



Liverpool Girls High School Case Study

Exploring the partnership between SWC and LGHS (NSW DoE) over the past 11 years

Overview | Background | Challenges

South West Connect (SWC) is part of a uniquely diverse, vibrant and compassionate community spanning across Fairfield, Liverpool and Cumberland City Councils (Region E).

Government data indicates that many of the young people in our community are from low socioeconomic, CALD, refugee and migrant backgrounds facing challenges of disengagement, generational unemployment and welfare dependency.

The construction of the Western Sydney Airport and the development of surrounding commercial and residential precincts and new suburbs will see the population growth projected to exceed 650,000 people by the year 2036.

This once in a generation growth and development brings opportunity but also a range of challenges for the youth in our community. SWC aims to ensure young people vulnerable to these challenges are supported and have a strong foundation to build their futures to gain meaningful employment.

We do this by creating innovative initiatives that address social and wellbeing barriers, and obstacles impeding on education and employment outcomes. For specific and further details, please visit

<https://www.swconnect.org.au/youth-collective-impact/programs/>

The Productivity Commission states that “there are up to a million people going untreated for mental health conditions in Australia with these illnesses costing the economy around \$180 billion each year.” SWC acknowledges the importance of young people having the skills and knowledge to identify the signs of mental illness and where to access their support networks. This will reduce absenteeism and lost productivity at school, during workplacements, work experience and in post-school employment. With this significant statistic in mind, SWC has partnered with LGHS over the past decade to implement a range of initiatives to complement the school’s ongoing wellbeing strategy.

This case study explores the partnership between SWC and Liverpool Girls High School over the past 11 years. The various projects and collaboration has spanned across VET Workplacements, Work Ready, Student Restaurant Takeovers (Class Chefs & Student Pop Up Café), Parent and Community Engagement Project with LC2, Youth Mental Health Summit, STEAM Careers and Design Thinking and more recently the Educational Pathways Pilot Program (EPPP).

“Our school is characterised as being a school that is innovative, responsive to individual student need and based on traditional values in a modern future focused school, preparing students to be future ready for any opportunity they may encounter in their lives ahead. We co-create high-quality learning that empowers young women to thrive and succeed within an inclusive and global community. David Hargrave, Principal at LGHS”

To see other case studies by SWC please visit:
www.swconnect.org.au/case_study/



About Us

South West Connect

www.swconnect.org.au

SWC is a local not for profit organisation and a registered charity. We have a proven track record of empowering over 86,000 young people in Region E to discover pathways to a better future for themselves and their families. SWC works with businesses, government agencies, community organisations, parents and schools to create initiatives that connect young people (5 -25 years of age) and their families to opportunities to enhance their life options beyond school.

SWC achieves this through our dedicated and specialist staff across two teams:

1. Structured Workplace Learning (SWL)

Organises a one week placement in businesses for Year 11 and 12 Vocational Education and Training (VET) students to enhance the skills learned in the classroom

2. Youth Collective Impact Team (YCIT)

Creates and delivers initiatives and projects to inspire, develop and empower young people to achieve their potential, includes primary and high school students

The Connection Experts



Liverpool Girls High School

liverpool-h.schools.nsw.gov.au

Located in the centre of Liverpool CBD in the South Western suburbs of Sydney, Liverpool Girls High School describe themselves as a large multicultural girls high school with over 89% of their students coming from a language background other than English. LGHS has students from 62 different countries with over 50 languages being spoken by our families. Many of LGHS students are refugees, they also have a number of Aboriginal students who enrich the culture of the school. LGHS is proudly a culturally diverse learning community and foster an exciting, culturally rich and inclusive school community.

The school offers a broad curriculum with choice and diversity focusing on academic, technological, sporting, creative, performing, social, community, work-based and leadership opportunities and experiences for all students. Teachers are committed to on-going professional learning, growth and development which equips them to give students an up-to-date, relevant education and authentic learning experiences and opportunities through engaging through our many partnerships to empower our students as life-long learners. Our students' excellent achievements and results as learners across the school in the many learning programs are a testament to this.

(Source <https://liverpool-h.schools.nsw.gov.au/>.)



