

School plan 2018-2020

Cascade Environmental Education Centre 5731



School background 2018–2020

School vision statement

Cascade EEC aims to provide educational experiences and opportunities that will engage and motivate all students to learn, discover, critically analyse their knowledge and to experience success. That every student that participates in a Cascade program has the opportunity to achieve their personal best through engaged, active learning in a safe, respectful and supportive environment. That every student that participates in our programs is excited to do so, safe when participating, interested in the activity and what will result from it, engaged in a practical and hands on way and inspired to make real change in their local community.

School context

Cascade Environmental Education Centre (EEC) is located in 250 million year old rainforest on the Dorrigo Plateau. Cascade is one of 23 environmental and zoo education centres in NSW. The EEC is both a local school and a regional resource that supports schools to meet their fieldwork requirements, grow as sustainability hubs within their communities, to develop student and staff knowledge and develop knowledge about and a relationship with the natural environment. As part of a collaborative team of EEC's, schools, government and non-government organisations, Cascade provides a broad range of experiences at a number of locations within the Tamworth Group. The Centre continues to support schools in their implementation of the curriculum and the Environmental Education Policy and to provide essential natural and sustainability based experiences both in and outside of the classroom. We aim is to provide quality experiences that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes and to empower students and their communities to become confident and empowered environmental citizens.

School planning process

This planning document forms a component along a continuum of continuous planning and consultation, conduct and evaluation of programs over the life of the Centre. Historical information is very important in developing the programs at Cascade. Consultation with the first Australians, the local Gumbaynggirr Aboriginal people through elders, the Dorrigo and Coffs Harbour LALC, the AECG, teachers and students informs our programs and guides our practice. The experience of previous teachers at Cascade and other EEC's also helps inform and strengthen our programs. Cascade EEC conducts a variety of evaluations of our groups to ensure the programs we conduct, the teachers we use and the resources we provide meet and exceed expectations. Documents such as the Melbourne Declaration, the National School Improvement Tool and the Schools Excellence Framework were consulted to underpin this plan. As a team the 23 EEC's in NSW have shared the results of evaluations, conducted studies, held professional development sessions and shared examples of best practice to ensure the programs delivered are the best they can be.

School strategic directions 2018–2020



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 Empowering Learners

Purpose:

To develop students environmental knowledge, skills, values and attributes and create environmentally literate citizens.

Providing engaging and stimulating learning environments and programs that empower learners to think and communicate creatively, collaboratively and critically to grow as individuals and achieve positive environmental impact.

Develop the capacity of Centre staff and those within our networks as learners, teachers and leaders in environmental and sustainability education. Through participation in, and the provision of, explicit, planned and incidental professional learning that improves teaching knowledge, skills and practice and results in the development of environmental citizens.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 Strengthen Partnerships

Purpose:

To extend and strengthen partnerships with our networks and communities through effective communication and a culture of collaboration.

The impact of these relationships drives the provision of authentic, relevant and unique experiences, which enable students to be confident and creative environmental citizens.

Strategic Direction 1: Empowering Learners

Purpose

To develop students environmental knowledge, skills, values and attributes and create environmentally literate citizens.

Providing engaging and stimulating learning environments and programs that empower learners to think and communicate creatively, collaboratively and critically to grow as individuals and achieve positive environmental impact.

Develop the capacity of Centre staff and those within our networks as learners, teachers and leaders in environmental and sustainability education. Through participation in, and the provision of, explicit, planned and incidental professional learning that improves teaching knowledge, skills and practice and results in the development of environmental citizens.

Improvement Measures

At least 85% of Students and teachers that attend camps rate them as high quality learning experiences.

Cascade staff collaborate to develop the biophylic exploration garden and low ropes course and to incorporate story thread approach into programs.

People

Leaders

Cascade leadership team and staff advocate for high quality learning experiences and resources.

Students

K–12 Students attend programs that are tailored to their curriculum needs.

Staff

New and returning staff participate in a range of specific environmental, leadership and educational focussed professional development opportunities. These include but are not limited to various network, principal and COS activities, EZEC events, DoE and PPA events and other incidental events that will benefit the staff and further the reach of Cascades programs.

Processes

Curriculum based school programs are developed, marketed and booked into school calendar. Programs are evaluated via written evaluations and staff observation.

High quality professional learning aligned to the curriculum and policy needs of students, visiting schools, staff members, Centre objectives and the DoE strategic Plan.

Evaluation Plan

Analysis of student and staff evaluations.

Analysis of attending school staff feedback.

Practices and Products

Practices

Staff are trained in order to improve their capabilities to deliver Centre programs to better support curriculum outcomes. This will include the improved utilisation of the low ropes course and enhanced skills in the conduct of activities in outdoor settings.

Cascade staff deliver curriculum based programs to K–12 students that are rated as high quality learning experiences by Students and Staff.

Staff attend professional development at state and local EZEC programs. Staff attend Professional development opportunities created by the department and PPA. Story thread approach to programming professional development and Centre visit is conducted.

Products

Post program evaluations and staff observations are developed to ascertain student satisfaction and learning outcomes.

Strategic Direction 2: Strengthen Partnerships

Purpose

To extend and strengthen partnerships with our networks and communities through effective communication and a culture of collaboration.

The impact of these relationships drives the provision of authentic, relevant and unique experiences, which enable students to be confident and creative environmental citizens.

Improvement Measures

Technology at Cascade is improved so that 100% of computers utilised during the "Bugs in the Rainforest" program are able to provide and support high quality learning experiences.

Cascade provides opportunities for partner schools and program partners to ensure they are better placed to provide students and schools with the resources and skills required to deliver a broad range of environmental learning experiences that will benefit themselves and the communities.

People

Community Partners

Cascade continues to grow partnerships and strengthen alliances with schools, DoE support personnel and Local Government Organisations on the Mid North Coast.

Leaders

Cascade technological resources are evaluated, replaced and updated to ensure high quality learning experiences for students and seamless program delivery for staff.

Students

Through partnerships Cascade provides opportunities for students to become engaged environmental citizens within their school community.

Processes

Develop partnerships with schools and their local communities to enhance environmental education programs and student wellbeing.

Enhance technology suitability, quality and availability to ensure a high quality of experience for students.

Evaluation Plan

Effectiveness of new computer system s evaluated by Cascade staff and program participants.

School and Community partnerships are evaluated via consultation with stakeholders to ensure benefits are realised for all.

Practices and Products

Practices

A partnership is developed with KWPS and Kempsey Shire Council (KSC) that is a model for school and community collaboration for the benefit of all parties.

Computers and the network at Cascade are evaluated and updated to create a positive learning environment.

A Year 11 "Depth Study" for biology is developed and delivered to High Schools in the area.

Products

KWPS implements a whole of school environmental management plan.

Engage in a partnership with Kempsey West PS (KWPS) and KSC on whole school development program.

Community partnerships that benefit students and teachers are continued.