us could see that there was a real need for some social interaction for the kids in the school. Too many kids are kind of hanging off the end, so to speak, on the fringe, marginalised, having nothing to do at lunch times and no opportunities for social interaction at all apart from the classrooms where they were probably even a wee bit unobtrusive there as well, because they were that kind of child. Staff 2002

Around thirty year 9 students volunteered for the program and were trained in third term of 2002. The program began its first year of operation in 2003.

Teachers and students regarded the program as very successful. In reflecting on their role as someone who trained the peer leaders, one staff member remarked:

What changes were made during the period of implementation

We have two groups of the peer leaders ... about 15 in each group, a nice small group. We talk about a whole range of things: communication, mediation, feelings (how to express them) all the counselling issues. We talk about how things are affecting them as well because if they are to help others then they have to deal with themselves. So that's been enormously successful in the school. And I think the school this year has changed a lot for a lot of reasons. A lot of input from a lot of people but it's partly to do with the peer leaders. Staff 2003

The continuation of this initiative is, however, vulnerable due to being dependent on the voluntary support of staff during their lunch period and the initiative being driven by just one or two apparently committed staff.

Efforts to more openly acknowledge and support staff

In 2003 the school determined to increasingly focus on staff health and welfare, an idea which was generated during 2002 in the climate of school change and health promotion. Many of the teachers involved in the implementation of MindMatters were engaged in considering the adoption of initiatives to enhance staff wellbeing.

In 2002 the executive decided to undertake to tour the school once per week, visiting classrooms and other sites in the hope that it would increase their connection with both students and teachers. One teacher was highly critical of this initiative and its implementation claiming that the visits were inconsequential and sometimes were plainly disruptive, as they appeared to have no genuine purpose.

By 2003, there were some clear initiatives established to begin to create a community that invested some energy in 'care' for each other in addition to sharing the burden of professional responsibility. Some staff reported that they had organised to support their peers by putting five dollars in to a fund to send flowers and cards to people at times of celebration, thanks, farewell or condolence.

School uniform policy

The school increased its commitment to a school uniform policy, enforcing the policy consistently and introducing a broader range of uniform options. General consensus among staff and students was that this had been very positive for the school's image, and for the students themselves who expressed and showed a greater sense of self-pride and attachment to the school. This change was noted and supported by parents both financially and verbally.

Drug and alcohol policy

By 2002 the state's education department had released a new policy regarding the management of drug and alcohol issues in schools. This policy was said to be consistent with the approach taken in MindMatters, with a focus on resilience, prevention and harm minimisation. The assistant principal indicated that the school would redevelop its own policy, taking into account the mandatory procedures outlined in the new state policy.

Change to school timetable

One significant change to the timetable, that drew little comment from staff members but was the first significant change reported by students in the 2003 interviews, was a change to the length of periods. The new model is: five one hour periods: two in the morning with a longer 30 minute break for recess; two further periods before the lunch break of 40 minutes; then just one period after the lunch break.

5.2. Efforts to change curriculum

MindMatters curriculum resources in pastoral groups

As mentioned in 4.2, the MindMatters team developed a program in which certain of the curriculum resources were to be used in the new pastoral care system by the homeroom teachers. It was also mentioned that some of the teachers were experiencing discomfort with the type of pedagogy that certain of the activities required.

The MindMatters team has been meeting on a fortnightly basis and one of the things that will happen with the pastoral groups next year is they will get an extended 25 mins every Monday and the MindMatters team has taken on board to prepare for all PG teachers a program based squarely on issues in MindMatters and we are definitely putting together very systematic program to try and address many of these issues. Staff 2001

In effect, few of the homeroom teachers implemented the proposed plan.

I think it's a problem in most schools ... that, when you have an extended pastoral group period, some teachers are fantastic but other teachers don't see it as their role, and despite the fact that we were producing materials for those pastoral groups because it wasn't a really water-tight lesson plan, there were quite a number of teachers that weren't just using it. And, so from that point of view we were losing the impact that we needed. Staff 2002

There were indications that the methodologies embedded in the MindMatters material were not compatible with some teacher's preferred style of teaching. Some teachers indicated that the group work and discussion style of engaging students with these issues were significant deterrents to them in attempting to use the MindMatters materials.

One teacher adapted the time and used it to tell stories. One teacher reported using incidental sayings that came up on daily notice sheets to stimulate class discussion. Other teachers reported that they simply chose not to use the pastoral care time allocated for any formal or informal instruction.

Apart from this issue of pedagogy, one teacher articulated what in some schools is a major issue in the usage of the MindMatters material; that teachers are wary of opening up discussion on issues where they may feel out of their depth.

MindMatters opens up all sorts of sensitive issues too, you know. And staff aren't perhaps used to talking about these sorts of things. Staff 2001

While the MindMatters materials may not have been broadly adopted in pastoral groups all teachers were positive in their comments about benefits of the increase in time allocated to pastoral care. It appeared that the longer pastoral period may have released teachers from a formal 'instructional' role and mindset. This may have been a factor in self-reported increase in staff wellbeing and connection.

It is, perhaps, also important to note that, in the state in which Glastonbury is situated, there is significant change being forced on traditional subject-based curriculum models and a shift to a thematic or rich-task based model is underway. Teachers who were resistant to this enforced curriculum change were, in most cases, the teachers who expressed discomfort with challenge to adjust their pedagogical practice in pastoral group.

Instead of seeing this reluctance by many teachers as a failure, however, the core team re-framed the purpose of the pastoral care period. While it was no longer necessary for the teachers to exclusively use MindMatters curriculum resources, they still encouraged teachers to use the period to focus on building connectedness and resilience.

What changes were made during the period of implementation

So instead we looked and asked ourselves the question, really what are we trying to do, and once again, it is to enhance school connectedness, and develop resilience, so we took another approach, and all of those long periods once a week, year 10s. e.g. have a guest speaker every week and so they come together for that period and the range of guest speakers is just quite extraordinary. So they are really tapping into the community and all sorts of services. Staff 2002.

MindMatters resources in the health and physical education curriculum

In 2002, MindMatters curriculum resources on bullying and harassment were embedded in the year 7 HPE curriculum. In year 8 health classes, some elements of the RAP program were used. At this point, HPE was compulsory for years 7 and 8 but was optional in 9 and 10. In 2003, the school introduced compulsory health for years 9 and 10, incorporating elements of the 'Resilience', 'Loss and Grief', and 'Understanding Mental Illness' materials. There was widespread acceptance that a compulsory health program was necessary. However, disagreement remained about how this might be best timetabled, so as to minimise disruption to other subjects and to increase commitment to it by students.

Ongoing sustainment of this initiative was dependent on greater levels of acceptance among non-health staff. These changes appeared to be stable after one year of operation and concrete plans were underway to overcome the teething problems that were experienced in 2003.

Other use of MindMatters curriculum resources

Some of the 'Resilience' materials were also used as part of the training of the year 10 peer leaders.

5.3. Efforts to develop new links with the community

In 2002, the assistant principal mentioned that the school had expanded existing links with local youth workers, engaging them in a peer leadership program and other initiatives.

What changes were made during the period of implementation

6. Sustainability of changes at the fourth visit in 2004

6.1. Structural changes

At the time of the fourth visit to this school in late 2004, the above changes had been sustained or strengthened and several had gained support within the school community.

The horizontal pastoral groups and the revised behaviour management system, first implemented in 2002, had been retained. These had been initiated at a cost to the school in terms of the time and budgetary allowance granted for the year supervisor positions, and the fact that teachers sacrifice free periods to supervise students in the withdrawal room. One staff member mentioned that the time allowance for year supervisors was to be reduced in the future.

It's a very different school ... the year management system is ... running very smoothly. We can't afford the time off that the year supervisors have but obviously it's essential to get the program up and running ... now it has been running reasonably effectively ... (next year) there will be about half as much (time allowance) as there is at the moment. Staff 2004.

Despite these disadvantages, the consensus from staff was that the new systems were valued, because of the improvements in students' connection to peers and teachers, as well as the improved management of difficult behaviour. Students also seemed supportive of these systems.

I think that happened too with the change in our structure because the pastoral group teachers have gone up with their years, there's that real relationship. Staff 2004.

Student behaviour, part of it was that we gave up some time out - withdrawal rooms - that seems to be reasonably effective because there are consequences for going there, there's a procedure to follow and there's an outcome at the end. Staff 2004.

