

# NESA consultations on the future of education

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## Background

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In October 2018, NESA requested that ACYP conduct consultations with school students to seek their views on what education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century should look like. These consultations were held at two ACYP events: Children's Week Parliament (October 2018) and the recruitment day for the 2019 NSW Youth Advisory Council (November 2018). Main themes that emerged from these consultations were then used to create an online survey that was completed by children and young people that attended the School Spectacular event organised by the NSW Department of Education (November 2018). Similar questions were also asked in a youth poll commissioned by ACYP in December 2018.

## Methodology

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In total, 1,848 children and young people took part in the consultations; online survey and youth poll.

Twenty focus group style consultations were held across the Children's Week Parliament and NSW Youth Advisory Council recruitment events. In total, 230 young people participated with ages ranging between 12 and 24 years. Young people came from across NSW representing diverse backgrounds and life experiences including disability; out of home care; culturally and linguistically diverse; Aboriginal young people and young refugees. Participants were recruited from government, Independent and Catholic schools; local youth councils and community groups and organisations.

Each focus group was conducted around the following questions:

1. What should the purpose of schooling be in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?
2. What knowledge, skills and attributes should every student develop at school?
3. How could the curriculum better support every student's learning?
4. What else needs to change?

Major themes that emerged from the focus groups were used to create an online survey. Children and young people that attended 2018 School Spectacular were invited to complete the survey. In total, 611 children and young people, aged 18 years and below, completed the survey. 84% of respondents were aged between 10 and 15 years.

In addition, 1,007 children and young people aged 12-24 years took part in the online poll. The sample was sourced from an online community for young people, Student Edge. Respondents were sent an invitation to participate in the survey via an email with a link to the online survey.

## Consultation Findings

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### What should the purpose of schooling be in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

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Young people expressed that schooling in the current era should serve several important functions. First and foremost, participants reported that school should prepare students for the outside world and especially the changing job market and technological advances. They gave several specific recommendations for how this could occur including more opportunities for work experience and volunteering, externally provided careers advice and more attention to skills-based, practical, life skills that can be applied in the real world. Participants reported that the purpose of schooling should not be to prepare students for passing exams but rather to equip students for real life:

*“(Schools should) teach you how to think not what to think.”*

Another important purpose of schooling raised by young people was to teach young people to be inclusive and to develop an awareness and understanding of difference and individuality. They would like schools to be places that encourage an awareness of the diversity of NSW; in terms of culture, religion, sexuality, gender, ability and appearance. Young people also reported that they would like schools to encourage all students to embrace their unique strengths and abilities and provide opportunities for students to learn in styles that suit their individual needs.

Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all students was also identified by young people as an essential purpose of schooling. Specifically, young people reported that schools should prioritise the promotion of a healthy, balanced lifestyle, instilling positive wellbeing habits from a young age. In particular, young people mentioned encouraging physical health, recreational activities, mental health and mindfulness activities and developing social skills.

*“Put the students’ wellbeing first.”*

Linked to wellbeing was the belief that schools should be places where students are taught to work collaboratively through group work rather than in competition with one another. Young people also reported that an important purpose of schooling was to instill in children and young people a passion and drive for education, academic achievement and productivity.

## What knowledge, skills and attributes should every student develop at school?

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### Knowledge

Across all consultations, young people discussed wanting to be better equipped with the knowledge required for a successful transition into adult life, including the work force, tertiary education, as well as community and family life.

The content of the current subjects being taught at school was highlighted by many young people as in need of updating. For example, some young people reported that certain subjects are either not covered in enough depth or do not seem relevant to young people. Participants suggested that some content revisions and additions would assist young people to better understand the topics and be able to practically apply what was being taught.

*“Subjects should be more practical and relevant to life.”*

It was agreed in many of the groups that teaching the basic fundamental subjects in junior high-school years, such as learning financial skills in Mathematics and public speaking skills in English, was working well. However, young people felt that some subjects could be improved, particularly PDHPE and History. In PDHPE, students wanted a more comprehensive and inclusive form of sexual education, as well as compulsory mental health education that included mental health first aid training, crisis management and understanding trauma. In addition to this, young people felt that all students should be given the opportunity to take part in first aid training. In History, young people felt that the current portrayal of the Aboriginal experience was not working well, with many saying that compulsory cultural awareness training should be included, as well as education about the diverse contribution of all communities to the history of Australia and the development of current society.

Additionally, young people called for new compulsory subjects to be added into the curriculum so as to fill in the gaps perceived to be currently missing. This included:

- a compulsory commerce subject that teaches financial management and budgeting
- a current affairs subject focusing on social awareness of current issues including environmental issues
- an ethics and morals HSC subject
- a politics and legal subject to be taught in junior high school focusing on human and child rights and political literacy
- advocacy education.

In line with this knowledge, participants expressed a desire for less homework and to increase the opportunities provided to all students to learn through practical experience and through simulating real-life scenarios.

*“Homework is unnecessary, it limits the potential to engage in opportunities within the broader community.”*

## Skills

Across all consultation groups, life skills were mentioned most frequently as among the most important skills to develop at school. When young people spoke about life skills, they covered a range of areas including: writing job and university applications, resumes and developing career literacy, work experience, volunteering and job interview skills and financial skills such as budgeting, money management and taxes. There was discussion that some young people do not have the means to learn these skills at home and that schools provide the only opportunity to teach these essential skills. In addition to financial and career skills, participants said that learning safe-driving skills, leadership skills, cooking, nutrition and agriculture were important to them.

*“Schools should be a place where young people go to learn basic life skills.”*

Students from regional areas spoke about the importance of all schools, including those situated in metropolitan areas, teaching agricultural skills so as to provide opportunities to students in city-areas to move into regional areas. In the same way, young people from regional areas want to be taught the skills necessary to moving and living in metropolitan areas. Young people also spoke about the importance of ensuring that all students are given the opportunity to learn technological skills such as coding and other STEM subjects.

Social and emotional skills also played a large role in the discussions, as young people spoke about needing to build resilience and adaptive coping skills. Young people thought that schools were the best place to ensure that all students are taught about emotional intelligence, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, communication and social skills, emotional regulation, adapting and managing change and stress and trauma management; all of which were recognised as critical skills, fundamental in ensuring the holistic development of a young person.

