1. To raise the research literacy of educators, in order for them to possess the critical skills necessary to challenge and understand the quality of research they encounter.

2. To bring together as many parties affected by educational research - e.g. teachers, academics, researchers, policy makers, teacher-trainers - in order to establish healthy relationships where field-specific expertise is pooled usefully.

3. To promote collaboration between research-users and research-creators so that educators become more involved in the questions posed for research to answer, the data generated in that process, and in the consideration of the meaning of that data.

4. To help educators become as aware as possible of significant obstacles - e.g. biases - in their own understanding of learning and education, and to locate the best methods of empirical enquiry and analysis in those fields.

5. To promote, where possible, research of any discipline that has been shown to have significant evidence of impact in education, and to challenge research that lacks integrity, or has been shown to be based on doubtful methodologies.

6. To explore 'what works' in the field of education, and to explore what the concepts contained in that statement might mean, as well as to consider the limitations of scientific enquiry in this area as well as the opportunities.
Welcome to researchED Melbourne 2017- or welcome back if you joined us last year. I hope you have a fantastic day today. Once again we have a stellar line up of some of Australia’s best and brightest educational voices. researchED conferences try to be different; we believe passionately in making teaching a more research literate profession, and bringing the best research to the classrooms that need it the most. We also believe that everyone in education affected by research has the right to speak up about how research does or doesn’t affect them. We believe in teacher voices being heard, and we believe in better conversations. We believe that together, teachers, researchers, academics and policy makers can build a better tomorrow by supporting the craft of what we do with the reason and evidence of sound research.

So listen, question, network, say hello and swap, steal and bring great ideas. And have fun. Everyone in education has the right to be heard- and to speak. I hope to hear your voice today!

Best wishes

Tom Bennett

Founder, researched.org.uk
It is with great pleasure that I welcome you back to Brighton Grammar School for the third Australasian researchED conference. Last year’s event demonstrated the growing and very passionate interest in the role of research informing teacher practice and the direction of education.

I am also personally delighted to welcome your keynote speaker, Professor John Hattie from the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. The work of John and his team is driving change and making a positive impact on the learning outcomes of students in many, many schools, including Brighton Grammar.

I wish you all the very best for a challenging and stimulating day. Looking at the line-up of presenters, I know you’ll be torn between sessions. Enjoy the day!

Ross Featherston
Headmaster
Welcome and Introduction 10:30 -11:00
Tom Bennett

Session One 11:00 - 12:00

Keynote
John Hattie

Session Two 12:10 - 12:50

Why it is difficult to close the persistent research-to-practice gap in teaching children to read
Jennifer Buckingham

The body of evidence about how children learn to read and the most effective ways to teach is extensive and remarkably consistent, drawing on research from a number of disciplines including education, speech pathology, experimental psychology, and cognitive science. Yet there remains a high level of variability in the extent to which this evidence is reflected in education policy and classroom practice, leading to wide disparities in reading acquisition among students in schools. This presentation will look at some of the reasons for the persistent research to policy and practice gap in reading instruction and in teaching generally.

Bridging the Divide: RCTs, Improvement and Transformation
John Bush

In the past decade, there has been an increased call for educational interventions to demonstrate their impact on children’s learning outcomes when implemented at a systems level. Schools, policy-makers and education-focused philanthropists want to know that their investments stand to yield a good return in outcomes for young people and society. This is often characterized as the education improvement paradigm. In parallel, there is an increasing recognition that education systems must prepare young people for an increasingly complex and less certain future. There is a concomitant recognition that, to respond to this need, education systems will need to transform themselves and foster innovation in teaching and learning practices. This is often characterized as the education transformation paradigm.
In the more extreme examples of the education discourse, educational improvement and educational transformation are often pitted against each other as mutually exclusive. This is a false dichotomy that can be bridged through support for the initial development of educational innovations and their evaluation by randomized controlled trial at an appropriate stage in their development.

The session will introduce Evidence for Learning’s Learning Impact Fund, which funds RCTs on Australian education programs, and then present case studies to explain key design features to make RCTs viable and valuable in education.

**First year as Senior Maths HoD: How evidence informed can I make it?**
Oliver Lovell

The worked example effect, testing effect, cognitive load theory, and distributed practice. Many of us are familiar with these and other key findings from education (and broader) research that can guide effective instruction, but what does a teaching program that incorporates these findings actually look like? More importantly, in light of the research highlighting barriers to the efficacy of PD (see: http://tiny.cc/hfwo_np) how can a subject area leader (in this case, mathematics) drive meaningful, evidence informed change in a school department in a short period of time? This presentation will highlight the efforts of one such leader, in his first 6 months in the new role, in order to make some inroads to answering these challenging questions.