The school had also sustained or followed through on other initiatives, including the change to period length and daily timetable, the enforcement of the new uniform policy and the development of a new drug and alcohol policy. Respondents expressed a continuing wish to have the school work toward more explicitly acknowledging and supporting staff, but did feel that the improved pastoral and behaviour management practices had already improved staff morale.

Glastonbury High continued to consider and explore other opportunities for structural change that might increase students' connection with peers and teachers. In 2004, one respondent reported that the current practice of rotating year 9 and 10 classes to new teachers every eight or nine weeks was under review.

It means as teachers we're teaching the subjects we know and like and can do well, which makes us better teachers for that reason ... but in year 10 you have four different classes over the year ... by eight or nine weeks you're just starting to get used to them and get to know them and then they're gone and then you've got to start again. You try to connect with the kids and understand what they understand and get that relationship, so we're looking at rotation systems going out or reducing at least, perhaps half-yearly changes. Staff 2004.

6.2. Curriculum changes

By 2004, some use of MindMatters material in the curriculum had been retained but further change was planned.

The resources continued to be used in the training of peer leaders and had been used in the delivery of compulsory HPE for years 7 to 10. As previously stated, the core team / equity team overseeing implementation still encouraged teachers to use the pastoral period to focus on building relationships and resilience, but did not require use of the MindMatters curriculum resources owing to discomfort among some staff. This resulted in non-standardised pastoral content and variability in the perceived purpose and value of those sessions.

The school had experienced difficulties during 2003 and 2004 in regard to the timetabling of the newly compulsory HPE program and its acceptance among staff and students – these issues are discussed in detail in section 6.1. In addition, the state in which the school is located was trialling and embracing a revised curriculum framework based on the provision of rich tasks and a holistic approach to students' development, including their wellbeing. By 2004, this new framework was impacting more immediately on the school, which was undertaking revision of its curriculum.

This combination of factors prompted the school to plan a compulsory 7 to 10 program to be known as 'Personal Futures', for implementation in pastoral periods from 2005. This program is based on the new curriculum framework and includes topics relating to physical health and harm minimisation; resilience, social and emotional wellbeing; setting and pursuing objectives including vocational goals; values education and ethics; and civics and citizenship. Physical education remains a separate subject, compulsory for years 7 and 8 but optional for years 9 and 10.

The advent of the state's new curriculum framework provided the impetus for the school to reconsider how it might systematically address student wellbeing in the curriculum and timetable. Under the new framework, personal futures will be an assessable subject, requiring commitment and accountability from staff and engagement by students in a way that was not applicable in the previous pastoral sessions. Delivering this material in the pastoral sessions is likely to help staff and students make more effective use of that time, as well as overcoming the timetabling issues and resistance experienced with the introduction of the compulsory health and PE program.

MindMatters is one resource that will be used to support the personal futures program. Pastoral group teachers will be allocated specific planning time to work with the draft curriculum for this program and to explore the use of various resources.

What we're going to do, like today, part of today is actually going through the materials, deciding what they think is important. We developed our through lines for each of the years and then targeted each group ... we'd actually workshop the material so teachers would actually go through the MindMatters Kit ... with the other teachers on that same year level. Staff 2004

6.3. Links to the community

In 2004, respondents from the school and the youth service indicated that the relationship had been sustained and nurtured, with the introduction of a new initiative that provided a free breakfast and socialisation for students once per week.

There was little other evidence of active expansion in regard to the school's contact with community agencies or primary care organisations.

7. What issues did this school face during implementation and how did they deal with them

7.1. Timetabling

The decision by staff in a secret ballot to change to a different pastoral structure involved a dedication of more time to pastoral group. Teachers generally accommodated this change. They owned the decision collectively, although not unanimously. In contrast, the changes in the area of health curriculum were far less happily received.

Prior to 2003, year 9 and 10 students were given the option to study HPE or not. In 2002, the whole staff voted to implement a compulsory health program in the 9 and 10 course structures. It was decided to allocate one lesson per fortnight to this subject. Essentially the structure was to be a theory lesson and an activities time once a fortnight for two hours in the afternoon to do the physical side of health. The health staff considered that this arrangement would enable the teacher to get to know their particular group very well, and, in Term one of 2003, the structure was reportedly delivering the outcomes and connection that the staff expected.

However, because it was new, and because of the flexibility of the timetable, other staff started to see this time as more 'malleable' than classes such as maths or English. By Term two, many of the 'optional activities' such as drama classes or band practice were being scheduled at the same time as the HPE period, and students who participated in these activities were 'allowed' to be taken out of the health class.

In response to these unexpected alterations to the planned program of implementation, the remaining smaller classroom groups were combined into a single larger group. With this seemingly practical response to their new reality, all hope of using the time to build meaningful connection with the students, as a small group was lost.

We still have one (health period) a fortnight ... but personally once a fortnight health is not enough ... it's hard to be cohesive when you've got 25 to 28 year 10's that you don't see any other time to actually have something meaningful to talk about. Every now and again we can hit on something that works for them but you don't have enough time to actually ... develop anything much - so I feel it's not happening ... it's not the way it's supposed to be. I prefer once a week ... I don't know whether that will happen ... hopefully it won't be in that activity time and I think there will be a lot of questions ... so there could be another re-structure next year. Staff 2003

All schools face competing pressures for time to access students to deliver their particular part of the education jigsaw puzzle. At Glastonbury, while there was the ideological commitment to filling in the health gap for those students missing out on the course in years 9 and 10, there was not, in the short term, the structural support, nor the administrative management of the implementation to support staff and students in the transition.

As one teacher observed:

The health was brought in, probably not fairly. We agreed to bring in health but we didn't realise or we weren't told the impact in the school, we certainly - we sort of got shafted - the option areas were the ones who got the lost line, lost a heap of students and it was a pretty acrimonious implementation ... health ... should certainly be up for debate. Staff 2003

Another staff member identified that much of the argument about the delivery of health emerged because of a failure of those responsible for timetabling to timetable this particular subject in the same way as other basic subjects. Such decisions effectively signalled to staff

What issues did this school face during implementation and how did they deal with them

that health is in some way less authentic or less important than other more highly valued and traditional and 'properly' timetabled subjects.

Several health teachers considered that the opposition to the compulsory health period in years 9 and 10 was frustrating, but assessed that there was a residual good will towards the concept. They claimed that this goodwill would enable the staff to move towards formalising the curriculum and timetabling it in a way that would give it equal status with other subjects.

Teachers considered that the continuing willingness to remain committed to delivering an effective health curriculum was attributable to ideas that were appropriated by staff who attended the MindMatters training.

Interestingly, one teacher asserted that it was beneficial that all the concepts and ideas that emerged from MindMatters were not always identified as new MindMatters ideas. He considered this as making the ideas and their implementation more palatable and acceptable because they seemed to emerge from the staff in a rather organic way.

(Many new initiatives) relate back to health and wellbeing and so forth. Pastoral groups and discipline policies and things like this and needs of handling kids and those sort of things which are really a part of the whole wellbeing side of it ... they haven't been tagged with MindMatters - because they are not 'tagged' that way people sort of say, that's not another new thing. Staff 2003

7.2. Resource issues

Pressure on the time of staff and students emerged as a significant issue at Glastonbury, particularly in 2003 when the decision to introduce the compulsory health subject was implemented. In such situations, competition emerges, for example between formal and informal learning opportunities, such as that described above where students are torn between their attendance at health classes and their participation in activities such as drama or the school band.

The fact that staff volunteer their time to support the peer leaders program, a significant way of value adding to the students' experience of school, is a resource issue at Glastonbury that appears to be largely under-acknowledged. Staff appear to be taking on demanding and high level coordination roles in, what some see as an essentially non-paid capacity. Some staff expressed the view that increasing pressure on staff time from a number of quarters may have the potential to exhaust the good will of teachers.

Although the introduction of the new level of middle management is well supported, staff pointed out that it came at a cost. As one teacher observed:

There's one and a half teachers cost to the school, out of our school budget, there's \$90,000 - something like that per year comes out to pay for the extra teachers (in the management team) to run things in the school. Staff 2003

Teachers noted variation in the performance of the new coordinators but generally acknowledged the positive effect of this funding decision.