## Attributes

Young people felt there were a range of attributes that all students should be supported to develop while at school. First, they believed that students should be encouraged to develop a passion for learning in all aspects of their life, through school and life experience; to work hard and with discipline. Second, young people reported that schools should nurture a community of respect, compassion, understanding and awareness of diversity, empowering all young people to recognise their self-worth. Finally, young people expressed that schools should promote team work, teach respectful leadership and adaptability to different or unexpected situations, so as to ensure all students are equipped with confidence, resilience and creativity. Young people expressed these attributes as a two-way process: when teachers treat all students fairly, this leads students to treat their teachers and peers in a similar manner; creating a cycle of respect.

## How could the curriculum better support every student's learning?

Responses to this question could be categorised under three main themes: teachers, schools and the curriculum and assessments.

### Teachers

Young people reported that they want to feel like their teachers genuinely care for them and put their wellbeing first. They appreciated strong teacher-student relationships that resulted in mutual respect, communication and informal check-ins. Participants also spoke positively of teachers who were flexible and adaptable to different learning styles, who used different methods, such as: lectures, textbooks, practical experience, videos, personal interest projects etc. to engage all of their students and ensure that no one is left behind or struggling.

Young people also expressed concern for the inconsistent quality of teachers in schools, particularly in regional and rural areas where there is frequent staff turn-over. These students reported being unsupported for lengthy periods of time and missing out on important educational content. To solve this, participants suggested funded housing for teachers coming to regional areas as well as incentives for these teachers to stay on long-term. To improve the overall quality of teachers in all schools across the State, it was suggested that experienced and well-received teachers could hold seminars and classes for upcoming teachers.

Students also discussed that teaching staff should reflect the diversity of the student body. Students wanted to feel represented by those teaching and looking after them. Participants thought that there should be at least one Aboriginal teacher at every school. It was also thought that all teachers should undergo mandatory mental health first aid training and be trauma informed, as well as mandatory cultural awareness training.

### Schools and the curriculum

Young people had several ideas for ways in which schools could make the curriculum more comprehensive and inclusive of all students. Specific subjects were mentioned as being of particular concern. First History was identified as lacking in Aboriginal cultural awareness and sensitivity. Second, it was reported that PD/H/PE could be strengthened by destigmatising the topics of sexual intercourse, sexual assault, domestic violence and drug use, and developing a more inclusive sexual health and healthy relationships component within the subject. Young people also felt that religious education was lacking in diversity, particularly in single-religion schools, such as the Catholic system, whereby students were not appropriately taught about other religions and cultures.

Young people spoke about having limited options for electives and extra-curricular activities, which prevented some students from pursuing their ambitions or feeling like they belong or fit in with the designated school curriculum. Students from regional or rural areas in particular spoke about missing out on electives that they were passionate about due to lack of resources, teachers or fellow students who were also interested.

*“Provide support for individual’s talents, value each subject and encourage students to undertake opportunities that are relevant to their ambitions.”*

It was suggested that students be given the ability to self-direct their learning – partake in VET courses or other more practical experiences, whilst still being considered a part of the student body. It was further raised that external careers advisors should be available for one on one consultations and to create career action plans for every student. Work experience and community volunteering opportunities were also spoken about positively, with participants saying that further action should be taken to strengthen community-school liaisons so as to demystify the post-school and career transitioning experience.

Other important changes to the curriculum that were frequently discussed included incorporating a wider variety of language classes into schools, as well as compulsory brail and sign language classes into all schools. It was thought that this would increase empathy within the student body as well as empower young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and young people with a visual impairment.

Regional and rural students also identified the inequality of the rural entry scheme as not working well. They felt that it was unfair for regional young people who are attending public schools to compete with regional young people who are attending private schools, in order to gain entry into university.

Groups spoke favourably about having access to homework centres before and after school, as well as internal tutoring. They felt that peer tutoring programs should be available in all schools to ensure all students have access to this level of academic support, as well as to increase peer support. These programs would involve senior students mentoring and tutoring junior students, as well as ex-students coming into school to mentor, provide career advice and tutor senior students.

## Assessments

Young people spoke about the issue of standardised assessments in determining student's abilities and future prospects. Specifically, they expressed concern over the amount of pressure this causes many students, including the negative impact on their mental health. It was expressed that, within the diversity of the student population of NSW, it is impossible to accurately measure student's intelligence levels using methods such as the HSC and NAPLAN examinations. Instead, they advocated for flexible assessment tasks for students who learn differently, who have disabilities and other special circumstances. Suggestions put forward included using a variety of testing methods, such as writing, speaking, personal interest projects, creative portfolios and discussion-based options, skill application in a variety of real life scenarios, or measuring outcomes on social skills and student engagement. Young people understood the importance of schools in terms of teaching students how to perform under pressure however they felt that the significance placed on standardised testing was unfair for many students and they resented being defined by a numerical value. They felt that taking the focus off failing, school statistics and competition would result in decreasing the negative effects of extensive pressure on their wellbeing.



## What else needs to change?

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During the consultations, young people spoke about what was working for them in relation to school and schooling, what could be improved and what could be made more consistent across the entirety of NSW schools, so as to ensure all students have access to the same academic and post-school opportunities. Young people also shared many ideas that they discussed within their groups in order to make schools safer, more positive and inclusive spaces.

A recurring theme that was addressed throughout the consultations was the importance of establishing all schools as safe and positive spaces for all students. Young people spoke about a cultural shift within schools so as to accommodate the needs and views of all students, strengthen a sense of community, validate all young people in terms of their ability to belong and be successful within the school context and thus, build resilience for their transition into wider society.

*“Schools as a place to form bonds, try new things, gain confidence and be empowered.”*

Young people also discussed the need for schools to be more proactive in checking up on the mental health and wellbeing of all students. They reported that not all students who require support are visibly in need and so, teachers and counsellors should prompt informal check-ins with their students.

