

Hunter River Community School

Annual Report



2016



5687

Introduction

The Annual Report for 2016 is provided to the community of Hunter River Community School as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

Tracey Rapson

Principal

School contact details

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Message from the Principal

I am proud of the achievements of all of our students and the ongoing success of the strategies being implemented by the school to create high quality learning experiences and to maximise student engagement.

Our continued success can be underpinned by key factors that promote quality teaching and learning programs that all members of the school learning community value and appreciate.

Firstly, the staff at Hunter River Community School are dedicated professionals who work collaboratively to provide an inclusive environment that facilitates individual learning and celebrates student achievement.

Our students are remarkable young people who demonstrate on a daily basis that having challenging, and often complex disabilities, is no barrier when it comes to achievement and success.

Finally, Hunter River Community School enjoys tremendous support from our parent and local communities. This invaluable support enables our school to provide quality learning opportunities for every student.

I certify that the information provided in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-assessment and review process undertaken by all members of the school learning community and provides a genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development

Tracey Rapson

Principal

School background

School vision statement

Hunter River Community School is committed to providing quality and adaptive education within an engaging and nurturing environment which values the cultural diversity of our community. Our core business is to provide all students with access to high quality education that is free from all forms of discrimination and disadvantage. We hold high expectations for all our students and aim to promote a culture of positivity through the provision of meaningful, relevant, caring and supportive learning experiences. We actively encourage and promote school culture underpinned by the beliefs of being safe, caring and being a learner.

WE ARE SAFE

WE CARE

WE LEARN

School context

Hunter River Community School is an established K–12 School for Specific Purpose (SSP), catering for the complex needs of 67 students with a moderate to severe intellectual disability and associated conditions. The school was relocated to a state of the art facility in Metford at the beginning of 2014.

The school serves a diverse population of students from six local government areas. There are currently 67 students attend the school, all of whom have high level support needs and complex communication disorders. The school has ten classes with each class staffed with a full-time specialist teacher and a School Learning Support Officer. The school population includes 20% of Aboriginal students and 15% of students in an Out of Home Care arrangement.

All students have an Personalised Learning Plan developed in conjunction with a multi-disciplinary team, including parents, health care professionals, community agency professionals and special education consultants.

With a Family Occupation and Education Index (FOEI) of 153, the school receives equity funding to improve the learning outcomes of students from low socio-economic backgrounds.

As a result of ongoing school evaluation and reference to educational research our school priority areas focus on improved learning outcomes for students through, innovative student learning programs, quality teaching and leadership initiatives and enhancing supportive community engagement and participation opportunities.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

For all schools (except those participating in external validation processes):

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

In the Domain of Learning, an emphasis was placed on ensuring that students are engaged in quality, functional and future focussed learning experiences that promote engagement and assist students to reach their full potential and independence as successful individuals. Students who attend Hunter River Community School all require extensive curriculum differentiation to access educational opportunities and every student has a Personalised Learning Plan. Parents and carers are integral members of a multi-disciplinary Learning Support Team that meet regularly to discuss and review student priorities and future goals. All Personalised Learning Plans are involved in a mid-year review.

All members of the School Learning Community strongly believe , it was paramount to achieving success for students to be given a voice and that they are treated as learners and respected members of the wider community. They are given a sense of belonging and purpose, they have their achievements celebrated and promoted in the wider community and they are acknowledged for their individual potential and strengths.

In the Domain of Teaching, an emphasis during 2016 has been on providing staff with a tool box of explicit skills to facilitate the development of high quality teaching and learning practises. These skills will promote students ability to achieve learning outcomes. Through explicit review of the wellbeing and curriculum documents, staff have been successful in designing engaging students programs that promote inclusion and success. One of the reasons that Hunter River Community School is so successful in meeting the needs of students with a disability is the school's commitment to best practise and to ensure that individual student needs are paramount in every decision. We believe that an increased focus on student centred learning will ensure that every student will achieve the skills that they need to live a full and valued life. Staff at Hunter River Community School will continue to be Instructional Leaders in the field of student centred learning and will demonstrate commitment in ensuring that Hunter River Community School remains a hub of Special Education expertise.

In the Domain of Leading, Hunter River Community School has focused on fostering our leaders of the future. Through a committed approach to building core skills, staff have been encouraged to plan their career pathways using the Performance Development Plan tool. All staff and members of the school learning community were actively involved and contributed to the school planning process and have been encouraged to take on leadership roles in coordinating priority area committees. This inclusive process recognises that building leadership capabilities is critical when striving for successful school excellence.

