

2022 Annual Report

Royal Far West School



5504

Introduction

The Annual Report for 2022 is provided to the community of Royal Far West 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 Strategic Improvement 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

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School vision

Royal Far West School aims to improve the quality of, and the access to, educational services of rural and remote students to learn to their fullest capability, achieve demonstrable learning and wellbeing outcomes in a safe, supportive and healthy environment.

School context

Royal Far West School (RFWS) provides educational services to the clients of the Royal Far West's (RFW) integrated health, education and disability service. All students are from rural and remote New South Wales (NSW).

Students present with a range of medical conditions, including developmental, learning, behavioural, emotional and communication difficulties and disorders. The school works with school aged students, with 25% identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. RFWS respects the cultural safety and identity of enrolled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families. All children are accompanied to RFW, a short stay facility, by a parent or carer. The school works in partnership with families, RFW, rural and remote schools and local services to provide information, consultancy, resource advice, professional development and program assistance. RFWS has a strong focus on building capacity in schools across the state using video conferencing and communication for individual, ongoing student support. Within RFWS, sits a NSW Centre for Effective Reading (CER) hub and the Sounds, Words, Aboriginal Language and Yarning (SWAY) team.

The CER Manly Hub is a joint initiative with the NSW Department of Education and NSW Health. CER provides a comprehensive assessment by multi-disciplinary teams including special education teachers, psychologists and speech pathologists.

SWAY is an evidence based oral language and early literacy program based on local Aboriginal knowledge, culture and stories developed by teachers, Aboriginal Education Officers and Speech Pathologists at RFWS. Through professional development and mentoring, SWAY builds the knowledge and capacity of participants to improve oral language and literacy outcomes of children within rural and remote communities.

The development of the 2021-2024 Strategic Improvement Plan was achieved through a comprehensive situational analysis and the results of the 2020 External Valuation. Our genuine consultation process involved representatives from RFW, home school representatives, the local AECG, our Aboriginal Education Officer (AEO) and external providers. At RFWS, we will address the needs of students from preschool to Year 12 through personalised learning and differentiation to engage and enable students to continue their learning journey. We will streamline administrative processes to increase the planning for, and support of, student learning time. We will strengthen communication with all key stakeholders. At RFWS, collaborative performance processes will ensure flexibility and high quality service delivery for every student and family within our care.

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 Strategic Improvement Plan and annual report.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine our Strategic Improvement 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

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

Elements	2022 School Assessment
LEARNING: Learning Culture	Excelling
LEARNING: Wellbeing	Excelling
LEARNING: Curriculum	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Assessment	Sustaining and Growing
LEARNING: Reporting	Working towards Delivering
LEARNING: Student performance measures	Working towards Delivering
TEACHING: Effective classroom practice	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Data skills and use	Sustaining and Growing
TEACHING: Professional standards	Delivering
TEACHING: Learning and development	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Educational leadership	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School planning, implementation and reporting	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: School resources	Sustaining and Growing
LEADING: Management practices and processes	Sustaining and Growing

Strategic Direction 1: Strengthening processes and practices to support engagement in learning

Purpose

To enhance teachers' capacity to meet the individual needs of all students supporting high levels of engagement within a collaborative, multidisciplinary and complex learning environment.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- · Personalised Learning
- · Time to Teach, Time to Learn

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

SSP supplementary funding: \$11,260.00 Socio-economic background: \$71,000.00

Professional learning: \$10,940.00

QTSS release: \$21,490.00 **Per capita:** \$17,160.00

Summary of progress

Personalised Learning

Staff participated in a series of professional learning opportunities to further develop their skills and understanding in catering to the specific needs and interest of our RFWS students. In addition staff have had opportunities to reflect on their current programs in order to diversify the teaching and learning activities and support the interests of our learners. Teachers have reflected on common themes of interest and have resourced and programmed accordingly. Teachers have been committed to building professional collaborative practice resulting in increased student confidence and experience across a complex situation and environment. The biggest shift in teaching and learning has been the inclusion of Lego Robotics across all classes. Staff are now comfortable in supporting students to engage in Lego Robotics, be they 5 or 15 years of age. Teaching and learning programs identify expected learning and are beginning to consistently include measures of success and lesson reflections to foster continual growth and improvement.

In 2023, the leadership team will maintain a focus on instruction to sustain a culture of effective, evidence-based teaching and ongoing improvement so that every student is engaged and supported in their learning progress. Understanding a student's journey throughout the Paediatric Development Program (PDP) identifies priorities for school operations, teacher development and the implementation of effective educational program.

