

Hunter River Community School

Annual Report

2018



5687

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2018** is provided to the community of Hunter River Community 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.

Tracey Rapson

Principal

School contact details

Hunter River Community School

17 Melaleuca Drive

METFORD, 2323

www.hunterrivc-s.schools.nsw.edu.au

hunterrivc-s.school@det.nsw.edu.au

4933 5844

Message from the Principal

I am proud of the achievements of all of our students and the ongoing success of the strategies being implemented by the school to create high quality learning experiences and to maximise student engagement. Our continued success can be underpinned by key factors that promote quality teaching and learning programs that all members of the school learning community value and appreciate. Firstly, the staff at Hunter River Community School are dedicated professionals who work collaboratively to provide an inclusive environment that facilitates individual learning and celebrates student achievement. Our students are remarkable young people who demonstrate on a daily basis that having challenging and often complex disabilities, are not a barrier when it comes to achievement and success. Finally, Hunter River Community School enjoys tremendous support from our parent and local communities. This invaluable support enables our school to provide quality learning opportunities for every student.

I certify that the information provided in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-assessment and review process, undertaken by all members of the school learning community and provides a genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development

Tracey Rapson

School background

School vision statement

Hunter River Community School is committed to providing quality and adaptive education within an engaging and nurturing environment, which values the cultural diversity of our community. Our core business is to provide all students with access to high quality education that is free from all forms of discrimination and disadvantage. We hold high expectations for all our students and aim to promote a culture of positivity through the provision of meaningful, relevant, caring and supportive learning experiences. We actively encourage and promote school culture underpinned by the beliefs of being safe, caring and being a learner.

WE ARE SAFE

WE CARE

WE LEARN

School context

Hunter River Community School is an established K–12 School for Specific Purpose (SSP), catering for the complex needs of 67 students with a moderate to severe intellectual disability and associated conditions. The school was relocated to a state of the art facility in Metford at the beginning of 2014.

The school serves a diverse population of students from six local government areas. There are currently 67 students attending the school, all of whom have high level support needs and complex communication disorders. The school has ten classes with each class staffed with a full-time Specialist Teacher and a School Learning Support Officer. The school population includes 20% of Aboriginal students and 15% of students in an Out of Home Care arrangement.

All students have a Personalised Learning Plan developed in conjunction with a Multi-Disciplinary Team, including parents, health care professionals, community agency professionals and special education consultants.

With a Family Occupation and Education Index (FOEI) of 148, the school receives equity funding to improve the learning outcomes of students from low socio-economic backgrounds.

As a result of ongoing school evaluation and reference to educational research our school priority areas focus on improved learning outcomes for students through, innovative student learning programs, quality teaching and leadership initiatives and enhancing supportive community engagement and participation opportunities.

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 Domain of Learning, an emphasis was placed on ensuring that students are engaged in quality, functional and future focused learning experiences that promote engagement and assist students to reach their full potential and independence as successful individuals. Students who attend Hunter River Community School all require extensive curriculum differentiation to access educational opportunities and every student has a Personalised Learning and Support Plan. Parents and carers are integral members of a multi-disciplinary Learning Support Team that meet regularly to discuss and review student priorities and future goals. All Personalised Learning and Support Plans are involved in a mid-year review.

All members of the School Learning Community strongly believe it was paramount to achieving success for students to be given a voice and that they are treated as learners and respected members of the wider community. They are given a sense of belonging and purpose, they have their achievements celebrated and promoted in the wider community and they are acknowledged for their individual potential and strengths.

In the Domain of Teaching, an emphasis during 2018 has been on providing staff with a tool box of explicit skills to

facilitate the development of high quality teaching and learning practices. These skills will promote students ability to achieve learning outcomes. Through explicit review of the wellbeing and curriculum documents, staff have been successful in designing engaging students programs that promote inclusion and success. One of the reasons that Hunter River Community School is so successful in meeting the needs of students with a disability is the school's commitment to best practice and to ensure that individual student needs are paramount in every decision. We believe that an increased focus on student centered learning will ensure that every student will achieve the skills that they need to live a full and valued life. Staff at Hunter River Community School will continue to be Instructional Leaders in the field of student centered learning and will demonstrate commitment in ensuring that Hunter River Community School remains a hub of Special Education expertise.

In the Domain of Leading, Hunter River Community School has focused on fostering our leaders of the future. Through a committed approach to building core skills, staff have been encouraged to plan their career pathways using the Performance Development Plan Tool. All staff and members of the school learning community were actively involved and contributed to the school planning process and have been encouraged to take on leadership roles in coordinating priority area committees. This inclusive process recognises that building leadership capabilities is critical when striving for successful school excellence.

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

QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

Purpose

To promote, build and sustain the professional learning and development of all staff members through the creation of a professional culture to benefit young people with complex disabilities.. Staff will be encouraged to follow a tiered level of development – engaging in school based mentoring and sharing opportunities, networking with colleagues, and participating in formal, delivered professional learning opportunities for the increase of outcomes for all students.

Overall summary of progress

In 2018 our school's first process was focused on building the schools knowledge through Professional learning in relation to the National Standards. To achieve this, the executive team engaged in a discussion about the area that were of high importance for the improvement of the school holistically. The PDP's of all staff members were also analysed to see where the teachers and SLSO staff required improvement. 100% of the PDP's of all teaching staff were linked to the National Teaching Standards as a priority in term 1. 60% of teachers demonstrated that they were confident in using the Standards to align with their professional goals. Using this data, a timeline was created for the delivery of professional development for each Wednesday meeting. A separate meeting was established on Thursdays for SLSO staff to address their needs in their focused areas of professional development. Feedback sessions were conducted to see the effectiveness of Professional Development and to drive future learning.

Process 2–Adapting the Curriculum

Process 2 focused on the establishment of the Instructional team to perform tasks that analysed the data gathered by all team members to set future goals for Professional development. This process required the team to evaluate the teaching programs to see where improvement was required. Instructional leadership feedback was collected during the executive meeting to ensure timelines were kept and that all teachers had the opportunity to be involved with the program. Programs were re-evaluated in term 3. Significant improvements were noted in the areas of; targeting individual skills, addressing the students' needs and adapting lessons based on the students abilities. Instructional leadership feedback forms were sent to the staff in term 4. Teachers responded extremely positive the Instructional Leadership Team, with only one complaint regarding feedback that was not timely or not provided.

Process 3– Building Staff Capacity

Process 3 addressed the schools need to create a system that analysed the teaching practices of the school in the areas of; lesson delivery, teacher programming and planning, classroom set up and student engagement. The executive team created the Instructional Leadership Team to gather the data from lesson observations so that we can track the effectiveness of professional development and continue to monitor the teaching staff's areas for further improvement. A lesson observation sheet was created that focused on the Quality Teaching Framework. Teachers were given prompt feedback about their teaching strategies and given examples of how they could improve their lessons from skilled teachers. This program was very effective and is continuing throughout 2019.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Increasing the number of teachers who use the national standards withing their PDP to improve classroom practice to 100%	Professional Learning funds Beginning Teacher funds –	When evaluating and reflecting on the practices of the year, a number of questions were posed. The answers to these questions aligned current practice to the original improvement measures. Data indicates that the explicit support provided by the School Leadership Team was received positively and impacted on their understanding of the expectation. At the conclusion of 2018, 60% of teachers were confident in using the Teaching Standards as a guide to the development of their PDP's
An increasing capacity of	Professional Learning,	All of the young people who attend Hunter River

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
teachers to explicitly differentiate the curriculum to create teaching and learning programs for young people with complex learning disabilities.	Beginning teacher and low socio– economic funds were used to support this program.	<p>Community School require extensive differentiation to successfully access the curriculum.</p> <p>All teaching staff have knowledge and capacity to implement the Life Skills Curriculum</p> <p>Throughout 2018, the School Leadership Team worked alongside staff to continue to build capacity in explicit and individual differentiation.</p> <p>As a result of this intervention, there was a noticeable extension of the differentiation process, which positively impacted on student engagement and achievement</p>
Staff increasingly demonstrate a culture which values mentoring and collaboration.	equity funds	<p>During 2018, a culture of mentoring and peer support was encouraged. The collaborative approach has always been a focus, however during the year, several Professional Learning opportunities were provided to reflect on collaborative practise.</p> <p>Senior, and highly skilled teachers moved into the mentoring roles and worked alongside their peers to facilitate a culture of best practise.</p>

Next Steps

In 2019, the School Leadership team will continue to work alongside teaching staff to further develop knowledge and understanding of how to effectively align the Teaching Standards to the PDP process.