*“Not enough counsellors, counsellors are not known to students and most don’t feel comfortable speaking to them and would rather speak to teachers. There needs to be more privacy in accessing counsellors.”*

Students also wanted more opportunities to have a say in school matters and for everyone, regardless of ability or position, to have their voice heard. They wanted to be asked what they wanted and needed out of their school experience and from their teachers and to improve teacher-student communication and feedback.

*“Ask people what they want, what they want to do, what their passions are.”*

Other specific changes that were frequently discussed included starting school later in the day; establishing more before and after school safe spaces such as Breakfast Clubs, homework clubs and peer mentoring programs. Young people also asked for meaningful recognition of important Aboriginal events such as NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week, implementing gender neutral uniforms and bathrooms and improving accessibility for students with a disability through ramps and lifts.

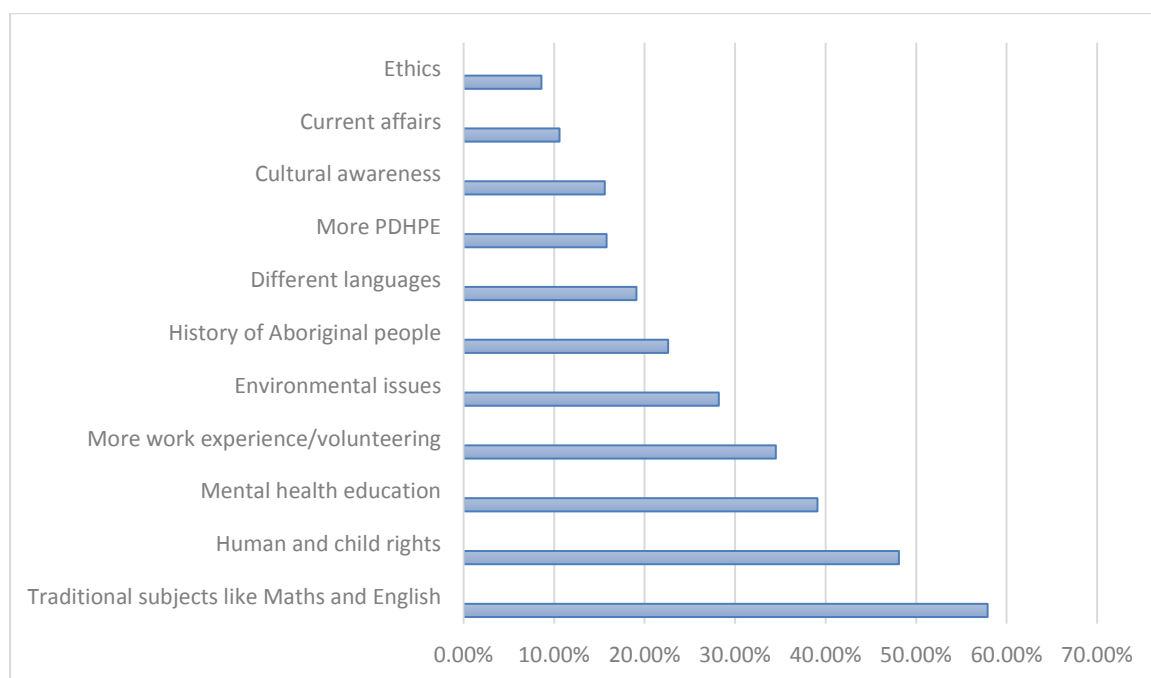
Lastly, participants provided specific ideas on how they would like to see changes made to the dynamics and structure of the classroom. To ensure all students were able to get the most out of their time in class and establish a strong mentorship with their teachers, they asked for smaller classroom sizes and teacher’s aids in every classroom. Young people also wanted more whole-of-school and year-group bonding activities and changes to the disciplinary action systems in schools. Specifically, they reported these systems do not deter poor behavior or stop class disruptions. Rather, young people conveyed that more compassion-focused anti-bullying and wellbeing education would be more successful in reducing classroom incidents.



## Survey Findings

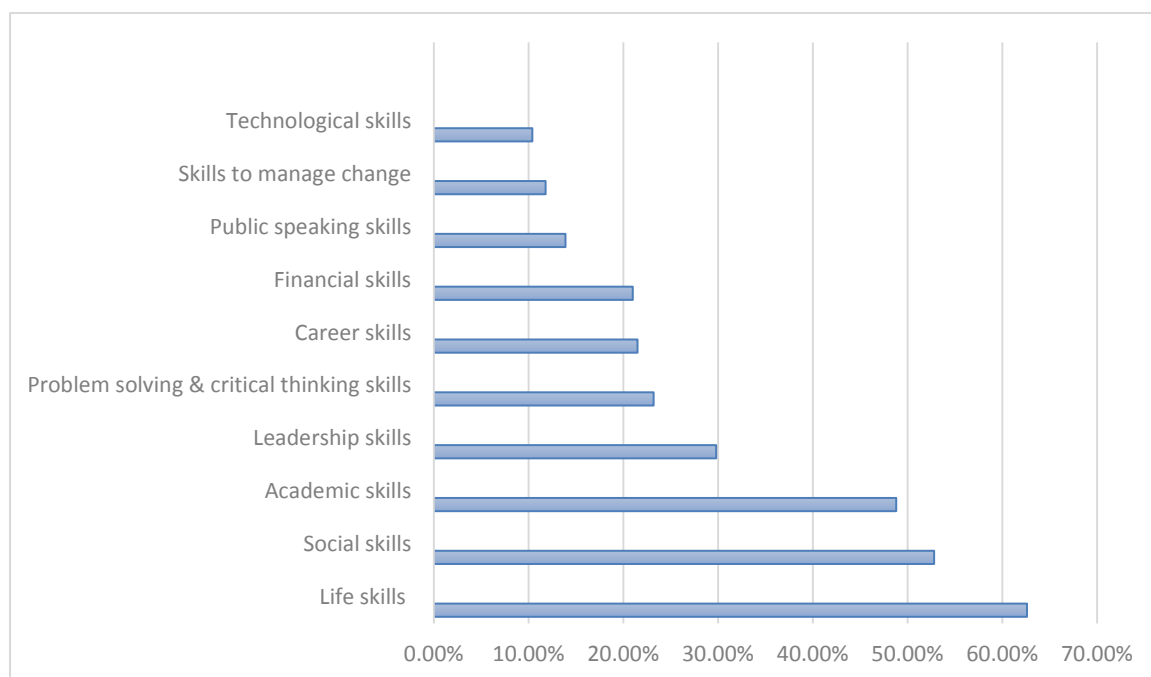
The main themes that emerged from the analysis of the focus group data were used to create an online survey that was completed by 600 children and young people. The survey findings are presented below.

