

# Brewongle Environmental Education Centre

## Annual Report



2016



5694

## Introduction

The Annual Report for **2016** is provided to the community of Brewongle Environmental Education Centre 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.

Steven Body

Relieving Principal

### School contact details

Brewongle Environmental Education Centre

587 Chapel Hill Road

Sackville North, 2756

[www.brewongle-e.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.brewongle-e.schools.nsw.edu.au)

[brewongle-e.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:brewongle-e.school@det.nsw.edu.au)

4579 1136

### Message from the Principal

Brewongle Environmental Education Centre is part of a wider network of Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC) across NSW. EZEC has a long history of providing quality educational outcomes for teachers and students across a wide range of Key Learning Areas, with a focus on environment and sustainability. Brewongle EEC has had a year of transition, with long standing Principal Mark Edwards working part time and departing in Term 3.

2016 has seen Brewongle continue to collaborate with outside agencies to deliver student centred, project based learning to schools. Partners have included Blacktown City Council, Western Sydney University and the Hawkesbury Environmental Education Network.

Brewongle Staff have continue to work professionally with other EZEC staff to design and implement an EZEC communications plan. This included targeted use of social media, organising professional learning for staff, moderating an #EnviroEd Twitter chat, making Filmpond movies and coordinating a social media team.

We have begun a comprehensive audit of our syllabus based programs to ensure they are relevant, student centred, story driven and connected to current curriculums. We have embraced the new Geography syllabus and are now offering programs for K–10 in Geography fieldwork and inquiry.

I would like to personally farewell and thank departing Principal Mark Edwards for his many years of contribution to sustainability education and dedication to public schooling. Mark has always been a champion of Aboriginal culture and forged strong ties with the local Darug community. This enabled Brewongle to be a leader in the delivery of cultural education to teachers and students.

I hope that we can all lead sustainable lives, with a view to looking after each other and all living things now and into the future.

## School background

### School vision statement

Brewongle EEC provides a real life context for students to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to enhance their understanding of, and influence on our land, water, wildlife and communities.

### School context

Brewongle Environmental Education Centre is one of 25 Environmental Education and Zoo Education Centres supported by the NSW Department of Education. Our educational setting is the former Sackville North Public School featuring an 1878 sandstone classroom and residence.

The Centre is located on a south facing ridge 70 metres above the Hawkesbury River at Sackville North. We offer day or residential school based programs with the motto – 'Explore, Experience and Discover'.

The Centre supports schools with curriculum implementation across a range of Key Learning Areas. The Centre designs and implements relevant and contemporary teaching and learning programs within the context of the natural, cultural and built environments. There is a strong emphasis on student centred /inquiry based learning programs utilising a range of current information and communication technologies.

Integral for the creation of sustainable futures is to develop school communities as leaders in sustainability. The Centre's support of school communities ensures that they have the knowledge, skills and motivation to affect and manage positive change within a local and global context. The Centre has multi-sectoral partnerships to enhance the capacity to create sustainable futures within our school communities. For teachers, we provide pre and post excursion sessions designed to extend and embed learning and to link the site effectively with your classroom teaching. We also deliver accredited professional development activities.

## Self-assessment and school achievement

### Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

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.

The Centre has a strong focus on curriculum and learning, working hard to maintain collaborative practices and learning alliances with other schools and organisations. A comprehensive audit process was undertaken of all our teaching programs in term 3 2016. This audit has begun an overhaul and update of both existing and new programs to enhance student learning. Staff have focussed on the new K–10 Geography syllabus and have begun designing new programs in this area. In the next school plan, the Centre will target areas for improvement in Learning Culture, Wellbeing and Assessment and Reporting.

The Centre staff have engaged in professional learning to enhance our delivery and design of programs. This has included annual collegiate Environmental and Zoo Education Centre Conference, Geography professional learning and IT. Brewongle employs high quality permanent and casual teaching staff and we foster a collaborative workplace. Brewongle has obtained data from visiting teachers via a Google survey form and this evaluation data is embedded in future program design and maintenance

Centre staff have moved into leadership roles exhibiting commitment to Strategic Directions and use of partnerships. The Centre's teacher, Steven Body is now the relieving principal and two casual staff (Kate Keary and Susan Price) have moved into full and part time roles for 2017.

