

# Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre Annual Report



2017



5741

## Introduction

The Annual Report for **2017** is provided to the community of Botany Bay 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.

Jan Rasborsek

Principal

### School contact details

Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre

Botany Bay National Park

Kurnell, 2231

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

[botanybay-e.School@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:botanybay-e.School@det.nsw.edu.au)

9668 2070

### Message from the Principal

One of the key goals of the Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre (EEC) is to ensure students have high quality authentic learning experiences in natural settings. Research suggests that when students experience quality time in these environments there are a range of measurable benefits including, increased creativity, increased resilience and reduced stress. Students are calmer, better at critical thinking, their behaviour and attention span improves, signs of attention deficit disorder are reduced and as a result, students tend to do better in standardised tests. The benefits of taking students outside are therefore real and quantifiable. As an educator I believe one of the biggest benefits is that this leads to engaged, self regulated learners. During 2017, the centre focused on the development of new Geography programs as well as the renewal and updating of existing core programs. All our programs have a strong focus on literacy, numeracy, visual arts and science and technology. The teaching and learning in our programs has been carefully planned to be student-focused and driven in line with contemporary educational best practice and curriculum priorities. It clearly focuses on the teaching dimensions of intellectual quality, significance and quality learning environments.

## School background

### School vision statement

We work in partnership with schools to provide learning experiences which enrich and extend students through programs that interpret the significance of the arrival of James Cook for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. It supports curriculum delivery with field work expertise and seek to support the Environmental Education Policy for Schools by educating students to be informed advocates of action to support and protect the environment on which we all depend.

### School context

Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre (BBEEC) is one of twenty six Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC) operated by the NSW Department of Education. BBEEC actively collaborates across this network to set directions and develop the organisation for environmental and sustainability education.

BBEEC is located in the Visitor Centre of Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell, in southern Sydney. The site is significant for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians as the point of first contact between Aboriginal people of the Dharawal nation and Captain James Cook and the crew of the Endeavour. 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.

BBEEC supports over 11,000 students K-12 pa including students in rural and remote areas via video conferencing. As well as on site programs at Kurnell, BBEEC uses other local sites, local schools and presents at a range of education events. The Centre has multi-sectoral partnerships to enhance the capacity to create sustainable futures within our school communities.

## 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.

**LEARNING:** The school has worked to strengthen and deliver school learning priorities. All School Programs have been reviewed and improved to align with syllabus changes. Quality teaching and professional practice are evident in every learning environment allowing students to connect with the environment and gain practical experiences to support their learning. The EEC has a number of strong community partnerships and a learning alliance with other NSW EECs to ensure best practice teaching and learning programs are offered to students and teachers.

**TEACHING:** During 2017 new casual teachers were engaged to work at the EEC. As a result there was a significant increase in collaboration and sharing of knowledge, skills and expertise to enhance the teaching and learning programs for students. Professional learning focused on supporting the larger group of casual teachers to develop the professional community. In addition staff engaged in regular professional learning events for the community of EECs to develop their environmental knowledge and skills thus enriching the programs at the EEC. All professional learning supported individual PDPs and the priorities of the School Plan.

**LEADING:** The EEC has continued to grow and develop a range of community relationships including local schools, artists and members of the local Aboriginal community. Collaborative feedback from the community has supported EEC staff in the promotion of future learning and innovation.

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

To support all students to develop positive knowledge, skills, values and attitudes towards the environment by engaging in meaningful and contextually relevant experiential learning that inspires them to become environmentally active global citizens and environmental leaders to sustain and improve natural and cultural environments.