Solution | Approach

Liverpool Girls High School offers 6 Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses available in both Stage 5 and Stage 6 classes.

Workplacement is a mandatory component of industry based VET courses that students can choose as part of their studies for the NSW Higher School Certificate (HSC) in Stage 6.

Recognising the importance for students to gain real life work practices in order to build their employability skills and improve their employment prospects, SWC engages a broad range of Host Employers on behalf of LGHS.

Workplacement is a one week placement with businesses, to enhance students skills learned in the classroom. It is a mandatory component of industry based VET courses for the NSW HSC and involves 70 hours of workplace learning. (35 hours in Year 11 and another 35 hours in Year 12).

SWC realises it can take some students more than 2 workplacements to complete their necessary hours, and placements may need to be changed due to extenuating circumstances. Staff work with schools sympathetically to accommodate these students. SWC is flexible, we arrange replacement workplacement as necessary.

SWC's flexible service delivery model maximises workplacement take-up by schools. Staff consult with VET coordinators/teachers regarding workplacement planning/requirements, teacher expectations, specific deadlines, exam and assessment timetables, SWC utilises the whole school year arranging workplacements to accommodate differing availabilities of many schools and year groups in Region E.

SWC plan for individual student's requirements such as disability/learning support. SWC regularly communicates with VET coordinators/teachers regarding workplacement planning/requirements, teacher expectations, deadlines.

Methodology | Stakeholder Process (Workplacement)

SWC has been the Workplacement Service Provider for Liverpool Girls High School for the past 11 years.

SWC follows a proven methodology and a reliable process when engaging with current and prospective workplacement host employers.

SWC strategies are tailored to program objectives, scope, individual students and local context. SWC has a thorough in-depth understanding of the four NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Principles underpinning workplacement in the HSC.

SWC workplacement opportunities are purposeful, planned, and structured, ensuring the placement is relevant to the student's interests and aspirations, while performing 'real' tasks building on learnt skills and gaining exposure to professional work environments, culture and commercial operations.

SWC's 15 years experience in delivering workplacement services and 1,100+ community connections provide a strong foundation to schedule workplacements which meet course requirements and student readiness/expectations.



Host Employers are assigned an Employer Liaison Consultant who provides assistance with every aspect of the workplacement process. Dedicated **Workplacement Officers** contact the host employer before, during and after the placement. They also are a main point of contact for any issues arising during the placement.



Students are supported throughout their 2-year VET course and can access a range of resources on SWC's website. SWC assists schools with **Work Ready presentations and mock interviews** prior to the placement. SWC ensures students settle in well at the workplace and gain a meaningful experience relevant to their course.



Teachers are supported throughout the year by SWC including VET Advisory Panel (Workplacement Reference Group) meetings held each term. SWC sources and administers workplacements on behalf of the school. VET teachers have a dedicated Workplacement Officer who is the conduit between the school and the host employers, providing prompt and effective support throughout the student's workplacement.



Parents and Carers can access the Parents & Carers Guide to Workplace Learning before their child attends workplacement. This contains important information about preparing for a positive and realistic workplacement experience.

Methodology | Stakeholder Process (YCIT)

The Youth Collective Impact Team applies the methodologies determined by the Evidenced Based Programs that we deliver. Our approach involves creating initiatives that are tailored, based on consultation and research. To ensure an inclusive and robust process, we set up a Steering Committee comprising of stakeholders from the education, government and business sectors for our large scale projects.

For all other projects, SWC consults with Principals and the executive team, including classroom teachers, Year Advisors or Faculty Head Teachers to agree on common shared goals /objectives, decision making and evaluation process to measure impact of the project. Outcomes are reported back to key stakeholders in detailed impact reports and communication with other stakeholders and the broader community is made available through our newsletters, annual operational reports and video summaries on our website.

Throughout each program, SWC works with school teaching staff/executive team to share resources and build capacity at each school to allow them to continue to benefit from the objectives/outcomes of each program. SWC is a conduit for communication of opportunities, broadcast to appropriate personnel at school. SWC links students with employment opportunities (entry level jobs and Apprenticeships/ Traineeships).
<https://www.swconnect.org.au/youth-collective-impact/programs/>

SWC facilitated the **Student Pop Up Café** and the **Class Chefs (student restaurant takeover)** events for LGHS which both provide a workplace co-assessment opportunity and workplacement hours to students.



