

Redbank School

2019 Annual Report



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Introduction

The Annual Report for 2019 is provided to the community of Redbank 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.

School contact details

Redbank School

Dragonfly Drive

WESTMEAD, 2145

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

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

9633 1030

School background

School vision statement

Redbank School's vision is to empower every student with the capacity to sustain a level of wellbeing that enables them to continue their journey through education and prepare them for rewarding lives as engaged citizens in a complex and dynamic society.

School context

Redbank School is a New South Wales (NSW) Department of Education (DoE) School for Specific Purposes (SSP) located on the grounds of Westmead Hospital, Westmead. It is one of three specialists schools established to provide educational support for children and young people accessing NSW Health mental health related treatment programs and services. The school also has two support classes for students identified by the DoE as having an emotional disturbance and requiring intensive educational support.

Self-assessment and school achievement

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 is a statement of what is valued as excellence for NSW public schools, both now and into the future. 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.

Each year, we assess our practice against the Framework to inform our school plan and annual report.

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/school-excellence>

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2019 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Delivering
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Delivering
LEARNING: Curriculum	Delivering
LEARNING: Assessment	Working towards Delivering
LEARNING: Reporting	Delivering
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Working towards Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Working towards Delivering
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Working towards Delivering
TEACHING: Professional standards	Delivering
TEACHING: Learning and development	Delivering
LEADING: Educational leadership	Delivering
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Delivering
LEADING: School resources	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Delivering

In the Learning Domain the school's on balance judgement was Delivering. The school has whole school processes in place to monitor student learning and wellbeing. Planning for learning and support for wellbeing are informed by the student's individual needs and driven by their aspirations. The learning needs of students are explicitly addressed in teaching and learning programs and appropriate adjustments are made to support individual learning and wellbeing needs. The school's practices create a supportive school environment for learning success and for optimal support for student wellbeing. Our next steps are to more explicitly define key transition points for our student cohort and ensure students are supported throughout the transition period. Teaching and learning programs will be revised to ensure they describe explicitly what students are expected to know, understand and do. The school will develop a whole school assessment strategy designed to ensure that the learning of all students is systematically monitored and individual student reports revised to ensure the inclusion of personalised descriptions of the student's strengths and growth.

In the Teaching Domain the school's on balance judgement was Working towards Delivering. A school wide approach to effective classroom management ensures effective classroom practice and provides optimal support for staff and students. Teaching staff utilise the Australian Professional Standards to reflect on practice, plan for and monitor their professional development. School-wide systems are in place to support teaching staff to attain/maintain their NESA teacher accreditation. All staff are supported by the school to achieve the professional goals identified in their Performance and Development Plans. Our next steps are to build the capacity of staff to utilise student progress and achievement data in developing teaching and learning programs and in designing individual learning experiences for

students. Systems will be established to ensure student learning is supported with the provision of regular and constructive feedback focusing on how to improve.

In the Leading Domain the school's on balance judgement was Delivering. In a culture of high expectations the school has in place supportive supervision processes for all staff that focus on ensuring all staff optimal opportunity to achieve their performance and development goals. The school's collaborative and consultative practices contribute to the cohesive educational community that exists between the school and the broader school community. Resources have been utilised efficiently and creatively to maximise what is available within the constraints of the school's physical design, creating learning spaces for staff and students that optimise learning. Our next steps are to revise teaching and non-teaching staff roles and align responsibilities to identified areas of strength and identify administrative practices that may be streamlined with the use of technology.

Strategic Direction 1

Sustainable Learning

Purpose

Sustainable learning is learning for all, learning that matters and learning that lasts. It's foundation is effective classroom practice, and it's goal is to provide for the learning needs of students and for students to progress from being developing learners to lifelong learners. Every student is engaged in evidence-based, purposeful, relevant learning that is responsive to individual needs and considers the complexities and diversity of learning in the 21st century.

Improvement Measures

100% of students achieve individual and program learning goals.

100% of students report learning is meaningful and they feel connected, inspired and more confident that they will realise their potential.

100% of staff working in the role of lead learner and contributing to instructional leadership.

