Arcadia College

Annual Report

2024 (Based on 2023 data)

Version: Final

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THE ARCADIA WAY

'Inclusive, Innovative, Individualised.'

Arcadia College aims to provide an engaging educational experience to young people who have prematurely disengaged from conventional schooling. It is our vision to provide flexible approaches to secondary schooling, through the provision of safe, inclusive, supportive and progressive educational experiences. Thus, it is our **mission** at Arcadia College to support and empower all young people to achieve individual and collective success.

Our **philosophy** is to support and encourage our learners by forming trusting relationships with them and offering them enjoyable, engaging educational and welfare programs that meet the individual needs, interests and abilities of our young people.

Arcadia College **aims** to provide an alternative, inclusive and innovative approach to education. Our school understands that engagement in education creates an opportunity for students to become empowered and successful learners. We believe that learning success is determined by an individual and our priority is to nurture and guide young people so that they believe they are capable of success through hard work, determination and commitment to their learning.

Arcadia College prioritises engagement, wellbeing and achievement. We prioritise the physical, mental health and welfare of our young people through a variety of strategies and programs. We prioritise student engagement through tailored educational and enrichment programs targeting individual needs, interests and abilities. We nurture and guide individual achievement by providing alternative opportunities and pathways that seek to promote ongoing learning, openings, future pathways and happy, healthy functioning young adults.

'Ohana means family; no-one left behind.'

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Arcadia College is a co-educational, independent secondary school offering a safe, inclusive and future-focused educational and wellbeing program. Arcadia College was accredited as a Special Assistance School (SAS) in 2013 and is regulated by the Queensland Non-State Schools Accreditation Board (NSSAB). It is governed by a Board of community and educational leaders under the Advantaged Thinking Philosophy.

Arcadia College had an enrolment of 378 students in 2023 across six cohorts (Years 7-12 on-campus; 286) and four cohorts (Years 8-11 Distance Education; 92). Student demand for enrolment at the College continues to exceed available spaces, especially within our middle school program. In order to

cater for this need, the College is currently offering the Distance Education mode of delivery for Years 8-12 students, in order to ensure students are engaged in an educational and wellbeing program.

Arcadia College staff create, implement and evaluate high quality, responsive and supportive programs with respect to the ages, abilities, aptitudes and development of our students.

In accordance with the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration, Arcadia College **aims** to:

1. Promote excellence and equity in education and

2. Assist our students become confident and creative learners; successful lifelong learners and active and informed members of the community.

The College supports all young people through an individualised approach to learning, wellbeing and community engagement. Through targeted programs and tailored curriculum and pedagogy, the College fosters all of our students to become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners and active and informed members of the community (*Alice Spring Mparntwe Declaration*, 2019). The College recognises individual needs, interests and abilities, offering high quality teaching and welfare support.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

Arcadia College is a Coeducational Independent Secondary, Special Assistance School (SAS) currently based at Robina on the Gold Coast. The College is governed by a Board of community and educational leaders under the Advantaged Thinking Philosophy. Arcadia College offers a safe, inclusive and future-focused educational and well-being program, targeting the individual needs, interests and abilities. As a special assistance school, we cater for a diverse range of student learning, emotional, psychological and physical needs, in order to give our students the best opportunity to build their future pathways and lives.

The College demographic is 56% female, 42.5% male students and 1.5% non-binary. Currently, 6% of the student population identify as Indigenous.

Students attend Arcadia College with a variety of complex, individual needs and circumstances that have led to difficulties participating in mainstream education. Students attending Arcadia College are accepted based on the criteria that they are at significant risk of or have disengaged from other formal avenues of education. The College identifies and provides individualised support for all students, depending on their needs and circumstances. Students are given a variety of pathways and opportunities that cater to the needs, interests and abilities of our young people. All students are encouraged to unlock their passions and purpose; tailored programs and pathways enable such

opportunities for our young people. The College offers a suite of educational and wellbeing programs that expose students to enriched learning experiences, indicative of societal expectations, curriculum imperatives and the complex demands of 21st-century life. Arcadia College is one of many Special Assistance Schools (SAS) across Queensland that caters for students who have disengaged from mainstream schooling and are returning to learning through an alternative educational program. Student wellbeing is a key focus of the SAS community, as students transition back into education. This is often a challenging journey, due to the very complex and sometimes traumatic experiences, which have shaped their attitudes and beliefs and impacted on their learning. Arcadia College ensures that this transition is not only successful, but a safe place to land; all students deserve the right to access education.