I think it has tightened things up a great deal but I don't think it's going to be sustainable in the long term because of the cost, the monetary cost of it, but it's better for the kids because of the structure - before they weren't coping down here at all. Staff 2003

There did not appear to be any intention by staff or executives to seek further funds to pay for the additional workload of non-appointed but de-facto staff co-ordinators of the new and

What issues did this school face during implementation and how did they deal with them

ongoing programs such as peer leaders. This may have been attributable to a lack of further funding sources. However, the school appeared to be relying on the good will of the staff, and trusting that these programs could be self supportive without becoming a direct or indirect cost (in terms of release time allocation).

This issue could possibly cause concern in the future at Glastonbury. The longevity of this initiative is subject to the capacity of well-meaning and highly committed staff being able to continue to give their lunchtimes to coordinating the implementation of the peer program. As one teacher noted:

Some of them are getting tired of doing it. Staff 2003

7.3. Leadership issues

Several teachers who attended MindMatters training reported a feeling of having to 'face reality' when they returned to school, and of wondering just how much they could achieve in the face of internal and external constraints.

The people running the seminars were very positive and very informative and I think I felt really what we needed was to have some of these people come down to (address) our staff ... How do you take it further? Staff 2001

Staff took some comfort in the fact that a highly regarded member of the executive team was overseeing the implementation of MindMatters in 2001-2002. However, this staff member had many other responsibilities and was coping with the effects of the dysfunctional behavioural management system that was in place at the time. When this executive took leave for long periods in 2002 due to ill health, the MindMatters team suffered a significant loss of leadership.

There were no formal structures established to provide a replacement MindMatters coordinator and other members of the executive did not immediately step into the role.

Members of the teaching staff who were part of the MindMatters team felt that they could not take on the leadership role, even though the principal reported that he would have encouraged them had they done so. In fact one staff member reported that when she did take an initiative to the principal he gave her his full support.

This lack of willingness of teachers to take on leadership of the program was largely attributed to 'change fatigue' as, in 2002, the school had seen the introduction of a number of changes, causing staff to be very busy adapting to new structures and procedures. These changes and the absence of the executive leader, caused many meetings of the MindMatters team to be cancelled or postponed.

We've had two meetings this year ... and here we are almost in the ninth month. And so people have become a bit cynical about MindMatters and the people on the MindMatters team have lost a lot of heart. Staff 2002

The idea of formal MindMatters planning could well have completely disappeared but for the fact that several of the teachers who were initially trained were part of the equity team. Teachers who attended this forum continued to draw on and raise ideas and concerns articulated in the selection and adoption phase of MindMatters. An example of this was the introduction of the peer leaders program. Staff who conceived of this idea were part of the MindMatters team. Given that it was not meeting, they eventually raised the idea in the equity meeting and, in the later half of 2002, the idea was endorsed and planning commenced. This is typical of the overlap and cross fertilization of ideas and action between the equity team and staff who had been trained in MindMatters, which had existed from the beginning of the adoption phase.

What issues did this school face during implementation and how did they deal with them

7.4. Staff development issues

Many staff who attended the MindMatters' professional development session conducted in 2001 considered it to be valuable, but expressed uncertainty about how to translate this into practical terms in their school. There was a strong sense from participants that while they felt motivated by the professional development, many also felt overwhelmed by the problems facing the school and by the lack of welfare and support staff available on site.

At the first visit, staff suggested a number of other areas in which further professional development might be useful to overcome perceived inadequacies including: the recognition of depression; background about sexual preferences; talking about grief and loss; substance use; and the 'whole school' approach to mental health.

Early in 2002, the assistant principal reported that while no staff had undertaken further professional development in this area, the school had allocated a significant budget to professional development for the following year.

At the second visit, the assistant principal reported that MindMatters money had been used to support professional development in staff in some other areas related to mental health, including sexuality and drugs. A further five staff had also attended the two day MindMatters professional development.

8. Issues identified at the fourth visit

As previously discussed, timetabling issues had limited the effectiveness of the compulsory health and PE program. The decision was made to return to a compulsory physical education subject for years 7 and 8, with PE optional for years 9 and 10. Health and wellbeing would be incorporated into the personal futures program to be delivered in pastoral sessions from 2005.

Resources in terms of staff time continued to be an issue, with one respondent indicating that the time allowance for year supervisors might be reduced the following year. However the peer leadership program, which had seemed vulnerable in relying heavily on staff goodwill and volunteer input, had been sustained at 2004. Many staff continued to take on additional work to support valued initiatives, such as volunteering for the peer leadership program or giving up spare periods to supervise the withdrawal room.

Additional work was also created through the implementation of a new curriculum framework in this state, requiring staff to plan for curriculum revision and new teaching and reporting systems.

In year 7 the kids get 12 different teachers and going from year 6 one teacher to 12 teachers and they struggle quite a bit. By going to the (new curriculum framework) it will reduce the teachers down to five probably. A lot of the teachers (will) teach two subjects. There's a bit of a hassle with that too. They don't particularly want to teach out of area ... the reporting structure is changing, like there's just massive amounts to get your head around and solve and achieve. Staff 2004.

Despite the imposition of curriculum change and the extra work this created, two respondents were optimistic that the new framework and systems could be beneficial in supporting the wellbeing of students and implied that they were consistent with the principles and objectives of MindMatters. This congruence is also suggested by the fact that the new framework encouraged the school to reconsider the place of student wellbeing in the curriculum and to incorporate MindMatters material into the personal futures program.

We've been around long enough to see change come and go. But it's bigger than that ... the needs of kids (are) now different than they were 10 years ago, curriculum-wise and what we teach them. And a lot of the values in the health and wellbeing and all those types of things which are going to be interwoven into the new curriculum ... I think this has got a lot of potential to address the needs we need to address. Staff 2004.

Leadership of the MindMatters implementation in 2004 remained similar to the previous year, with individuals who had been on the MindMatters core team and/or on the equity team maintaining their commitment to the ideas and being involved in the integration of MindMatters into the planned personal futures program. However there were no formal meetings of a MindMatters planning team *per se*.

By 2004, the school itself had also undergone some changes in leadership practices and style, including the establishment of the middle management structure in the form of year supervisors. The school also had a new principal in 2004, owing to the previous Principal's secondment to another position. This had resulted in certain changes of leadership style and practice. While staff remained supportive of the previous principal's achievements, several felt that the new leadership approach would be effective in addressing certain challenges now faced by the school.

There was little evidence in 2004 of the implementation of additional formal professional development for staff, in regard to student wellbeing issues. Respondents continued to feel that supplementary professional development would be important in keeping the school

focussed on the principles of MindMatters and wellbeing, particularly for new staff and those who had not previously attended the training.

9. What impact did the changes have?

9.1. Impact on student wellbeing

Students' attachment to school

In the student interviews in 2002 there was a significant shift in the language used by students to describe their views of their school. Several spoke positively about the school, mentioning the improved discipline, the reduction in bullying and harassment and the reduced impact of drugs and alcohol.

They also liked the fact that the school's uniform policy had been tightened and seemed to feel more positive about themselves and the school as a whole.

When we first went to buy my school uniform I thought it was really going to be horrible ... like in my mind it was ... looked gross. But it doesn't. Student 2002

Mum said, like the whole school looks much neater. Student 2002

They held supportive views of the new horizontal pastoral system and the behaviour management procedures. For example, on the newly introduced withdrawal room:

If you play up then you go in there, it's as simple as that. Student 2002

I've only had one person from my class sent to the withdrawal room the whole year. So it hasn't been overly used or anything. It has been used the right way. That's good. Student 2002

By 2003, these positive comments increased in number and conviction. An anecdote told by one of the students in 2003 indicates the level of confidence that students developed in the period of implementation in which MindMatters was being evaluated.

A thing happened to me once. I was just outside talking to a mate and this guy (a fellow student) came up and offered me drugs and I wasn't going to say anything because I thought he was joking ... a teacher came up - 'what's going on?' and I told her. The guy's teacher came and pulled me out of class and (teacher's name, was) really strict about (it) ...

... and then I got called into this office and they were telling me - I wasn't in any trouble. He was joking and I didn't want to make a fuss about it - but the school took it seriously. They've opened their eyes, because there used to be people on the oval that you could see that were smoking and it was so obvious - in a circle - so obvious like I don't know how the teachers missed it but I guess they opened their eyes. Student 2003

On the change to the timetable:

Timetable change - we've got two periods in the morning, and two after recess and then just one in the afternoon - where there used to be one in the morning. Student 2003

We like it better because you have lunch and then have a class, then go home. Student 2003

The new pastoral group structure was also seen as having increased opportunities for students and teachers to form positive relationships.