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

### Empowering learners

#### Purpose

Engage and empower students to effect a positive change for sustainable futures through learning experiences that are authentic and model quality teaching. Facilitate quality learning so students are informed, active and responsible citizens with the necessary 21st century skills capable of positively influencing their future

#### Overall summary of progress

Current programs continued and were successful as shown by evaluation reviews, time is continuing to be devoted to writing and implementing new programs after and external curriculum audit in mid 2016.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A 10% increase in the diversity of differentiated excursion and in-school programs and activities offered by the centre</li></ul>	Progress was made by initiating an external audit on all BEEC programs and Staff attended Geography training to help begin writing new programs for this syllabus.	\$1000 – 2 days casual relief for external audit by Gaye Braiding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student and teacher feedback reflects increased leadership knowledge and skills.</li></ul>	Leadership programs delivered and Brewongle continued partnership with Youth Eco Summit. Teacher feedback via evaluation forms overwhelmingly positive. Areas to improve: explanation of leadership award to students.	No cost – covered within current staffing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student feedback reflects skills, knowledge and positive values towards the environment</li></ul>	Highly successful collaboration with Blacktown Council to deliver St 3 Science and Tech program to Primary Schools in the Blacktown Council area. Project based inquiry learning evidenced in Filmpond movies. <a href="https://ezecnsw.filmpond.com/#/ponds/ezecnsw/films/3ix3ofavrfad">https://ezecnsw.filmpond.com/#/ponds/ezecnsw/films/3ix3ofavrfad</a>  <a href="https://ezecnsw.filmpond.com/#/ponds/ezecnsw/film">https://ezecnsw.filmpond.com/#/ponds/ezecnsw/film</a>	\$15,000 allocated from Blacktown Council to fund teacher relief, Brewongle staff, free excursions and buses for Public Schools in the Blacktown LGA

#### Next Steps

An external audit of all our current programs was initiated in term 2, 2016 with a view to this document guiding the writing of new programs, and the re-writing of old programs into 2017. New Geography Syllbuses are a target and focus for improvement, as well as improving the diversity and syllabus accuracy of day and camp programs offered. Brewongle will seek to continue collaboration with outside agencies like Blacktown Council, Western Sydney University, EZEC network and our local Aboriginal Community to provide programs to schools. Plans for 2017 include increased use of digital technologies, implement student surveys, the Go Make A Difference student leadership challenge, increased take up of the Brewongle Leadership Award and the successful completion of our Aboriginal Student Leadership Program.

## Strategic Direction 2

Building teacher capacity through quality teaching

### Purpose

Engage and empower teachers to effect a positive change for sustainable futures for themselves and their learning communities. Build and enhance staff capacity as learners, teachers and leaders in education for sustainability by improving knowledge, understanding and values in sustainability content and pedagogies to enable 21st century citizenship in students.

### Overall summary of progress

Teacher training days offered during 2016 included a Healthy Waterways training day with Blacktown City Council, Geography Fieldwork for Primary Teachers and Nature Play, a Social Media Masterclass and Filmpond VC for EZEC staff.

### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Increased range of registered and accredited teacher professional courses offered	Planning was implemented to design Geography and Aboriginal Ed TPL in 2017. Informal TPL was run with EZEC network and non-registered TPL with Blacktown City Council.	No extra resources allocated
Increased number of teachers participating in professional learning courses	Progress was made in staff training and planning for 2017 courses to be delivered. Staff were involved in Geography TPL and fieldwork with DoE curriculum advisors.	\$1500
Permanent and casual staff develop and progress their professional goals as outlined in the Performance Development Framework.	Staff are continuing to work towards their professional goals as outlined in individual Professional Development Plans	\$2000 – from professional learning budget.

### Next Steps

In 2017 the Centre aims to run at least one teacher training day per term. These will include 'Promoting Healthy Waterways' in term one as part of the Blacktown Council program, A Geography fieldwork day for all staff from Kellyville Ridge PS in term 2, an Aboriginal culture TPL day in term 3, and either a Geography or History day in term 4. All staff in 2017 will complete a PDP and aim to meet their professional learning goals.

## Strategic Direction 3

### Enabling sustainable partnerships

#### Purpose

Ensure innovative and strategic support to schools in learning for sustainability. Demonstrate sustainable operations through collaboration and innovation, thereby building capacity of learning communities/regional offices for sustainable futures.

#### Overall summary of progress

Our current partnerships continued, however no new partnerships were formed. Staff collaborated with EZEC network, DoE staff to design and implement the EZEC Communication and Engagement Plan for 2016.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Increased number of partnerships with schools and non-DEC organisations	Partnerships were continued with existing groups like HEEN, RCE-GWS, Blacktown Council, Hills Council, EZEC network.	No extra resources allocated – most meetings after school.
10% increase in the range of events and projects delivered in collaboration with partners.	By continuing with existing partners, this milestone is still in progress.	Nil
Increased engagement with DEC Communication and Engagement portfolio	Steve Body continued on this portfolio, helping drive social media workshops, social media use and training for EZEC network. An EZEC website was also set up and resources on the old site were audited and moved. Discussions continued with with DoE technical staff to have a dedicated sustainability page for EZEC and curriculum needs. This outcome occurred early 2017.	Nil

#### Next Steps

To increase our collaboration we are aiming to engage with the Australian Association for Environmental Education through presenting and attending at the annual conference. Staff will attend HEEN, AECG, Hills Shire, Blacktown Sustainable Schools, RCE-GWS (and connection with RCE-Okayama and Japanese Schools), and publish an article in OzEE news. We will begin and maintain a school newsletter to replace the Brewongle Blog.