#### Overall summary of progress

Our staff extended their knowledge and understanding of the Geography syllabus. The engagement of new staff at the EEC supported development of several new programs for Geography in Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 with a strong focus on active learning and engagement. New resources to support the teaching and learning programs ensured that students were actively completing a variety of learning activities. Evidence to support student learning during these new programs includes teacher and student feedback, photographic; student and teacher voice and journal evidence.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Evidence of active student engagement and participation through student and teacher feedback.	3 casual teacher days to develop and write new programs	Qualitative and quantitative feedback and evidence of student voice indicative of active student engagement and participation in our programs.  Milestone attainment evidenced in teacher and student feedback, photographic; student and teacher voice and journal evidence.  New programs for Geography in Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 have been written and delivered.
Data from post visit surveys from teachers and students	SAM one day	Realignment of school systems and practices centred on data collection to identify common threads and trends for reflection and further action in 2018
Positive evaluation by visiting schools of pre and post material.		Schools provided valuable feedback to contribute to the improvement of our resources to support teacher capacity and student learning.
Number of return school visits.	Survey Monkey membership \$348 pa	Trend data does indicate the presence of return schools operating across their odd and even year scope and sequence for Geography and History.
Data on number of students participating in video conference delivered to rural and remote schools.	\$100 for art materials	Students from rural and remote schools highly value the video conference programs to support their learning. Feedback indicates a high level of student engagement during the sessions and afterwards during class activities

#### Next Steps

- Develop Science program to support new Stage 6 syllabus. Train staff in the delivery of Module 4 Ecosystem Dynamics
- Review Science programs and identify possible new programs to support Science Stages 1–6 and Primary Connections where applicable. Write new programs in 2019
- Support staff to develop new units of work with high student engagement and student led inquiry learning activities
- Review and refine pre and post material for visiting teachers

## Strategic Direction 2

### Building Teacher Capacity

#### Purpose

To build and enhance staff capacity as learners, teachers and leaders in education to lead their school communities towards a culture of sustainability and support the development of environmentally responsible citizens by modelling best practice environmental and sustainability education, offering professional learning opportunities and working with teachers to enable 21st century citizenship in students.

#### Overall summary of progress

Professional development of staff was a focus for our school in 2017. Staff were able to frame professional learning goals by referencing the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Staff identified areas for further development which included understanding of new syllabuses, inquiry learning and the use of iPads to pursue environmental education.

All staff supported the professional development of visiting teachers to BBEEC and those accessing our programs off-site. The EEC facilitated a PL course (Outdoor Education and School Gardens) with 60 teachers attending. New skills were gained and shared with their school communities.

Our staff also provided tailored professional support for individual schools and teachers to enhance their provision of special days related to environmental and sustainability education. Department of Education International were also recipients of our support of visiting teachers, deputies and principals from visiting schools in South-East Asia.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Culture of reflection is embedded into teaching and learning practice.		Staff have embraced the daily reflection tool. They reflect on their own practice, share their experiences of what worked and did not work and collate comments, audio clips and photographs to demonstrate student learning during the program. An analysis of these reflections indicates a shift to more experiential learning for the students and higher engagement.
Number of teachers enrolled in MyPL courses (registered and non-registered).	\$1000	MyPL courses supported the building of teacher capacity to deliver environmental and sustainability education.  New PL course: Outdoor Education and School Gardens delivered to 60 teachers.
Teachers use of pre and post learning resources.		Teachers provided feedback to BBEEC to drive improvement in the scope and quality of resources provided.

#### Next Steps

- Professional Learning for BBEEC staff on student led inquiry based programs using research based material
- Develop an annual Professional Learning Plan for BBEEC
- Professional Learning sessions on Science syllabus and Primary Connections in 2019
- NESA procedures and PDP training for all staff
- Write new PL course–The Art of Nature and Well-being for 2018

## Strategic Direction 3

### Building Stronger Partnerships

#### Purpose

To build stronger partnerships as an educational community by leading and inspiring a culture of collaboration, engaged communication, empowered leadership and organisational practice BBEEC will work closely with community partners to provide authentic, relevant and unique environmental and sustainability education experiences for all students

#### Overall summary of progress

During 2017 the collaborative connections with a number of organisations have been strengthened adding value to the work of the EEC. Staff have supported the work of EZEC network to ensure the delivery of high quality programs and professional learning sessions. Links with the local school Kurnell Public School resulted in the delivery of Nature Art workshop sessions for students. Teachers reported a high level of excitement and engagement during this program. Connections with the Aboriginal community has been supported by the engagement of two Aboriginal teachers to support teaching and learning programs.

#### Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Surveys and website data to assess the number of teachers, schools and students who have engaged in BBEEC programs.	\$468 pa	Survey results from 2017 indicate that students, teachers, parents and carers value the provision of educational services provided by the Botany Bay EEC  Data from website analysis indicates a significant increase in the number of hits to the BBEEC home page and also for individual programs. There has been an increase in the use of social media to promote BBEEC and EZEC.
Increased use of social media to raise the profile of BBEEC and EZEC measured by data.	\$400	An active social media strategy was used to promote programs offered by BBEEC, the EZEC Network and to celebrate student achievement in environmental and sustainability education.
Data on the number of strategies implemented in the EZEC Communication Plan.  Evaluation of the EZEC Communication Plan.	\$500	Our Centre consistently implemented strategies from the EZEC Communication Plan e.g. Facebook, Twitter

#### Next Steps

- Collaborate with EZEC Network on Citizen Science projects to collect authentic data in collaboration with Tangaroa Blue and Macquarie University
- Continue to strengthen a connection with the local Aboriginal community and employ Aboriginal teachers at the EEC when available

## Student information

Botany Bay EEC does not have a permanent student population. Students from K–12 attend the EEC to complete day programs to complement their learning at school.

5669 students completed day programs with the EEC. 1831 rural and remote students attended video conference sessions to support History, Science and Creative Arts programs.

## Workforce information

### Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	0
Assistant Principal(s)	0
Head Teacher(s)	0
Classroom Teacher(s)	0
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Learning & Support Teacher(s)	0
Teacher Librarian	0
Teacher of ESL	0
School Counsellor	0
School Administration & Support Staff	1.03
Other Positions	0

\*Full Time Equivalent

No Aboriginal people are employed at the EEC on a permanent basis. The Centre has two casual Aboriginal teachers who work with students as required.

### 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	0

## Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning has been a central focus for staff at the EEC. It has involved formal and informal sessions of learning, collaboration and networking to ensure that teachers are able to deliver high quality teaching and learning programs. All staff have attended a variety of conferences throughout the year including annual Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC) Conference, Australian Association of Environmental Education Conference, Apple Learning Academy. In addition, staff have completed all mandatory Departmental courses through MyPL.

Botany Bay EEC has delivered accredited workshops for visiting teachers. Sixty teachers attended the Outdoor Education and School Gardens professional learning course held at the EEC. Feedback from teachers indicated that they were equipped with a variety of hands on activities and lesson ideas to take back and share with their school community.

## 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.

<b>Receipts</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Balance brought forward</b>	<b>87,925</b>
Global funds	21,266
Tied funds	1,606
School & community sources	37,769
Interest	787
Trust receipts	0
Canteen	0
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>61,428</b>
<b>Payments</b>	
Teaching & learning	
Key Learning Areas	60,187
Excursions	0
Extracurricular dissections	0
Library	141
Training & Development	559
Tied Funds Payments	3,234
Short Term Relief	0
Administration & Office	3,641
Canteen Payments	0
Utilities	658
Maintenance	0
Trust Payments	0
Capital Programs	0
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>68,420</b>
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	<b>80,933</b>

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 December 2016 to 31 December 2017.

	<b>2017 Actual (\$)</b>
<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>147,246</b>
Appropriation	96,891
Sale of Goods and Services	5,930
Grants and Contributions	44,185
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	240
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>-61,275</b>
Recurrent Expenses	-61,275
Employee Related	-48,365
Operating Expenses	-12,910
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
<b>SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>85,972</b>
<b>Balance Carried Forward</b>	<b>85,972</b>

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 EEC has migrated from the OASIS system to the new LMBR program. Extensive training and support for the Principal and Relieving SAM has resulted in the development of new financial management processes and governance structures to meet financial policy requirements.

- During 2018 there will be a strong focus on developing professional learning courses for EEC staff and visiting teachers. Significant funds will be allocated towards this project
- The EEC will update technology equipment for use by students. Significant funds will be allocated towards this project.