**Lunch 12:50 - 13:20**
In this session, I will highlight recent calls for radical change to schools and school systems from leading educationalists and organisations. I will show that there is nothing new about such calls and explain the rich lineage of these ideas and their antecedents. In particular, I will examine the idea that learning should be a natural process and how this idea informs many calls for reform. I will suggest that education needs improving but that the revolutionary reforms that are often proposed are not consistent with the evidence we have about learning. Instead, I will argue that there are more prosaic means for achieving lasting and powerful improvements.

Efforts to create new evidence and find out ‘what works’, mean schools are regularly approached by researchers and jurisdictions to participate in research projects. But how much do we know about how and why Australian schools engage in and with research?

This session will share the findings of a recent study that sought to explore this question. Initiated by Catholic Education Melbourne (CEM), the ‘Understanding School Engagement in Research (USER)’ project involved consulting 73 schools about:

- their responses to requests to participate in research projects (e.g. how many requests they receive, how many they say Yes to, why they say Yes or No, research topics they are more/less interested in); and
- their views and practices around using research evidence (e.g. whether/how much they value and use research and evidence, how they access research and evidence, what helps/hinders).

As schools are critical stakeholders in educational research, this session will stimulate discussion about the findings of the study, how those might compare or contrast to the experiences of your school and what they might mean for how to
Session Four 14:10 - 14:50

**Avocado teaching**
Benjamin Evans

There’s no such thing as a healthy individual foodstuff, but diets can be healthy or unhealthy, and over time, the benefits of one over the other will become apparent. Teaching is similar – individual activities, though they may appear ‘engaging’ on the surface, are merely part of the educational diet. This talk will focus on what makes a healthy academic diet, remembering that a little of what you fancy does you good.

**Balanced Literacy: Pouring new wine into old bottles.**
Pamela Snow

This presentation will explore the term “Balanced Literacy” which is promoted by many Australian education academics and primary teacher organisations as a “solution” to the longstanding tensions concerning optimal ways of approaching initial literacy instruction. On the face of it, any compromise position that contains the word “balance” has intuitive appeal. However a review of the Balanced Literacy literature reveals that it has no agreed upon definition and frequent references to the word “eclectic” betray its lack of systematic and explicit teaching of synthetic phonics to beginning readers. It is argued that Balanced Literacy is really a re-packaging of Whole Language essentials into something that pays lip service (no pun intended) to explicit, evidence-based phonics instruction.

**An evidence broker for Australian schools**
Matthew Deeble

Evidence for Learning is a new national, cross-sector, non-profit organisation whose mission is to help educators increase learning through better evidence. It has been incubated with philanthropic and government funding to create an independent body that generates practical and actionable knowledge for front-line professionals. This session will look at the theory of action behind the organisation, what partnerships are critical for its success, what assets it has acquired and needs to develop and what lessons it has learned over the last 18 months about getting close to practice change and improvement.

Break 14:50 - 15:10
Mathematical problem solving is founded on understanding and conceptual fluency. We can be reasonably assured that we can teach most children to add numbers. However, teaching the subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers, then subsequently fractions and expressions is an altogether different challenge. In this session we explore how the materials, explicit language, and logic of teaching these critical computations with whole numbers can be extended to fractions computation and computation with algebraic expressions. Consistency and commonality of structure and pedagogical models enable the child to develop a deeper understanding of the operations. This understanding facilitates more abstract study of mathematics and mathematical problem solving. This session is useful for teachers of students from Year 1 to 9.

Rules Rule
Lillian Fawcett

Due to the complexities of the English language, orthographic knowledge is integral to improving spelling ability. An important part of orthography is knowing the spelling rules. If you are a poor speller, a knowledge of the spelling rules provides scaffolding to assist in determining the most likely letter order of a particular word. In this workshop, Dr Lillian Fawcett will introduce a range of rules, discuss strategies for teaching these rules to students and highlight how a knowledge of rules can be used to help students identify spelling errors and self-correct.

Session Outline:
1. Overview of Frith’s Literacy Acquisition Model.
2. Introduce a range of rules.
3. Discuss strategies for introducing students to these rules and participate in some activities that can be used with students.
4. Participants apply their knowledge of the rules introduced so they can identify students’ point of confusion and effectively help them to determine the correct spelling.
5. Questions.

Not magic, Mem, statistical learning: helping little readers gather Big Data
Alison Clarke

It’s kind of amazing that so many young children learn to instantly read thousands of words in their first years of primary school, given English’s very complex spelling system. Like most education academics of her generation, Mem Fox asserts “Reading is a grand guessing
“game” (Reading Magic, p99), but current reading scientists have a different explanation, based on robust evidence.

Small kids are engaged in Big Data Collection, actively gathering statistics on language patterns. We show them patterns to look for, and their little brains go for it, solving what cognitive scientist Mark Seidenberg calls the puzzle of So Much To Learn, So Little Time.