Overall summary of progress

Students' programs were revised to ensure individual and program goals were identified and that teaching and learning programs focused on optimising opportunities for all students to achieve these goals. Evidence suggests that whilst all students were provided with optimal opportunity to achieve their goals, data indicates about 80% of students were successful in achieving their individual goals whilst 70% of students were successful in achieving program goals. Based on student feedback throughout the year, all students felt connected at school and, at different times, experienced feeling inspired and confident in their ability to realise their potential. Evidence collected throughout the year indicated whilst staff were achieving their individual learning and performance goals, the overarching goal for all staff to be working in the role of lead learner was unrealistic and an analysis of practices indicated a substantial amount of work is required in this area.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Learning for all is the process for providing equity, inclusive learning facilitated by effective instruction, quality teaching and high expectations and support of families.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Analysis of teaching and learning programs indicate areas of strength and areas for improvement in the delivery of equitable and inclusive education programs.	Teaching staff
Professional learning needs of staff identified and planned for.	Leadership team
Students achieving individual learning goals.	

Process 2: Learning that matters is the process for providing valuable learning, learning that is mastered and maintained, fostered by quality teaching and available as needed.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Students report their learning is meaningful and data indicates a high level of student engagement in learning.	Students
Staff observations indicate students are implementing strategies to support learning in the classroom.	Learning Support Team
Students achieving their learning goals.	Teaching and support staff
	Parents/carers
	Mental health service providers

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 3: Learning that lasts is the process for providing lifelong learning, learning that is meaningful, intentional and future directed. Future-directed learning is focused on transitions to and between educational settings and from school to work.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Students report feeling more connected to their learning and are more capable of recalling information when they need it. Students achieving their learning goals. Staff reporting feeling more confident in identifying and meeting the learning needs of students.	Assistant Principals Teaching and support staff

Next Steps

Next steps include the development of a school wide process for monitoring student learning progress and achievement that systematically and explicitly identifies growth targets for individual students and for all students in an educational program. Next steps also include the use of technology to create a database to collect data relating to student engagement levels throughout enrolment and to collect data relating to the level of engagement in learning sustained post discharge/enrolment. In relation to staff working as lead learners, next steps are to engage staff in professional learning focused on developing the skills and knowledge lead learners require and identify increased opportunities for staff to lead projects/teams within the school.

Strategic Direction 2

Teaching Wellbeing

Purpose

Teaching Wellbeing is wellbeing for all, wellbeing that matters and wellbeing that lasts. It's foundation is effective classroom practice, and it's goal is to explicitly teach wellbeing and the skills and strategies for wellbeing and for students to realise their potential. Every member of staff delivering quality wellbeing focused educational programs for students with complex, dynamic and diverse educational needs related to severe mental illness and mental health related difficulties.

Improvement Measures

100% of students with the knowledge, skills and strategies for achieving and sustaining physical, social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive wellbeing.

100% of students progress toward and achieve wellbeing related individual and program goals.

100% of staff working in the role of lead learner and contributing to instructional leadership.

Overall summary of progress

The school's overall approach to wellbeing was revised and teaching and learning programs updated to align with the domains of the Department's Wellbeing Framework. Teaching and learning programs were evaluated to ensure optimal opportunities for all students to learn wellbeing related skills and strategies. With a shared understanding that wellbeing is integral to learning and dynamic, processes were established to support all students to identify and monitor their own wellbeing. A system was developed to more closely monitor and therefore respond to, the impact wellbeing was having on student learning. Evidence suggests that all students engaged daily in the use of wellbeing related skills and strategies and sustained a level of wellbeing that optimised their capacity to achieve individual and program goals. Evidence collected throughout the year indicated whilst staff were achieving their individual learning and performance goals but the overarching goal for all staff to be working in the role of lead learners in wellbeing was unrealistic and an analysis of practices indicated a substantial amount of work is required in this area.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Process 1: Wellbeing for all is the process for providing a planned approach for improving physical, social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive wellbeing, that includes targeted focus on wellbeing, intensive support and a safe and calm environment.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Staff observations include students engaging in wellbeing related strategies throughout the school day.	Learning Support Team
Students report feeling safe and supported at school.	Students
Student wellbeing data indicates a high level of achievement of wellbeing goals.	Teaching and support staff
Leadership team members report a need to focus on refining instructional practices.	Leadership team

Process 2: Wellbeing that matters is the process for identifying, measuring and achieving valued wellbeing, wellbeing that impacts on ability to function in daily life, to learn, to engage in education and realise potential.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
Trauma informed principles evident in whole school practices.	Teaching staff
Students report a high level of engagement in wellbeing lessons specifically	Leadership team

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

those focusing on the dialectical behaviour therapy based skills and strategies.