## Financial summary equity funding

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

	2017 <b>Actual</b> (\$)
<b>Base Total</b>	234,205
Base Per Capita	4,585
Base Location	0
Other Base	229,620
<b>Equity Total</b>	0
Equity Aboriginal	0
Equity Socio economic	0
Equity Language	0
Equity Disability	0
<b>Targeted Total</b>	0
<b>Other Total</b>	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	234,205

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

The EEC sought feedback from visiting teachers and students throughout the year. A snapshot of their responses are presented below:

### TEACHERS:

- The program was changed this year to align with the new curriculum. Myself and my colleagues thought it was fantastic and better than the previous program. We will definitely be back!
- Keep up the great work! You people are amazing! We did First Contacts
- The programs supported the curriculum links and made the learning real for the students
- I would like to suggest a program for Stage 5– Making a Nation
- Outstanding. Well prepared with a variety of geographical tools and skills planned. Worksheets followed Ecosystems at Risk syllabus content. As a teacher I could not have done this fieldtrip alone with the students. It was reassuring and educationally advantageous to have an expert in the area and someone experienced in the terrain we crossed.

### STUDENTS:

- Being able to put into place the different sampling

techniques on the rock platform

- I liked that we got to go to the beach and got a better understanding of the environment
- Learning how the coastline changed over time
- My favourite part of the excursion was when we were trudging through the mud and water in the mangrove area and through the bush as it was a really cool experience that I would have never done if it was not for this excursion
- Being able to experience new things and learn about the plants and animals that I didn't know about
- Going into Alpha farm, dressing up and doing the washing using the wash boards. Then we got to play games from the past like knuckles and sack races
- My favourite part was the re-enactment of the first meeting between James Cook and the Aboriginal people
- I learnt about the importance of wetlands and how vulnerable they are and how we need to preserve them for future generations



## Policy requirements

### Aboriginal education

Our school has a strong focus on Aboriginal education at BBEEC. The EEC has a strong emphasis on History programs and staff are always open to opportunities to enrich their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture. Staff participated in staff development days at various professional learning events including: the Aboriginal Heritage Tour, Botanic Gardens; the Aboriginal Exhibition at the Australian Museum and the Aboriginal Conference at the University of Sydney. After engaging with experts in the field of Aboriginal history, material culture and lore there were many opportunities to share this knowledge in collaborative sessions at the EEC and enhance the provision of quality teaching and learning experiences.



the Aboriginal people of Kurnell, our school continued to support the stakeholders from NPWS and OE&H in planning for educational programs that will be delivered for students during the commemoration. Our staff were also active in supporting community organisations involved in this commemoration.

### **Multicultural and anti-racism education**

Our school embedded culturally inclusive teaching practices in the delivery of our teaching and learning programs for all our students. Our teaching staff made connections with students in relation to multiculturalism, cultural inclusivity and belonging with all students by exploring the contributions we all make as Australians in our rich multicultural society and instilling in students their future legacy as shared custodians of the land and their ongoing contribution to our Australian story.

Our school supported anti-racism education by providing learning opportunities for students to better understand and value our differences in our multicultural society. Our staff provided learning experiences that allowed students to explore different values, beliefs and traditions and how our nation has changed starting with the first Australians to our current day.

### **Other school programs**

Our school supported a range of programs across the EZEC Network which included collaboration in the writing of new units of work, updating our EZEC Network website to ensure that the information on offer was accurate and representative of the EEC and Zoo education sites, supported annual programs including the Green Day at a local high school, Youth Eco Summit and the EZEC Network conference to further develop the skills of our staff.

DE International were well supported by our school. We continued to offer our day program to support the education and cultural awareness to visiting educators from South East Asia at our site. Our DE International Coordinator tailored visits to meet the needs of visiting educators to learn more about the role of environmental education centres in NSW and also the role they play in promoting environmental and sustainability education for all our students.

Looking forward to the 2020 commemoration of the meeting of two cultures between Lt James Cook and