### What do you think are the 3 most important things children and young people should learn at school?



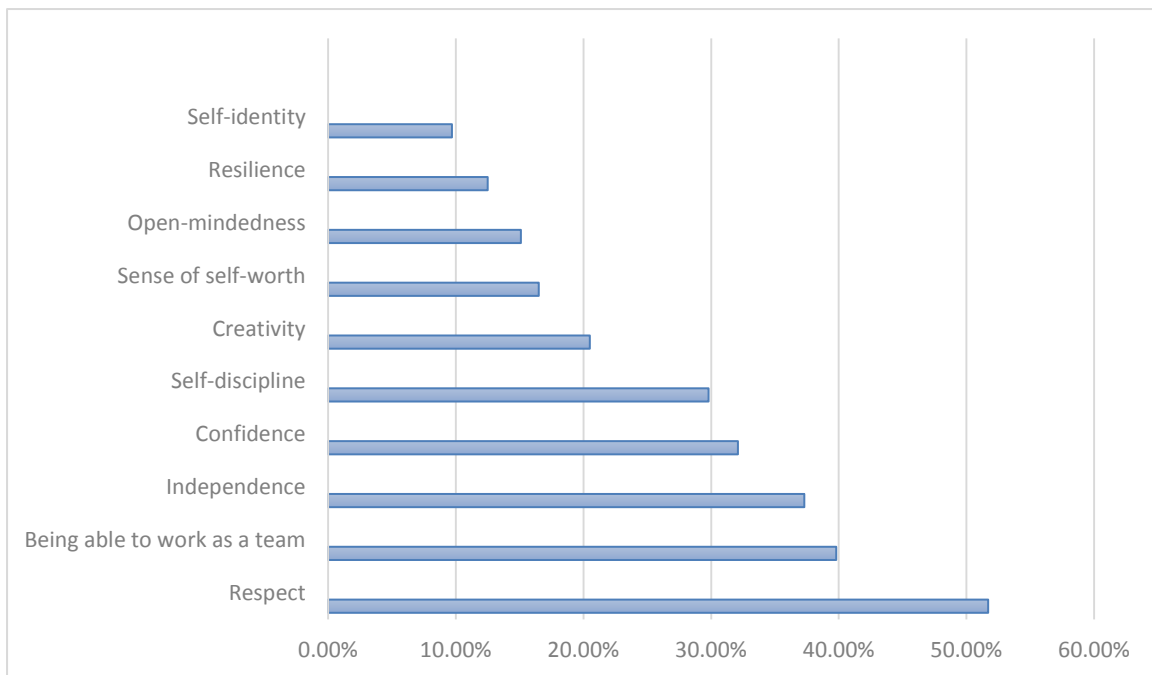
As shown, more than half of the respondents (57.9%) reported that traditional subjects like Maths and English are among the most important things that children and young people should learn at school. Just under half (48.1%) and 39.1% respectively indicated that human and child rights and mental health education were also among the three most important things that should be taught at school.

## What do you think are the 3 most important skills children and young people should develop at school?



Just under two-thirds of children and young people (62.6%) reported that life skills, such as cooking, driver’s education and nutrition were among the most important skills that students should develop at school. Just over half (52.8%) listed social skills, including getting on with others and resolving conflict, as in their top three; while just under half (48.8%) reported that academic skills such as English, Maths and Science, were the most important skills to be taught at school.

## What do you think are the 3 most important qualities children and young people should leave school with?



Just over half of the children and young people that responded to the survey (51.7%) reported that respect was one of the three most important qualities children and young people should leave school with. In addition, being able to work as part of a team and independence were listed as the most important qualities to leave school with (39.8% and 37.3%, respectively).

## What is your number one recommendation to improve education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

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The online survey ended with one open-ended question that asked children and young people to give their number one recommendation to improve schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Young people's responses were analysed and grouped according to common themes.

### What young people would like to learn at school

Young people reported that they would like their education to be based on current social issues. They were interested in learning about current affairs and wanted to know more about what was going on around them, the issues that affect their generation and prepare for the issues that will affect them in the future.

Many young people commented on the need for schools to modernise, in terms of the values that they teach and the practices that are used. They reported that 21<sup>st</sup> century schools should promote inclusivity, equality, respect, diversity and open-mindedness and take action against discrimination, racism and bullying. Modern practices raised included using more advanced technology, such as virtual reality, in classrooms, and teaching STEM and coding in all schools. Students want to be able to keep up with ever-changing technology and be taught how to implement it into future career opportunities, some of which do not even exist yet.

*"Remembering that the world is always changing and that education should be changed to follow and compliment the 'outside world'."*

In order to feel confidently prepared for their post-school transition, the necessity of life skill education was also frequently mentioned. While they spoke positively about fundamental subjects such as Maths, English and Science, as well as creative subjects such as art, music and dance, many young people felt that they need to be taught more in relation to basic life skills. Responses mentioned wanting to learn about driving, cooking, taxes, financial skills, buying a house, cleaning, public speaking, resume writing, as well as social skills such as maintaining healthy friendships, etiquette, empathy, communication and conflict resolution.

*"Everyone should be taught basic life skills like driving cooking etc."*

*"Teach life skills that are to be used every day."*

*"Have life skills classes because so many kids these days leave school with no idea what adult life and life skills that they need."*

They wanted to be taught these skills in a practical manner, through real life problem-solving and work experience.

