

Red Hill Environmental Education Centre Annual Report



2017



5750

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2017** is provided to the community of **Red Hill 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.

Michele McFarlane

Principal

School contact details

Red Hill Environmental Education Centre

Saunders Ave

Gulgong, 2852

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

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

6374 2558

School background

School vision statement

The common EZEC vision is: to support NSW Public Schools to implement sustainability education through meaningful learning experiences in and about the natural, built and cultural environment. We strive to be the leaders in providing students with the skills, values and opportunities to act as responsible citizens. At Red Hill, we have an additional vision to bring the teaching of history to life through utilising our unique surroundings in the historic township of Gulgong.

School context

Red Hill Environmental Education Centre is one of 23 Department of Education schools dedicated to the goals of Environmental Education. Established in 1995 with a mandate to also support the teaching of history, we utilise our built and cultural environment in teaching programs. The focus is on education for sustainability (EfS), with both a present and future orientation. EfS has strong intrinsic links to learning for Aboriginal Cultural awareness. In a time of increasing concerns about the future of the planet, students can develop a sense of hopelessness. Education for sustainability can empower students to feel that they are able to act, individually and collectively, in ways that contribute to a sustainable future.

With our location in the historic Gold Rush town of Gulgong, many of our programs work to support History syllabus implementation with experiential, hands on activities which develop in students a deeper knowledge and understanding of this pivotal time in Australian History.

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 there are five elements. Our self assessment results follow. 1. Learning Culture: Excelling. 2. Wellbeing: Sustaining and Growing. 3. Curriculum and Learning: Delivering. 4. Assessment and Reporting: Working towards Delivering. 5. Student Performance Measures: Working towards Delivering. The last two elements in particular relate specifically to individual student progress, assessment and reporting over extended periods of time. As an Environmental Education Centre, we are not able to address these elements without continuous, on-going enrolments. The majority of students attend one day events, which can be as short as 4 hours with centre staff. Our programs supplement and contribute to visiting school's assessment and reporting regimes.

In the Teaching Domain, there are five elements. Our self assessment results follow. 1. Effective Classroom Practice: Delivering. 2. Data Skills and Use: Working towards Delivering. 3. Collaborative Practice: Excelling. 4. Learning and Development: Sustaining and Growing. 5. Professional Standards: Excelling.

In the Leading Domain, there are four elements. Our self assessment results follow. 1. Leadership: Excelling. 2. School Planning, Implementation and Reporting: Delivering. 3. School Resources: Excelling. 4. Management Practices and Processes: Sustaining and Growing.

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: Learning for a sustainable future

Purpose

Participation in RHEEC programs provide learning experiences that build on classroom curriculum programs. Utilizing experiential learning, student engagement and achievement is enhanced via natural settings, the use of ICT, specialised equipment and methodologies and RHEEC teacher expertise.

These experiences help students to make sense of their world and think about how they can act as responsible citizens to sustain and improve natural and cultural environments.

Overall summary of progress

The improvement measures for this strategic direction have been met and surpassed.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Attendance data increase by 5% on 2014 figures	Attendance data increase by 5% on 2014 figures	Student attendance numbers in 2014 were 2771. For 2016 we had 3758, and this year totalled 4690. This is an increase of 25% in the last twelve months, and a 69% increase over the life of this School Plan.
Feedback surveys continue to demonstrate high level satisfaction	Feedback surveys continue to demonstrate high level satisfaction	In all Feedback surveys, 100% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with all positive statements. For example: "Enthusiastic, engaged the children really well", "Great teacher skills. Excellent staff, excellent knowledge, engaged students beautifully. Great reflections after activities. Great day"

Next Steps

For the next cycle of school planning, we are moving away from a focus on continuous growth in numbers. With the staffing level of a Teaching Principal and one Teacher, we are at capacity. Our focus will move to increasing value and building depth and breadth into programs when and where this is possible within the time constraints of our delivery. We will continue to provide visiting teachers with Teacher Evaluation Forms and process these, acting on issues if and when they arise.

Strategic Direction 2

Fostering quality teaching

Purpose

The use of reflective practices will develop a school culture in which staff take responsibility for their ongoing learning, strive for innovation and improvement and make strong connections within and beyond the school. This will enable staff to lead school communities to act responsibly, assist teachers to integrate environmental and sustainability education, values and practices into their school communities

Overall summary of progress

Progress in this Strategic Direction has been solid. We will continue to look to develop ourselves and provide quality professional development to other staff as appropriate, when the opportunity arises, and at events where we create our own opportunities.

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">• PL courses for DoE staff available on MyPL and utilised and other staff professional development offered by RHEEC	<p>EZEC developed PL courses on teaching outside available on MyPL and utilised.</p> <p>Other staff professional development offered by RHEEC</p>	<p>As reported in 2016 School Report, these courses were not able to be offered because students were also present at the time.</p> <p>During 2017, Red Hill staff provided Teacher Professional Development on the Sustainability Action Process to a group in Dubbo, ran a K-6 Geography Skills PD at a combined schools Development Day and held Workshops for Traditional Aboriginal Weaving.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Record of programs being progressively updated, % completed	<p>Record of programs being progressively updated, % completed</p>	<p>All programs have been reviewed and updated to reflect current NESA Syllabus documents.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PL opportunities that enhance strategic directions and/or personal development frameworks.	<p>PL opportunities that enhance strategic directions and/or personal development frameworks.</p>	<p>All Professional development undertaken by staff has been mapped to our Strategic Directions and/or individual Teacher Professional Development Plans.</p>

Next Steps

In the next iteration of the school plan, we intend to focus on student wellbeing, integrating this into our programs and developing our own staff as well as aiming to provide Professional Development to other Department of Education teachers as our expertise grows.