Time to Teach

Through the employment of an additional teacher, staff were given the opportunity to prepare for, and attend, case conferences for their PDP clients each week as part of the multidisciplinary team that addresses the complex needs of students and support improved student outcomes. Staff provided direct feedback to the Royal Far West clinical team on the student's week and home school feedback. All teachers have built their capacity to confidently participate and contribute in a Case Conference supporting the learning outcomes, diagnosis and well being in students both at RFWS and home school. Feedback from Royal Far West clinical teams has been extremely positive. Staff have welcomed the opportunity to share their observations of students from their classrooms. In 2023, we will continue the employment of a teacher to facilitate release of teachers to prepare and participate in Conferences and, at times, Video Conferences. This teacher will support the implementation of the initiative.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
Innovative teaching experiences have been included in teaching and learning programs.	All staff are moving towards including more innovative teaching experiences particularly through STEM activities which incorporate Lego Robotics in teaching and learning programs.

All staff use the RFWS proforma for differentiated teaching and learning programs which demonstrate NESA requirements for programming.	Following trialing several iterations of a teaching and learning program and registration template which meets the NESA requirements there is now a consistent proforma used across the school. Planned differentiation occurs in consultation with home schools and increasingly with families.
Administrative systems are refined and processes provide staff with additional time for the development of engaging lessons for students.	Refinement of administrative systems and data collection process have facilitated a more streamlined transition which has led to collaboration, professional dialogue, classroom observation and timely feedback.

Strategic Direction 2: Strengthen partnerships and support a collaborative culture

Purpose

To enable a holistic and collaborative approach with our partners including Royal Far West, home schools and parents/carers to ensure best practice optimises support for rural students with complex health and learning needs.

Initiatives

This year our school implemented the following initiatives to support the realisation of the four year Strategic Improvement Plan and the achievement of system-negotiated and school-determined targets.

- Communication
- A Culture of Success

Resources allocated to this strategic direction

SSP supplementary funding: \$270,447.00 Aboriginal background: \$79,603.00 SSP quality teaching support: \$47,173.00

QTSS release: \$21,490.00 Professional learning: \$3,634.00

Summary of progress

Communication

We have continued to work towards ensuring that regular and relevant information is shared between both organisations in a systematic and timely manner. Senior Executive have met fortnightly with the Head of Child Health Services to discuss processes and protocols to assist in the operationalising of RFWS. In 2023, once the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been ratified, we will work towards the joint creation of policies and procedures to inform the ongoing relationship between organisations.

A Culture of Success

SWAY worked with 7 rural and remote sites where 199 students were supported in whole class interventions and 83 students participated in a targeted intervention program.

CER Following the School Development Review of the Centre for Effective Reading (CER) the realignment of CER hubs has resulted in the Manly Hub, currently based at RFWS, in terms of staffing and finance sits within Palm Avenue School from 2023.

RFWS A revised survey was developed in consultation with all stakeholders to enable the capture of data in an efficient way and to guide the interaction between home schools, RFWS and RFW around student well-being, student intake and student transition. In 2023 the survey will be trialed and reviewed; the Senior Executive Team and Administration (BM) will visit unique school settings such as Randwick Children's Hospital School and The Hospital School Westmead to investigate their systems and processes of data collection, teaching and learning programs and communication processes.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

The annual progress measures indicate the expected annual level of achievement for each improvement measure, aligned to the initiatives, in the Strategic Improvement Plan. Schools evaluate their achievement against annual progress measures to determine progress and inform future planning.

Annual progress measure	Progress towards achievement
All staff develop diagnostic clarity around student learning and behaviour needs by collaborating with RFW clinical staff through Case Conferences.	All staff have awareness of the RFW pathway for each student's assessment or therapy week. This enables teachers to support their observations leading to diagnostic clarity.
RFWS teaching staff record observable traits of students for use in Video Conferences with the Home School by	Accurate daily records of observations by teachers monitor and track a student's engagement and behaviour to best inform key stakeholders.

School Executive staff and RFW clinicians.	
The MOU is finalised between RFWS and RFW with identified areas for appendices discussed.	The MOU is not yet finalised. RFWS and RFW are continuing to liaise for a successful outcome.
Research and identify a set of tools to determine learning and satisfaction from students at RFWS.	As a result of research and review, satisfaction and engagement surveys for students and parents/carers have been developed for consistent implementation in 2023.