*"Instead of just teaching the allocated content and information, teach application skills and how to use and apply the information we learn in real life situations to help improve today's society. This will also allow us, as students of the 21st century, to continue to make advancements in our personal knowledge base and that of others in our society."*

## Focus on student wellbeing

Many students commented that bullying was a problem in their schools and that in order to cultivate a safe, inclusive and supportive environment, schools should revise their anti-bullying policies, provide anti-bullying education in the classroom and take timely action when issues do arise.

*“Make the schools a bullying free zone so kids can feel happy and comfortable in their learning environment.”*

To promote positive wellbeing in schools, young people would like strong, one-on-one relationships with teachers who care about each student’s wellbeing and success. They thought smaller class sizes with more than one teacher in each classroom would assist in building these relationships as well as a more productive learning experience. It was also important to young people that teachers treat all students fairly, with no displays of favouritism.

*“Teachers being more aware of kids’ needs and what is going on with them like why they’re not learning if they’re having a hard time at home.”*

*“Building a deeper connection between students and teachers.”*

## Building inclusive schools

Students recognised the need for schools to cater for a variety of learning styles and abilities and of engaging all students within the school system. Specific groups mentioned by young people were Aboriginal students, students with disability, students from rural and remote areas and students who have less supportive home environments.

*“No one should ever be left out.”*

*“More opportunities in rural and remote areas for all fields no matter the boundaries. NSW doesn’t stop in Sydney.”*

Young people recommended diversifying the curriculum to include: education about a wide range of cultures, a more comprehensive teaching of Australian History as well as cultural awareness training and multicultural excursions, compulsory language classes and more comprehensive mental health education that also opens up a dialogue around LGBTQIAP+ experiences.

*“We need to learn more about older culture and traditions from all over the world.”*

To cater to all learning styles, young people recommended using a variety of educational tools and methods including: hands on and interactive work, experiments, physical activity and group work.

Ultimately, young people would like to be treated as individuals, not as a single stream of students who all learn, think and act the same. They want to have a voice in their school community and be listened to and respected, regardless of their academic abilities.

*“The education system and NESA needs to understand the individuality of humans and needs to develop a method of teaching to all styles in an engaging and unique manner.”*

*“Cater for all sorts of students and realise that not everyone works at a table and desk, and there needs to be more options for learning areas.”*

*“Remember that everyone learns in different ways and to encourage different learning styles.”*

### Structural aspects of 21<sup>st</sup> century schools

Many young people discussed structural changes they would like to see in schools. These included the universal provision of air-conditioning and the maintenance of facilities, such as upgrading classroom resources and providing clean bathrooms. Other physical and structural changes were expressed so as to improve the accessibility of all buildings within every institution, specifically for students living with disability, through wheelchair access, wheelchair bathrooms and structuring all classrooms to support of students with learning disabilities.

*“Every building should cater for people with reading, writing and speaking disabilities and also should have wheelchair bathrooms.”*

### Building compassionate schools

Young people also displayed strong compassionate and altruistic values in their responses. When asked for their number one recommendation to improve education in the 21st century many young people said: to provide more education in developing countries, to learn how to help people, to help those who are less fortunate, to provide education for those who are homeless and to be given more opportunities to participate in charity and volunteering work in their communities. In line with this, many responses also expressed a deep concern for the sustainability of their future and the role of schools in protecting the environment and teaching environmentally sound and protective practices.

*“Environmental awareness could definitely be improved, we should do stuff like get better recycling, be better with our water usage and electricity usage, and other stuff like that.”*

*“We should help more homeless people.”*

*“There should be more education in third world countries”*

*“To learn more about how the world can be a better place.”*

## Online Poll Findings

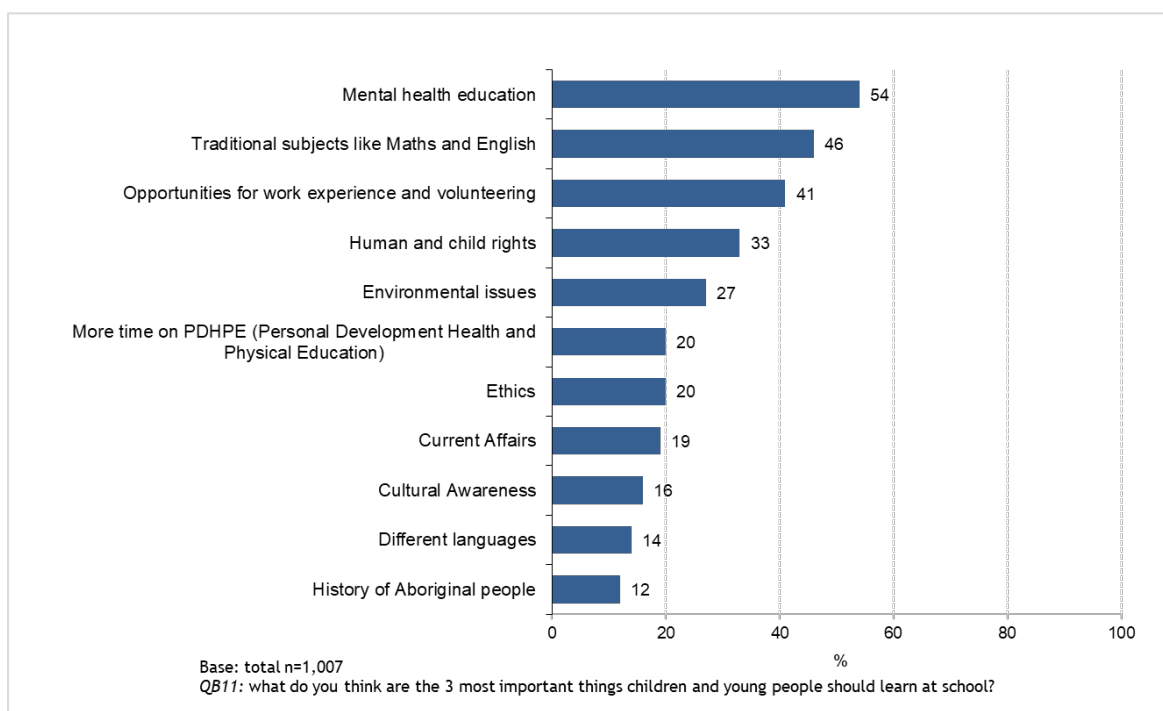
### What children and young people think are the top three most important things they should learn at school

Children and young people are most likely to think the most important things they should learn at school are mental health education (54%), traditional subjects such as maths and English (46%) and opportunities for work experience and volunteering (41%).