Student Pop Up Café: VET students run a Café for the morning. Students make and serve up to 200 barista coffee and bacon and egg rolls in 4 hours; comparable to some of the busiest cafés in Sydney.



Class Chefs: VET students run a restaurant for one evening, showcasing their skills (120 paying customers receive a 3-course fine dining experience, including drinks). Schools receive a resources package developed in consultation with NSWDoE and Industry bodies.

Student Restaurant Takeover process (Class Chefs and Student Pop Up Café):

- Consultation with stakeholders (Senior Pathways and Schools) to identify needs, create project plan, compliance documentation (risk management, processes manuals, permission notes etc)
- Identify suitable restaurant / café, meet with owner/manager to ensure meaningful real-life learning practices, complete compliance obligations (risk management, student placement records etc)
- Information session for teachers, schools submit EOI's, schools selected
- Meeting between SWC, teachers and restaurant / café manager and conduct site visit, allocate roles and responsibilities, identify and overcome any challenges
- SWC manages the end to end process including ticket sales/bookings, providing information and resources for the school to effectively prepare their teachers and students for the event day where they serve paying customers
- Event day – VET students run the restaurant / café for the day and co-assessed. (preparation, service, clean up, reset for next service)
- SWC manages and compiles the student, teacher and customer evaluations and prepares/submit impact reports to relevant stakeholders.





Workplacement

- Develop knowledge, skills and attitudes through real workplace experience
- Learn work ethics, teamwork and the meaning of responsibility
- Gain maturity and confidence through involvement in an adult work setting
- Make informed decisions in assessing future career choices

Youth Collective Impact

Student Restaurant Takeover specific:

- Co-assessment opportunity and workplacement hours to students
- Supervising teachers are credited with professional development hours
- Gain first hand experience working under pressure in a commercial environment
- Develop knowledge, skills and attitudes through real workplace experience
- Learn work ethics, teamwork and the meaning of responsibility
- Gain maturity and confidence through involvement in an adult work setting
- Make informed decisions in assessing future career choices

These broader objectives complement and add value to the workplacement program and benefit the community in Region E :

- Empower young people to achieve their educational, social and employment potential
- Engage communities and employers, around the needs of young people transitioning into the workforce
- Engage with and build relationships with schools and career advisers across our region to promote the importance of career education and workplace learning
- Improve community connectedness and social inclusion (bridging generational and cultural gaps)
- Connect young people to networks and resources that enable them to become active and valuable contributors in the community, through increased volunteering and employment
- Teach SEL skills for success to assist young people to better cope with stressful or challenging situations
- Improve leadership skills, self-esteem, self-awareness and self-belief to create a better future
- Strengthen links between what is learned at school and what is needed in the workplace
- Promote resilience and empathy through positive Mental Health and Wellbeing initiatives
- Encourage young people to lift their aspirations, set goals and take actions to achieve goals
- Support students to be work ready by experiencing a real workplace, leading to improved career pathway exploration, career decision making and transition from primary/high school to employment
- Develop employability skills that are relevant and beneficial in school and beyond
- Break the cycle for young people who have experienced disadvantage (reduce generational unemployment and welfare dependency)
- Increase the rate of successful transition from primary to high school by improving resilience, problem solving, communication and responsible decision making (this builds employability skills like perseverance, collaboration and self-control) which leads to improved physical and mental health, academic achievement, career success and happiness in life



LGHS students being trained by the maitre d' to serve 100+ customers during their Class Chefs (student Restaurant Takeover) session



LGHS students at the annual Youth Mental Health Summit photo booth



LGHS students preparing meals at Class Chefs



LGHS students at the UTS:Hatchery Design Thinking workshop



LGHS participating in interactive workshops at the annual Youth Mental Health Summit and meeting service providers at the expo session



LGHS students with their Student Pop Up Café certificates after serving 200 barista coffee + bacon & egg rolls



LGHS students at the STEAM Expo hosted at the Powerhouse Museum, participating in solving problems with technology