Strategic Direction 3

Environmental sustainability through strong connections

Purpose

To meet the continually changing needs of our students through innovation, excellence and continuous improvement in order to build successful learners, confident and creative individuals, active and informed citizens and future leaders of a sustainable world. Leading and inspiring a culture of collaboration via positive relationships and strong partnerships between community groups, schools, staff and parents will empower leadership and organisational best practice.

Overall summary of progress

Our strong networks are a great strength. We have local school and community networks, our regional networks and state wide communities of practices. These enhance our capacity to deliver education for sustainability, history and Aboriginal cultural knowledge and awareness.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
EZEC Strategic Alliance survey of Principal's demonstrates engagement and commitment to community of practice	EZEC Strategic Alliance survey of Principal's demonstrates engagement and commitment to community of practice	Survey conducted and results analysed to indicate support for continuity of Community of Practice.
Meetings and collaborative programs with regional Environmental Education centres.	Meetings and collaborative programs with regional Environmental Education centres.	Meetings have been held and local collaboration included Outback Outreach, Green Day in Mudgee, Science Week in Dubbo, shared and team teaching with staff from Wambangalang and Warrumbunges Environmental Education Centres and the Western Plains Taronga Education Centre staff.
Local community use of the centre.	Local community use of the centre.	Local community use included: Gulgong Craft Club, Barnardos Playgroup, Mudgee Disability Support Services, Gulgong Public P&C, Gulgong Arts Council, Gulgong Chamber of Commerce and various other groups and individuals.

Next Steps

The EZEC wide community of practice continues to grow, with new vision and strategic directions for the 2018–2020 planning cycle. The establishment of a funded EZEC co-ordinator is a priority, as is the push for two teachers in each centre.

The local community of practice will continue to grow, we have held our end of 2017 planning meeting for collaborative activities in 2018, including the development of combined Teacher Professional Development activities, drawing on our collective expertise.

Community groups will continue to utilise the centre. The Chamber of Commerce are intending to create an office space in the Scout Hall.

Student information

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	1.22
Other Positions	0

*Full Time Equivalent

One member of staff identifies as Aboriginal.

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	50

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

One member of staff maintained accreditation at Proficient during the time frame of this report. From 2018, all staff will be required to meet the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, will have Professional Development Plans with goals that link to the School Plan and its Strategic Directions, with the flexibility to have one goal that links to their personal development needs and desires.

All staff have completed all mandatory training requirements, such as Working with Children Check,

CPR, Code of Conduct, Anaphylaxis, e-Emergency and Provide First Aid.

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.

<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.

Income	\$
Balance brought forward	0.00
Global funds	0.00
Tied funds	0.00
School & community sources	0.00
Interest	0.00
Trust receipts	0.00
Canteen	0.00
Total income	0.00
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	0.00
Excursions	0.00
Extracurricular dissections	0.00
Library	0.00
Training & development	0.00
Tied funds	0.00
Short term relief	0.00
Administration & office	0.00
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	0.00
Maintenance	0.00
Trust accounts	0.00
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	0.00
Balance carried forward	0.00

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from <insert date> to 31 December 2017.

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 2107 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.

<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.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

As part of the network of Environmental and Zoo Education Centres, Red Hill is a participant in the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2016–2018. This was finalised and endorsed during 2016, and we reported on progress at the end of 2016, and again during 2017. All programs begin with an acknowledgement of the traditional custodians, and we fly the Aboriginal flag each day. We display the Apology to the Stolen Generations and the Aboriginal Languages Map. Many programs are specifically about developing knowledge and understanding of a variety of Aboriginal cultures, both for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants. On-site, we have a bush tucker garden, yarning circle and dedicated Nangirra Aboriginal Outdoor learning area for activities such as gunyah building, net making, grinding ochre, making johnnycakes, boomerang throwing, aboriginal games, symbols and painting. We run an annual Walan Maya (Empowerment) Camp for regional schools with the support of the Aboriginal Education Team from Dubbo. In 2016 the camp had the theme of 'Songlines', the same as the NAIDOC theme. Students participated in a range of activities related to songlines, including Aboriginal Astronomy and communication. Off-site, we utilised various local areas of significance such as Hands on Rock, the Drip and Ganguddy (Dunn's Swamp) to give students the opportunity for real life experiences that build connection to country and appreciation of the sustainable nature of traditional land management practices. In 2017, we introduced a new activity with the ancient and contemporary cultural practice of twining string, coiling baskets and weaving dilly bags.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

Red Hill Principal is the designated ARCO. As an integral element of our programs that support student learning relating to the Gold Rush era in Australian History, we teach students about the Chinese experience of life on the gold fields. Students also learn about the range of other countries that prospectors came from, including Germany. This develops knowledge of the multicultural nature of Australia, and the impact of racism on individuals and groups of people.