TOTAL ENROLMENTS

Arcadia College has maintained steady growth over the past 5 years with 152 students enrolled in 2016, to 388 students enrolled both on campus and Distance Education, Term 3, 2023. The consistent increase in enrolments encouraged the need for our own building to ensure that we could cater for more students in need of specialised schooling and support. As such, the College was fortunate enough to build a state-of-the-art facility, which was completed in 2020 at our new Robina campus; a building with specialised facilities to cater for the needs, interests and abilities of our young people. The building was designed to not only meet educational outcomes but also tailored to embed programs such as Adventure Based Learning, the Arts, Community Engagement and Project-Based Learning. Total enrolment numbers from 2015-2023 are as follows:

Year	Total number of students
2015	150
2016	125
2017	192
2018	186
2019	212
2020	229
2021	272
2022	303
2023	378

OUR STAFF

The 2023 Arcadia College total staff number was 105. This total included 35 registered teachers and 70 professional and support staff with backgrounds and qualifications in leadership, administration, welfare, educational support, youth worker support and special education. All staff collaboratively work towards promoting a high quality of education and welfare support for our young people, targeting an individualised model for success. As evident through the success of our programs and student outcomes, all staff employed at Arcadia are wholeheartedly invested in the mission, vision, aims and values of the College. Arcadia College values the diverse cultural backgrounds of its staff, total 2 staff members identifying as Indigenous. The College promotes and values ongoing professional learning for all staff and as such, provides continual opportunities for staff to participate in professional development opportunities. During 2023, staff were given the opportunity to complete a range of professional development courses including, Advantaged Thinking, Behaviour Management, CANVAS Training, Curriculum Planning and Design, Pedagogy, Integrated & Thematic Approaches to Planning & Development, Individual Curriculum Planning, NCCD, Modifying and Adjusting the Classroom, Child Protection, Disability Standards for Education, Professional Boundaries Training, Mental Health First Aid, Leadership, Outdoor Educational Leadership and The Arts. The total professional development expenditure budget for 2023 was **$76,140.** The College encourages a culture of continuous learning to nurture all staff to strive for individual success.

Qualifications of all Teachers

Qualification	Detail the number of classroom teachers and school leaders at the school who hold this qualification
Doctorate or higher	0
Masters	8
Bachelor	32
Diploma	1
Certificate	0

FUNDING INFORMATION

Arcadia College income broken down by funding source can be found on the *MySchool* website at www.myschool.edu.au.

SOCIAL CLIMATE

Arcadia College fosters student growth and achievement through an *individualised, inclusive and innovative* approach to education. Students are encouraged to build positive relationships, attitudes and behaviours through a range of supports included in the College's positive behaviour model. At Arcadia College, all students are encouraged to be accountable, respectful and caring members of the Arcadia community. Students are given the opportunity to demonstrate and build these skills through a tailored social emotional learning framework, focusing on personal growth and development, resilience and social skills. Within each cohort, staff and students focus on tailored, developmental goals, aligned to the Australian Curriculum and individual student needs. This is achieved through the staff adopting and implementing strategies, supports and programs reflective of the Advantaged Thinking philosophy. An Advantaged Thinking approach is about working with young people to develop and invest in their talents and aspirations, thereby enabling them to thrive, rather than focusing on their immediate needs. Through this framework, the College seeks to promote the creation of opportunities and works to break down any structural barriers that may be inhibiting those opportunities for our young people. This philosophy is evident throughout the documentation and processes implemented across the College.

In addition, students are encouraged to focus on their strengths and interests; an opportunity for students to find their niche and flourish within their schooling environment.

Parent, student and teacher satisfaction

Arcadia College has grown extensively over the past five years and is regarded in the area as one of the best Special Assistance Schools. The College is often referred to parents from local GP's, GO's, specialists and other schools who acknowledge the high level of expertise and service the College offers to young people in most need. The College is also well supported by Federal, State and local members, who continually engage and acknowledge the efforts of the College. This positive reputation is also reinforced by the extensive waiting list and continued parent, student and staff satisfaction data. Arcadia College values the importance of promoting and developing partnerships between the College, parents/caregivers and the wider community, in order to ensure proactive support and understanding of our young people. Parent/caregiver information is communicated regularly via letters, email, text messages, social media (Facebook) and semester newsletters, providing specific information targeting the College opportunities, successes and information to foster a College Community.