The new approach to school planning, supported by the new model of funding, is making a critical difference to the operation of Hunter River Community School.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine the strategic priorities in our School Plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/school-excellence-framework>

Strategic Direction 1

STUDENT LEARNING –

Purpose

To ensure learning for all students is continuous K–12 and is based on challenging, high quality learning experiences supported by innovative technology access. To work together across all stages of learning to ensure consistent, high standard, shared professional practices.

Overall summary of progress

The staff at Hunter River community School have continued to work collaborative to ensure that every student is engaged in quality learning experiences.

Providing students with a voice is an essential goal for all staff. A personalised communication matrix has provided staff and families with a comprehensive tool to ensure that any communication system is tailored to individual needs.

Staff have continued to embed the principles of the Wellbeing Framework into school culture and this has had a positive impact on staff, student and learning community members wellbeing across a variety of environments

Students have participated in "streamed" numeracy classes during the year and the "Maths For Me" document has been implemented across all stages. the establishment of these classes have provided staff with an opportunity to teach explicit numeracy skills to students.

The School Excellence Framework has continued to be a value tool for all members of the learning community to monitor, assess and facilitate future direction. This tool has also provided staff with an opportunity to engage in professional dialogue and to reflect on school programs

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
All students will have a comprehensive communication matrix that reflects individual needs and communication strategies	During 2016 every student has had a communication matrix completed and reviewed by members of The Learning Support Team. This has facilitated the development of individualised, explicit communication programs to promote successful communication across a variety of settings	Low Socio Economic Funding
Improvement in staff and student well– being as a result of the implementation of school Welfare Policy	The reviewed School Welfare Policy has had a full cycle of implementation. The guidelines focusing on suspension protocols have facilitated a greater understanding of the process by all stakeholders. The new PBL program fits exceptionally well within the framework of the Wellbeing guidelines.	– Low Socio Economic Funding
Embedded knowledge of individual augmentative communication systems will facilitate increased levels of engagement and improved student outcomes	Communication is HRCS's core business. All stakeholders have developed a greater understanding of essential it is to ensure that ALL students have a communication system that promotes engagement.	low socio economic funding

Next Steps

Each students communication matrix will be reviewed and progress charted. The data from this tool is invaluable for teachers when analysing and programming.

Communication tools will be placed in all Assisted Travel vehicles to assist students in the often difficult transition from home to school.

Students with extremely high support needs will have a Communication Passport developed which will provide all caregivers with a detailed description of the young person's communication profile

During the final year of this plan's cycle, explicit numeracy strategies will be embedded into teaching and learning opportunities. .

Strategic Direction 2

QUALITY TEACHING AND LEADERSHIP

Purpose

To develop approaches which build on the capabilities of all teacher and leaders so they are involved in planning, and monitoring their own learning to increase their capacity to deliver high quality outcomes for all students.

Overall summary of progress

PBL strategies and programs have become an integral component of school culture. Students have responded positively to the "Leuca" awards and to the lessons that are being explicitly taught.

The implementation of the new Performance and Development Framework has facilitated teaching staff engaging in an explicit reflective process that is supporting the continuous development of all staff, with an individual focus and through a collaborative approach.

Staff have continued to develop their core understanding of Department of Education initiatives and the impact of those programs at Hunter River Community School.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
All staff are engaged with the new Performance and Development Framework	Teaching staff have successfully completed the full cycle of Performance Development. Negotiated goals have been successfully achieved and self evaluations have reflected the professional progress made.	– Low socio economic
All staff will implement identified features of PBL into daily teaching practice. The principles of PBL will be firmly embedded into school culture.	The implementation of the PBL program has been extremely successful. Teachers are incorporating each week's explicit lesson into their class program. The "Leuca" awards have proven extremely popular with students and the weekly PBL assemblies are well attended	low socio economic aboriginal equity
All staff will demonstrate their knowledge of key DEC initiatives by aligning their professional goals and practices to key reforms	Staff have successfully managed their knowledge and understanding of DEC initiatives extremely well. All have competently fulfilled their compliance requirements	low socio economic funding
Teaching and Learning Programs will illustrate teaching staff's knowledge, understanding and commitment to National Curriculum guidelines and content	All teaching and learning programs clearly reflect and reference National Curriculum requirements. BOSTES assessment in 2016, highlighted that all teaching and learning programs satisfied curriculum recommendations	– quality teaching

Next Steps

The PBL program will continue to be embedded into school core business. Weekly lessons and focuses will be explicitly taught in all rooms and student achievement recognised.

