

Caldera School

Annual Report



2018

Caldera School



5573

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2018** is provided to the community of Caldera 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.

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School background

School vision statement

Caldera School.

- Provides the opportunity for students to develop and improve their cognitive and problem solving capabilities.
- Values the individual differences of all students.
- Encourages the involvement of families and our community agencies and supporters.
- Implements policies and procedures to protect the rights and wellbeing of all school community members.

At Caldera we know that students develop best where teaching and learning occur within a context of student wellbeing. Student wellbeing at Caldera is the sum of all academic, cognitive and social practices, policies and programs that occur within the school. Given the nature of the students it is paramount that staff, students and the community actively work to establish a safe, structured and supportive environment.

Our school is committed to the values of public education.

School context

Caldera is a School for Specific Purposes, located at Tweed Heads South. The school is an alternative Department of Education and Communities facility that has been created to meet the needs of students whose challenging behaviour has prevented them from being maintained in a regular school setting. The school aims to support a student's transition through school into the wider community.

In 2008 Caldera School commenced providing teaching support to the Kamala, Child and Adolescent In-Patient Unit. Kamala is an acute mental health inpatient facility within the Richmond Mental Health Campus, co-located with the Lismore Base Hospital. The Unit provides diagnostic assessments and therapeutic programs for children and adolescents (12–17yrs) with severe and/or complex mental health needs.

Caldera programs operate within an educational model where quality academic and management programs exist in unison. All students have Personalised Learning and Support, which is designed to meet their academic, cognitive, transition and social goals. The fragile nature of the students at Caldera requires staff to develop programs designed to promote achievements and success, whilst accounting for students' past experiences and capabilities.

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 and participated in an external validation. 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. During the external validation process, an independent panel of peer principals considered our evidence and assessment of the school's progress, aligned with the standards articulated in the School Excellence Framework.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of **Learning** Caldera School assessed itself as **Sustaining and Growing**. Through the External Validation process we discovered that Caldera School is Excelling in the elements of **Learning Culture** and **Wellbeing**. Caldera School provides a multifaceted approach to supporting both the Learning Culture and the Wellbeing of students at the school, two elements that we feel are inextricably linked. Many students that enrol at Caldera School are extremely disengaged from the schooling system and have significant wellbeing concerns. By providing Personalised Learning and Support that caters directly to a student's academic, social and emotional needs whilst working through problems from a collaborative philosophical approach, the majority of students re engage with education and wellbeing is enhanced. An area of ongoing development at the school is in the element of **Assessment**. This is a key focus area in the 2018–2020 school plan in the Quality teaching strategic direction. An element of interest was **Student Performance Measures**. This is an element of the SEF that Caldera School places little value on. Due to the complex and challenging needs of the students at Caldera School, the school places value on enhancing student wellbeing and academic engagement over external or internal student performance measures.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of **Teaching** Caldera School assessed itself as **Sustaining and Growing**. Through the External Validation process we discovered that Caldera School is Excelling in the elements of **Learning and Development**. In an environment such as Caldera School where students often have complex needs and can be highly volatile. There is a need to have a high quality teaching and support staff in order to work effectively with these students. As demonstrated in **Evidence Set 4: Professional Learning**, there are many systems in place to support teachers' wellbeing and capacity to work in a challenging and highly stressful environment such as Caldera School. There are also structures in place to support teachers develop leadership skills such as coaching and mentoring. The results from the 2017 People Matter Employee Survey demonstrated a high level of engagement and job satisfaction as well as support and development for staff to have the necessary skills to do well in the workplace. An area of interest was **Data Skills and Use**. The school identified itself as delivering due to a few keywords in the statement of excellence, *identify student achievement and progress*. However after reviewing the evidence, the panel deemed the school to be Sustaining and Growing. The school does use data frequently and effectively in order to support student attendance, wellbeing and approaches to managing challenging behaviour. The school also uses data to evaluate effectiveness of programs and to inform the school's future direction.

