

We The People
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We the People 236 High-Rise Children



Good day to you. This last week while suffering man-flu, listener 'Richard' sent me some information regarding a new school in Melbourne which got me thinking and that's a dangerous pastime as many know, especially when one is feeling crook and cranky. I have called today's narrative, the "**High-Rise Children**" and so allow me to share a few thoughts about the future of our children from an education perspective. For some odd and illogical reason the current paradigm promotes a big Australia as a panacea for all our troubles. More people pour in to build up the dole queues and to line up for nonexistent jobs in a divided multicultural society built on political correctness and powered by a lethargic or even ignorant voting populace. It makes no sense to me to over-populate the driest continent on earth which we are told is good for us. However this growth paradigm is old world and denies the truth that more people on a crowded planet just means more problems and an escalation in social and environmental decay. Melbourne just like Sydney, is in gridlock in every sense of the word. There are quite simply far too many people and now our children are about to pay in a way we could never have imagined.

Haileybury College is located right in the heart of Melbourne in King Street and is Melbourne's first so called '**vertical school**' to cope with the growing contingent of '**High-Rise Children**'. Students are dropped off in the converted high-rise basement and met by teachers. Of course there has to be a new socially acceptable phrase to go with this and it's called "**changing the building envelope**" where, in reality it's simply refitting an old office building. The school like every other school boasts about being inclusive and a place for academic achievement and on and on in this nation's declining education sector. Too many national acronyms and too much politically correct language and verbal sanitising for my liking and not enough measurable results across Australia. So let's just accept it's just another school at heart but in this school there is virtually no sunlight and no fresh air for the most part. Students don't hear the birds singing or feel a fresh breeze or enjoy traditional playground activities and social release. They can however, breathe in vehicle exhaust fumes as they rise up on a hot day and become photochemical smog, all to the sounds of endless traffic chaos. They can however access levels 3 and 4 where they have an indoor activity area of 1000 square metres including a modest running track. That's the size of a suburban block for hundreds of students. Later this year they plan to build an additional 500 square metres of space and gymnasium on the roof. Gone are the days the kids came running out of class during breaks to join their cohort and play chalk games or feel grass under foot. There are no favoured natural places to call their own or to act as a meeting point for friends. The children likely just become names on rosters with orderly movement between floors. In my view it appears a place of perfect dystopia for our young.

Now let me be clear here in that I am not claiming the school is doing anything wrong and it enjoyed unanimous support for its construction by the local Council. Rather it is the product of over-population and this is the future for many in Australia as these structures rise up. This is just one measure of the price we pay for a big Australia and too many people but when our young lose out it's unforgivable. Put simply, I don't want my grandchildren to become high-rise students in an unnatural and closeted environment where their formative years are constricted even at school. To be accurate, the school is directly opposite a public city park and so the students can access this but the notion of an inner city public park doesn't do much for me surrounded by busy streets and nefarious characters. Let's think about safety and the number of teachers needed to supervise and all the rules that must follow. This country is a favoured destination for what it is and not for what governments are trying to make it. It's the same here on the Gold Coast as the State government and Gold Coast Council pack in more and more people thus destroying the very reason people like to come and live here. There is nothing to be proud of when a wonderful area is transitioned into a crowded city by the sea. This type of growth is like 'burning the furniture to stay warm'. So let's recognise that this madness of over-population is not good for Australia and especially now as we see our young suffering with Astro-turf for grass and artificial bird calls to replicate the outdoors. What unbridled and unnecessary nonsense as middle class Australia and our life style is systematically destroyed.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley