



BER FUNDS FLEXIBLE LEARNING

A Federal Government Building the Education Revolution grant largely funded the \$3.8 million library Avondale School iCentre in NSW which opened last March. The final result is a flexible and inviting building that supports learning from kindergarten to Year 12.

Consultation was a key element in planning the new building as the school Development Officer, architects, finance committees, the IT Manager and library staff all provided input. This group prioritised flexibility, the integration of ICT, spaces for both individual and collaborative work, and design that would inspire students to visit the building.

Employing local contractors whenever possible not only resulted in reduced costs, but a real sense of community involvement – many of those who worked on the iCentre are parents of past or present students.

We selected FE Technologies RFID to provide security and automate some library functions including loans and stocktaking. The loan system is so simple that kindergarten students can sometimes be seen demonstrating its use to their parents. Wireless network access throughout the building supports the 1:1 student laptop program for secondary students.

Student reactions have been overwhelmingly positive as they use the

story centre, complete with underwater mural, the outdoor reading area, relaxed seating areas, group study rooms, the recording centre for creating podcasts and vodcasts, the media room with surround-sound and separate classrooms for information literacy lessons. The copy and print centres provide for student printing and whole-school photocopying facilities and the iCentre is a popular meeting venue.

The open entry area has demonstrated amazing flexibility and so far has been transformed for parent/teacher nights, a book fair, an art show attended by over 1600 visitors and a book launch.

Library staff members at Avondale School see their role as supporting and leading students and staff in their learning needs. We also aim to provide an environment where students feel comfortable, welcome and safe to explore new ideas. The new iCentre provides fantastic opportunities to inspire students to dive into the fun of learning, in a constantly changing information landscape.



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*Primary students enjoy
teacher-librarian Jenny
Litster's storytelling
surrounded by an
underwater mural.*

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