The results of this process indicated that in the School Excellence Framework domain of **Leading** Caldera School assessed itself as **Sustaining and Growing**. Through the External Validation process, we discovered that Caldera School demonstrated strength in the elements of **Educational Leadership** and **School Planning, Implementation and Reporting**. The School Plan really is at the core of school improvement. Staff, student and parent surveys are conducted in order to inform the schools plan. All staff are allocated to strategic direction teams and spend allocated time each week in order to research and create professional learning for key initiatives. This makes it transparent and promotes ownership from staff. PDPs and staff Professional learning are centred around the strategic directions of the school. Once the key initiatives have been developed they become part of the professional learning cycle in order for them to be embedded in to practice. The element, School resources was an area that the panel felt the evidence provided by the school merited the assessment to be Excelling rather than Sustaining and Growing. This was due to the evidence the school provided for leveraging external providers and the expertise of specialist teachers to enrich the delivery of the curriculum.

Our self-assessment and the external validation 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

Engagement

Purpose

To generate student engagement through the introduction of STEM technology into teaching and learning.

Overall summary of progress

As part of our strategic direction we conducted research into the possibility of introducing Critical and Creative Thinking (CCT) into planning and programming at Caldera as a way of generating student engagement. We also created resources designed to help students develop CCT skills through engaging activities. After conducting a review and evaluation of our efforts it was decided that the introduction of CCT as a means of creating engagement would be of limited benefit for Caldera students, so we decided to head in a different direction. A new plan has been developed to contact a host of ED/BD programs to make inquiries about what programs and/or resources they have found helpful in terms of engaging students. We are also planning to have a representative from a local school deliver some professional development to staff about what has been found to be effective in terms of engaging students at their school. The aim is to seek out resources/programs that will be useful to Caldera as a means of engaging students.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
As a result of STEM activities students are more engaged in their learning.	RFF	Researched methodology of Critical and Creative Thinking. Started developing units of work. Yet to be trialled.
As a result of engaging in STEM activities students report that they are more likely to attend school.		Put on hold. No progress made in 2018.

Next Steps

Make contact with other ED/BD schools about successful programs/ strategies they are employing to engage their students.

Explore STEM as a means of increasing engagement.

Strategic Direction 2

Wellbeing

Purpose

To measurably increase the emotional literacy and resilience of students at Caldera, with a focus on the following key areas; Self awareness, self management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making.

Overall summary of progress

The focus of the Wellbeing strategic direction team was on developing a framework for enhancing student's emotional literacy and resilience. We started the year by researching emotional literacy & resilience programs to implement at Caldera School. Began to create a library of emotional literacy & resilience related literature and resources on OneNote. Selected two possible programs, and contact program advisors and schools to determine the quality of each. Listed pros and cons of each potential program, and compared these. Contacted other SSPs to discuss related programs & practices. After which we decided not to adopt either program but to develop our own.

We created staff & student surveys to gather baseline data about emotional literacy & resilience. Began creating a Caldera specific EL & Resilience program framework. Administered & gathered completed staff and student surveys and collate baseline data. Began collating a bank of emotional literacy / resilience student learning resources.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Improved student emotional literacy.	Purchased resilience resources.	Still in the phase of developing resources and directions.
Improved student resilience.	RFF	Still in the phase of developing resources and directions.

Next Steps

To identify topic areas to for EL & Resilience program. Continue collating a bank of emotional literacy / resilience student learning resources. Finalise Caldera specific EL & Resilience program framework.

Strategic Direction 3

Quality Teaching

Purpose

Enhance quality teaching practices by increasing staff and student competence in use of assessment and inquiry based learning practices.

Overall summary of progress

ASSESSMENT:

In 2018 we researched and identified effective Assessment practices for working with Emotionally and behaviourally disordered students. We designed, administered and collated baseline staff and student surveys to measure how often students understand what they are meant to be learning and are able to identify their progress. We designed and modified units of work to include four key elements of assessment. We trailed the use of these units in our classrooms, modified them then trained all school staff in the design and use of these effective assessment practices. Staff feedback was unanimous and agreed the practices seem worthwhile implementing and achievable with most students.