Summary of selected partnerships & programs with LGHS

LGHS has a strong focus improving the wellbeing of their students and has partnered with SWC over the past decade on a range of initiatives across wellbeing, career exploration and work immersion, they include:



Youth Mental Health Summit

SWC facilitates an annual event, where 500 students, teachers and local professional service providers engage in workshops, seminars, expos, and interactive sessions focused on practical strategies for improving mental wellbeing across all aspects of a young person's life from school, home, social and part time work environment. These students and teachers create action plans and share strategies with other schools which are then implemented back at their schools and in their homes to help improve the mental wellbeing of up to 40,000 young people in Region E. LGHS has participated in the YMHS since 2014 as part of their ongoing wellbeing strategy. <https://www.swconnect.org.au/youth-collective-impact/youth-mental-health-summit/>



Bully Prevention Workshops & Stymie

SWC worked with LGHS wellbeing team 2012-2017 to implement a range of initiatives to support and strengthen their existing student wellbeing framework. This included a series of 25 Bully Prevention Workshops for the entire Year 7 cohort of 180 students delivered by SWC facilitators. Following detailed evaluation process, SWC worked with the LGHS Wellbeing team to engage the services of Stymie as a further option for students to report bullying incidents beyond the current available channels. According to the founders, Stymie promotes student wellbeing. They work with schools to enable students to make anonymous notifications about themselves or their peers. Once the notification is made, the connected school receives the information via email, and responds according to their wellbeing framework.



Best Enemies

Best Enemies is a cyber safety education program which uses an engaging and confronting film to provide resources on cyber safety to young people, parents and teachers. They worked with youth psychologists and educators to create a program that includes workshops, community panel discussions, and study resources.

SWC engaged the team at Best Enemies to deliver complementary workshops to high schools across Region E to address the causes and consequences of the serious social problem of cyber bullying and cyber safety.

According to their website, feedback from students, teachers and other participants in a tour of more than 75 NSW schools shows young people will talk about the issues and want to understand the issues after seeing the Best Enemies 12-minute film, based on the true experiences of a 15-year-old girl. Best Enemies' ability to show the consequences from both the victim and the bully's perspective makes it unique and really connects with young people. The Best Enemies Education Program aims to provide the resources and tools not only to address the problem but more importantly to prevent it.

“Our students come back from the YMHS excited and inspired by the incredible line up of speakers, workshops and helpful mental health service providers at the expo. Our students get to meet students from other schools and find out what works well and the challenges encountered when creating wellbeing action plans. They are motivated to share ideas and resources from the YMHS showbags with their peers back at school. SWC also delivered the “Care for Us” antibullying workshops to our entire cohort of Year 7 students and was positively received. Felicity Callahan, Head Teacher Wellbeing”

Summary of selected partnerships & programs with LGHS



Work Ready Programs assistance for students include personal presentation, addressing employer expectations, WHS in the workplace, and relevant, industry specific insights. The program includes Years 9 to 12 students seeking work experience, part time jobs and post-school employment. The information provides students with an overall awareness of workplace expectations, how to successfully meet them and ways to positively contribute. SWC also provide a team of industry representatives to assist schools with Mock Interview days. SWC has assisted with connecting young people to thousands of part time, full time, casual, apprenticeships and School Based Apprenticeship opportunities, also through our partnerships, work ready program and mock interview sessions.



STEAM & Design Thinking

Working in partnership with LGHS, the University of Technology (UTS:Hatchery) and the Powerhouse Museum, SWC enhanced the learning experience for 150 Year 7 students taking part in the STEAM Expo initiative. SWC arranged for LGHS to have exclusive use of the Powerhouse Museum's advanced technology learning centre where students had the opportunity of trying their skills at 5 different sessions across virtual reality, coding, artificial intelligence, advanced graphic design and 3D printing. Students then solved a 'global crisis' by completing a simulated problem solving task usually set for second year (or above) university students. Sessions allowed students to learn how technological concepts relate to real world situations and providing them with hands-on projects and problems that help them apply concepts and solutions in a new context. The aim of this partnership is to nurture the curiosity of students and help them develop skills around creativity, critical thinking and innovative problems solving. The goal is to also improve literacy and numeracy as well as develop future ready enterprise skills such as communication and project management skills.