Student, parent and staff surveys were undertaken in 2023 for the purposes of school improvement using targeted questions to gather evidence and ideas to focus on areas for improvement. Overall, students, parents and staff responded positively in all areas of the satisfaction survey, acknowledging the authentic approach to both educational and welfare needs, demonstrating the success of the individualised approach to schooling. Throughout the year, via emails, letters and social media comments, overall parents and caregivers indicated that students felt well supported, safe, happy, cared for and nurtured in all areas of their schooling. For some students, Arcadia College is the first school to which they've enjoyed attending.

Parent satisfaction data scored an average across all areas, the average score was 5.0 (6.0 being the highest). Areas included teaching and learning, welfare support, behaviour management, communication, programs and opportunities offered, ICT and facilities.

The student survey results averaged above 4.0 for most categories (6.0 being the highest). Areas included teaching and learning, welfare support, behaviour management, communication, programs and opportunities offered, ICT and facilities.

Staff survey results averaged above 4.8 for most categories (6.0 being the highest). Areas were also identified for improvement, to which were embedded within the Arcadia College Annual Improvement Plan. All data recorded assists to inform school improvement agenda, to ensure a student, staff and wider College community voice within all of the programs and opportunities offered at Arcadia College. Positive feedback and the continual increase in enrolment numbers, including reaching capacity well before the beginning of the schooling year, prompted Arcadia College to design a Distance Education mode of delivery, to ensure that all young people who require alternative approach to schooling are

well-catered for and are not being left behind. The Distance Education offering serviced 25 students on inception and has continued to grow throughout 2023.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Average student attendance rate (%) for the whole school:

Total number of students	Number of possible attendance days	Total number of days absent	Total attendance days
378	66047	16487	49560
The average student attendance rate for the whole school in 2023 was 75%			

Average student attendance rate for each year level:

YEAR 7

Total number of students in year level	Number of possible attendance days for year level	Total number of days absent for year level	Total attendance days for year level
20	3660	650	3010

Year 7 average student attendance rate **82.2%**

YEAR 8

Total number of students in year level	Number of possible attendance days for year level	Total number of days absent for year level	Total attendance days for year level
62	9579	1564	8015

Year 8 average student attendance rate **83.7%**

YEAR 9

Total number of students in year level	Number of possible attendance days for year level	Total number of days absent for year level	Total attendance days for year level
80	14640	3447	11193

Year 9 average student attendance rate **76%**

YEAR 10

Total number of students in year level	Number of possible attendance days for year level	Total number of days absent for year level	Total attendance days for year level
97	17266	3265	14001

Year 10 average student attendance rate **81%**

YEAR 11

Total number of students in year level	Number of possible attendance days for year level	Total number of days absent for year level	Total attendance days for year level
63	11214	2725	8489

Year 11 average student attendance rate **75.7%**

Year 12

Total number of students in year level	Number of possible attendance days for year level	Total number of days absent for year level	Total attendance days for year level
56	9688	2418	7270

Year 12 average student attendance rate **75%**

Description of how non-attendance is managed by the College

The core business of our College is to ensure young people are re-engaging in education. As such, Arcadia College is committed to supporting our students and their parents/caregivers in maintaining attendance rates above 85%. Daily management of absences see students marked as absent 'unexplained,' which produces a list that is cross-checked by the Assistant Principals, who then instruct administrative staff to send through an '*Absentee*,' text to parents/carers. The roll call occurs at three checkpoints per day. This list is cross checked by administration staff to filter excused absences such as suspension, medical etc. This list is then checked by the Assistant Principal before text messages are sent out. It is important that students, staff and parents/caregivers have a shared understanding of the importance of attending school.

