



Soaring

SUCCESS

CAREERS AND PATHWAYS

Jessica Smith (Class of 2018)

When Jessica was in Secondary School, she knew she wanted to work with children, but was unsure exactly what field she wanted to work in. Her traineeship at John Paul College's Early Learning Centre (ELC) allowed her to gain an insight into her potential future career path. After graduating from Year Twelve, Jessica continued to work at the ELC before she had to leave to complete her university degree (Bachelor of Education). She acquired a range of knowledge and skills from her traineeship and ELC that she could bring into her tertiary studies and now into her classroom as a qualified Primary School teacher.

What motivated you to apply for a school-based traineeship position?

I applied for an early learning centre traineeship at JPC because although I was certain I wanted to work with children, I wasn't sure in what capacity. Thanks to this opportunity to work at ELC while also studying at the College, I discovered myself and learned about my career options.

How did this traineeship add value to your future pathway as a teacher?

After completing my traineeship, I was awarded a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. I continued working at JPC's Early Learning Centre while studying full-time for university. I gained various knowledge and skills that I could apply to my university studies (Bachelor of Education). I worked at the ELC for six years before leaving to finish university and begin my teaching career.

What underpinning experience assisted you in securing your traineeship?

Growing up, I was heavily involved in my youth group and eventually became a leader. My youth group went on a mission trip to Vanuatu in 2016, where we conducted a holiday program for local children and built a library for the local school. This experience has fuelled my passion for working with children.

How did you successfully manage your school workload and your one-day-at-work employment commitment?

Throughout school, I was very active in co-curricular sport. JPC was very accommodating when it came to supporting me with juggling school, sport and work, and I could enjoy an additional study period. I utilised this study time to complete my assignments and the theory portion of my traineeship.

What has been the highlight of your experience?

The highlight of my experience was learning valuable skills from many accomplished educators in the field. As a recently graduated teacher working with Year One students, I could bring all this knowledge into the classroom. I have been fortunate to be part of a network of educators who value each child's growth, well-being and development. This network, which I could call my 'family', has greatly assisted my professional development as an educator.

Can you describe a typical day at your work in the ELC?

I worked with a diverse range of children in different age groups and with various behaviours and cultural backgrounds. Hence, a 'typical' day for me varies depending on the group of children I was working with. In addition to looking after and educating children, I arranged planned activities according to their stage of physical, mental and emotional development. I kept an eye on them to ensure a safe and supportive environment. It is important to remember that modelling positive actions shapes a child's behaviour and promotes growth. It was also essential to develop and maintain relationships with children, colleagues, parents and other caregivers, follow legislative policies and procedures, and maintain confidentiality and ethical practice.

What advice do you have for other students considering a similar traineeship pathway?

I would say take the leap! It is an incredible opportunity to learn new things about the line of work while also learning new things about yourself. I could connect with other like-minded individuals who guided and supported me as I became the educator I am today.



If you would like to know more about how you can start your career, please contact **Mrs Rasmussen**, Vocational Education Program Coordinator at jasmussen@jpc.qld.edu.au or **Mrs Baldwin**, Head of Careers & Pathways at KBaldwin@jpc.qld.edu.au



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