The Educational Pathways Pilot Program (EPPP) is an innovative program designed to give students a better sense of what lies beyond the school gates, and provide them with more personalised and targeted careers advice by:

- Helping students into school-based apprenticeships and traineeships through mentoring and support
- Expanding opportunities for school students to engage with fee-free VET Smart & Skilled programs
- Strengthening careers advice and job-ready life skills for young people

In addition to the Careers Immersion Teams cluster meetings, SWC also participates in the Industry Engagement Working Group which is the steering committee to enhance the EDGE for work pilot. The EPPP's objective aligns with SWC's aim to improve the quality of, and access to careers information and advice for young people in our region. This is also why SWC contributes to the Careers and Transitions Advisers Network to enhance career advisor capacity and capability and industry engagement to new cohorts, particularly in Years 8 to 10, in addition to Years 11 and 12.

“The STEAM Careers and Design Thinking event with SWC, LGHS and the Powerhouse Museum was a great day and we loved the energy the girls brought to the UTS: Hatchery. These events showcase the potential to expose and engage more young women to the space of TEAM in interesting ways that can hopefully have an impact on their education and career trajectories. Tida Tippapart, UTS Hatchery and New Learning Manager”

Summary of selected partnerships & programs with LGHS



Careers and Transition Expos Seek-A-Skill Careers Expos

SWC has partnered with Fairfield and Cumberland City Council, TAFE and local employers to host the annual Seek-A-Skill Careers Expos. To date, 11,000+ students have interacted with employers and received an insight into a trade, job or industry. 790 volunteers from 98 exhibitors delivered valuable information, experience and tips about their respective industry and career paths.

SWC partners with a leading event company annually, to promote Expos for Apprenticeships/Traineeships and Career Market options to students across 5 regions of NSW. Region E has over 3,000 students and parents attend each event with over 100 exhibitors, all offering employment through Apprenticeships and Traineeships for local youth. Thousands of students and teachers from LGHS have participated in these Career Markets and Expos, providing students with an opportunity to broaden their career options.



Each year and over the past decade, SWC supports a range of awards that recognise the talents and achievements of young people.

These include:

- NSW DoE VET Awards Gold Sponsor
- VET Student of the Year Award (all 36 of our schools offering VET courses)
- VET Student Workplacement Awards as nominated by Host Employers
- Student Work Ethic Awards provided to all 145 Primary and High Schools in our region. SWC asks schools to select a student who has consistently demonstrated that they try to achieve their personal best in a diligent and respectful manner, the award includes a certificate and a Coles Myer gift card.



“The thing that I love most about VET is the fact that students get to be in this real life working environment, they get to really practice the hands on skills that they wouldn't necessarily get in other frameworks in other courses at the school. Their natural ability just shines through and they're having a great time doing it as well. They can take those practical skills into the workforce and they come out with dual accreditation, they have their HSC behind them and they get their Certificate II or III, its a great way for them to lift their confidence and get a holistic experience.

Jennifer Henriques, LGHS VET Coordinator/Teacher at Class Chefs and Student Pop Up Café (VET student restaurant takeovers)

UTS:HATCHERY

Results | Outcomes Achieved

11 Year Period partnership between SWC and LGHS

The projects were completed within the agreed timeframes and the original objectives were achieved.

1,600 LGHS Workplacement students, placed across 6 frameworks (11-year period):



Information
& Digital
Technology



Business
Services



Entertainment
Industry



Retail
Services



Food &
Beverage



Kitchen
Operations



2,900
Work Ready and
Mock Interviews

completed by LGHS students
from Years 9 to 12

Career and
Transition Expos
1,200 students



participated in Seek a Skill, Careers Market,
Apprenticeship & Traineeship Expos



Wellbeing &
Bully Prevention
1,350 students

participated in sessions (includes
Best Enemies, Stymie and YMHS)



STEAM & Design Thinking
550 students

participated in Career Immersion events
(includes workshops, Speed Networking, Career
Explorer Industry Tours & STEAM Expos)



Student Restaurant Takeovers
680 dishes **560** drinks **305** customers

served by LGHS students in Class Chefs & Student Pop Up Café

Through our collaboration with the "LC2 Parent and Community Engagement Project" working with local Liverpool Primary and High School Principals, SWC has facilitated the successful transition of Primary School students from feeder schools into both Liverpool Girls and Boys High Schools. This was achieved through a series of workshops and Aspirational Future Links Tours.