I think it's good to make all year pastoral groups because I noticed in the last year really the whole of year 10 have become really close and everybody knows everybody now - whereas you never knew a lot of people - so you get to know all the people. Student 2003

The capacity of the new pastoral system to provide for peer support and appreciation is clearly being realised by some staff. As this teacher states:

We've ... stuck with the kids ... and if you come to our year assemblies we've got a year band, kids play regularly, they sing, dance, do all sorts of things in front of their peers and it's really united the kids. We do year activities - I just think it's really tied them in and they really have a feeling of belonging ... our participation rates ... are absolutely outstanding. Staff 2003

Support for marginalised students

The peer leaders program is seen as having increased the support for students who are more marginalised in the school.

I think the peer leaders are fantastic absolutely fantastic. You see kids who are always not interested at lunchtime joining in. There might be someone who eats lunch by himself, and we have done ... encouraged him to be part of the group but we can't do it. But break-dancing happens on Wednesdays and he's in there just like anyone else and it's the peer leaders and they get kids who are basically isolated and would rather be included by students rather than adults. Staff 2003

Further, the senior students who were peer leaders felt positive about the role they played in helping students in lower years to fit in to the school more effectively:

What we really did last year, we done lots of training and we like started up with year activities just to get everybody more involved in things, and then we go when the year 7s started this year we go and see them every day in pastoral group and stuff just to make sure that they are OK. And we now like run great activities like once a week for everybody to do. Student 2003

I think it's really good speaking for myself because I have found a lot of people that don't know (anyone) ... like year 7s who don't know anybody and will come, like, new from other schools ... it's helped them find something to do at lunchtime and getting them involved in things. Student 2003

Reduction in bullying and harassment

Students, in 2002, thought that the issue of bullying and harassment had improved.

I've seen other schools, they've got ... people that don't want to go to school cause they get bullied and stuff ... and I've seen no one like that in this school, so I know what it is like this year, so it must have improved. Student 2002

Teachers also reported both in 2002 and 2003, that they felt that students were more able to access support and to report bullying or other problems.

Most informants (including students) agreed that bullying was much less of a problem in 2003 than it was at the commencement of this study.

I reckon even since last year the teachers have got better on people bullying and stuff cause its my second year here and people have got better already ... like the teachers have got better ... like more strict and stuff ... say if someone is in a fight they hear about it anyway ... they have heaps of teachers there on duty ... you can always tell if there is going to be a fight, there's always a huge mob of people in one spot. Student 2003

This view was supported by other students:

I: So with the bullying and harassment thing ... is it any better or worse than it was when I came here two years ago?

S: Better - I think it's a lot better (all agreed).

S: I know year 9 is better because I think people have grown up a lot since last year, and I don't know what it's like in year 7 and 8, but it's definitely got better in year 9. Students 2003

With regard to bullying, several teachers made very assertive comments about significant improvement in student wellbeing in this area:

There seems to be that sort of gradual decline. There's a lot of work done ... and I think we are meeting with some success. I know a couple of kids in my group were a few of the bullies around the place, pretty bad ones as well, and a lot of their behaviour has tempered and really tempered - so a lot of that (bullying) has been disappearing and that's been the direct result of work that's going on and by a whole range of things within the school ... that's declined particularly amongst boys. Staff 2003

My experience would be that there has been a significant decrease in bullying and harassment but it hasn't changed the dynamics of where it occurs. For example, year 8 girls ... it has quietened it down but the major thing about it is with that management team now ... well two things, one of them with having a class teacher who is responsible for a year group and having the specific management structure kids are significantly more likely to talk to people about harassment. So I think that has been a significant change. Particularly when and I think in our first year we specifically addressed bullying and harassment and stuffed it up. Staff 2003

... bullying, harassment is very minimal now because issues come to the year coordinators now ... we've had one big bullying incident this year and that's it and we stomped on it. And because we've stomped on it there's been no follow up from any of the kids who were doing the bullying or the kids ... we've heard nothing back so I think that has certainly resolved itself. Staff 2003

Nevertheless, there is some residual concern about mainly verbal bullying of girls by other girls particularly in lower years. As one student noted:

I reckon with guys it's probably more bullying and hurting each other, but with girls it's more going behind your back and saying things like what you think about

other people, bitching behind their back. It's more like that for girls, but for guys it's bullying and hurting them and threats and stuff. It's not as much like that for girls unless it's quite serious. Student 2003

This was supported by one of the staff:

We still have - mainly now I think, a lot of it's the girls, sniping and that sort of behaviour. Spreading rumours, and those sorts of things. But even then - that also has significantly dropped down a bit as well. Yes I would say we have had some success. Staff 2003

One particularly powerful way in which students were being empowered to stop bullying was by a teacher initiative to train and enable peer tutoring in anti-bullying strategies.

We've been doing a course in peer leaders at the moment and getting ready to show the other years a course in bullying and harassment. Student 2003

The new behaviour management procedures were also seen as leading to a decrease in the impact of bullying behaviour.

... these kids have been annoying other kids for years too. And now they are being stomped on or being moved or being removed. The other kids are going, 'wow this is alright! I can cope now.', or 'I'm not having so and so saying snide remarks all the time' and that sort of thing. And of course different teachers react in different ways as well, so now the system is getting on top of them a bit more the other kids are getting a break and that would help their positive feelings as well. Staff 2003

An acceptance seems to have developed that the new approach to managing bullying is now embedded within the school and is not dependent on any ongoing focus on MindMatters.

People don't use the term MindMatters anymore but they know if someone speaks in a certain way to a kid then - it's not what we do here. Staff 2003

Reduction in impact on school of drugs and alcohol

Executive staff and some teachers began to report in 2002 that substance use problems, such as smoking on school grounds, were less frequently observed than before. There was still a sense that while improved discipline had helped to reduce the impact on the school, the actual use of drugs and alcohol continued among a proportion of the students.

I don't think it's got any better or worse. I think we've had a couple of drug instances each year I've been here, with things like kids being in possession of drugs at school. Staff 2002

One teacher expressed disappointment that the drug and alcohol issue had not been specifically addressed, despite having been identified by the MindMatters team within the school as a priority from the beginning. This, again, was attributed partly to the absence, due to illness, of one of the key drivers of the school's MindMatters implementation. It may also indicate a shift in the philosophy of the staff to deal with matters such as drugs and alcohol and bullying more holistically.

By the third visit, however, teachers and students indicated significant changes in the amount of problems at Glastonbury associated with drugs and alcohol.

Typical of staff comments are:

T: In my first 18 months here the counsellors would speak with me at least on a weekly basis about their concerns, particularly with marijuana use, major major concerns. Now the last 12 months there was very little discussion being a real concern by the counsellors over marijuana use.

I: Just playing the devil's advocate, could it be that you've just got a healthier bunch of kids coming through?

T: Still the same families ... I think the kids are becoming much more aware and conscience of their behaviours and responsibilities. Staff 2003

The other thing is that anecdotally at least I would have to say there is a significant reduction in use of drugs and alcohol. Including smoking and marijuana use and so on. That seems to me just from talking to kids that the amount of binge drinking and that sort of stuff that used to occur has significantly lessened. So I think there has been major changes - I don't know whether statistically when the kids do their surveys again. Staff 2003

The student's views supported this perception:

I wouldn't say it (alcohol and other drugs) was a big problem, but there is a group of people - from each year there's a couple of people. I don't know about the alcohol but it's more like smoking and stuff. Student 2003

I don't think the alcohol is that big a problem. I know that nearly everyone does it ... definitely not at school (no) never at school ... it's just the people that I guess get out of control, they've really cut back though. All the people that really smoked drugs or whatever a year ago either don't come to school, they've moved away, or they've got out of it. Because a lot of people just ... everyone experiments ... but everyone is realising now that they sort of have to get on with things and that ... it's just a phase for a lot of people. Student 2003

Most telling though were the insights of one of the staff members whose job entailed high level interaction with students at risk.

When I first came here I spent a lot of my time dealing with drug problems, drug issues, mostly marijuana and some more serious drug issues. Every day that I was here I was taking a drug withdrawal group, not an education, but a drug withdrawal group to do with withdrawal, and how they would do it ... to do with self esteem issues, the MindMatters things ... resilience, self esteem assertion, those sorts of things ... talking about their problems. So every day I was running a group (for those) who voluntarily wanted to withdraw. They came to me, it was all boys no girls.

