

Royal National Park Environmental Education Centre

Annual Report



2017



5691

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2017** is provided to the community of **Royal National Park 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.

Julie Gallan

Teaching Principal

Front cover

Peaceful space. Sketching along the Bungoona Path.

School contact details

Royal National Park Environmental Education Centre

Farnell Ave

Audley Heights, 2232

www.royalnatpk-e.schools.nsw.edu.au

royalnatpk-e.School@det.nsw.edu.au

9542 1951

School background

School vision statement

School Vision

Learning and working together for a more sustainable future.

Provide students and teachers with confidence, skills and knowledge to contribute in a positive and meaningful way towards the environment.

School Motto

Enabling environmental citizens

Encouraging students, teachers, school executive, school environment committees and school communities to become more environmentally literate and actively engaged in sustainable improvement. The focus is on building their capacity to act more sustainably, through learning in the environment.

Environmental and Zoo Education Centre EZEC Vision

To support NSW Public Schools to implement sustainability education through meaningful learning experiences in and about the natural and cultural environment. We are the leaders in providing students with the skills, values and opportunities to act as responsible citizens.

School context

Located in the Royal National Park, south east of Sydney.

Centre staff facilitates fieldwork experiences for K–12 in a wide range of ecosystems and unique locations, mainly within this reserve. Students are immersed in nature through experiential learning, in curriculum focussed programs.

Public school students from SE and SW Sydney access the Centre for fieldwork and incursions. Some rural students utilise the Centre fieldwork programs, with video conference participants P–12 from across NSW.

The Centre is one of 25 Environmental Education and Zoo Education Centre's (EZEC) in NSW Department of Education. (DoE) RNPEEC actively collaborates across this network to set directions for planning, curriculum development, student engagement, organisational effectiveness, professional learning, sustainability education, literacy, numeracy and Aboriginal education.

Through the local Community of Schools on the Park (COSOTP) the Centre collaborates in professional learning, sustainability and Aboriginal programs.

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.

In the *learning domain* RNPEEC focussed learning culture, curriculum and learning. Our staff value student engagement and are sensitive to adapting the learning culture when required to differentiate programs to meet needs of students. The learning alliances occur daily as we facilitate programs with and for other schools. The visiting teachers know their students and our staff optimise their student's learning. Accommodations are planned to ensure all students can participate to their maximum ability.

Through the *teaching domain* our Centre focus was on learning and development, collaborative practice and professional

standards. The Performance and Development Plan (PDP) process has been embraced teaching staff. This has been enriching through professional conversations and the evidence teachers have produced. Teachers participated in professional learning, both in-house and externally provided. Teachers readily share learning they received with peers.

We work collaboratively as a staff, plus work in collaboration with staff from other schools, networks and student leaders. There is ongoing communication from administration, teacher through to the principal interrogating visiting teachers to determine their fieldwork needs. Interpreting syllabus outcomes, school requests, programming from cross KLA experiences and identification of what best suits the developmental stage of students requires discussions between the class teacher/coordinator and our staff. We utilise the school website and social media to communicate broadly across the community. Curriculum outcomes from existing and new syllabi are being constantly interrogated to ensure our teaching and learning programs align and support syllabus outcomes.

In the *leading domain* the Centre focussed on the elements of Leadership and School Planning and Implementation. All staff are highly committed to providing quality public education. Linkages exist across communities of schools including the EZEC network and other partners such as Office of Environment and Heritage, Royal Botanic Gardens, Council and non-government agencies.

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

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/sef-evidence-guide>

Strategic Direction 1

Empowering learners

Purpose

Empower students as they are our hope for the future.

Inform and empower students to act as responsible citizens to sustain and improve natural and cultural environments.

Provide opportunities for students to connect with the environment in an increasingly nature–deficit society.

Provide opportunities for students to shine and become agents of change both now and in the future.