Some children can figure out some patterns for themselves, but a sizeable minority need explicit and systematic teaching about the sounds, major spellings and word parts of English, before they can even work out what data to collect, let alone collect it. This allows them to develop orthographic mapping, and thus instant word recognition, and frees them from having to sound every word out. Having automatised the word recognition task, and thus rightsized its cognitive load, children can then focus more on building vocabulary, comprehension and fluency.

Seen from this perspective, many current early years literacy teaching practices don’t make much sense. Rote memorising high-frequency word lists, ignoring the patterns therein. Predictable/repetitive texts for beginners, rather than decodable texts. Topic-based or error-based spelling lists, not pattern-based ones. The Three-Cueing Method/Multicueing, actively teaching children to guess like weak readers, not decode like strong ones.

When Universities start teaching primary teachers linguistics – in particular phonology, orthography and morphology – and about the reading science, early years teachers will be better positioned to actively help all but about 3-5% of children crunch the necessary numbers, really nail learning to read, and efficiently move on to reading to learn. When upper primary and secondary teachers understand the implications of this for their workloads and classroom behaviour, they’ll demand it.

Session Six 15:50 - 16:00

Closing remarks and thanks
Tom Bennett
Tom Bennett is the founder of researchED, a grass-roots organisation that raises research literacy in education. Since 2013 researchED has visited three continents and six countries, attracting thousands of followers. In 2015 he became the UK government’s school ‘Behaviour Czar’, advising on behaviour policy. He has written four books about teacher training, and in 2015 he was long listed as one of the world’s top teachers in the GEMS Global Teacher Prize. In the same year he made the Huffington Post’s ‘Top Ten Global Bloggers’ list. His online resources have been viewed over 1,200,000 times. He currently lives in London where he keeps bees and solves crimes that Scotland yard can’t crack.*

*allegedly.

Greg Ashman

After working as a Deputy Headteacher at a High School in London, Greg moved to Australia with his young family in 2010. He secured a position as Head of Mathematics at Ballarat Clarendon College, a regional school in Victoria. Clarendon places a premium on the use of research evidence. This inspired Greg to apply research findings in his own teaching, to start a blog about education research and to begin a PhD in an area of educational psychology known as ‘Cognitive Load Theory’. He now works to apply research more widely in his school and he has spoken about his experiences at a number of events.

Dr Jennifer Buckingham’s main area of work is school education policy, and she is currently heading up the CIS’s FIVE from FIVE Reading Project which aims to have effective reading instruction in every classroom, every day. Jennifer is the author/editor of numerous reports and articles including Why Jaydon Can’t Read (2014), Read About It: Evidence for Effective Teaching of Reading (2016), and Focus on Phonics: Why Australia Should Adopt the UK Phonics Check (2017). She is a board member of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), an Associate Investigator at the ARC Centre for Excellence in Cognition and Its Disorders.

John Bush is Associate Director of Evidence for Learning. John’s career spans education and social enterprise, with expertise in leading and managing education social enterprises; grant-making and evaluation; designing and developing transformative learning experiences; and recruiting and developing exceptional teachers. He has transferred his classroom teaching and school leadership experience in the United States and Australia into designing, developing and managing programs in Australia and to evaluating program implementation and impact. At Evidence for Learning, John is responsible for grant-making and evaluation through the Learning Impact Fund and managing international relationships to develop practice guides for Australian educators.
Alison Clarke has been a Speech Pathologist since 1988, is also an ESL teacher, and has a Masters in Applied Linguistics. She has worked mainly in schools and the disability sector in Australia and the UK, and is now in private practice. She runs the website www.spelfabet.com.au, which promotes increased (but not exclusive) use of explicit, systematic synthetic phonics with reading and spelling beginners and strugglers. Alison was 2015-16 Vice President of Learning Difficulties Australia, and has also been an administrator, City Councillor and Mayor.

Matthew Deeble is the Director of Evidence for Learning. He has more than 20 years’ experience in building and running enterprises in education, health and clean technology. He was involved in provisioning the first Internet services in Australian schools and developing internet management software used by thousands of schools in Australia, NZ, the UK and USA. More recently he has worked on data, identity and privacy projects for the National Schools Interoperability Program and an online career profile service in Higher and Vocational Education. He is also a non-executive director of the heathcare evidence efficiency platform Covidence.

Benjamin Evans was educated at Durham and Cambridge Universities in the UK, and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry. He is interested in education to make minds, not careers and is an advocate of communal curricula, high expectations and academic extension for all, as well as the genuine transformative power of a rigorous academic education. ‘A man’s reach should exceed his grasp, or what’s a heaven for?’