INQUIRY BASED LEARNING:

In 2018 we initially researched Quality teaching rounds and Project Based Learning hoping to determine which would be a more valuable focus in order to improve the quality of teaching at Caldera School. Research, training and consultation with school leaders and curriculum, engagement and quality teaching advisors about Project based learning lead to the discovery of Problem Based learning and Inquiry based learning (IBL). The latter of which is a far better fit for our students. It is less heavily reliant on student ability to work in groups for sustained periods of time on the same project. It is also a great tool for developing problem solving skills and giving opportunity to develop social, emotional regulation and team work skills without necessarily relying on them. Staff surveys indicated a preference for focus on Inquiry Based Learning. We designed, administered and collated baseline surveys to measure current staff and student confidence in using IBL. SD team trialled a variety of IBL practices and trained whole school staff in the use of these. Staff feedback was again unanimously positive with Staff agreeing the practices seem worthy of implementing and achievable with most students.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
In Literacy and Numeracy, students report increased understating of what they are meant to learn and increased ability to identify their progress.	RFF	Student survey results deemed unhelpful as students generally self-reported knowing what they are meant to learn and being able to see their progress despite often being unable to do either of these things when directly asked by teachers. Teacher judgment will be relied upon to measure ongoing improvement.
Students report increased understating of what they are meant to learn and increased ability to identify their progress across other KLA's.	RFF	Student survey results deemed unhelpful as students generally self-reported knowing what they are meant to learn and being able to see their progress despite often being unable to do either of these things when directly asked by teachers. Teacher judgment will be relied upon to measure ongoing improvement.
Students experience higher levels of engagement as a result of participating in IBL tasks matched to their personal interests.	RFF	Researched and chose to focus on trialling Inquiry based Learning practices. Trialled by SD team and found effective in increasing engagement in the small sample size.

Next Steps

Successful trials and training for Assessment and IBL have occurred. Both these focuses are expected to assist our Literacy and Numeracy focus.

In 2019 we aim to embed these focuses. We have allocated time to meet with all staff to check what they have been implementing, what's working well. Difficulties and what they have learned. We have also allocated time for my SD team members to mentor other staff in the use of these practices. By the end of 2018 we aim to have improved staff confidence and competence in these areas. By 2020 we aim to have increased student's academic engagement, learning, and ability to identify their learning progress as a result of each of our 3 focus areas. We will be relying on teacher surveys to indicate our degree of success.

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	\$11,977 (AIME program, celebrating days of cultural significance, RFF)	Access for students to participate in AIME program. Release for Executive to collaborate on implementation of AIME program. This resulted in significant engagement, goal setting and increased cultural competencies of students. All staff embedding 8 Ways. Resulting in improved curriculum options, increased staff cultural competence and confidence and whole school engagement in class led learning about days of cultural significance.
Socio-economic background	\$55,910	Funding was used to assist in funding an additional teacher. This meant that the students most in need had access to closer supervision and support.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Boys	22	23	23	24
Girls	5	3	4	5

Structure of classes

Classes at Caldera School are structured in a way to minimise risk within the school and maintain a safe and fair school environment. Therefore the classes are not structured by school grade, age or academic ability. All students are on Individualised Education Plans and have their own daily task sheet and patterns of study.

Year 12 vocational or trade training

In 2018, 1 student undertook TVET vocational training in Retail Cert 2 as part of an SbAT traineeship through Kingscliff TAFE. Another student completed a YES course in Hospitality through Kingscliff TAFE. 2 students undertook work placements with local businesses – one in hospitality and one in meat processing. 4 students completed Work Studies courses through Distance Education. A further 4 students were able to secure part-time/casual employment through links the school has made with employment service providers in the local area.

Year 12 attaining HSC or equivalent

One student completed his Year 12 equivalent studies in 2018 area.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	2
Classroom Teacher(s)	4.5
Teacher Librarian	0.2
School Counsellor	0.1
School Administration and Support Staff	8.02
Other Positions	0.2

*Full Time Equivalent

There are currently no teachers with an Aboriginal background working at Caldera school.