Process 3: Wellbeing that lasts, is the process of providing lifelong learning, learning that is meaningful, intentional and future directed. Future-directed learning is focused on transitions to and between educational settings and from school to work.

Evaluation	Funds Expended (Resources)
All students with personalised learning and support plans reflective of individual needs. Students, parents/carers and mental health service providers report feeling included in decisions relating to the wellbeing needs of students, a high level of confidence in the school's capacity to support students.	Students Parents/carers Mental health service providers Teaching and support staff

Next Steps

Next steps include collecting and analysing a broader range of wellbeing data from students, parents/carers, community schools and mental health providers to further refine whole school approaches to wellbeing. Next steps also include a school wide evaluation of practices to ensure ongoing alignment with trauma informed principles and the development of an improved system to collect and analyse student, parent/carer and staff feedback. Next steps include the leadership team focusing on sharing their knowledge and skills in instructional leadership and creating opportunities for all staff to contribute as lead learners.

Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
English language proficiency	Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English language proficiency (\$400.00) 	Students identified as English as an Additional Language/Dialect (EAL/D) learners accessing support to achieve improved English language proficiency.
Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS)	Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Teaching, Successful Students (QTSS) (\$60 659.00) 	<p>Quality teaching practices evident in teaching and learning programs.</p> <p>Teaching staff implementing quality teaching practices in the classroom to support students to achieve learning and wellbeing goals.</p>
Socio-economic background	Funding Sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socio-economic background (\$16 954.00) 	Students with additional learning and support needs relating to their socio-economic background support to achieve their learning and wellbeing goals.

Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
Boys	27	19	11	9
Girls	17	14	21	24

Student enrolment profile

The student enrolment data published in the above table is not indicative of the school's student enrolment profile. Redbank School has a capacity enrolment of sixty-three students eighty percent of these are initiated when young people are admitted into the Acute Adolescent Unit and twenty percent of enrolments are initiated when eligible students are offered placement through the Department of Education. In 2019 the school enrolled 87 students.

Management of non-attendance

Attendance at school has a big impact on longer term outcomes for children and young people. When a child is not at school they miss important opportunities to learn, build friendships and develop their skills through play. Regular attendance at school is a shared responsibility between schools and parents. By working together we can have a positive effect on supporting our children and young people to regularly attend school.

Our teachers promote and monitor regular attendance at school and all our schools have effective measures in place to record attendance and follow up student absences promptly. They are guided by the School Attendance policy which details the management of non-attendance.

Post school destinations

Proportion of students moving into post-school education, training or employment:

Seeking employment: 35%

Employment: 20%

TAFE entry: 25%

University Entry 5%

Other: 15%

Unknown: 0%

Year 12 students attaining HSC or equivalent vocational education qualification

All students entered for the Higher School Certificate achieved the credential.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	3
Classroom Teacher(s)	6.81
Teacher Librarian	0.4
School Counsellor	1
School Administration and Support Staff	11.52

*Full Time Equivalent

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce composition

The Department actively supports the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees through the use of identified positions, scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2019, 3.9% of the Department's workforce identify as Aboriginal people.

Workforce ATSI

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2019 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.30%	7.20%
Teachers	3.30%	2.90%

Note 1 – The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014–17 introduced an aspirational target of 1.8% by 2021 for each of the sector's salary bands. If the aspirational target of 1.8% is achieved in salary bands not currently at or above 1.8%, the cumulative representation of Aboriginal employees in the sector is expected to reach 3.3%.

Note 2 – Representation of diversity groups are calculated as the estimated number of staff in each group divided by the total number of staff. These statistics have been weighted to estimate the representation of diversity groups in the workforce, where diversity survey response rates were less than 100 per cent. The total number of staff is based on a headcount of permanent and temporary employees.

Teacher qualifications

All casual, temporary and permanent teachers in NSW public schools must hold a NSW Department of Education approval to teach. Teachers with approval to teach must be accredited with the NSW Education Standards Authority, and hold a recognised teaching degree. All NSW teachers must hold a valid NSW Working With Children Check clearance.