To ensure this, Arcadia College implements the following:

- Implementation of *Attendance Policy* and *Attendance Plan*

- Dedicated Youth Worker and Student Engagement Officer roles focusing on Attendance, Engagement, Mental Health and Communities

- Monitoring school attendance data to identify absenteeism trends and individual students with high levels of absenteeism

- Consistently recording and following up on unexplained absences and repeat absences of all students

- Provide interventions for students and families for students with attendance rates lower than 85% including individual attendance support plans for *High Concern*. This includes students with patterns of late arrivals or early departures

- Daily Youth Worker Check-Ins with students of concern

- Daily/Weekly communication with parents/caregivers

- High Concern meetings and individualised support options

- Implementation of a Home Visit program, where applicable

- Access to Flexible Arrangement options to support individual student needs

- Students who require additional support can apply for College transport to school. This is assessed on a case-by-case basis

- Development of a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive relationships including the implementation of programs to develop social skills, resilience and positive wellbeing for our students

- Provide strong support networks, both internal and external, for students and their families, including access to onsite Psychologists to address barriers to attendance/engagement

- Reward system for students with positive attendance rates above 85%

- Incentive system for students with low attendance rates who meet their attendance goals throughout the term

- Youth Workers provide morning wake-up calls for students who require additional support

- Failure to Attend process implemented as per Government Legislation.

NAPLAN results for Years 7 & 9 students Arcadia College - 2023 data

Benchmark Data for Year 2023 - Note: This data represents a small cohort sample size and therefore is not a true indication of mean scores across cohorts. In addition, multiple students were withdrawn or exempt from participation in NAPLAN for 2023.

Reading

Year	Average Score (School)	Average Score (National)	% at or above National minimum standard
Year 7 (2023)	417	536	n/a %
Year 9 (2023)	507	564	n/a %

Writing

Year	Average Score (School)	Average Score (National)	% at or above National minimum standard
Year 7 (2023)	442	534	n/a %
Year 9 (2023)	496	567	n/a %

Spelling

Year	Average Score (School)	Average Score (National)	% at or above National minimum standard
Year 7 (2023)	483	539	n/a %
Year 9 (2023)	534	568	n/a %

Grammar and Punctuation

Year	Average Score (School)	Average Score (National)	% at or above National minimum standard
Year 7 (2023)	444	539	n/a %
Year 9 (2023)	472	557	n/a %

Numeracy

Year	Average Score (School)	Average Score (National)	% at or above National minimum standard
Year 7 (2023)	448	538	n/a %
Year 9 (2023)	480	568	n/a %

Percentage of students making above average progress Data not available for this special school

http://www.myschool.edu.au/

Year 12 Outcomes

Outcomes for our Year 12 cohort 2023	
Number of students awarded a Senior Education Profile	56
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement	n/a
Number of students who received an Overall Position (OP)	n/a
Number of students who are completing or completed a School-based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SAT)	4
Number of students awarded one or more Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualifications	50
Number of students awarded a Queensland Certificate of Education at the end of Year 12	35
Number of students awarded an International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD)	n/a
Percentage of Year 12 students who received an OP1-15 or an IBD	n/a
Percentage of Year 12 students who are completing or completed a SAT or were awarded one or more of the following: QCE, IBD, VET qualification	89%
Percentage of Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) applicants receiving a tertiary offer	n/a

Post-School Destination Information

At the time of publishing this School Annual Report, the results of the 2023 post-school destinations survey, Next Steps – Student Destination report for the school was not available. Information about these post-school destinations of our students will be uploaded to the school's website in September, 2024 after the release of the information. Data from 2022 is available as per Appendix 1.

Background on how the Next Steps survey was conducted:

The survey was emailed and promoted on the College Facebook page to all previous Year 12 students who had left Arcadia College in 2023. The 2023 data was requested in April, 2024 and will be available on the website in September, 2024.

DISTINCTIVE CURRICULUM OFFERINGS

The curriculum is enhanced through multiple learning opportunities, such as enrichment electives, Adventure-Based Learning, The Arts, Service Learning, Social Emotional Learning and cross curricular activities. Subjects are linked through a common theme or topic for each term, with an overall project or outcome attached to incorporate cross curricular areas such as, *The Arts*, Technologies, and HASS, in an attempt to promote continuous engagement and success, whilst supporting students' individual interests and needs. Below are examples of the additional engagement strategies used within the College.

Project-Based Learning

Project Based Learning (PBL) is a student-centred learning approach, engaging students in a variety of curriculum areas, concepts and ideas. Fostering students to develop their potential as independent learners, creative and critical thinkers and collaborators, PBL explores a variety of issues through a range of projects related to 'real life,' experiences. This teaching and learning framework, encourages students to navigate their own learning journeys, whilst gaining skills and knowledge to assist their future career and employment aspirations. This method is used predominantly across the junior school cohorts, to promote engagement.