Funding sources	Impact achieved this year
Socio-economic background \$71,000.00	Socio-economic background equity loading is used to meet the additional learning needs of students at Royal Far West School who may be experiencing educational disadvantage as a result of their socio-economic background.
	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • Personalised Learning • Time to Teach, Time to Learn
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include: • professional development of staff through Lego Robotics to support student learning. • employment of additional staff to support Case Conference and Video Conference participation. • staff release to increase community engagement.
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: Staff have diversified their teaching and learning activities in order to remain current and support the interests of our learners. Teachers have reflected on common themes of interest and have resourced and programmed accordingly.
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: We will continue to analyse student surveys and feedback in terms of engagement. Class teachers will look to establish trends in the collected data to identify patterns to inform teaching and learning activities. Units will be reviewed and adjusted where appropriate.
Aboriginal background \$79,603.00	Aboriginal background equity loading is used to meet the specific learning needs of Aboriginal students at Royal Far West School. Funds under this equity loading have been targeted to ensure that the performance of Aboriginal students in NSW public schools, across a broad range of key educational measures, improves to match or better those of the broader student population, while maintaining cultural identity.
	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • A Culture of Success
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this equity loading include: • creation of school literacy resources embedding local language. • community consultation and engagement to support the development of cultural competency. • employment of specialist additional staff (SLSO) to support Aboriginal students. • engaging an Aboriginal Education Officer (AEO) to facilitate improved community engagement, including the engagement of students and their families with the personalised learning pathway (PLP) process.
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: Additional AEO to support RFWS students and families, cultural safety, and connections within community.
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: In 2023, the SWAY program will expand to include 10 additional sites and 380 additional students through whole class program and targeted intervention. We will continue to employ an additional AEO to support RFWS students and families prior, during and after their visit to Manly.
Professional learning	Professional learning funding is provided to enable all staff to engage in a

cycle of continuous professional learning aligned with the requirement of the \$14.574.00 Professional Learning for Teachers and School Staff Policy at Royal Far West School. Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan includina: Personalised Learning A Culture of Success Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:

• staff being provided with time to share and collaborate with colleagues, experts and the wider community.

The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: improvement of practice for teaching and non-teaching staff in line with school initiatives and departmental priorities.

After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: personalised and targeted professional learning in the form of mentoring and co-teaching.

QTSS release

\$42.980.00

The quality teaching, successful students (QTSS) allocation is provided to improve teacher quality and enhance professional practice at Royal Far West School.

Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including:

- Personalised Learning
- A Culture of Success

Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:

- additional staffing to support staff collaboration in the implementation of high-quality curriculum.
- additional teaching staff to implement quality teaching initiatives.
- staffing release to align professional learning to the Strategic Improvement Plan and develop the capacity of staff.

The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: Each staff member of RFWS has increased their skill set and capacity to personalise learning for students of RFWS. The variety of learning opportunities and activities now offered within each classroom reflects new and current interests of students.

After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: In 2023, RFWS Executive and teaching staff will continue to monitor student learning and wellbeing with a focus on high levels of student engagement promoting a happy, productive and school learning environment.

COVID ILSP

\$40,120.00

The purpose of the COVID intensive learning support program is to deliver intensive small group tuition for students who have been disadvantaged by the move to remote and/or flexible learning and were identified by their school as most likely to benefit from additional support in 2022.

Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan includina:

· Other funded activities

Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this targeted funding include:

- employment of teachers/educators/paraprofessionals to deliver small group tuition.
- releasing staff to analyse school and student data to identify students for small group tuition groups.

COVID ILSP \$40,120.00	 providing targeted, explicit instruction for student groups in literacy. releasing staff to provide online tuition to student groups in literacy.
\$40,120.00	The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: intensive small group tuition for students who have been disadvantaged by the move to remote and/or flexible learning and were identified by their school as most likely to benefit from additional support in 2021.
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: to continue the implementation of small group literacy tuition using data sources from home schools to identify specific student need.
SSP quality teaching support	These funds have been used to support improved outcomes and the achievements of staff and students at Royal Far West School
\$47,173.00	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • A Culture of Success
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this initiative funding include:
	 release time to engage staff in professional learning. employment of additional staff to support the creation of high-quality teaching and learning programs. employment of external support services
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: 199 rural and remote students participated in the Sounds Words and Aboriginal Yarning (SWAY) whole class program and 83 students participated in the targeted intervention program
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: to employ additional staff to meet the demand for the delivery of the SWAY program from rural and remote schools across NSW.
SSP supplementary funding	These funds have been used to support improved outcomes and the achievements of staff and students at Royal Far West School
\$294,017.00	Funds have been targeted to provide additional support to students enabling initiatives in the school's strategic improvement plan including: • Personalised Learning • Communication • A Culture of Success • Other funded activities
	Overview of activities partially or fully funded with this site specific funding include: • release time to engage staff in professional learning. • employment of additional staff to support the creation of high-quality teaching and learning programs. • increase capacity for Aboriginal Education Officer (AEO) and other staff members to be utilised for targeted student support across the school. • executive release to ensure all students benefit from high quality teaching and learning practices that best meet the full range of their individual needs.
	The allocation of this funding has resulted in the following impact: We now have two dedicated LaST teachers which allows time for more in depth support to students, local school teachers, parents and RFW clinical teams. We have invested in both the professional learning and training of staff and assessment resources and tools.
	After evaluation, the next steps to support our students will be: to continue the LaST allocation and review the suite of assessment tools used by RFWS in conjunction with RFW to ensure we are effectively capturing student strengths and areas of challenge.