Key Initiatives	Impact achieved this year	Resources (annual)
<b>Support for beginning teachers</b>	Nil for 2016. Target for 2017 with funding for Kate Keary.	Nil
<b>Capital Works</b>	A new garage and storage area was built using Brewongle funds to enable storage of Kayaks, fleet vehicle and equipment. Plans were designed for refurbishment of existing cabins and this work was taken over by DoE Asset Management. Quotes have been received, but funding is not available yet for completion.	\$20,000 for new garage. \$60,000 put aside for Cabin upgrades in 2017.

## Student information

### Management of non-attendance

Brewongle Environmental Education Centre does not have enrolled students. The Centre caters for visiting schools K–12 across a range of subjects. The majority of programs operate at our Centre in Sackville North, but we also offer School incursions and run many programs at off site venues with project partners.

#### 2016 student visitation numbers:

- 268 Schools
- 6376 Students overall including:
- 838 Stage 1
- 1758 Stage 2
- 2150 Stage 3
- 637 Stage 4
- 279 Stage 5
- 302 Stage 6

## Workforce information

### Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Classroom Teacher(s)	1
School Administration & Support Staff	1.19

\*Full Time Equivalent

In 2016, Brewongle engaged the services of an Aboriginal teacher on a 1 day per week casual arrangement.

### Teacher qualifications

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

### Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	100
Postgraduate degree	100

### Professional learning and teacher accreditation

In 2016, Brewongle staff completed professional

learning through attendance at the annual Environmental and Zoo Education Centre Conference. No staff were involved in the process of gaining further accreditation.

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

### Financial information

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

Income	\$
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	<b>223 379.59</b>
Global funds	46 582.20
Tied funds	8 269.23
School & community sources	99 009.19
Interest	4 101.61
Trust receipts	30 426.64
Canteen	0.00
Total income	411 768.46
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	35 617.38
Excursions	0.00
Extracurricular dissections	24 860.01
Library	229.14
Training & development	2 647.19
Tied funds	23 834.10
Short term relief	0.00
Administration & office	29 863.11
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	7 071.47
Maintenance	24 574.92
Trust accounts	34 425.18
Capital programs	19 763.54
Total expenditure	202 886.04
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>208 882.42</b>

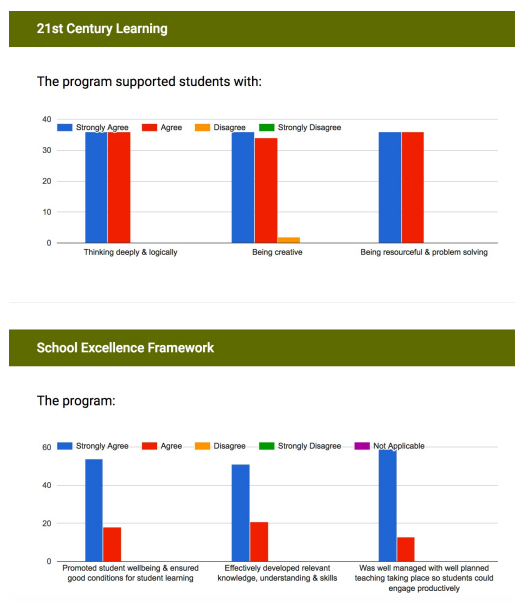
A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.



## Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Centre's vision and values reflect the goal of supporting schools and their communities in making positive and realistic steps in the creation of a sustainable future

This year the Centre experimented with a Facebook Live session to connect students on Writers Camp with their parents at home. This was hugely successful and both parents and students enjoyed the process as evidenced by positive comments on our Facebook page. Our teacher feedback was overwhelmingly positive as evidenced by a sample of our evaluation results below. These figures are part of our teacher evaluations forms that are collected via a Google Survey emailed to teachers post excursion. Brewongle staff utilise these evaluations to improve our teaching performance and enhance our programs.



## Policy requirements

### Aboriginal education

The Centre conducts a very popular Aboriginal education program. This program is run in partnership with members from the Darug community. Activities are offered for primary and high school students on-site and at several Aboriginal heritage sites throughout the Hawkesbury district.

The Centre employed an Aboriginal teacher for 1 day per week in 2015 and our program audit process has a strong focus on the Cross Curriculum priority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Cultures as well as incorporating the 8 ways of learning program

### Multicultural and anti-racism education

The programs at the Centre enable students from all cultures and communities to identify as Australians within a democratic multicultural society and to develop the knowledge, skills and values for participation as active citizens. The Centre promotes positive community relations with feature articles in local newsletters and via our blog and social media accounts. Brewongle EEC is committed to making respect and responsibility a core part of our ethos. The