Non teaching staff will commence the Professional Development Plan during the final year of the plan. training and

mentoring will be provided to assist in the development of plans that reflect individual needs and skill development

Training for staff in LMBR will be a major focus of 2017. Hunter River Community School will go "live" in term 3

Strategic Direction 3

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Purpose

To increase community support of our students through a school-wide focus on access, wellbeing and wellbeing programs. To work together as a learning community to provide our student with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to achieve their personal goals and live successfully in the community.

Overall summary of progress

The introduction of several alternative means of communicating with school has proven to be very successful. Parents and carers are using the Skoolbag App to register student absences and to review upcoming events.

The School Facebook page has continued to be a very useful tool and has facilitated a greater awareness of school programs and initiatives.

Our relationships with local aboriginal groups has strengthened and it has been pleasing to have representatives at several school functions. Our NAIDOC day celebration was a day of festivities and wonderful learning opportunities. Unfortunately the Creative Arts program was postponed due to the facilitator not being available.

Supporting our families through the NDIS journey has been complex. Many have felt ill equipped to formulate a successful plan. The school is working closely with therapists to ensure that the service delivery of therapy during school hours is manageable.

The Parent Information Session on Numeracy was a successful event, with parents, carers and community members attending.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Parents will develop an understanding and build knowledge around curriculum development for students with significant disabilities	The programs implemented during the school year have facilitated a growth in knowledge and understanding of what students are being taught at school. The numeracy focused parent information sessions provided a platform for parents to investigate and develop a deeper understanding of what mathematics looked like for young people with complex disabilities	Low Socio economic Funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skoolbag will be implemented	Skoolbag has continued to be a successful tool to inform community stakeholders of what is happening at school. Parents and carers are also using the application to lodge absentee submissions	Low socio economic funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connections will be strengthened with service providers	Strong connections with post school service providers are essential to ensure a smooth and trouble free transition to adult life for students. During the year, these links have been strengthened through professional networking opportunities, and by liaising with the Support Teacher Transition.	Low Socio economic funding Aboriginal equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased engagement of parents and school community members in core school business	There have been several programs implemented to encourage parents and members of the school community to become involved in school business. Parent survey results have indicated that evening meetings of the P&C would enable more people to attend, and this strategy will be implanted in 2017.	Low Socio economic funding

Next Steps

NDIS: to more effectively manage the therapy delivery during school hours. Guidelines around this delivery will need to be formalised in the 2017 school year.

Increased Engagement: Initiatives will be implemented to further increase parent engagement in school events

Indigenous Creative Arts Program: this program will be implemented during the 2017 school year

Key Initiatives	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
Aboriginal background loading	Strengthened relationships with Local Aboriginal Community. Inclusive programs to celebrate and recognise the culture and achievements of Indigenous students	• Aboriginal background loading (\$3 911.00)
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	feedback form teaching staff and executive on effectiveness of program. Improved student outcomes	
Socio–economic background	Increased student engagement in all identified programs. Feedback from members of the School Learning Community about the implemented programs and the impact of students	• Socio–economic background (\$0.00)
Support for beginning teachers	Beginning Teachers have been supported to build capacity in all identified areas	• Support for beginning teachers (\$13 377.89)

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2013	2014	2015	2016
Boys	44	41	46	48
Girls	13	15	16	17

This year our school has continued to grow and is currently at capacity levels. There are 67 young people enrolled across the K–12 spectrum.

Structure of classes

Classes are structured to meet student needs, and where possible are staged based. Individual behavioural and medical needs are also a major consideration when structuring classes.

Retention Year 10 to Year 12

Hunter River Community School has an excellent retention rate of our Year 10 students. Over 95% of students complete Year 12 and receive their Higher School Certificate Life Skills

Post-school destinations

Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment	Year 10%	Year 11%	Year 12%
Seeking Employment			
Employment			
TAFE entry			
University Entry			
Other	0	0	0
Unknown			

Students exiting Hunter River Community School access a range of post school services. Students access Community Participation day programs or engage in a self managed program.

Year 12 attaining HSC or equivalent

At the conclusion of 2016, one student received his Record of Student Achievement after an early exit

program to access a post school day program.

3 students were successful in obtaining their Higher School Certificate Life Skills.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Assistant Principal(s)	3
Classroom Teacher(s)	8.58
Teacher Librarian	0.4
School Administration & Support Staff	11.82
Other Positions	0.1

*Full Time Equivalent

One staff teaching staff member identifies as being of Aboriginal descent

Workforce retention

During 2016, there was very little staff movement. Retention rates are excellent, with 90% of staff returning for the following year

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	11
Postgraduate degree	2

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional Learning for all staff members is extremely important. During 2016, teaching staff were encouraged to attend Professional Learning opportunities that met identified Professional Development Plan goals.