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Professional learning is core to enabling staff to improve their practice.

Professional learning includes five student-free School Development Days and induction programs for staff new to our school and/or system. These days are used to improve the capacity of teaching and non-teaching staff in line with school and departmental priorities.

In 2019, all staff participated in a range of whole staff and individual school and non-school based professional learning. Staff who participating in learning as individuals shared the learning with all staff in staff and program meetings.

Professional learning opportunities included:

- Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation and Anaphylaxis
- E-emergency care
- Child Protection

- Code of Conduct
- School Counselling Service Conference
- Counselling service Twilight sessions
- Redbank School Annual Conference
- Michelle Meyer The Psychological Health Centre Training Workshop
- Understanding the Autism Spectrum – Sue Larkey Workshop
- Nutrition Seminar
- Multicultural Education Conference
- Communicating with Traumatized Children & Young People
- Making Learning Visible – Classroom Perspective
- Mental Health & Wellbeing of Young People
- Art of Nature
- Dialectical Behaviour Therapy – skills and strategies training
- Mentor Training for Teaching and Non-teaching Staff in Schools

Teacher Accreditation

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) define the knowledge, practice and professional engagement needed for high quality effective teaching that improves student learning outcomes. The Standards use nationally agreed indicators of teacher quality to guide the preparation, support and development of teachers throughout their careers. All teaching staff at Redbank School are progressing toward or maintaining accreditation through National Education Standards Authority (NESA) at proficient.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with Department policy requirements.

	2019 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	1,414,526
Revenue	3,068,505
Appropriation	2,705,566
Sale of Goods and Services	348,015
Grants and contributions	3,763
Investment income	11,162
Expenses	-2,460,139
Employee related	-2,032,020
Operating expenses	-428,119
Surplus / deficit for the year	608,366

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.

Financial summary - Equity loadings

The equity loading data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' line item of the financial summary above.

	2019 Approved SBA (\$)
Targeted Total	1,737,103
Equity Total	17,354
Equity - Aboriginal	0
Equity - Socio-economic	16,954
Equity - Language	400
Equity - Disability	0
Base Total	538,892
Base - Per Capita	28,255
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	510,637
Other Total	183,245
Grand Total	2,476,593

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.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

Each year schools are required to seek the opinions of parents/carers, students and teachers about the school.

Feedback from students indicate a high level of satisfaction with the school and the support offered. Most student's communicated their appreciation for the high expectations set by staff but find the level of supervision intense and sometimes frustrating.

Feedback from parents/carers indicate a high level of appreciation for the school and the support the school offers their child. Parents/carers reported feeling supported and included in their child's education and expressed gratitude for the professional manner in which staff advocate on behalf of their child's educational needs.

School staff reported feeling supported at work and appreciated the safe environment. School staff expressed appreciation for the work that has been carried out throughout 2019 to improve the physical environment for staff and students.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal Education Policy

The responsibility for enacting the Aboriginal Education Policy rests with all Departmental staff. The policy should underpin and inform planning, teaching practice and approaches to educational leadership in all educational settings.

Evidence of effective implementation of the policy included:

- Establishing, building and strengthening relationships with the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, Aboriginal people and communities.
- Providing, in partnership with Aboriginal people and communities, education which promotes quality teaching, is engaging, and is culturally appropriate and relevant.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students will match or better the outcomes of the broader student population.
- Implementation of Personalised Learning Pathways for all Aboriginal students in a school culture of high expectations.

Anti-Racism Policy

All teachers are responsible for supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact these may have on individuals and the broader community. Principals are responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy. All schools have an Anti-Racism Contact Officer who is trained to respond to concerns in relation to racism.

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers address the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. Principals are responsible for ensuring that school policies, programs and practices respond to the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the school community, and provide opportunities that enable all students to achieve equitable education and social outcomes.

Other School Programs (optional)

Redbank School provides intensive educational support for students experiencing severe mental illness and significant mental health related difficulties. Our students are entitled to equitable opportunities and choices in their education even though they don't have the same experiences as other students. They have the same rights as other students, including the right to education on the same basis as students without a disability. This means our students have the same opportunities and choices in their education that are available to other students, our students are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning opportunities drawn from the curriculum and set in age-equivalent learning contexts and, while our students will access age-equivalent context, the way in which they access it and the focus of their learning may vary according to their individual learning and wellbeing needs, strengths, goals and interests.