Males are more likely than females to think the most important things they should learn at school are traditional subjects like maths and English (50% compared to 42%) and ethics (24% compared to 17%) while females are more likely to think the most important things they should learn at school are mental health education (60% compared to 48%) and human and child rights (37% compared to 28%).

Children and young people 12-18 years are more likely than those 19-24 years to think the most important things they should learn at school are traditional subjects like maths and English (51% compared to 40%) and opportunities for work experience and volunteering (44% compared to 37%) while those 19-24 years are more likely to think the most important things they should learn at school are mental health education (59% compared to 49%) and history of Aboriginal people (16% compared to 8%).

Children and young people living in Sydney are more likely than those living in regional and rural NSW to think the most important things they should learn at school include current affairs (22% compared to 13%) and cultural awareness (18% compared to 10%) while those living in regional and rural NSW are more likely to think it includes mental health education (58% compared to 51%), traditional subjects like maths and English (53% compared to 42%) and environmental issues (31% compared to 24%).





Children and young people who speak a language other than English at home (20%) are more likely than those who speak English at home (11%) to think the most important things they should learn at school includes different languages.

Children and young people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (29%) are more likely than those who do not (10%) to think the most important things they should learn at school includes the history of Aboriginal people.

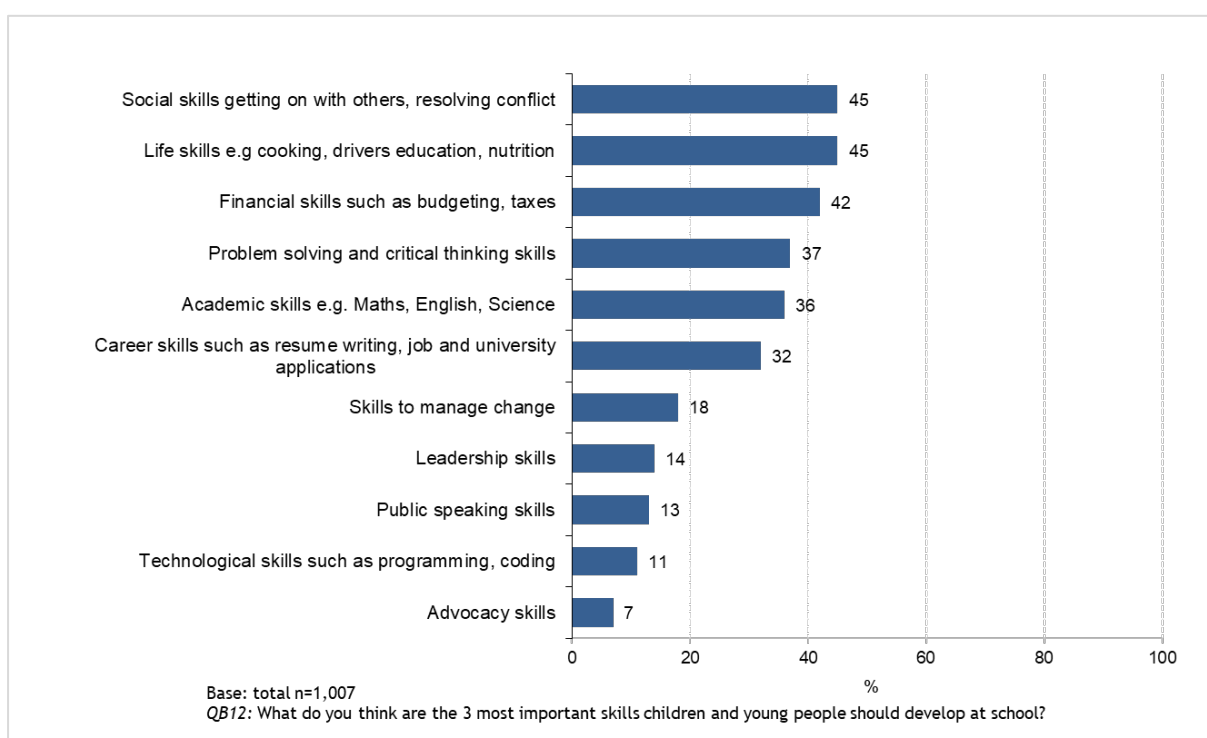
## What children and young people think are the most important skills they should develop at school

Children and young people are most likely to think the most important skills they should develop at school are life skills such as cooking, drivers education and nutrition (45%), social skills such as getting on with others, resolving conflict (45%) and financial skills such as budgeting and taxes (42%).

Males are more likely than females to think the most important skills they should develop at school are academic skills (40% compared to 31%) and technology skills such as programming and coding (17% compared to 5%) while females are more likely to think the most important skills they should develop at school are life skills (54% compared to 37%) and career skills such as resume writing, job and university applications (37% compared to 27%).

Children and young people 12-18 years (41%) are more likely than those 19-24 years (30%) to think the most important skills they should develop at school includes academic skills while those 19-24 years are more likely to think it includes financial skills such as budgeting and taxes (46% compared to 38%).

Children and young people living in Sydney are more likely than those living in regional and rural NSW to think the most important skills they should develop at school include problem solving and critical thinking skills (41% compared to 31%) and leadership skills (16% compared to 10%) while those living in regional and rural NSW are more likely to think it includes life skills (51% compared to 43%) and financial skills (48% compared to 39%).



Children and young people who speak a language other than English at home (45%) are more likely than those who speak English at home (35%) to think that the most important skills they should develop at school are problem solving and critical thinking skills while those who speak English at

home are more likely to think it includes financial skills (45% compared to 34%) and technology skills (12% compared to 6%).

