



Dandenong High School has been shortlisted at the Victorian Architectural Awards.

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YOUR SAY

What do you think of the new Dandenong High buildings?



"I really like it. It's open, and I work well in a group and also in small groups, and the layout allows us to do that."

Johanna, year 9



"We were working on a volcano for geography and I made one in the new layout and I got a really good mark for it."

Kristina, year 9



"We now get easy access to equipment that aids our learning and we can collaborate with other students more easily."

Kieren, year 9



"It's very helpful because it's so accessible and there are bigger groups and more opportunities to socialise and learn more."

Raffaello, year 8



"It's more spacious here and you feel safer with 300 students in the building in the different areas and for different things."

Milica, year 8



"It's new, bright and spacious and big and it makes you feel special. The spaces cater for a lot of people."

Dimithi, year 8

Shaping minds with new design

Staff, students and architects full of praise for school

Education | Sally Spalding

IT WOULD come as no surprise to Dandenong High School students that their school has been shortlisted at the Victorian Architectural Awards.

The school was designed to take more than 2100 students after a merger with Cleeland and Doveton secondary schools.

Architect David Tweedie said designing a building for so many people had been a challenge.

Designers consulted students and teachers on the project.

"We sat the students in different ways, tried teaching in different ways and the project team basically watched how students

and teachers reacted in different formations and then asked for their feedback as to what worked best," Mr Tweedie said.

"In this way the Dandenong design was unique."

A ratio of three teachers to 50 students has meant fewer disruptions and distractions.

The feedback from students using the new building has been positive.

"Students love the comfort level in the regulated temperature and oxygen and their motivation to work is much improved," principal Martin Culkin said.

"Attendance rates across all levels has improved as well."

Mr Culkin said students were very proud of their new buildings.

Before construction of the new building, the Dandenong, Doveton and Cleeland principals visited schools overseas to determine what type of learning environment would be best for Dandenong.

What has resulted is something Mr Tweedie is proud to call "world's best facility" in education design.

The winner of the William Wardell Award for Public Architecture, for which the Dandenong High School development is nominated, will be announced on June 25.