Liverpool Girls High School Students that participated in these projects have utilised the skills gained to secure part time work while at school.



Annual Youth Mental Health Summit:

(Evaluation feedback from all participants 2014 to 2020)



95% of Students agreed that mental health is important and it needs to be talked about more



88% Teachers agreed



86% of Students learnt something new about mental health and wellbeing at the YMHS



78% Teachers agreed



96% of students thought the YMHS was beneficial and would recommend it to their friends or colleagues



100% Teachers agreed



97% of students had a positive experience at the YMHS and thought it helped to reduce the stigma attached to mental health



100% Teachers agreed



89% of students met a new service provider at the YMHS that they were not previously aware of



70% Teachers agreed



92% of students were inspired by the presenters and workshop facilitators to take positive action towards improving their own mental health and wellbeing



100% of teachers found the professional development session useful for their jobs



95% of schools created strategies and mental health and wellbeing action plans at the YMHS to complement their existing policies

Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing is the foundation for success at school, careers and in life. Schools value learning from other schools about the mental health strategies that work as well as how to overcome challenges encountered. The YMHS provides that opportunity for 500+ people to come together and actively improve the mental health and wellbeing of their school community and beyond.



Moving Forward

Liverpool Girls High School a major benefactor of the upcoming **Western Sydney Airport and Aerotropolis** where thousands of jobs and opportunities for local businesses will be created. The airport is expected to support almost 28,000 direct and indirect jobs by 2031, five years after the airport opens.

LGHS is uniquely positioned within the Liverpool CBD, a thriving hub for growth and development. There are more than 15,000 health and knowledge workers, already in the Liverpool Local Government area (LGA), which equates to 20% of workers. At the current rate, by 2036, the Liverpool LGA should contain around 30,000 health and knowledge workers, almost 25% of the workforce.

According to PwC's "reimagining the Liverpool Innovation Precinct" report*, health and education already plays a significant role in Liverpool. Liverpool is the global leader in collaboration for health, education and research. This is demonstrated through the interconnectedness and interaction in the city centre.

The Precinct will be a flagship for robotics and automation in health and advanced manufacturing, investing in and attracting industry partnerships to Liverpool to support care delivery, research and education and training. Particular emphasis will be to engage with local employers to understand their workforce needs to enable the development of clear career pathways and the relevant technical skills that have both short and long-term job prospects. A structured approach to vocational training will upskill talent to enable Liverpool to take advantage of upcoming opportunities, including the Western Sydney Airport.

SWC is also uniquely positioned to support LGHS and other schools in Region E to connect students with opportunities to help them to build employability skills and gain experiences to help young people secure productive jobs that match their interests and abilities.

Through our collaboration and established networks across the education, business and community sectors, SWC have created sustainable initiatives that address health and wellbeing, youth unemployment, employability skills, transition and pathway options that will allow young people to become economic, social and civic contributors in their community.

When young people feel empowered, inspired and motivated to achieve their goals, and are provided with appropriate skills and resources, they will focus their time and energy on achieving their goals regardless of their background or the adversity they previously faced as evidenced by the many success stories within our community over the years.

Valuable partnerships with forward thinking schools like Liverpool Girls High School allows SWC to continue to improve learning and employment outcomes for young people and make a sustainable, positive impact in Region E.

For additional information,
please contact South West Connect on: (02) 9822 9370 | (select option 2 for the Youth Team)
www.swconnect.org.au | info@swconnect.org.au
PO Box 68, Edensor Park NSW 2176 | Bossley Park Community Centre, 28 Belfield Rd Bossley Park NSW

* [\[source: https://www.pwc.com.au/agendas/cities/reimagining-liverpool-aug17.pdf\]](https://www.pwc.com.au/agendas/cities/reimagining-liverpool-aug17.pdf)