

St Margaret's named one of Australia's most innovative schools

St Margaret's has been named as one of Australia's most innovative schools for the third consecutive year.

Each year, The Educator releases its Innovative Schools report, revealing schools at the cutting edge of change and innovation in Australia.

This year, St Margaret's was recognised for innovation on two fronts; the first being a published collection of stories authored by the school's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students entitled *Gidhal* and the second being a STEAM initiative which provides Visual Art students opportunities to engage with innovative technologies to create virtual reality and augmented reality artworks.

Gidhal, meaning 'stories' in Kala Lagaw Ya (a language from the Torres Strait), is a rich collection of stories, artworks, interviews and profiles from St Margaret's students who are from ten communities across Australia and who together speak 11 languages.

Principal Ms Ros Curtis said: "*Gidhal* pays respect to who we are and where we came from, bringing these stories to life for the entire St Margaret's community, and is also a wonderful record for our students to access and learn from the stories of First Nations people."

The second initiative is providing St Margaret's students with opportunities to engage with innovative technologies to create virtual reality and augmented reality artworks.

Students are illustrating the pages from a children's book in three dimensions using VR technology and software; experimenting with audio to animate their VR paint strokes; and working on a collaborative VR painting accompanied by the school orchestra help bring a musical composition to life.

Ms Curtis explained the STEAM initiative is preparing students for jobs of the future.

"A career path using augmented and virtual reality technologies will be a lot more commonplace in the future with applications in a range of industries from design, science, ICT and more.

"Art is proving to be a great access point to this technology, giving students confidence and demonstrating possibilities in digital art," she said.

Ms Curtis said she was thrilled to receive the award.

"We are very proud of both projects and to be the recipient of 'The Educator' magazine's 2020 Innovation Award for the third year in a row really affirms we are leading the way in providing learning experiences and educational opportunities that will secure the best possible future for our girls," she said.