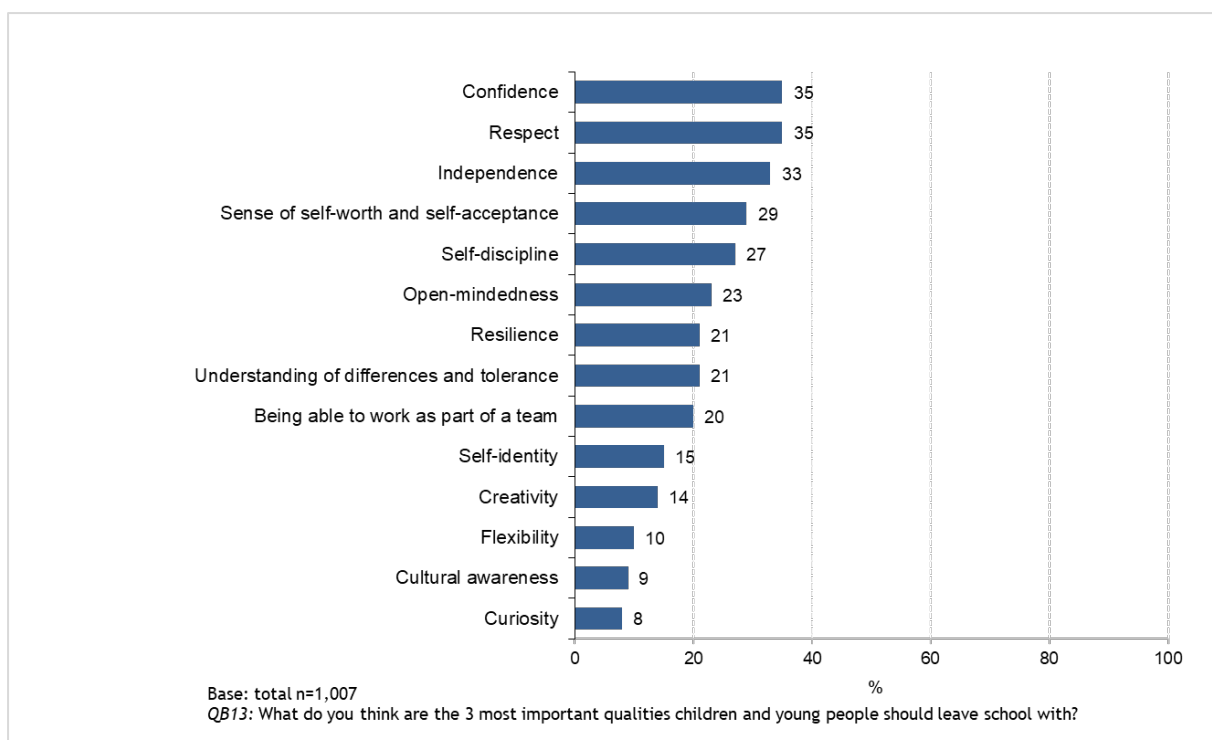
Children and young people who have a disability are more likely than those who do not to think that the most important skills they should develop at school include financial skills (53% compared to 40%) and advocacy skills (13% compared to 6%) while those who do not have a disability are more likely to think it includes social skills (47% compared to 35%) and problem solving and critical thinking skills (39% compared to 29%).

Children and young people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are more likely than those who do not to think the most important skills they should develop at school include financial skills (55% compared to 41%) and advocacy skills (23% compared to 5%) while those who do not identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are more likely to think it includes life skills (47% compared to 33%) and problem solving and critical thinking skills (39% compared to 26%).

## What children and young people think are the three most important qualities they should leave school with

Children and young people are most likely to think the most important qualities they should leave school with are confidence (35%), respect (35%) and independence (33%).

Males are more likely than females to think the most important qualities they should leave school with include confidence (39% compared to 31%), self-discipline (32% compared to 23%) and flexibility (13% compared to 7%) while females are more likely to think it includes a sense of self-worth and self-acceptance (33% compared to 25%).

