

Everton Park State School recognised as an International Glasser Quality School!

In 2023 we received recognition as an International Glasser Quality School. We join only four other schools in Australia, all within Queensland.

Choice Theory, Reality Therapy and Lead Management underpins the work we do at Everton Park State School. This work is about supporting children to become self-managed and responsible.

As a school we have adopted the following principles to develop deeper understandings of how and why we behave.

1. The only person whose behaviour we can control is our own.
2. All we can give another person is information.
3. All long-lasting psychological problems are relationship problems.
4. The problem relationship is always part of our present life.
5. What happened in the past has everything to do with what we are today, but we can only satisfy our basic needs right now and plan to continue satisfying them in the future.
6. We are driven by five genetic needs: **survival**, **love**, **belonging and connectedness**, **power**, **freedom** and **fun and enjoyment**.
7. We can only satisfy our needs by satisfying the pictures in our Quality World.
8. All we do from birth to death is behave. All behaviour is Total Behaviour and is made up of four inseparable components: acting, thinking, feeling and physiology.
9. All Total Behaviour is designated by verbs and named by the part that is the most recognisable.
10. All Total Behaviour is chosen, but we only have direct control over the acting and thinking components. We can only control our feeling and physiology indirectly through how we choose to act and think.

We link this work with current neuroscience practices to ensure we are supporting children to become self-managed. All of our staff have completed training, many to high levels.

As part of the process, we completed a self-evaluation using the following three criteria of a Quality School:

- **Criteria 1** – The school environment is perceived as a joyful place based on trust, cooperation, and respect.
- **Criteria 2** - Students, staff, and parents are encouraged to learn Choice Theory® and its application at school and in their lives.
- **Criteria 3** - Useful and meaningful work through Total Learning Competency is completed at the school.

The second part of the process was inviting a team of representatives to co-verify our work. The team visited classrooms, playgrounds, lunchtime clubs and meetings so that they could speak to staff, students and parents and caregivers about our school.

I would like to extend a sincere thank-you to everyone who spoke with the team and shared our work over the three days.

Thank-you to the co-verifying team that comprised of:

- Bette Blance – Faculty, Glasser Aotearoa New Zealand, William Glasser International Board member and chair of the Quality School Committee.

- Jane Newman – Faculty, Glasser Australia, Board Member Glasser Australia, Glasser Australia representative on the William Glasser International Board.
- Christine Duffield - Faculty, Glasser Australia, Glasser Australia Glasser Quality Schools coordinator.

The third part of the process involved the co-verifying team writing the co-verification report, detailing the anecdotes, photos and stories that they heard about our school. They then had to seek endorsement through William Glasser International Glasser Quality School committee, which happened last night.

I have included some excerpts from the report. The full report is also here on our school website.

Introduction

It is the co-verifying team's opinion that Everton Park State School has quality relationships at its heart, is *truly outstanding and truly excellent* and what is stated on their website is evident throughout the school community.

This report outlines what the co-verification team observed; the evidence of the conditions for quality at Everton Park State School. Thus, **it is the co-verification team's belief that Everton Park State School fulfills the criteria for a Glasser Quality School.**

Executive Summary

In his book *'The Quality School Teacher'* Dr Glasser wrote six conditions for quality schoolwork that could be used to guide teaching. (p 20 *The Quality School Teacher* 1993)

These are:

1. There must be a warm, supportive classroom environment.
The environment at Everton Park State School was inviting and welcoming. All classrooms visited encouraged students to work collaboratively and a strong commitment to the use of cooperative learning strategies was evident.
2. Students should be asked to do only useful work.
Where possible students were engaged in tasks that were relevant to them and had real life implications. There is a strong commitment to reasonable adjustments and differentiation to accommodate all students.
3. Students are always asked to do the best they can do.
Everton Park State School demonstrates a strong commitment to creating frameworks that value high expectations and quality outcomes.
4. Students are asked to evaluate their own work.
A variety of self-evaluation tools are used and address the premise that quality work, as good as it may be, is never static but always open to continuous improvement.
5. Quality work always feels good.
In all the classrooms visited by the co-verifying team students were fully engaged and content to stay on task. Quality work is acknowledged and celebrated in a variety of ways.
6. Quality work is never destructive.
The teachers model kindness, courtesy and respect and are committed to providing safe learning environments whereby always doing the best we can builds skills for life-long learning.

The essence of these conditions is encapsulated in the three criteria used by EPSS to self- evaluate for this co-verification process. During the visit to EPSS it was also evident to each of the co-verifiers that all these conditions for a quality school are what 'drive' the staff to create a positive, supportive

and trusting learning environment where the children and staff are encouraged to self-regulate and produce quality work.

Key findings

- The use of the Get Happier Program was a successful way to teach the students **Choice Theory®** at Everton Park State School.
- Pedagogical models such as Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies being used at Everton Park State School align with the **internal control psychology of Choice Theory®**.
- Everton Park State School is a very welcoming community, where acts of kindness are acknowledged, encouraged and celebrated.
- **Self-evaluation** by staff and students is a key driver of **quality** outcomes at Everton Park State School.
- Coaching approaches that involve in-class observations and **self-evaluation** by the teacher drive continuous improvement in pedagogical practice.
- **Trusting and supportive relationships** are evident.
- Everton Park State School values providing quality, inclusive education for the range of diverse needs within the school community.
- Everton Park State School provides a framework for **self-regulation** and problem solving by using artifacts such as the helping hands/Reality Therapy questions.
- Everton Park State School is in the **Quality World** of all of those the co-verifying team spoke to and a joyful place to be.
- A high level of support was clearly evident at Everton Park State School. All stakeholders the Co-verification team spoke to mentioned this in some way or another.
- There were multiple examples of **Lead management** in action at Everton Park State School.

Key recommendations

1. What is happening at Everton Park State School is shared with the wider community, so that the **joy** that is experienced by all stakeholders at Everton Park State School can be showcased (and curiosity about **Choice Theory** grows).
2. Consider writing a report documenting the school's transformative journey with **Choice Theory®**, sharing the insights and experiences gained with the wider Glasser Community. A copy of this document along with this Co-verification Report could also be published on the school website or Facebook page.
3. Collaborate with a university to initiate and conduct an independent research project, evaluating the impact of **Choice Theory®** implementation at Everton Park State School. The findings could contribute to the broader understanding and application of **Choice Theory®** in educational settings.
4. Parents/caregivers are given further opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of **Choice Theory/Reality Therapy/Lead Management**.
5. To continue to give time and PD opportunities so that the Everton Park State School pedagogies and frameworks are understood and implemented to ensure continued growth and quality.
6. To continue to look for opportunities to relate and align units of work with purposeful and real-life situations.