Overall summary of progress

Teachers have reported that students have returned to school energised to make a difference in their school. This has resulted from a focus on litter reduction or organic recycling that is part of our school's culture and has impacted the visiting schools.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved engagement with natural environment	Professional learning sessions, and subsequent sharing with and mentoring colleagues, iPads, GPS, social media. Global funds, peer mentoring, social media, classroom displays.	Programs have incorporated time to be engaged in an ecosystem in an unstructured way. More nature play activities for Early Stage 1 and Stage 1.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">increased capacity and desire to improve sustainability practices in school and in the community	Calico bags to make Take 3 for the Sea bags, tongs, sets of sieves and quadrats, Energy Audit kits, Waste Audit equipment.	Supported the Go Make a Difference (Go MAD) collaborative EZEC student leadership initiative with ongoing support to two participating high schools. Specialist programs including SLIPs, Sustainability Science and in–school programs supporting sustainability teams.

Next Steps

Develop the grounds around the Centre plus work with one small school to model forest school principles.

Promote citizen science projects through fieldwork.

Facilitate a local Bird Olympics event to develop students appreciation of birds, their ecology, identification and bird calls.

Providing resources to enable students to manage aspects of sustainability management in their school grounds.

Strategic Direction 2

Building teacher capacity

Purpose

Curriculum needs are evolving. Dynamic modification of programs is required to support schools.

Increasing staff skills will ensure they are equipped to extend sustainability and environmental education.

Developing teacher confidence and expertise in sustainability education and management will deepen the culture of sustainability within schools.

Overall summary of progress

Mentoring and development of new casual teachers joining our teaching team.

Continued sustainability support to teachers through sustainability network, advice, support in schools and active partnerships.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional learning courses developed and delivered related to fieldwork skills and sustainability.• Staff can deliver a wider variety of programs with confidence.• More school communities are supported through professional learning to improve resource and grounds management and curriculum opportunities.	EZEC expertise, teacher professional learning, EZEC State Conference, Program builder, teacher relief, global funds.	<p>Outdoor learning and kitchen garden workshops have been run.</p> <p>Extended opportunities for teaching staff to run in-school programs in sustainability, including biodiversity, energy and waste audits.</p> <p>Professional learning in Depth Studies for Stage 6 Science was timely and helpful to participating schools and our teaching staff.</p>

Next Steps

Facilitate targeted professional learning to build teacher skills in sustainability support for schools.

Promote more mentoring with teachers shadowing and learning new techniques from colleagues.

Strategic Direction 3

Doing better.

Purpose

Formalise systems at the Centre in order to run more effectively and enable smoother induction of staff. Improve communication with and exposure to teachers in schools.

Provide opportunities for staff to be innovative and engaged with sustainability program development and delivery.

Work within networks to develop systemic leadership in environmental and sustainability education.

Overall summary of progress

The school website is now in a format more suitable for mobile devices. Content is being shared across platforms as appropriate. There is an increase in bookings directly from website information. Enquiry form online is resulting in more bookings with new schools. Links to school communities has expanded as handles through social media are applied.

There have been many programs that have a website entry, program outline and detailed teaching program aligned to syllabus (using Program Builder). Sustainability has been incorporated into the teaching and learning programs wherever appropriate. Sustainability Network has supported teachers in professional learning across the year, with follow up support. Mail Chimp has been used to effectively manage mailing list, newsletter and advice of meetings and posting meeting minutes. Our website plus meetings have resulted in in-school support in sustainability.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved systems.Smoother induction of staff.improved communication with visiting staff	Writing for the Web, Jill from Curriculum, Vicky Whitehead, Jill Bell, paid promotion of social media, linking to school Facebook and Twitter accounts, Buffer, program builder, teacher relief time, Website, Twitter, Mail Chimp, Facebook, global funds and TPL funds.	<p>Website updated for mobile devices. Increased website activity. Facebook account started. Syllabus linked programs developed for worm farming, composting and kitchen gardens. Some shadowing has occurred and limited staff development of sustainability program delivery skills. MyPL hours for teachers participating in meetings. Energy audits carried out in 3 schools, waste sort in 3 schools, provision of resources for self delivery of programs in 5 schools.</p> <p>Folder of teaching programs developed.</p> <p>Data: Website traffic, Twitter feeds/likes/followers, Facebook feeds/likes/followers.</p>

Next Steps

There are stand alone incursion and video conference programs that require time to polish, develop and promote.