The changes I've seen. There are much fewer drug problems. There are still kids smoking marijuana ... many fewer problems and most of the kids are scared of it now because they know what it is going to do. They all saw kids who lost their motivation ... they saw that and didn't want to go there. And there are fewer

suspensions now. We manage cases really well. We have support (with external health agencies). To manage individual cases we have a social worker for a day a week, so the hours may have been extended there because we didn't have him before.

It's quieter, it's sort of a nicer feeling. We get in early with most of those things ... we are holding onto a boy we never thought we could hold onto.

It was a normal school. The change is enormous. You walk down the corridor and you can feel it and see it. Staff 2003

An issue that still required attention and strategic response within the school and the broader community was the issue of parental attitudes to drug and alcohol that were sometimes in conflict with the school, health sources and standards of the community reflected in the law. Teachers attitudes were also a little ambiguous on the issue of alcohol.

I had a kid in my year 9 class the other day and his mum gives him cigarettes every day. Staff 2002

A good example of that is this weekend there's a lot of kids here in a year 10 football side, and it's not a school team, but they are having their weekend away footy trip. The only reason we know about it (well all the kids have talked about it) one of the reasons we know is four of the boys are supposed to be playing basketball for the school. They've told the coach that they can't play now because this footy trip is on and they will be too hung over to play the game.

I've had a bit of a go at them because they should have told the coach earlier and I've talked to a couple of them about how they could have a few drinks and then not be so hung over that they couldn't turn up on Saturday and play the game. But they all say that their parents (and one kid who is not involved said this to me as well) 'our parents are going to be there, my Dad's going to buy me a case of beer for the weekend' and their parents will be there and they are accepting that's what you do. I mean it surprises me really. From the kids' point of view they think it's safe because their parents are there, they're condoning it, they're saying it's OK. And I didn't say anything to the kids but I personally thought it was irresponsible of the parents and they should be taught about their commitment to this team - they could do both - have a couple of beers. Staff 2003

Increased awareness of mental health issues and strategies for dealing with them

One concrete example was given of students learning new strategies for dealing with mental health problems. The insertion of MindMatters materials on 'Grief and Loss' in the year 9 health curriculum was perceived by one teacher to have had a significant impact.

I have a girl in year 9 ... her mother died this year and we just happened to be right on that section (Grief and Loss). I asked her 'Would you like to leave the room? This is the topic now' (and she said) 'no, I want to be here'.

And it was really good because the other kids could identify with what she was going through but not at such a personal level and she knew that they all knew, and they all knew that she knew.

It was helpful for me to know all the things to do ... a parent dies in your class 'I don't know how to respond' and it (The MindMatters resource) was helpful for me as well. What to say and what not to say. I found that very beneficial right at the particular time. And I think the rest of the class did too. Strangely enough at the beginning of the year I absolutely hated my year 9s - they were the toughest group and throughout the year, I don't know whether it's a combination of MindMatters and we've also got a ... student run roster and the kids have just gelled - and they are my favourite class now - and I think it's a combination of all things. Staff 2003

These established curriculum insertions along with the capacity of pastoral structures to raise, discuss and respond to mental health issues supported greater awareness among students.

The variance in the consistency of the delivery of the material in pastoral group time raises the concern that some students were likely to receive considerably more opportunities to raise their awareness than other peers depending on who their pastoral group teacher was. Opportunity for students then seemed largely dependent on staff self-assessment of role legitimacy, role competence and role confidence with regard to engaging with students about mental health issues.

Opportunities for leadership and participation

The school had also implemented some leadership opportunities for students, including through the peer leadership program and training which involved supporting new students, inclusion initiatives for students with disabilities and a lunch time activities program. The program enabled more independent students to access affirming leadership roles and build meaningful links with less independent students with whom they shared an interest or skill set. The program provided opportunities for genuine self-esteem by refashioning the options of the playground at lunchtime from a passive and territorial place to a range of small communities within that student body sharing in activities with like-minded students.

In a sense this program is about students creating places for fellow students to belong and connect with school and peers in ways that research shows build resilience.

In addition to the student representative council, the school had set up a group comprised of an elected representative from each pastoral group. The overall aim was to give students more opportunities for leadership and decision-making in the school.

Reduction in suspensions and truancy

The school's rate of suspensions has been halved over the two years during which the evaluation took place.

Information recently released by the Department of Education illustrates the success of Glastonbury High School's approaches to managing student behaviour.

In 2001, our suspension rate was 11.6% (87 students). This rate was less than the average for secondary schools, and reflected a calm, safe and well-managed school. However, the fact that the rate was climbing was one indicator of a need to improve the school environment that resulted in our changing pastoral care, forming year teams and developing a greater range of responses to both good and unacceptable behaviour.

Last year, our suspension rate had declined dramatically to 5.7 per-cent (42 students). This was less than half the rate of secondary schools.

Our rates of student absence also are far better than for comparable schools and diminishing. School newsletter 2003.

It is reported that truancy has also been reduced, although no direct evidence of this was collected during the evaluation.

9.2. Impact on staff

Increased awareness of risk factors which affect mental health

Teachers expressed initial consciousness about general societal issues affecting the 'neediness' of the clientele they were drawing into the school. In response to their training in MindMatters and the drug education workshop run by Dr Michael Carr-Gregg, teachers grew in their awareness of mental health and risk factors.

Greater openness towards emotional and mental health issues

Teachers who were trained in MindMatters appear to have developed increasing awareness of, sensitivity to, and openness in discussing mental health and wellbeing issues.

This group were noticeably more comfortable in noting and responding to these issues than other less engaged staff. One staff person spoke of her own learning to deal with some sensitive issues:

It was helpful for me to know all the things to do ... a parent dies in your class 'I don't know how to respond' and it (The MindMatters resource) was helpful for me as well. What to say and what not to say. I found that very beneficial right at the particular time. Staff 2003

There were, however, noticeable differences between staff members in their willingness, and self-perceived professional and personal capacities, to engage with these issues with students and staff.

A number of teachers, while shifting more or less comfortably to an awareness that they need to notice and report concerns about students, continued to express anxiety about competency and capacity to respond.

Students' comments in 2003 are particularly important on this point.

That's the worst thing ... teachers like think they try to help, but their heart's not in it ... not all teachers - just in general. Like they think they try to help, but they sort of need to find out what's really causing it ... I think some of the teachers do honestly care, but they don't know what to do about it. Student 2003

I think if you're going to talk to teachers (about how they respond to crisis and mental health issues) - they need to talk about it more (with the students), they just can't treat it like it's in the school environment. Student 2003

The student's call for more talking, more understanding and more time implied in this comment, met with expressed concerns of teachers about their capacities in this area, time pressures and uncertainty about referral. Despite this there did not appear to be any foreseeable investment in further capacity building to respond after issues emerged.

More effective management of behavioural and discipline issues

The adoption of MindMatters and the introduction of significant structural change were largely seen as enmeshed processes by the end of the two years.

After one year of introduction of these systems, opinion of their value was largely positive but some disagreement was still evident (some teachers still think the old vertical pastoral system was preferable). However, by the time of the third visit, support for the systems appeared unanimous among teachers and students.

Yes - I think that is where the behaviour management thing comes into it - there is still a bit of it but there - but there's a focus there's a place to grow there's a pathway to solve it and we're very conscious of not letting it build up so yes so I think the reaction is much better and the ethos that's where the health and that comes into it and the kids know that even little things - even if they say something in a put down way - meaning all the teachers are actually mentioning it occasionally so I think that sort of infiltrated everywhere - I mean I'm not saying it still doesn't happen but there's a solution. Staff 2003

By the time of the interviews in 2003 there was broad consensus that behavioural problems were being more effectively and efficiently dealt with than at the start of this case study. Most interviewees agree that the implementation of structural and organisational structures had achieved a positive impact on all students both those who have behavioural difficulties and other students as well. They determined that there was less disruption in class and more time spent on learning activities.

One teacher's assessment of the improvement between 2001 and 2003 is very enlightening:

From the teacher's point of view, they're now more in control of the behaviour management within their classroom because of the clear steps (in discipline structures). There is more support for teachers in classrooms, the kids have got clear consequences of what the steps are, and how they can get out and what the consequences are of their behaviour. Which is resulted in our suspension rates, number of kids in the withdrawal room, all of those things reduced. So there's lots of really good things ... I think it means that everyone can work together a bit more collaboratively ... (teachers feel) much more supported. Staff 2003

Empowerment to support student wellbeing

The implementation of the peer leaders program was very empowering for the staff who considered themselves competent to work with students in building health and wellbeing.