The Instructional Leadership initiative will continue, with formal classroom observations occurring at least once per term. Informal walk throughs will occur on a regular basis.

Strategic Direction 2

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND POSITIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Purpose

To develop relationships with people in our community which support our students in finding greater success and confidence as citizens. Through encouragement of partnerships with community members and groups, we can create a broader knowledge of how our students can achieve with their support and as part of their network.

Overall summary of progress

The introduction and consolidation of several alternative means of communicating with school has proven to be very successful. Parents and carers are using the Skoolbag App to register student absences and to review upcoming events. Our families have responded particularly well to the introduction of regular SMS to inform of events, activities and school circumstances.

The School Facebook page has continued to be a very useful tool and has facilitated a greater awareness of school programs and initiatives.

Our relationships with local Aboriginal Groups has strengthened and it has been pleasing to have representatives at several school functions. Our NAIDOC day celebration was a day of festivities and wonderful learning opportunities. This year Uncle Perry became an integral member of our school team and has delivered Programs focusing on Cultural Identity to all students. Students have responded exceptionally well to this program.

Supporting our families through the NDIS journey has been complex. Many have felt ill equipped to formulate a successful plan. The school is working closely with therapists to ensure that the service delivery of therapy during school hours is manageable.

During 2018, a Parent Chat was established. This initiative provides families and carers with an opportunity to come together, network, and share stories. It is also provides a platform for families to have the opportunity to listen to speakers on topics that have been selected by the family community.

During the year, we also hosted a number of events to facilitate an increase in community engagement. One of the most popular was the Halloween disco.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Increasing the effectiveness of the connections between individual goal setting, student's school outcomes and post school outcomes.	Transition funding	Secondary staff and the School Leadership team have continued to work with Post School Providers to improve the outcomes for our students leaving school.
There will be an increased level of satisfaction with the communication strategies employed by Hunter River Community School.	Operational funding	. Families and carers have indicated that they are enjoying the multifaceted approach to effective communication
An increasing positive impact of partnerships with outside agencies and the students of Hunter River Community School.	Operational funding	Hunter River Community School has continued to cement positive relationships with a variety of agencies. In particular, our Service Learning Programs with neighbouring school has generated positive outcomes and experiences for our students, and the students involved in the program

Next Steps

Parent Chat will continue in 2019. Relevant guest speakers will continue to be sought.

During 2019, movie nights will be included in the calendar. These will provide an opportunity for families, who often find it difficult to attend a movie theater, to come along and watch a newly released movie with the young person.

Strategic Direction 3

STUDENT LEARNING AND WELLBEING

Purpose

To develop and implement challenging, innovative and inclusive curriculum that enables students to be effective community citizens. Having effective communication skills and positive well being school practices will enhance student learning outcomes.

Overall summary of progress

The staff at Hunter River Community School have continued to work collaboratively to ensure that every student is engaged in quality learning experiences.

Providing students with a voice is an essential goal for all staff. A personalised communication matrix has provided staff and families with a comprehensive tool to ensure that any communication system is tailored to individual needs. The focus on the communication for young people with complex needs has ensured that the learning community has developed a respect for student's innate communication styles. During the year staff engaged in a survey that focused on their knowledge and understanding of the communication Matrix. Results were analysed and key points became the focus of the year's plan.

Staff have continued to embed the principles of the Wellbeing Framework into school culture and this has had a positive impact on staff, student and learning community members wellbeing across a variety of environments

In 2018, PBL was reviewed and modified to best suit the context of HRCS. We made a team and gave everyone a role and responsibility. We developed a lesson schedule for the year and lesson social story books that demonstrate all the lesson content. It was important to promote our 3 school expectations to our wider community, so we made a video that demonstrated how to sign them using Auslan. Another big change to our PBL structure was re-inventing our award and reward system. We decided as a team that our school awards would be worth 'PAWS' which would calculate for each student and earn them their milestones. Each milestone was discussed as a team at regular meetings and a reward was attached.