Expanding on school support in sustainability. There have been referrals made by parents and teachers to expand on the reach of our influence on schools in sustainability practices.

Streamlining of administration for both fieldwork and in school programs.

Student information

Management of non-attendance

In 2017 the Centre supported 11,790 students. There was continued increase in demand for support with fieldwork programs especially K–6 Geography.

The distribution of students across the year was:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
3035	2226	3428	3101

There was an increase in the number of students supported through in-school programs.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	0
Assistant Principal(s)	0
Head Teacher(s)	0
Classroom Teacher(s)	1
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Learning & Support Teacher(s)	0
Teacher Librarian	0
Teacher of ESL	0
School Counsellor	0
School Administration & Support Staff	1.19
Other Positions	0

*Full Time Equivalent

The Centre is supported by 14 experienced and passionate casual teachers, three of which have been on temporary appointments this year.

Currently no staff identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Workforce retention

All permanent staff have remained at the Centre in 2017.

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	6

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Staff from the Centre participated in a range of professional learning, including: EZEC State Conference, Sustainability Networks, Apply First Aid, Cardio Resuscitation Refresher, Anaphylaxis awareness training, Writing for the Web, SQUIZ matrix training, Accessibility essentials, Principals Conferences, EZEC Principals Conference, Oasis Training, LMBR training, ICT Update Sessions, Child Protection Update, Configurator training, Geography, EZEC SAM conference, APTs Anaphylaxis online, Oasis network meetings, COSOTP SAM meetings.

One casual teacher achieved accreditation at Proficient level in 2017 and another has just begun accreditation process. Three teachers are in maintenance of their Proficient status.

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

Financial information

The three financial summary tables cover 13 months (from 1 December 2016 to 31 December 2017).

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

Receipts	\$
Balance brought forward	53,876
Global funds	26,815
Tied funds	2,848
School & community sources	42,503
Interest	458
Trust receipts	0
Canteen	0
Total Receipts	72,624
Payments	
Teaching & learning	
Key Learning Areas	62,026
Excursions	209
Extracurricular dissections	0
Library	64
Training & Development	146
Tied Funds Payments	4,848
Short Term Relief	0
Administration & Office	4,907
Canteen Payments	0
Utilities	1,971
Maintenance	1,009
Trust Payments	0
Capital Programs	0
Total Payments	75,180
Balance carried forward	51,320

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

	2017 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	0
Revenue	148,064
Appropriation	76,027
Sale of Goods and Services	26,350
Grants and Contributions	45,497
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	190
Expenses	-57,646
Recurrent Expenses	-57,646
Employee Related	-33,687
Operating Expenses	-23,960
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	90,418
Balance Carried Forward	90,418

The Opening balance for the 2017 school financial year is displayed in the OASIS table as Balance brought forward. The financial summary table for the year ended 31 December 2017 shows the Opening balance as \$0.00 because the Opening balance for the 2017 school financial year is reported in the OASIS table (as Balance brought forward).

The amount displayed in the Appropriation category of the financial summary table is drawn from the Balance carried forward shown in the OASIS table and includes any financial transactions in SAP the school has undertaken since migration from OASIS to SAP/SALM. For this reason the amount shown for Appropriation will not equal the OASIS Balance carried forward amount.

The Centre is managing the finances for the state wide EZEC conference in February 2018. There is \$25,000 of funds being held by the Centre to be expended in Term 1 2018.

Financial summary equity funding

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

	2017 Actual (\$)
Base Total	378,697
Base Per Capita	9,170
Base Location	0
Other Base	369,528
Equity Total	0
Equity Aboriginal	0
Equity Socio economic	0
Equity Language	0
Equity Disability	0
Targeted Total	0
Other Total	0
Grand Total	378,697

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

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

Feedback has been sought from teachers and students from Stage 3–6, and parents Early Stage 1 Teddy Bears Picnic program via post experience evaluation surveys. Unsolicited email feedback has also been received. Other feedback has come as comments during the day, captured in post fieldwork and programs reflections.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. It is summarised below:

Parents

Sav had a ball! Exhausted and happy

Jazz came home bursting with facts about Indigenous Ozzy's. Thanks for a great day.