I suppose one thing that has come out of it for me has been, having attended the first MindMatters session a couple of years ago, I really felt there was a need to embrace the idea but I didn't know quite how and the idea of giving students more

responsibility came up and from there was born the idea I suppose of having peer leaders. I've been involved with the transition of year 10s helping year 7s come into the school, but the fact that maybe those people and they were called 'care leaders', we felt maybe we could change the name and extend the role and so I've been involved in that, and that's been fantastic. Staff 2003

As this excerpt from the transcript shows, the link to MindMatters is articulated by staff involved in the conception of the peer leaders program. The capacity of staff to create programs and gather support for implementation attests to the fact that staff were empowered to use the MindMatters experience and material in creative ways.

Interestingly, one teacher, when talking about the initiative to train student mediators noted:

The mediator stuff would incorporate a hell of a lot of the MindMatters stuff ... it is looking at the emotional and social health of the person, and the brilliant thing about it is in dealing with the peer leaders, we're actually dealing with our own problems, and how we solve them. So in doing this training to help them to help others, the training is helping us and the kids help each other ... I've done lots of personal development groups (elsewhere) ... but ... nowhere have the boundary lines crossed in such a way (as at Glastonbury) ... we're talking about things, (staff) are there hanging in listening too - and they make comments ... this is a really good thing for the school. Staff 2003

More rewarding relationships with students

Some teachers also identified the positive impact on teachers of having a closer relationship with students that was fostered by the new pastoral care structure. One teacher stated:

I was 'umming and ahing' at one stage about (leaving) ... cause I'm not full time here, I'm only permanent part-time, and thinking perhaps I'd like to be full time permanent. To do that I'd have to move to another school and I'm thinking 'do I want to move to another school and re-establish myself?' ... and then I think about my pastoral group 'I'd like to see them in year 10'. And so I've got that sense of belonging too. Staff 2003

Being a pastoral teacher is important to me - and I think most people start to feel that - I just get that impression. Staff 2003

... we get together as a year and it's really good and I think it's working for all the years actually. You just have that cohesiveness and it's like a belonging feeling rather than just belonging to the whole school which is fairly big - it gives you a small group - you've got your pastoral group to belong to but you've also got you year to belong to. Staff 2003

Increased staff support

Most of the staff (but not all) agreed that staff are better supported by the new structures and the behavioural management policies.

At the outset, the participation in MindMatters training was seen to have had a positive impact on staff morale.

Inspiring. It (the training) really made me fell like ... I mean, I'm a parent (and) I've been a teacher for a few years but I still didn't quite know how to approach

things and it gave me a real sense of 'OK' I can confidently challenge things - look at kids, look at behaviour and think about where to go next. Staff 2001

When asked whether there had been any progress in the area of supporting staff, one teacher remarked:

I know for the last week, for instance, the amount of support I've had has been absolutely superb by everyone and that's top down all the way through which has been really fantastic and so yes we seem to be doing it (supporting each other) and I think we've got to start changing perceptions. Staff 2003

As mentioned above, other staff were less likely to acknowledge progress in this area and a certain cynicism about what were seen as 'tokenistic' gestures was expressed.

9.3. Impact on school as a whole

Enabling of cohesive change

MindMatters is consistently described by staff at the school as an important tool that enabled them to implement significant change in a cohesive manner. It was cohesive because a significant number of staff, and important community based partners, shared a training experience that provided them with a common set of ideas and a language that liberated conversations about issues they were all concerned about but feeling powerless to address.

I think the education from that (MindMatters training) has made a difference because in the school now we talk about (associated issues), not widely, but we talk. Staff 2003

The timing of the training of MindMatters at a time when this school was seriously considering making major changes organisationally and structurally was fortuitous.

The time out provided by the training opportunity was also valued by the staff as it gave them the opportunity to do the necessary planning. Further, the number of staff trained, described by some as a 'critical mass' created a sense of a team, working together on wellbeing issues.

I think there was another component (in addition to planning time) to it as well which was - there was a focus of like-minded people being able to talk together about these changes. As always, (planning) doesn't ever get very far unless you do have that critical mass of staff and that's what we managed to achieve with ... training? Staff 2003

Fortnightly meetings of the equity team and programs arising and implemented by this group appear to have served to keep the issues in focus during adoption phase of MindMatters.

In the second year, the implementation of MindMatters at Glastonbury lost some of its obvious momentum because it was seen to be partly dependent upon the return from sick leave of the key person who had been driving it.

There hasn't been any formal MindMatters stuff at all this year ... but it's important - cohesive basically. Staff 2003

Despite this, the core staff who attended MindMatters training, particularly those who overlapped with the equity team, appear to have appropriated the MindMatters concepts into their action in the school.

I'm also part of the equity team which is closely aligned - so MindMatters is all around me, as well. Staff 2003

OK - well, previously we had MindMatters meetings, now we have equity meetings which - really to me it is a similar thing, so within equity we work with students who have problems, that's pretty much what we do. Staff 2003

Further, on the whole, the staff who volunteered to support the new peer leaders program that emerged in 2003 were those who had attended the MindMatters training.

Clearly the presence of a significant number of MindMatters trained staff in the school was viewed as a positive factor in sustaining school change even in the absence of the initial formal structures established to oversee its implementation.

While many staff remained uncertain of their competence to effectively handle issues of mental health there was an increased acceptance of the need for change. Structural change, curriculum change and the incorporation of assistance from health agencies were undertaken upon the vote of staff and were all designed to enhance connectedness and wellbeing. This indicates both awareness and commitment to collective action by the staff of this school.

I think whoever does MindMatters must be pretty open minded I mean to put your hand up to want to do it and to want to do it you've got to be able to give it of yourself. I think the fact that so many people in this school have ... opted to do it just says we were ready for change and when it came ... (MindMatters was) the push that helped get us over that line that we needed to get through. But it brought a lot of teachers together I think as well and how to deal with ... (many issues) because there weren't these options before now there are, but basically I think we set ourselves up for success. Staff 2003

Stronger links with parents and the community, in providing support for students

Changes to the management structures assisted staff to forge positive links with parents. As a consequence of a move to generating opportunities for student connection and wellbeing one year co-ordinator expressed great pleasure that the students themselves could talk with their parents about things happening at school that were health promoting. In addition she was able to report to parents about many more positive things underway in the school.

I'm seeing the kids in a positive light instead of always in my office for all the wrong reasons - so it's really nice to have some positive influence. Really it helps to develop a positive rapport with them so that every time I see them it's not negative and plus with their parents. They say to their parents ... 'hey, guess what we're doing - we raised enough money and we took all my girls in - we had a total pampered day'. Those girls would never get that opportunity otherwise. Its really unique and most schools probably don't have that chance. We do all sorts of things. Staff 2003

Development of a positive school ethos

By the interview period in 2003 the positive impact of MindMatters, and the structural, curriculum and pedagogical change that ensued, was very strongly attested to by teachers comments:

I suppose the school has an atmosphere that's more caring and it's more out there than it used to be ... it was always 'oh yeh', subtle, and it used to seem to be more dependent on the leadership ... nowadays it seems independent of the leadership

whereas the school has to stand alone so it feels like it is more ingrained in the school, and everyone rather than in individuals. I think the MindMatters ideas and the way you have changed the system match, and I thought that could be an ongoing core independent of other changes around the school - in that way I think it was probably worth it. Staff 2003

There's a focus there's a place to grow there's a pathway to solve it and we're very conscience of not letting it build up so, yes, so I think the reaction is much better and the ethos that's where the health and that comes into it and the kids know that even little things - even if they say something in a put down way - meaning all the teachers are actually mentioning it occasionally so I think that sort of infiltrated everywhere - I mean I'm not saying it still doesn't happen but there's a solution. Staff 2003

In 2002, cameras were introduced to better survey certain areas of the school to prevent vandalism. Although these cameras are rarely active, they have, together with the significant discipline and structural changes, enabled the school to create a sense of safer place for students and staff.

Comments by both staff and students indicate that students feel safer in 2003 than previously.

Enabling achievement of goals

Significant progress has been made towards achieving the initial goals of the core group that attended the MindMatters training.

The HPE subject is now compulsory across years 7 to 10. The curriculum in all years addresses mental health to give students strategies to deal with mental health issues. MindMatters material is embedded in year 7 and year 9 and covers the issues of bullying and harassment, grief and loss and resilience.