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	

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Significant amounts of professional learning were undertaken by Caldera School staff in 2018, most of which was focused around the 2018–2020 School Plan. A weekly professional learning cycle was implemented to increase collaboration, build staff capacity and assist them in embedding school initiatives. In 2018, one graduate teacher became proficient. All other teachers were at the proficient level of accreditation.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018.

	2018 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	205,198
Revenue	1,915,632
Appropriation	1,914,032
Sale of Goods and Services	0
Grants and Contributions	-351
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	1,952
Expenses	-1,673,051
Recurrent Expenses	-1,673,051
Employee Related	-1,619,268
Operating Expenses	-53,783
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	242,581
Balance Carried Forward	447,778

The school SAM and Principal attended and engaged in a range of professional learning opportunities to better understand how to use the new systems to manage and meet financial policy requirements.

The SAM and Principal meet formally to discuss the finances of the school on a monthly basis and informally as need arises. Reports generated in SAP and the eFPT tool are valuable resources in ensuring that school expenditure is as planned.

The school focus of the next school budget will be on hiring staff to deliver specialised programs in order to enhance student engagement and provide an opportunity for them to experience learning that would be otherwise be limited in the current school context. There will also be an increase in expenditure on staff training and development as Caldera School engages more with the broader ED/BD network of schools.

Financial summary equity funding

The equity funding data is the main component of the

'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

	2018 Actual (\$)
Base Total	457,564
Base Per Capita	15,524
Base Location	1,879
Other Base	440,162
Equity Total	70,659
Equity Aboriginal	15,345
Equity Socio economic	55,314
Equity Language	0
Equity Disability	0
Targeted Total	1,149,176
Other Total	44,305
Grand Total	1,721,705

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

In 2018, all students and their parents/ carers participated in a Transition Plan meeting with their class teacher. These meetings served to give both the student and their parents/ carers voice in the Personalised Learning and Support provided by the school. From these meetings the general feedback was that:

*The majority of students and parents/ carers were very happy with the Personalised Learning and Support being provided by their teacher.

*The majority of students and parent/carers were happy with the Transition Plan in place for the 2018 school year.

Students and their parents/carers were also involved in the School Planning process. A survey was completed by both students and parent/carers as to the focus areas of the 2018–2020 School Plan. The school was focused on increasing the percentage of parent wellbeing surveys returned. There was a significant increase from 15% to 100% of parent surveys returned. The surveys demonstrated an overwhelmingly positive outlook on the school and it's support of both students and parent/carers. There was 100% completion of student surveys again in 2018 with very pleasing

results. The vast majority of students gave overwhelmingly positive reviews, the school as well as the teaching and learning provided.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

We used \$11,977. This funding assisted an Executive/ Strategic Direction leader with training in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education leadership to embed '8 Ways' in each classroom following whole school professional development in 2017. It also paid for our first year accessing the AIME program and allowed this Executive to tailor, and support student interactions with the AIME program and AIME mentors which was accessed and found to be highly valuable for our Aboriginal students. It also allowed teachers relief from face to face in order implement Personalised Learning and Support (PLS) including IEP's, Transition Plans and meetings in order to enhance the wellbeing and achievement of aboriginal students in line with the 'Turning policy into action' document. As a result of this initiative:

- Aboriginal students and their parents/ carers were involved in the Transition Plan process which influences a students' Individual Education Plan (IEP) and future pathway plans.

- As part of their PLS, all Aboriginal students have achievable and engaging IEPs with necessary adjustments made to content and assessment procedures to allow access to the curriculum.

- All teachers work within the philosophy of the school and are committed to developing effective problem solving skills in Aboriginal students. All Aboriginal students also have Self Control Plans that assist them to better manage themselves emotionally and behaviourally.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

From 2015 to 2017 our ARCO has led strategic direction 2– Well-being, of our school plan. A significant goal within this direction was to proactively target improvement in Aboriginal and Multicultural resources and lessons for all students in our school. Correspondingly, all teaching staff have self-reported improved cultural competencies and increased confidence in ability to deliver engaging and culturally appropriate Aboriginal and multicultural educational resources and lessons to all students. 2018 saw a focus on embedding these improved practices so that each class becomes confident in having responsibility for organising whole school learning activities related to days of cultural significance.