25 – wrist band

50– badge

75– movie time or free lunch order

100– badge

150– drink bottle

200 – badge.

PBL reached all the milestones for 2018.

The School Excellence Framework has continued to be a value tool for all members of the learning community to monitor, assess and facilitate future direction. This tool has also provided staff with an opportunity to engage in professional dialogue and to reflect on school programs

Our Aboriginal Education Program involving Uncle Perry was very successful. At Hunter River Community School, 12 students identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The program in Semester 1, focused on providing students with opportunities to engage in activities that introduced aspects of Aboriginal culture through dance and song. A HRCs signing choir was established and performed at NAIDOC Week celebrations. During our NAIDOC Week activities, student's artwork was also on display. Local Aboriginal dance troupes from neighboring Metford Public School attended and performed for the school.

The HRCS signing choir also performed at the LMG Education Week Awards. During this ceremony, Uncle Perry and the Aboriginal Program received an Education Week Award for Outstanding Cultural School Program.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
As a result of the programs, 100% of students will have a communication profile that reflects their individual communicative needs and incorporates augmentative communication technologies as required.	Low Socio economic equity funding	All students had a communication matrix which provided all members of the Learning Support Team with a clear path for future learning.
.Students increasingly demonstrate the school's values of 'We are Safe – We Care – We Learn'.	Low Socio economic equity funding	The core values of PBL have been integrated into all aspects of school culture. Signage relating to the core values has been installed and provides a visual reminder of our PBL platform. Our weekly PBL assembly awards reflect the 3 overriding Principles.
As a result of the program, staff will have greater knowledge of Aboriginal culture and increase the prevalence of Aboriginal perspectives in their teaching and learning programs.	Aboriginal Education funding	Aboriginal Education has continued to be a priority. All staff have engaged in Professional Learning that has increased knowledge of Aboriginal Education and effective ways to integrate the principles of the program across teaching and learning opportunities.
An increasing engagement of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) in the Science and Technology Curriculum (K–10).	Equity funding	There has been some introductory exploration into developing a comprehensive scope and sequence to facilitate an increase in the implementation of Science and Technology across all teaching and learning activities. This will be a focus of 2019

Next Steps

In 2019, a new position will be created which will release an SLSO 5 days per week. Within this position, the Communication Support Officer will work alongside teachers and students and focus on explicit support with augmentative communication

In 2019, Hunter River Community School will move into a new assessment program. Using a tiered approach, students' progress will be assessed and mapped using P–Scales, SWANS or Best Start. the tool used will be explicitly linked to the individual level of the student.

In 2019, we have set new milestones for our strategic direction. We have developed a new team, including new members with roles and responsibilities decided. We have designed an information brochure and a fridge magnet that was handed out to each family to promote and engage families in our PBL journey. This year we have introduced a new behaviour strategy of 'Red and Green' choices. This strategy promotes all positive behaviour as being 'green' and negative behaviour as being 'red'. Staff are not putting the emphasis on what the 'red' choice actually is, but that there is always a 'green' choice to counteract it. This new 'green and red' choice strategy has been put into place and the whole staff team are on board.

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	Aboriginal Education loading – \$14755	Our Aboriginal Education Program involving Uncle Perry was very successful. At Hunter River Community School, 12 students identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The program in Semester 1, focused on providing students with opportunities to engage in activities that introduced aspects of Aboriginal culture through dance and song. A HRCs signing choir was established and performed at NAIDOC Week celebrations. During our NAIDOC Week activities, student's artwork was also on display. Local Aboriginal dance troupes from neighboring Metford Public School attended and performed for the school.
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	QTSS funding – \$16346	During 2018, the QTSS funding facilitated a program of Instructional Leadership. The funds were used to release senior and experienced teachers to work alongside colleagues to provide a model of best practise. This initiative had a positive impact on the development of quality teaching and learning programs and supported the increased engagement of students
Socio–economic background	Socio –economic background funds \$92870	<p>The funding received under the umbrella of socio–economic background equity facilitated several initiatives within the school plan. Funding allowed teachers to be released from class to work collaboratively on identified subject area scope and sequences.</p> <p>Within this model, an executive teacher, 2 days per week, worked explicitly with families to improve attendance rates and solve issues associated with Assisted Travel and NDIS.</p> <p>This funding band provides a platform for several programs to engage students in innovative programs. During 2018, these have included the School Leadership Program, School camp and the school PBL program.</p>
Support for beginning teachers	Beginning Teacher funds \$ 13786	Supporting beginning teachers is a key element of core business at Hunter River Community School. This year a support program was implemented which facilitated an experienced teacher being released each week to work along side the beginning teachers on a number of areas including programming and writing of SMART goals. The feedback from both groups was extremely positive