The Arts

Linked heavily to the guiding principles of PBL, an Arts-based pedagogy is also embedded throughout learning in several cohorts, acting not only as a tool for re-engagement, but also as a powerful therapeutic tool. Students are encouraged to participate in the active creation of their learning environments and transform their classrooms to reflect the themes or topics each semester. Students will contribute to the learning environment throughout each term, where they can visibly see their efforts and track their own learning. This is an effective strategy for all year levels.

Students are also given access to extracurricular arts activities, through Music Group, Drama Club, and Just Dance group. These groups are offered outside of the usual curriculum hours, to foster students' interests and abilities. In addition, the College uses music instead of school bells, as break/class transitions, where students are given the opportunity to select the song of the term to be played during these transitions.

Adventure-Based Learning

Students will engage in social and emotional learning through a structured, targeted framework, incorporating developmental needs of students, as well as through Adventure-Based Learning (ABL) programs in the Health and Physical Education Key Learning Area (KLA). ABL is based on a philosophy that, in essence, states that individuals are usually more capable (mentally, emotionally and physically) than they perceive themselves to be and if given the opportunity to participate in a supportive atmosphere, can discover this excellence within themselves. ABL utilises learning initiatives, low and high challenge programs and activities to facilitate individual capabilities, team building, problem solving, creativity, critical thinking, trust and communication. The experience allows the individual and team to approach physical, social, mental and emotional challenges in a safe and secure setting.
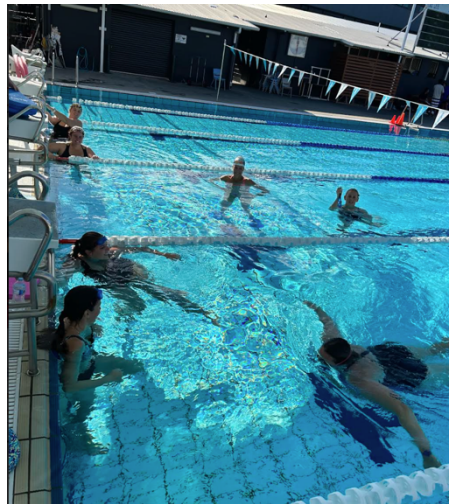
Independent Schools Cup

Arcadia College initiated and participated in the first Independent Schools Cup; an interschool sports initiative for Independent Schools on the Gold Coast. The competition was trialled during Term 3, with over 80 students and 5 schools participating in the touch football competition. The initiative will extend to additional schools in 2024, offering touch football and basketball round robin comps.

Rock and Water

Rock & Water is a practical based program aimed at raising self-awareness of personal strengths and abilities and at learning how to play, work and live together with others in a changing, multicultural society. The concepts 'rock' and 'water' are used as a metaphor throughout the program for young people to explore and choose different forms of communication (for example, does the situation require a rock attitude or water attitude). Rock & Water is designed to enhance children's resilience skills, monitor and identify their reactive behaviour patterns when placed in times of stress, develop their capacity to work effectively in a group situation by analysing how relationships are strengthened, and to stand with focus and determination as an individual.

The Resilience Project

Arcadia College is continuing to collaborate with The Resilience Project (TRP) to deliver an evidence based SEL program. The Resilience Project is committed to teaching positive strategies to prevent ill mental health and build young people's capacity to deal with adversity. Through an evidence-based Teaching and Learning Program and inspiring digital presentations for students, staff and parents/caregivers, our school partnership program aims to support mental health in the classroom, staffroom and family home. The research is clear; the more positive emotion you experience, the more resilient you will be. For that reason, the focus is on key pillars that have been proven to cultivate positive emotion; Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness (GEM), with Emotional Literacy being a foundational skill to practise these strategies. The Resilience Project's School Partnership Program has been independently evaluated by both The University of Adelaide and The University of Melbourne. In-depth study of program participants versus non-program participants found students that had the benefit of The Resilience Project material benefited in a range of ways such as:

• Improved confidence and self-esteem

• Improved knowledge and ability to express emotions, at school and home

• More supportive classroom environments

• Significant increase in daily practice of gratitude strategies.

We are heavily focused on teaching our students that we all have the ability to choose, and to give them more 'tools in the toolbox' to be able to do this successfully.

Service Learning- Eco-Marine Warriors

The Peer Leaders of Arcadia College were given the opportunity to apply to become a part of the Eco-Marine Warriors team, working with other school groups to promote sustainability practices. The program is designed to inspire and educate young people to promote positive action to conserve freshwater, marine and terrestrial ecosystems and wildlife that inhabit them. Six of our Student Peer Leaders successfully participated in this program.