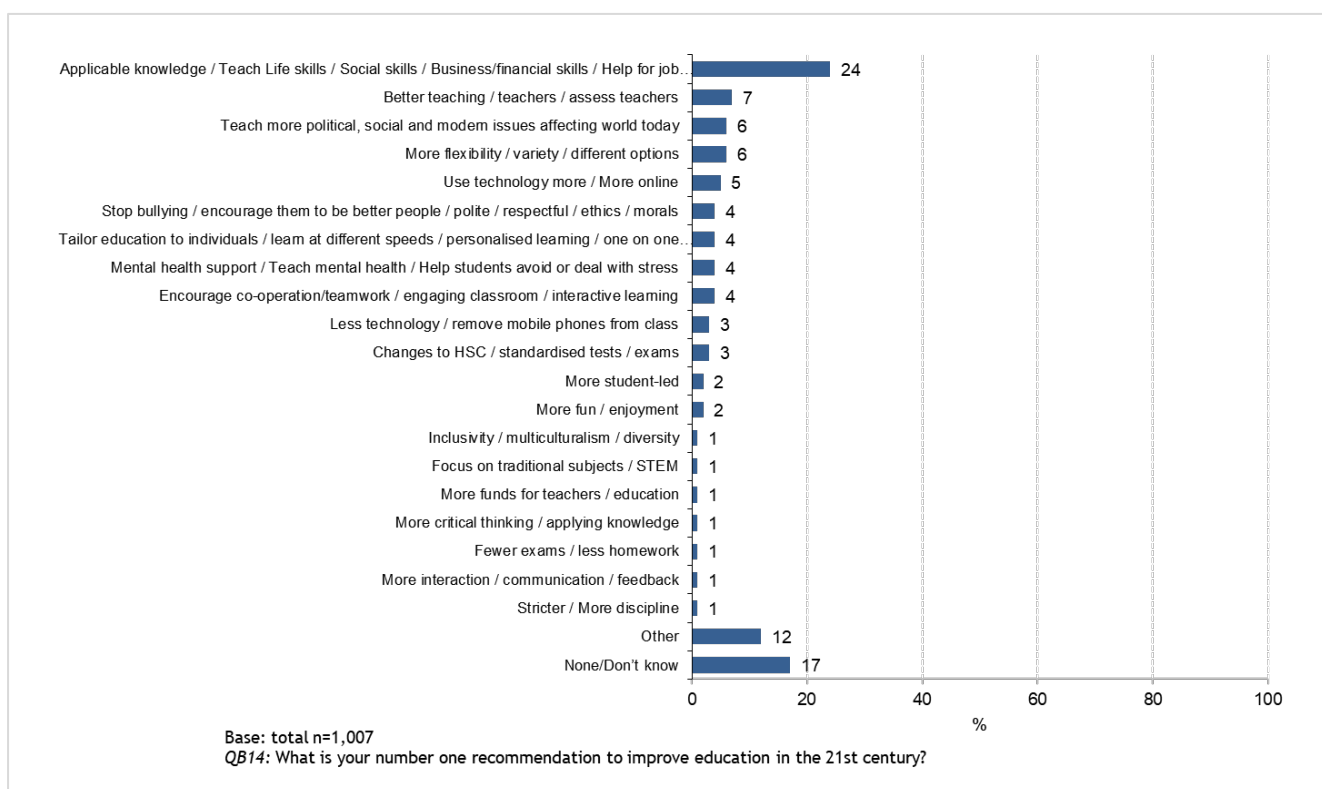


Children and young people who have a disability (24%) are more likely than those who do not (14%) to think the most important qualities they should leave school with include self-identify while those who do not have a disability are more likely to think it includes confidence (36% compared to 25%).

## What children and young people would recommend to improve education in the 21st century

Children and young people are most likely to say their number one recommendation to improve education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is to focus on applicable knowledge including life skills, social skills, business/financial skills and how to get a job (24%). This was followed by better teaching/teachers (7%), covering more political, social and modern issues affecting the world today (6%) and more flexibility/variety/different options (6%).

Children and young people living in regional and rural NSW (28%) are more likely than those living in Sydney (21%) to say their number one recommendation to improve education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is to focus on applicable knowledge including life skills, social skills, business/financial skills and how to get a job.



## What children and young people would like to add to the school curriculum

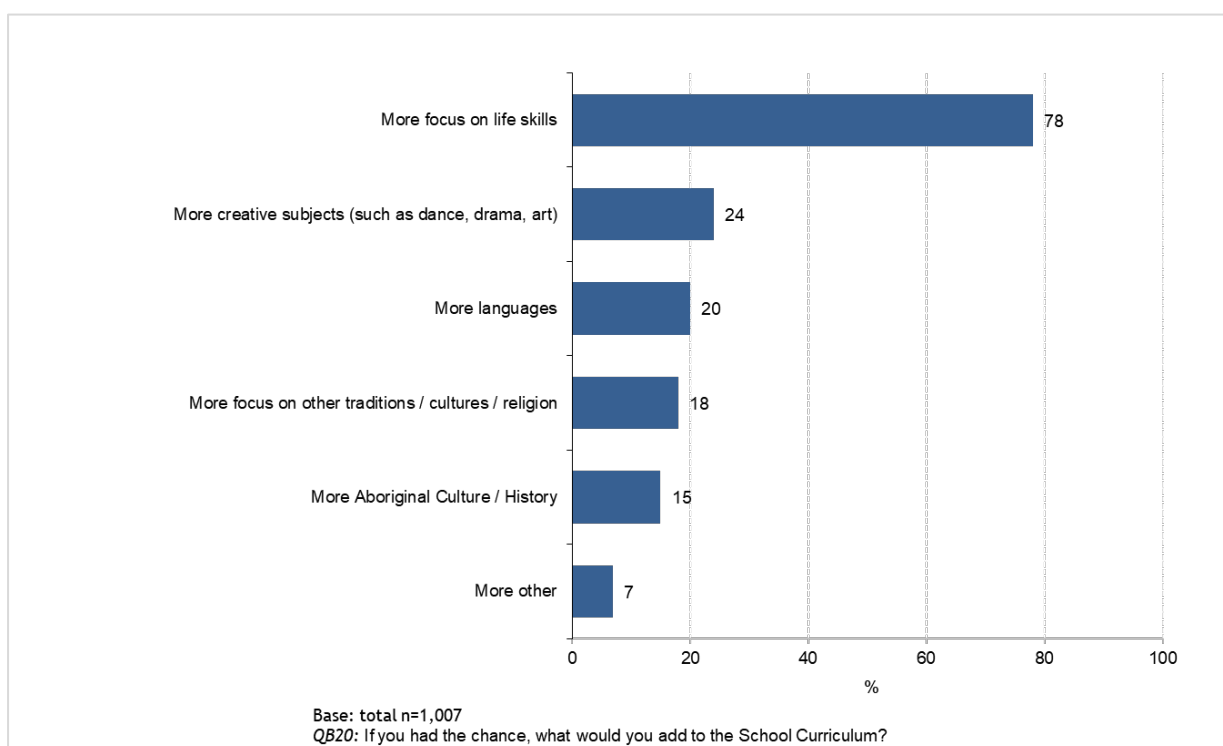
The things that children and young people are most likely to want to add to the school curriculum are more focus on life skills (78%), more creative subjects such as dance, drama and art (24%) and more languages (20%).

Children and young people who are 19-24 years (20%) are more likely than those 12-18 years (10%) to want to add more Aboriginal culture/history to the school curriculum.

Children and young people living in Sydney are more likely than those living in regional and rural NSW to want to add more languages (23% compared to 15%) and more focus on other traditions, cultures, religion (21% compared to 13%) while those living in regional and rural NSW are more likely to want to add more Aboriginal culture/history to the school curriculum (21% compared to 12%).

Children and young people who speak a language other than English at home are more likely than those who speak English at home to want to add more focus on life skills (83% compared to 76%), more languages (32% compared to 17%), more creative subjects (29% compared to 22%) and more focus on other traditions, cultures and religion (25% compared to 16%) to the school curriculum.

Children and young people who have a disability (24%) are more likely than those who do not (14%) to want to add more Aboriginal culture/history to the school curriculum while those who do not have a disability are more likely to want to add more focus on life skills (80% compared to 68%).



Children and young people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (41%) are more likely than those who do not (12%) to want to add more Aboriginal culture/history to the school curriculum while those who do not identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are more likely to want to add more focus on life skills (80% compared to 60%).