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Boys	46	48	48	47
Girls	16	17	17	19

Hunter River Community School is a K–12 educational setting that caters for 68 young people with complex needs. During 2018, the Secondary School included 6 classes, the Primary School has 2 classes and The Hub was an open classroom teaching setting of 2 classes.

Students are placed at Hunter River Community School via the Access Request and Placement Panel model. Student who attend Hunter River Community School come from 6 Local Government areas.

Structure of classes

At Hunter River Community School classes are structured to best meet the needs of the students. Classes are predominantly aligned with Educational Stages and scholastic years. When deciding on the cohort of students in the class, individual student specific needs are considered. Classes are fluid, and changes may be made if required.

Retention Year 10 to Year 12

During the transition from Year 10 to Year 12 for the 2018 school year, there was 100% retention of students moving into a Stage 6 pattern of study

Post-school destinations

Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment	Year 10 %	Year 11 %	Year 12 %
Seeking Employment	0	0	0
Employment	0	0	0
TAFE entry	0	0	0
University Entry	0	0	0
Other	0	0	4
Unknown	0	0	1

Year 12 attaining HSC or equivalent

All of the 5 students who were in Year 12 during 2018, obtained their Higher School Certificate – Life Skills.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	3
Classroom Teacher(s)	8.1
Teacher Librarian	0.4
School Administration and Support Staff	12.52
Other Positions	0.74

*Full Time Equivalent

At Hunter River Community School, there are 2 staff members who identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage

Teacher qualifications

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

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	99
Postgraduate degree	1

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional Learning for all staff is extremely important. During 2018, both teaching and non-teaching staff were encouraged to participate in Professional Learning which aligned with their Professional Development Plan Goal

At the conclusion of 2018, there are 12 teachers who are at Provisional Level and 1 conditional teacher

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	236,891
Revenue	2,883,283
Appropriation	2,811,562
Sale of Goods and Services	-843
Grants and Contributions	69,381
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	32
Investment Income	3,152
Expenses	-2,765,198
Recurrent Expenses	-2,765,198
Employee Related	-2,569,089
Operating Expenses	-196,110
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	118,085
Balance Carried Forward	354,976

Voluntary School Contributions: Families are provided with a voluntary option of paying \$25 per semester school contribution. Only a small percentage of our families engaged in this option.

Short Term Relief: Once again the short term relief expenditure was significant. The majority of the staff suffered from the Influenza A virus that was prevalent across NSW.

SAP: Hunter River Community School continued to implement processes to facilitate transparent and effective financial management. During 2018, the school migrated to the new HR model of management. A significant increase in administration allocation assisted with this successful transition to the new model of school management. All protocols are aligned with Auditor recommended best practice

External Donations:

Once again Hunter River Community School enjoyed tremendous support from local businesses and community groups. Our largest donation was \$ 25000 from East Maitland Bowling Club. This money is tagged to keep our 2 buses operational.

Proposed major expenses: Monies in our School and Community Funds (6300) have been tagged for the replacement of our school buses in the upcoming years.

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

	2018 Actual (\$)
Base Total	580,079
Base Per Capita	25,873
Base Location	1,975
Other Base	552,231
Equity Total	110,127
Equity Aboriginal	14,755
Equity Socio economic	92,870
Equity Language	2,502
Equity Disability	0
Targeted Total	1,954,225
Other Total	25,712
Grand Total	2,670,143

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.