The pastoral care systems and behaviour management systems have been comprehensively overhauled.

There is clearly a shift in this school towards being a 'safer' place for students, with a reported decrease in bullying and harassment and attendant anxiety. However, gender differences in bullying style were being noted with some concern that the girls were still engaging in less overt harassment that required further attention.

With regard to substance use and abuse, at the second visit, drugs and alcohol were still a concern but students felt that substance use impacted less on those who didn't use drugs. They attributed this to less blatant use and discussion about drugs, causing less disruption in the school. At the third visit to the school late in 2003, however, the situation with illicit drug use appears to be markedly improved. There were still certain indicators that alcohol use outside of school was a residual problem that warranted further response, particularly in concert with parents.

The quantitative data clearly shows that the issue of drug and alcohol overall improved. In place of this issue dominating discipline and counselling resources, drug-related incidents have diminished.

10. Further Views on Impacts at the fourth visit

Student wellbeing

At 2004, it seemed that most or all of the previously reported improvements in student wellbeing had been sustained. Feedback from students suggested that most hold positive views of the school and those who could remember the previous systems of pastoral care and behaviour management were supportive of the changes the school had adopted. Students' comments were consistent with improved attachment to school, when compared with the early years of the evaluation.

Respondents also clearly indicated that the school now provides a larger number and wider variety of supports for troubled or marginalised students. In addition to talking with trusted teachers, young people are able to access the year supervisors, a school counsellor, a social worker, youth workers from the community and peer leaders. This represents an increase when compared with the supports that were available prior to the school's major changes, beginning in 2002. At least one respondent also suggested that these support persons were now accessed more frequently, suggesting improvements in help seeking and/or referral.

The school ... has changed a lot of things over the last three or four years and the provision of people to talk to is probably better now than it's ever been ... we're more aware of kids' problems now than we've ever been with our system ... we've got somebody available to the kids at all times. We've got a very good range ... they're all quite different. Staff 2004.

The previous improvements in the management of bullying and harassment, attributable to changes begun in 2002, also seemed to have been maintained. Students generally reported feeling safe at school and those who could remember the previous school culture felt that the changes made over recent years had been helpful. Staff clearly indicated that the improvements in the management of bullying and harassment had been sustained and there was evidence of improved reporting and help-seeking.

As a teacher on duty, you can feel it, but I think because of the pastoral group system now, with the year supervisor, I think kids feel more supported and I think it (bullying) is reported more regularly. Staff 2004.

There was broad agreement that the previous pastoral and behaviour management changes had reduced the negative impact of substance use on the school community and that these improvements had been maintained. Substance use still occurred among certain individuals or student cohorts but staff were more aware of the issue and the school managed situations more effectively.

Drug and alcohol, again I think it's been dealt with better. This story of the odd smoker and this sort of thing, I think the way it's been dealt with is probably better ... earlier on this year we had an issue with some of the kids brought alcohol to school and that was deal with very efficiently. So I think that we are getting better on that one. Staff 2004.

Evidence collected at the fourth visit also suggests that previously-described impacts on students' awareness and acceptance of mental health issues were sustained to some degree through use of MindMatters in the HPE curriculum and the practices of some teachers in pastoral sessions. The school's plans for the more systematic delivery of relevant material to all students, through the personal futures curriculum, should continue to build on this awareness.

Furthermore, at least some students still have opportunities for participation and leadership, through the peer leaders program. Anecdotal evidence also supports the premise that the

school has maintained its previously reported improvements in regard to truancy and suspension.

Impacts on staff

In 2004, staff who had been exposed to the MindMatters program and professional development were broadly still of the opinion that it had helped to raise awareness of and commitment to mental health issues and had contributed to improved staff-student relationships. However these improvements had not necessarily been built upon within the school as there had been little additional formal professional development for some time. Several felt there was a need for additional training in MindMatters and related issues (particularly for new staff) to sustain this cultural change.

There had been an increase in staff morale from 2003 to 2004, partly attributable to new school leadership as well as more positive engagement by staff with the state's new curriculum framework. The year system, with the accompanying changes in pastoral and behaviour management practices, had also become better established by 2004 and was now seen as being quite supportive of staff. Staff valued these initiatives despite the additional workload and time pressures created for teaching staff.

The year system has helped. I'm in the year 9 team. I had a pastoral group for three years now so I've had the same group of kids that I've seen every morning for three years and my relationship with them - well it makes me feel good, kids are friendly and chatty and whatever and you know you've got someone who you can deal with and you know things get followed up by the year supervisors and so I think that's helped staff morale. Staff 2004.

One staff member was able to offer some reflections on her recent experiences of using the resources in the HPE subject. She found the resources very useful and positive and particularly valued the material on 'Grief and Loss' and 'Stress and Coping'. While the other material was also appreciated, this teacher indicated that it was difficult to find good resources on these particular topics. The suicide material was also valued, in providing clear guidelines about how to address this in a positive way. She felt that the resources had contributed to her greater confidence about discussing challenging situations with students.

Sustainability of whole school impacts at the fourth visit

Informants found it difficult to separate the effects of MindMatters itself from the broader change processes that had happened in the school, because they had occurred concurrently.

It's really hard to dissociate the two because the drastic change came at the same time that MindMatters did and because you have a structural change that is that large, it's going to have a ripple effect ... and with MindMatters tied in there, it can only help. Staff 2004.

Those staff who had been involved in MindMatters training and implementation continued to see the program as having been an important enabler of change, at a time when the school was undertaking a number of change processes. It wasn't necessarily viewed as creating the perception of a need to change – this was already present to some degree in the school – but MindMatters did contribute information and guidance about how the school should proceed.

(MindMatters) was the catalyst. It produced the information that told us that if we made these changes and made better connections with the kids, then we would get better outcomes. Maybe it would have been something else if some other

program with that type of passage had come along and given us that information, that would have set us on the path too. Staff 2004.

There was little evidence of active expansion in regard to the school's contact with community agencies or primary care providers, but the pre-existing relationship with a faith-based youth service near the school had been maintained.

The previously noted shift toward a more positive school ethos appears to have been sustained in this school, with respondents still reporting by the fourth visit that the school was a safer place and that there had been improvements in handling bullying, drugs and alcohol and other difficult behaviour, as well as better staff morale. There is also evidence that the school's reputation has improved as a result of changes made over the past two to three years; this change is also attributed by one staff member to enforcement of the uniform policy and efforts to influence students' behaviour before and after school.

There was a bit of that (negative) reputation hanging over, because I live in the community. It's on its way up, I don't think it's gone away yet but it has got its positive influence at the moment ... I think one of the things ... that's made a big difference is that we've really tightened up on uniform ... And we have been working really hard on saying okay you go straight home, or come straight to school ... we actually ring the parents ... an assistant principal will go over (to the shopping centre) and walk around and supervise the area. Staff 2004.

11. Indicators of change from student questionnaires

Two questionnaires (Healthy Kids Survey and Help-Seeking Questionnaire) have been used to assess key outcomes from the school's use of the MindMatters resources. From these questionnaires, a number of variables have been selected to indicate changes in: protective and resilience factors, help-seeking intentions; and drug and alcohol use.

To examine whether any of these indicators have changed since MindMatters was implemented at Glastonbury, the scores for each sex in each year in 2004 are compared to the scores of students of the same sex and year in 2001.

Note

Differences between age and sex groupings in 2001 and 2004 were examined for statistical significance. For Tables 1 and 3, the *t*-test for independent samples was used while for Table 2, Chi-square was used.

Positive or negative changes in variables are described as 'little' if they are between 1 and 2 standard deviations of the national mean, and as 'moderate' if they are between 2 and 3 standard deviations. Changes greater than 3 standard deviations are described as simply 'higher' or 'lower'.

Please note that it is not possible to attribute with certainty any positive or negative changes in these indicators simply to the school's use of MindMatters. It is likely that other important factors might also impact on these variables.

Scores for year 10 were tested for statistical significance but great care should be taken in interpreting these results as the number of students participating as baseline was very low (<10).

Changes in protective and resilience factors

The Healthy Kids Survey has two main scales each of which has six sub-scales. Not all of these are considered to be target variables for the MindMatters program. Four key variables have been selected for the purpose of this report, as likely indicators of changes that might be attributed to MindMatters. These are:

- the 'School attachment' sub-scale;
- the 'Autonomy Experience' sub-scale;
- the 'Self-esteem' sub-scale ;
- the 'Effective help-seeking' sub-scale

Table 1 indicates that the 'school connection' scores were lower for female students in year 8 in 2004 compared to their counterparts in 2001. This difference was statistically significant ($p < .05$).