Non– teaching staff were also encouraged to participate in Professional Learning that would enhance their skills.

At the conclusion of the 2016 year, there are 4 teachers who are at Provisional Teaching Level, 2 provisional

Financial information (for schools using OASIS for the whole year)

Financial information

This summary financial information covers funds for operating costs to November 30 2016 and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Income	\$
Balance brought forward	168 417.72
Global funds	204 007.09
Tied funds	107 464.16
School & community sources	46 601.78
Interest	3 905.22
Trust receipts	7 947.35
Canteen	0.00
Total income	538 343.32
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	5 897.34
Excursions	3 453.06
Extracurricular dissections	17 366.44
Library	567.27
Training & development	2 769.09
Tied funds	10 670.67
Short term relief	101 986.68
Administration & office	45 203.17
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	42 334.43
Maintenance	14 460.55
Trust accounts	7 819.79
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	252 528.49
Balance carried forward	285 814.83

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Financial information (for schools using both OASIS and SAP/SALM)

Financial information

The three financial summary tables cover 13 months (from 1 December 2015 to 31 December 2016).

The financial summary consists of school income broken down by funding source and is derived from the school Annual Financial Statement.

<You may use this text box to comment on:

- voluntary school contributions
- any significant variation between income and expenditure
- high levels of retained income and retained income held in trust
- significant expenditure on student curriculum materials, resources and technology.>

Delete text not required.

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from <insert date> to 31 December 2016.

There is no opening balance recorded in the SAP finance table. The opening balance for the school for this reporting period is recorded as the Balance Brought Forward in the OASIS table.

The OASIS Balance carried forward amount (ie, funds on date of migration) is included in the (2a) Appropriation amount in the SAP table.

Any differences between the OASIS Balance carried forward and (2a) Appropriation amount is the result of other accounts and transactions being included in the (2a) Appropriation amount.

<Use this text box to enter a general statement describing:

- your school's financial management processes and governance structures to meet financial policy requirements
- any unusual spending patterns or substantial underspending/overspending (e.g. accommodating leave, illness, savings for planned capital expenditure)
- intended use of funds available>

Delete text not required.

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Financial information (for schools fully deployed to SAP/SALM)

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from <date> to 31 December 2016.

<Use this text box to enter a general statement describing:

- your school's financial management processes and governance structures to meet financial policy requirements
- any unusual spending patterns or substantial underspending/overspending (e.g. accommodating leave, illness, savings for planned capital expenditure)
- intended use of funds available>

Delete text not required.

Financial summary equity funding

The equity funding data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance

School-based assessment

Hunter River Community School is effectively meeting all expectations. During 2016 the school participated in the BOSTES review which provided an extensive assessment of procedures and processes relating to all aspects of core business. The BOSTES review panel were exceptionally complimentary about the way the school met Department of Education requirements and advised that there were no areas of improvement to focus on.

Other assessment data

<You may choose to use this text box to comment on other assessment data including:

- Best Start
- Literacy and numeracy achievement against the literacy and numeracy continuums>

Delete text not required.

HSC

The performance of students in the HSC is reported in bands ranging from Band 1 (lowest) to Band 6 (highest).

<You may choose to use this text box to comment on relative performance comparison (average difference) and statistical information from Business Intelligence>

Delete text not required.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Parents, caregivers and staff participated in the "Tell them From Me" survey. The data from these surveys indicated that all members of the learning community were overall satisfied with the performance of the school.

Students participated in a pictorial survey which provided them with an opportunity to indicate what they liked and disliked about school. Overall students were happy with their experiences and indicated that they particularly enjoyed the additional programs that were offered.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Aboriginal Education is integrated and embedded into every aspect of core school business at Hunter River Community School.

- Aspects of Aboriginal culture were experienced across the school through a variety of interactive classroom activities this year. Students completed artworks, listened to music, read stories and used the internet to develop and share their knowledge.

- Significant culturally important days were recognised and celebrated by the whole school community during the year

Multicultural and anti-racism education

Hunter River Community School promotes the values of acceptance and tolerance for a Multicultural Australia. All teaching and learning programs were reviewed to ensure that all environments were culturally inclusive and respectful.

Our school values individual difference and work together with all members of the Learning Environment to ensure students receive an education catering to their individual learning style and cultural identity

Other school programs

Hunter River Community School has a peer and staff elected Student Leadership Team that represent the school at school and community functions. This team consists of 2 school captains, 4 school prefects and 2 sporting house captains