School performance

School-based assessment

Students at Hunter River Community School do not participate in external assessment as a direct result of their complex disabilities. At Hunter River Community School, assessment is highly valued tool and provides teachers with an effective measure of student achievement. During 2018, staff were provided with an assessment schedule which timetabled assessment for each subject on a term basis. The assessments undertaken, aligned progress with SMART goals which reflected individualised indicators. Engagement levels and the degree of prompting required was measured through a matrix that was constant across the K–12 spectrum. Student reports that covered each curriculum area, along with identified personalised goals and targets, are issued at the conclusion of Semester 2 and 4.

Financial summary equity funding

Other assessment data

<You may choose to use this text box to comment on other assessment data including:

- Best Start
- Literacy and numeracy achievement against the literacy and numeracy continuums>

Delete text not required.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Families, carers and staff participated in a variety of surveys to gather information about their satisfaction with the introduction of a variety of new processes and procedures. The feedback from these surveys indicated that all members of the Learning Community were overall satisfied with the performance of the school and the improvement measures that had been implemented.

Students participated in a pictorial survey which provided them with an opportunity to indicate what they liked and disliked about school. Overall students were happy with their experiences and indicated that they particularly enjoyed the additional programs that were offered.

Staff also engaged with several Survey Monkey enquires to gather data about their feelings toward improvement measures and the school in general. Overall, the data collated was positive.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Aboriginal Education is integrated and embedded into every aspect of core school business at Hunter River Community School.

Aspects of Aboriginal culture were experienced across the school through a variety of interactive classroom activities this year. Students completed artworks, listened to music, read stories and used the internet to develop and share their knowledge.

Significant culturally important days were recognised and celebrated by the whole school community during the year

Within the Personalised Learning and Support Plan, cultural identity of young people was recognised and celebrated.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

Hunter River Community School promotes the values of acceptance and tolerance for a Multicultural Australia. All teaching and learning programs were reviewed to ensure that all environments were culturally inclusive and respectful.

Our school values individual difference and work

together with all members of the Learning Environment to ensure students receive an education catering to their individual learning style and cultural identity.

Other school programs

Hunter River Community School has a peer and staff elected Student Leadership Team that represent the school at school and community functions. This team consists of 2 school captains, 2 vice captains, 2 junior school prefects, 2 secondary prefects and 2 sporting house captains

Our senior Food Technology program is committed to providing a variety of life skills and fostering independence. Within this program, students host a weekly multifaceted school lunch program for peers and staff. Each week students will collate data from pictorial school lunch order forms, prepare shopping lists, purchase the items required, prepare the food and distribute the orders. This program is extremely popular and successful.

During 2018, students engaged in a variety of sporting activities which aim to not only increase engagement, but foster the development of skills and experiences. Throughout the year, students engaged with Ten Pin Bowling, Riding for the Disabled, Sailability, Archery, Boccia, Hydrotherapy, Dream Cricket and Gymnastics. Within school, students developed skills in basketball, bowling, soccer and volleyball. Every student during 2018, engaged in some level of sport.

8 of our students once again performed in Star Struck. Everyone enjoyed the experience of performing in front of large audiences with thousands of their peers. The commitment of staff to support students in this program is outstanding. We look forward to continuing our relationship with Star Struck.

School Camp.

In 2018, Hunter River Community School organised a 4 day camp to Coffs Harbour for 8 of the senior students. 5 Staff members accompanied the students on this educational adventure. Throughout this trip, students were able to enhance their social skills and transition goals outside of the classroom and in a less restrictive environment. The students were outstanding on the 5 ½ hour bus trip to our hotel.

While in Coffs Harbour, the students were able to visit many of the wonderful sites the Coffs Harbour had to offer such as the Big Banana education facility. While there the students were able to find out how the banana plantations were established in the region and how bananas are grown and harvested. The students were able to ride the Giant Slide at the Big Banana Fun Park which was located on the site. This was an excellent experience for the students as some students were able to overcome their fears and take a turn on the slide. Students also displayed their ability to help one another as the walk up was very steep and more able students assisted by carrying the riding sacks of lesser

able students.

Students also attended classes on marine life at the Dolphin Marine Conservation Park. There they learned about the dangers that rubbish in the ocean causes the marine life and how the Conservation Park saves the marine life. Students were able to get up close with many marine animals and all of the students had their photograph taken with a dolphin.

Overall this was a very productive, educational and worthwhile excursion for both students and staff