There were no other statistically significant differences in the scores for students 2004 compared to students of the same sex and year in 2001.

Other differences which were not found to be statistically significant were:

- slightly lower 'school connection' scores for males in year 7 in 2004
- slightly lower 'autonomy experience' scores for females in year 8 in 2004
- slightly higher 'autonomy experience' scores for males in year 9 in 2004
- slightly higher 'effective help-seeking' scores for males in year 9 and year 10 in 2004
- slightly lower 'autonomy experience' and 'self-esteem' scores for males in year 10 in 2004

Table 1: Resilience and Protective factors in 2004 compared to the control group.

| | | School connection | Autonomy experience | Self esteem | Effective help-seeking |
|-----------------------|---------|-------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Year 7 (2004) | Males | A little lower | No difference | No difference | No difference |
| | Females | No difference | No difference | No difference | No difference |
| Year 8 (2004) | Males | No difference | No difference | No difference | No difference |
| | Females | Lower | A little lower | No difference | No difference |
| Year 9 (2004) | Males | No difference | A little higher | No difference | A little higher |
| | Females | No difference | No difference | No difference | No difference |
| Year 10 (2004) | Males | No difference | A little lower | A little lower | A little higher |
| | Females | No difference | No difference | No difference | No difference |

Changes in help-seeking intentions

In the Help-Seeking Questionnaire, students are given a scenario depicted in a cartoon format and are asked to indicate what type of help-seeking responses they might use if they were in the situation. For the purpose of this report, two variables have been examined for change. These are:

'Willingness to Talk to Someone at School'

Students were given a list of individuals (friend, mother teacher etc) or organisation (eg Kids Help Line) and asked to indicate whether or not, if they were confronted with the problem depicted, they would talk to anyone on the list. They could select as many as they wanted. This variable identifies the students who had indicated that they would talk to a teacher or some other adult at the school.

'Positive Attitude to School Counsellor'

Students were asked to indicate whether they considered that a school counsellor, student welfare teacher or pastoral care teacher (abbreviated to student welfare) could help with the problem depicted in the questionnaire. Those who indicated that a counsellor would 'help quite a lot' or 'would definitely be helpful' were classified as having a 'positive attitude to the school counsellor'.

Table 2 shows the differences for males and females in each year in 2004 compared to students of the same sex and year in 2001.

Three changes that were found to be statistically significant, namely: a slightly lower proportion of females in year 7 and males in years 8 and 9 indicate that they would talk to a teacher or some other adult at school, compared to students in the same year in 2001 ($p < .05$).

Other changes that were not statistically significant were:

- female students in year 8 were a little less likely to indicate that they would talk to a teacher or some other adult at school, compared to students in the same year in 2001,
- male students in year 10 were moderately more likely to indicate that they would talk to a teacher or some other adult at school, compared to students

in the same year in 2001, while females in the same year were a little more likely to do so;

- female students in years 7 and 9 and males in year 10 were a little more likely to indicate that a school counsellor, student welfare teacher or pastoral care teacher would be helpful, compared to students in the same year in 2001.

Table 2: Help-seeking indicators in students in 2004 compared to the control group.

| | | % who indicate they would talk to someone at school | % who indicate that student welfare would be helpful |
|----------------|---------|---|--|
| Year 7 (2004) | Males | No difference | No difference |
| | Females | A little lower | A little higher |
| Year 8 (2004) | Males | A little lower | No difference |
| | Females | Slightly lower | No difference |
| Year 9 (2004) | Males | A little lower | No difference |
| | Females | No difference | A little higher |
| Year 10 (2004) | Males | Moderately higher | A little higher |
| | Females | A little higher | No difference |

Changes in drug and alcohol use and intentions

In the Healthy Kids Survey, students were also asked to indicate the number of days of drinking, smoking and use of marijuana they had experienced in the previous three months. Three variables are reported as potential outcomes of the MindMatters program:

‘mean number of days of drinking in last three months’

‘mean number of days of smoking in the last three months’

‘mean number of days of using marijuana in the last three months’

Table 3 shows the mean number of days of use of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana for students in 2004 compared to students of the same sex and year in 2001.

Three changes were found to be statistically significant ($p < .05$) namely:

- The mean number of drinking days was moderately lower for male and female students in year 8 in 2004 compared to students in the same year in 2001
- Female students in year 8 in 2004 also had a moderately lower mean number of days of smoking compared to students in 2001

Other changes which were noted but which were not statistically significant were:

- The mean number of days of drinking was moderately lower for males in year 10 in 2004 compared to their counterparts in 2001, while for males in year 9 and females in year 10, mean number of days drinking was slightly lower;

- The mean number of days of smoking tobacco was a little higher for males in years 8 and 10 as well as females in year 9 in 2004 compared to their counterparts in 2001, while for females in year 10 it was a little lower; and
- The mean number of days of use of marijuana was lower for girls in year 10, a little lower for girls in year 9 and moderately lower for boys in year 10 in 2004 compared to their counterparts in 2001.

Table 3: Drug and alcohol indicators, 2004 compared to 2001

| | | Mean days of alcohol use | Mean days of tobacco use | Mean days of marijuana use |
|-----------------------|---------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Year 7 (2004) | Males | No difference | No difference | No difference |
| | Females | No difference | No difference | No difference |
| Year 8 (2004) | Males | Moderately lower | Slightly higher | No difference |
| | Females | Moderately lower | Moderately lower | Slightly lower |
| Year 9 (2004) | Males | Slightly lower | No difference | No difference |
| | Females | No difference | Slightly higher | No difference |
| Year 10 (2004) | Males | Moderately lower | Slightly higher | Moderately lower |
| | Females | Slightly lower | Slightly lower | Lower |

Comment

Despite reports of improved school climate, a number of indicators from the student questionnaires were more negative in 2004 compared to the baseline indicators. In contrast, year 8 students showed a significantly decline in the frequency of alcohol use

It should be noted that participation in the student questionnaires was lower for years 7 to 9 at the fourth year of data collection.

12. Key learnings from Glastonbury

The following points summarise a number of significant areas that emerged from the way in which the MindMatters resources were used at Glastonbury High.

When a critical mass of a staff are engaged in MindMatters training, this has a significant and long lasting impact on the capacity of the school and staff to create and deliver innovative health building programs.

The tools of MindMatters training and the program supports were useful in enabling staff at Glastonbury to critique their own school culture.

The sharing of the training provided a critical mass of understanding and empathy for the concepts of health and wellbeing that are embodied in the MindMatters program.

Training a large number of staff provides important protection against the loss of significant leaders during the implementation of MindMatters. This degree of training for a staff also protects against other factors that impede change adoption, implementation and management.

Once they are trained in MindMatters, teachers develop competencies that they can adapt into new situations as evidenced by the development of the peer leaders program. This indicates a significant flow on of capacity building to own, share and create a growing language and competency base of staff and students who can notice and respond to issues of mental health and wellbeing.

The language and ideas of MindMatters can provide an important leavening agent for change.

The training has the capacity to significantly energise staff members and build or restore their perceptions of themselves as valuable professionals.

When delivered within a whole school, whole of staff framework, and supported by significant structural, discipline and surveillance changes, drug use and attendant problems at school dropped significantly as did the incidence of bullying and teasing, and the resultant anxiety that it causes amongst students and staff.

In this school, horizontal pastoral group structures enhanced connection between students and enabled higher level of staff connection and ongoing interaction with students.

Staff trained in MindMatters do not necessarily all have the same levels of competence and confidence in dealing with mental health issues. Follow up training to support individual teachers to develop skills and understandings is important.

The good will of staff trained in MindMatters can generate and implement new and effective programs in schools. However, when programs run on goodwill they are more fragile.

It is important to inculturate new staff into the MindMatters frame of reference and to provide further training opportunities for staff who seek to develop further relevant skills and knowledge to enhance wellbeing.

Forced change has in the past been poorly received in this school. The way in which changes are introduced impacts on staff mental health and goodwill.

New education policies and frameworks, while externally imposed, can create opportunities for a school to reframe and revive its use of the MindMatters principles and resources - particularly when such initiatives include an explicit or implied focus on integrating student wellbeing into the school's curriculum or practices.