The school's model of educational delivery aligns with our school's specific purpose and with our partner PCYMHS Teams' Models of Care. Our model is flexible and responsive to ensure every student is supported in their unique journey, and to minimise the impact a hospital admission can have on a student's education and educational trajectory. We plan to enhance the model to include more opportunities for us to build the capacity of schools to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of students experiencing mental illness and significant mental health related difficulties.

In 2019, the model of educational delivery included the following programs:

ACCESS PROGRAM

A wellbeing focused education program delivered in a classroom setting in the Acute Adolescent Unit within Redbank House. School integration plays an important role in a young person's recovery, school staff work with other members of the multidisciplinary team to implement the program in the context of the young person's health care plan. The classroom acts as a safe and supportive learning space for students as they access treatment and begin their journey of clinical and personal recovery. Education planning for individual students starts as close as possible to the time of admission. Longer hospital stays require on-going planning and review to ensure the students, with the support of parents/carers and mental health staff, have a voice in the decisions being made about their education and future educational pathway.

Students access their community school curriculum by bringing in hard copies of their school work into the classroom or by using the school's technological resources to access learning digitally. Students also access a wellbeing program that focuses on the explicit teaching of wellbeing and the skills and strategies for wellbeing. Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) skills and strategies form the basis of the learning. The overall program aligns with the department's wellbeing framework and includes activities to enhance student wellbeing across each of the identified domains and focus areas include mindful meditation, coping skills, relaxation, visual arts, food technology, social skills and health and fitness.

Fifty one students accessed the program in 2019, sixty seven percent from government schools and thirty two percent from non-government schools. Fifty two percent of students returned to their respective community schools with support at the time of discharge whilst forty eight percent of students were identified as requiring ongoing intensive educational support.

ENGAGE PROGRAM

This program caters for secondary students who have been identified as requiring intensive education support post discharge from the Acute Adolescent Unit. The program engages students in the curriculum with optimal levels of support whilst they continue their journey of recovery and prepare for a return to their community school setting. The program provides students with ongoing opportunities to learn and practise DBT skills and strategies so that they can better manage the symptoms of mental illness in a school setting. Some students are supported to explore alternative educational pathways including the possibility of an offer of placement in the school's EMPOWER PROGRAM.

In 2019, twenty four students were identified as requiring more intensive support post discharge and were referred to the ENGAGE PROGRAM. Of these, thirty three percent returned to their community school whilst sixty six percent were identified as requiring longer term intensive educational support and were referred to the EMPOWER PROGRAM.

EMPOWER PROGRAM

This program provides a longer term educational option for students who have been identified as requiring ongoing intensive educational support post discharge from the Acute Adolescent Unit and for whom a return to their community school has not been possible. The program also provides intensive educational support for students offered placement through the DoE placement panel process.

Every student is offered optimal opportunity to participate in and progress through the NSW curriculum. Decisions regarding curriculum options are made in the context of collaborative curriculum planning. This planning is done with the student, parents/carers, mental health teams and can involve the student's community schools, educational services staff and other services involved with the student and/or family. To ensure students are progressing toward their learning and wellbeing goals, progress is reviewed as required and at scheduled review meetings.

Program teaching staff assess, plan, program and report for students moving through Stage 4 of learning and for students moving through Stage 5 and Stage 6 accessing outcomes and content from NESA Life Skills courses. Students in Stage 5 and Stage 6 accessing outcomes and content from standard NESA courses access the curriculum through Sydney Distance Education High School (SDEHS) as part of their collaboratively developed Personalised Learning and Support Plan (PLSP). Every student's PLSP outlines the adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment activities that enable the student to access syllabus outcomes and content and demonstrate progress toward and achievement of outcomes.

SDEHS is one of the DoE's state-wide equity programs for students who are geographically isolated or whose individual circumstances prevent them from attending school. Redbank School utilises this model of educational delivery to provide students access to the curriculum delivered by specialist subject area teachers and the school pays all associated contribution payments to SDEHS on behalf of students and their families. This model not only ensures students have access to the curriculum delivered by specialist subject teachers, it allows program teachers to focus on supporting students to achieve the learning outcomes and meet the return of work standards set by SDEHS.