Dr Lillian Fawcett has over 20 years experience in education, is an accredited Dyslexia-SPELD specialist teacher, and has additional qualifications in psychology. She has developed a range of spelling and reading programs based on well-research literacy acquisition and memory retention principles which has enabled her to successfully help hundreds of students improve their literacy skills. Numerous teachers and school throughout Australia are currently using Lillian’s evidence-based Cracking the ABC Code programs.

Professor John Hattie is a researcher in education. His research interests include performance indicators, models of measurement and evaluation of teaching and learning. John Hattie became known to a wider public with his two books Visible Learning and Visible Learning for teachers. Visible Learning is a synthesis of more than 800 meta-studies covering more than 80 million students. According to John Hattie Visible Learning is the result of 15 years of research about what works best for learning in schools. TES once called him “possibly the world’s most influential education academic”.

John Hattie has been Director of the
Melbourne Educational Research Institute at the University of Melbourne, Australia, since March 2011. Before, he was Project Director of asTTle and Professor of Education at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. He holds a PhD from the University of Toronto, Canada.

Oliver Lovell

A key inspiration in Ollie’s route to teaching was a new joy of learning awakened through the challenge of trying to learn Mandarin. This learning project exposed him to the science of learning, which has since become the basis of his approach to teaching, also prompting the Education Research Reading Room podcast. Ollie is currently enjoying his new role as Head of Senior Mathematics at a public school, on the lands of the Kulin nation, in Melbourne’s West. He is the Early Career Representative for the Victorian branch of the Australian College of Educators, and blogs at www.ollielovell.com

Dr Stephen Norton

Shani Prendergast is the Senior Research Analyst at Catholic Education Melbourne, responsible for developing and implementing the jurisdiction’s research strategy. Shani has worked in education (the schooling sector) for 17 years across a variety of function areas – teaching, professional learning, project management, policy, research and evaluation. Having worked on a number of educational research projects over the past 7 years, Shani is particularly interested in how schools engage in, and with research.

Mark Rickinson is an Associate Professor and Associate Dean (Engagement) in the Faculty of Education at Monash University in Melbourne. Mark’s work is focused on improving the use and usefulness of educational research in policy and practice. In Australia and before that in the UK, he has undertaken research, evaluation and consultancy projects relating to the use of evidence in educational policy and practice, and the role of learning in environmental and sustainability education.

Lisa Rogers was appointed CEO of AITSL in October 2016, following an extensive national and international search. Since commencing in the role Lisa has become an emerging leader and voice in Australian education, refocussing the conversation towards the importance of quality education, esteeming the profession and prioritising proven teaching strategies that impact student learning in the classroom. Lisa has met with Education Ministers, system and sector leaders and teachers and
school leaders across Australia to gain a stronger understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the education community and is working closely with stakeholders to improve student learning. Before joining AITSL Lisa was Deputy Secretary, Early Learning and Student Achievement in the New Zealand Ministry of Education, with responsibility for raising achievement and improving system effectiveness with school leaders across education and the wider social sector. Prior to this, Lisa was the Deputy Secretary Evidence, Data and Knowledge, using research and analysis to identify where effort and resources can best help lift student achievement. Lisa has held several other significant posts at the Ministry and a background in strategic policy, research and insights analysis with the Ministry of Justice, the University of Wales and the British Army.

Professor Pamela Snow is Head of the Rural Health School at La Trobe University. Pamela is a speech pathologist and registered psychologist. Her research has been funded by nationally competitive schemes such as the ARC Discovery Program, ARC Linkage Program, and the Criminology Research Council, and spans various aspects of risk in childhood and adolescence:

- the role of oral language competence as an academic and mental health protective factor in childhood and adolescence;
- the oral language skills of high-risk young people (youth offenders and those in state care);
- applying evidence in the language-to-literacy transition in the early years of school.
## Timetable

### Welcome
10:30 - 11:00
**Welcome and Introduction**
Tom Bennett

### Session 1
11:00 - 12:00
**Keynote**
John Hattie

### Session 2
12:10 - 12:50
**Closing the reading R-P gap**
Jennifer Buckingham
**Bridging the Divide**
John Bush
**Evidence informed Maths**
Oliver Lovell

### Lunch
12:50 - 13:20

### Session 3
13:20 - 14:00
**You say you want revolution**
Greg Ashman
**School Engagement in Res.**
Mark Rickinson & Shani Prendergast
**The achievement challenge**
Lisa Rogers

### Session 4
14:10 - 14:50
**Avocado Teaching**
Benjamin Evans
**Balanced Literacy**
Professor Pamela Snow
**An evidence broker**
Matt Deeble

### Break
14:50 - 15:10

### Session 5
15:10 - 15:50
**Critical Computational Skills**
Dr Stephen Norton
**Rules Rule**
Lillian Fawcett
**Not Magic, Mem**
Alison Clark

### Plenary
15:50 - 16:00
**Thanks**
Tom Bennett