UniStart for Schools Program

Arcadia College has developed a partnership with Southern Cross University, including a Year 12 University pathway. Year 12 students are invited to complete the *UniStart* for Schools program, which on completion guarantees students direct entry into courses at Southern Cross University. This program builds confidence and teaches students the core skills required to succeed at University. In 2023, 11 students from Arcadia participated in this program within a cohort of 120 students across multiple schools. Two students from Arcadia College came first and second overall and as well as this huge achievement, they also received scholarships from Southern Cross University to support their future pathways. This program continues to enable direct entry into Southern Cross University for Arcadia students who seek this future pathway.

CONTACT US

This Annual Report is available on our College website: www.arcadia.qld.edu.au. For further information about **Arcadia College**, please contact Tahlia McGahey (Principal) on 075655 1800 or via email – principal@arcadia.qld.edu.au.

Appendix 1- Next Step School Survey

Next Step
2023 Post-School Destinations
Arcadia College (Robina)

This is a summary of the post-school destinations of students from Arcadia College (Robina) who completed Year 12 and gained a Senior Statement in 2022. The results are from the *Year 12 Completers Survey,* which is conducted approximately six months after students completed Year 12.

For more information about the survey visit the *Next Step* website www.qld.gov.au/nextstep. Regional and statewide reports will be available from October 2023.

75.6% response rate
31 out of 41 Year 12 completers from this school responded to the 2023 survey.
Results may not be representative of all Year 12 completers at this school.

Post-school destinations

In 2023, 51.6% of Year 12 completers from Arcadia College (Robina) were engaged in education, training or employment in the year after they completed school.
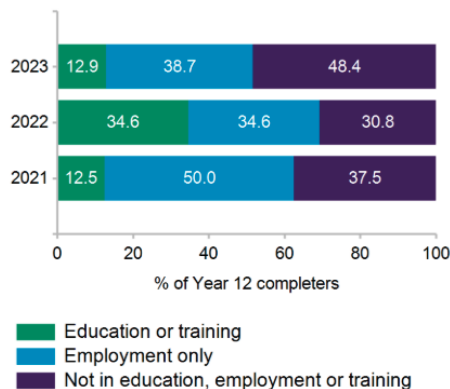
Of the 31 respondents, 12.9% continued in education and training. These study destinations were bachelor degree and VET certificate.
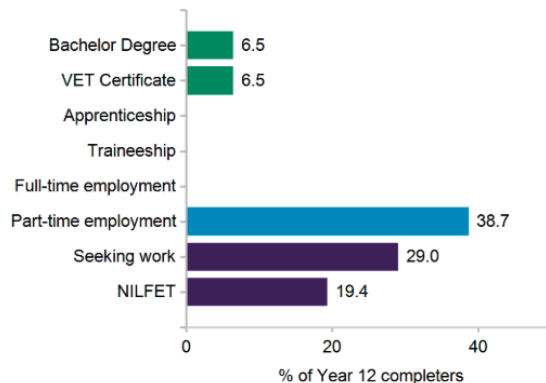
A further 38.7% transitioned directly into paid employment only.

All Year 12 completers were assigned to a *main destination*. Respondents who were both studying and working are reported as being in education or training, including apprentices and trainees.

Engagement over time

	Education or training	Employment only	Not in education, employment or training
2023	12.9	38.7	48.4
2022	34.6	34.6	30.8
2021	12.5	50.0	37.5

% of Year 12 completers

- Education or training
- Employment only
- Not in education, employment or training

Main Destination in 2023

	% of Year 12 completers
Bachelor Degree	6.5
VET Certificate	6.5
Apprenticeship	
Traineeship	
Full-time employment	
Part-time employment	38.7
Seeking work	29.0
NILFET	19.4

% of Year 12 completers

Queensland Government

Appendix 2- NAPLAN - student progress report

My School®

Arcadia College, Robina, QLD

NAPLAN ⌄

Percentage of students making above average progress

The table below shows the percentage of students at the school who achieved above average progress, compared to students of a similar background and who had the same starting score on their previous NAPLAN test.

Data not available for this special school

[NB] In 2020 education ministers decided that NAPLAN testing would not proceed that year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, there is no 2018-2020 and 2020-2022 student progress available.