Fantastic talk The children enjoyed the interactive parts of the talk and it was very educational. It was well-targeted for the age groups and a very beneficial program for the school. Environment committee parent. – Composting and Worm farming workshop for Green Team. Environment Committee Parent Contact Cronulla South Public School

Students

Just handed in my major work and wanted to say thanks so much for helping me throughout the project. It has been great working with such lovely people and the feedback you gave was invaluable. Stage 6 Design and Technology HSC candidate

Teachers

I just wanted to say a big thank you for our Teddy Bears picnic... We all had a lovely time and our learning has continued throughout this week at school. We are so lucky to have the National Park at our door step. Many thanks for an action packed day which engaged all of our students and teachers. ES1 Teddy Bears Picnic Oyster Bay PS

We had a great day! The day was structured really well and provided lots of engaging and fun activities. The kids learnt so much about Indigenous culture too. They really liked the timeline of Indigenous history. My class are actually using some of what they learnt on the excursion as the stimulus for our assembly item this week. We are launching a waste free lunch box initiative and class competition. Stage 2 History Jibbon Journey Bonnet Bay PS

Thanks for organising such a great excursion to Jibbon today. The kids had an absolute ball and learnt so much along the way. We now have so many directions in which to take our learning of this topic. Thanks! Stage 2 History Jibbon Journey Bonnet Bay PS

On behalf of all the teachers and children who attended the excursion yesterday we would like to say a VERY BIG THANK YOU FOR A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

ON THE DAY! You have all provided us with the scaffold to build onto and extend the children's understanding, to enable them to progress in the tasks, to be provided by us in the future. WELL DONE!
Stage 2 Geography The Earth's Environment Blakehurst PS

Each one of the teachers commented on how much knowledge our environmental education teachers had and how passionate they were about the environment. This was very infectious and the students had a fabulous time. We heard many a time that it was the best excursion they had been on. I would agree! It was very focussed on the skills which we were unable to provide them with at school. They loved using the GPS and I know they are more conscious about rubbish in the playground. Stage 3 Geography Factors that Shape Places

I think the geocache was a great collaborative learning experience for our students.... thank you for providing our mini humans with an outstanding learning opportunity. I love the movement. I love the tools for learning. I love the collaboration. I love the questions the children asked. I love the way the geocache task differentiates learning but expects that all students can achieve the outcome. Well done! Stage 3 Geocache Dash Lindsay Park PS

The students and (..two teachers) would like to thank you again for being such a helpful and informative tour guide during our excursion to the RNP. We really enjoyed the day especially the Honeymooners Track and we look forward to visiting again soon. Bronze Class – IM Endeavour Sports HS

Thank you so much to you and your team for a fantastic day. The kids has a blast and we ourselves, were very impressed with their behaviour. Stage 5 Geography Coastal Management Elderslie HS

Students develop an ephemeral artwork.



Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Teaching programs incorporate aspects of Aboriginal education, where appropriate.

Our Centre staff have been involved in planning and running two COSOTP Aboriginal Cultural days Koori Kids on the Park, in consultation with parents, students, Aboriginal community representatives and Department of Education Aboriginal Education team. The Centre has supported two Aboriginal Education Consultative Group AECG Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics STEMs enrichment programs.

Our Centre has reported on the EZEC Reconciliation Action Plan and are working towards strengthening our partnerships and practices. In 2018 the Centre will be developing its own Reconciliation Action Plan.

Take 3 for the Sea – caring for Country.



Multicultural and anti-racism education

Programs are inclusive of students from varied cultural backgrounds.

Our permanent teacher is the Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO). They undertook ARCO training in Term 4 2017. We are developing anti-racism education strategies and ensuring that practices and procedures within schools and worksites are consistent with the Department of Education's Anti-racism Policy (2005).