Student information

Attendance

NSW student attendance data in 2020 is not comparable to previous years due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSW Government encouraged students to learn from home, where possible, for a seven week period from 24 March to 22 May 2020. During this period, schools monitored engagement with learning to determine whether students were marked present. This changed the attendance measure. There was also some evidence of varied marking practices as schools adjusted to the learning from home period, with some schools recording higher attendance rates while others recording markedly lower rates.

Attendance figures from 2021 were calculated differently to align with the third edition of ACARA's National Standards for Student Attendance Data and Reporting. Changes include treating partial absences over 120 minutes as a half day absence (instead of their actual value, calculated as a proportion of a nominal 6-hour day) and covers all weeks during Semester 1. Prior to 2021, the final week of Term 2 was excluded.

Furthermore, the department implemented an automated attendance feed (AAF) system in Semester 1 2021. AAF transfers data automatically from third-party attendance management systems to the department's centralised data warehouse every night. The AAF significantly improved data quality in 2021, which has affected data comparability with previous years.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2021, COVID-19 continued to affect student attendance. Analysis of attendance codes showed a change in the structure of absence reasons in 2021.

Although there were no state-wide or regional lockdowns in NSW during Semester 1 2022, student attendance was impacted by a range of factors:

- · Families evacuating and relocating due to NSW floods
- Sick students staying at home until a negative COVID-19 test was returned
- Household members testing positive to COVID-19
- The easing of COVID-19 border controls at the beginning of 2022 which allowed families to travel inter-state and overseas.

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.

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal(s)	1
Assistant Principal(s)	2
Classroom Teacher(s)	5.88
Teacher Librarian	0.2
School Counsellor	1
School Administration and Support Staff	7.61

^{*}Full Time Equivalent

Workforce composition statement

From 2022 onwards, the new Assistant Principal Curriculum and Instruction (APCI) roles form part of entitlement. The FTE of these roles are counted as per entitlement in line with other non-deputy principal/head teacher executive positions as there is no off-set requirement from the teaching allocation. The APCI is included under the assistant principal(s) position grouping.

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, and scholarship opportunities to become a teacher and by providing a culturally safe workplace. As of 2022, 4.6% of the department's overall workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school workforce composition

Staff type	Benchmark ¹	2022 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation ²
School Support	3.00%	4.10%
Teachers	3.00%	3.30%

Note 1: The NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2019-2025 takes a career pathway approach in that it sets an ambitious target of 3% Aboriginal employment at each non-executive grade of the public sector by 2025.

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.

Financial information

Financial summary

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022. The Principal is responsible for the financial management of the school and ensuring all school funds are managed in line with department policy requirements.

	2022 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	522,537
Revenue	2,575,479
Appropriation	2,559,093
Sale of Goods and Services	14,600
Grants and contributions	-200
Investment income	1,986
Expenses	-2,198,944
Employee related	-2,091,773
Operating expenses	-107,171
Surplus / deficit for the year	376,535
Closing Balance	899,072

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.

	2022 SBAR Adjustments (\$)
Targeted Total	0
Equity Total	150,829
Equity - Aboriginal	79,603
Equity - Socio-economic	71,226
Equity - Language	0
Equity - Disability	0
Base Total	1,778,444
Base - Per Capita	23,666
Base - Location	0
Base - Other	1,754,778
Other Total	527,208
Grand Total	2,456,481

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

Parent: Feedback from all the parents and carers about their experiences within our school has been positive. Parent comments agreed that their child felt comfortable in the learning environment. Some parents indicated that their child felt a level of anxiety about 'the unknown' prior to their arrival; however their fears were allayed immediately by the nurturing and supportive staff making a positive difference to their child's well-being during their stay. Anecdotal comments included phrases like: 'everyone goes above and beyond', 'nothing has been too much trouble' 'everyone is so kind and caring', staff catered for their child's individual needs in a happy, supportive learning environment.

Staff feedback: There is a shared commitment in the school to student and staff well-being. Staff reported they have access to quality professional learning to improve student outcomes. Opportunities are provided for staff to collaborate. Staff have access to quality resources to support student learning.

Students: Positive feedback from students include comments such as: 'This is the best school, I have learnt things I am interested in. Tinkertank was fun. I loved the art activities. We did maths but did not realise we were learning maths'.

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

Multicultural Education Policy

Teachers are responsible for addressing the specific learning and wellbeing needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds through their teaching and learning programs. The Principal is 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.