All students engage in a holistic and comprehensive wellbeing program that focuses on the skills and strategies that form the basis of Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) and the principles underpin classroom practices. Students have ready access to strategy tools, indoor and outdoor take space areas, wellbeing applications and meditation sessions.

In 2019, we had fourteen students working toward the HSC. Fifty percent of students. Every one of these students should be proud of and commended for the progress and achievements they made throughout the year. A notable achievement included a First Place in the Preliminary (Year 11) Chinese in Context course.

In 2019, we had 14 students working toward the HSC. 50% of those students completed year 12 following the Pathways program. 50% of the students that completed the HSC were offered placements at university, 25% of the students enrolled in TAFE courses and 25% of students engaged with Disability Employment Services for vocational and employment opportunities

Some key features of the program include:

Physical health and fitness. – this component of the program aims to increase student's physical strength and fitness levels, decrease stressors, improve social connections, build team work and improve sleep hygiene. Most students do not engage with club or community based sport programs due to ongoing mental health and/or social and emotional difficulties so engaging in the weekly sport program provides them with a valuable opportunity.

Community access – this part of the program provides opportunities for students to experience life in the community and included travel training, shopping, planning, budgeting, eating out, locating services, engaging with people, investigating employment and TAFE options. Group and individual activities involved students in learning that required them to apply classroom learning to every day events, build relationships and social connectedness with peers and adults. Feedback from students showed they felt an increased sense of independence and an increased awareness of diversity and multiculturalism within a broader community context.

Volunteering – this component of the program involved students visiting the RSPCA where they showed care and regard for the animals. Volunteering enabled students to participate and interact in their community in a positive and meaningful way whilst developing skills and confidence in communication, responsibility, commitment and team work. Students were encouraged to talk about their participation in the volunteering activities and they reported increased feelings of happiness, a sense of purpose and satisfaction and improved self-esteem.

Another key feature of the program is the opportunity for students to work together and publish the term newsletter called #CALMCORE. The aim of the newsletter is to create a valuable learning experience for students, engage with parents, families and community leaders, inform, educate and unify our community, recognise student progress and achievements and to promote relevant community services, activities and events. Features of the newsletters included recipes students had made during Food Technology as well as 'try at home' ideas, photos of learning tasks including art work created during class and workshop programs, pictures related to whole school activities including excursions and assemblies and certificates of achievement. Film and book reviews and interviews conducted by students were also regular features. Staff, parent/carer and student feedback was very positive, some of the feedback received included: " *I am kept up to date with school and community support and events*" and " *Seeing my child's name in the newsletter makes it special*".

The program also included the opportunity for students to engage in a range of workshop-based groups to support their learning. Some of the workshops delivered in 2019 included:

Social Skills – this workshop has been successful in teaching students social and emotional skills using a variety of activities and games designed to improve communication, problem solving, acceptance, self-regulation and cooperation. The program aim is to promote positive and relationships and friendships, encourage kindness and feel empathy toward others.

Robotics – this workshop engaged students in a variety of learning platforms, allowing them to explore many different learning pathways in a range of subject areas. Some students cultivated an interest in 3D printing and coding whilst others took apart simple appliances and developed an interest in mechanics. When assembling robots in teams, some students were great at speaking, easily bringing ideas to life verbally, while others lead behind the scenes through coding, performing technical tasks and/or making sure the team stayed on task. Either way students learnt to communicate as a team and express their ideas for positive results.

Gardening – students were involved in teaching and learning activities about sustainable living, healthy food and the importance of a healthy life-style. The first stage of the program involved students in building the garden beds and preparing the soil for planting. Students then planted, grew and harvested a range of herbs, fruits and vegetables. for use in the Food Technology program. Students also created a garden for sensory stimulation . Students researched plants to determine those that would provide sensory stimulation. Students planted and grew lavender and basil and engaged with the garden as part of their individual support plans. The gardening program provided opportunities for students to imagine possibilities, share and connect ideas, generate designs, make plans, communicate effectively, work collaboratively and transfer knowledge into new contexts.