

Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2024

Redbank School 5559



School vision and context

School vision statement

Our vision is to empower every student with the resources for sustainable wellbeing, for every student to continue their journey through education and finish school prepared for rewarding lives as engaged citizens in a complex and dynamic society. It includes achieving excellence in our school's specific purpose and contributing to the success of students in other schools whose experience of mental illness impacts their education and educational trajectory. This is a journey of continual improvement, one we travel together with our students, families and community. Throughout the journey, we will continue to learn and engage in high impact professional learning, we will hold ourselves accountable for the impact of our work.

School context

Redbank School is a School for Specific Purpose (SSP) located on the grounds of Westmead Hospital, Westmead. The school's specific purpose is to provide intensive educational support for students experiencing acute mental illness and ongoing significant mental health related difficulties. The school is strategically co-located with Redbank House, the hub for the Perinatal, Child & Youth Mental Health Service teams that deliver services and supports for people living with mental health issues and their families and carers in the Western Sydney Local Health District. School staff work consultatively and collaboratively with Redbank House and other mental health specialists to achieve its purpose.

The school has a capacity enrolment of seventy students, 80% of which are initiated when young people are admitted into the Acute Adolescent Unit (AAU), a specialist inpatient facility within Redbank House for young people experiencing severe mental illness. The other twenty percent of enrolments are initiated when students are offered placement through the DoE's Access Request process. The student cohort are all of secondary school-age and, as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act, have a disability. The composition of the student population varies as students enrol and exit throughout the year. The number of students with Aboriginal background, English as an Additional Language/Dialect and/or students who experience challenges associated with economic disadvantage, fluctuate continuously throughout the school year.

The findings of a recent situational analysis identified focus areas for improvement and the school's strategic directions for the next four years:

Strategic Direction 1 - Student growth and attainment. The focus of this direction is to improve student achievement in reading, numeracy and learning through initiatives related to effective classroom teaching practice.

Strategic Direction 2: Sustainable wellbeing. The focus of this direction is to support improvement in student wellbeing so that students are engaged and achieve their educational goals.

Due to the school's specific purpose and fluidity of the student cohort, locally developed targets for individual student progress and achievement will be developed and monitored annually. Improvement in the effectiveness of the school's programs and practices and the school's journey toward excellence will also be monitored each year using data identified in the relevant evaluation plan and a set of criteria for success. The school's program delivery is underpinned by consultative and collaborative practices and with the strategic allocation of resources, the school's significant alliances and partnerships can be strengthened. The school will continue to improve the effectiveness of its programs and practices to ensure the needs of every student are addressed and optimal outcomes achieved. The school needs to embed explicit strategies to ensure the outcomes for Aboriginal students and students learning English as an additional language (EAL/D students) equal or better those of all students.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To empower students with the capacity for learning and ensure every student demonstrates learning growth in reading and numeracy and optimal opportunity to achieve their learning goals.

Improvement measures

Target year: 2024

All students achieve expected growth in reading and numeracy.

Target year: 2024

All students achieve personalised learning goals.

Target year: 2024

The progress and achievement of Aboriginal students and students in equity groups equal or exceed the progress and achievement of all students.

Initiatives

Reading and numeracy

Reading and numeracy is about strengthening students literacy and numeracy foundation skills through explicit teaching. Explicit teaching involves using highly structured and sequenced steps to teach a specific skill and includes the identification and implementation of explicit interventions and other support strategies. Explicit teaching practices ensure students know where they are (through informed assessment), where to go to next (learning goals) and how they will get there (success criteria and explicit learning experiences).

Redbank School will:

- embed a whole school assessment process for the identification, monitoring and evaluation of individual student's literacy and numeracy development
- deliver a whole school reading and numeracy intervention to target gaps in individual student's knowledge, understanding and skills in reading and numeracy through explicit instruction
- engage staff in high impact professional learning on the teaching of reading and numeracy skills through explicit instruction, formative assessment, literacy and numeracy progressions and specific strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and students in equity groups

Personalised learning

Personalised learning is an educational approach that aims to customise learning for each student's strengths, needs, skills and interests. It's about building individual student's capacity to learn and targets identified goals for improvement bringing greater coherence, focus and purpose to the decisions made about student learning. It involves students becoming active participants in the learning process, empowering them to become independent learners and motivating them to achieve their full potential.

Redbank School will:

Success criteria for this strategic direction

A whole school approach ensures the most effective evidence-based teaching methods optimise learning capacity and progress for all students across the full range of abilities. Teachers employ evidence-based effective teaching strategies. Effective methods are identified, promoted and modelled, and students learning improvement is monitored, demonstrating growth (SEF - Explicit teaching).

The learning goals for students are informed by analysis of student progress and achievement data. Progress toward goals is monitored through collection of quality, valid and reliable data. Reporting on school performance is based on valid and reliable data and analysis. (SEF - Whole school monitoring of student learning).

School uses systematic and reliable assessment information to evaluate student learning over time and implements changes in teaching that lead to measurable improvement. The school has processes in place to support teachers consistent evidence based judgement and moderation of assessments (SEF - Data analysis).

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Questions - what has been the impact on student reading and numeracy skill development and achievement of their learning goals? Does the progress and achievement of Aboriginal students and students in equity groups equal or exceed the progress and achievement of all students?

Data - student reading and numeracy data, all students learning performance data, Aboriginal student data, students in equity groups data.

Analysis - judgement as to the effectiveness of the initiatives on student growth in reading and numeracy and achievement of personalised learning goals.

Implications - the findings of the analysis informs future directions, next steps.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Initiatives

- embed a systemic approach to rigorous and holistic assessment of student need to identify learning goals, the adjustments/supports required and the monitoring and review of ongoing effectiveness and evaluation of intended impact
- improve the effectiveness of teaching practice through personalising learning that is informed by sound holistic information about each student's individual educational needs and underpinned by consultation and collaboration with students and other key stakeholders
- engage all staff in high impact professional learning to build staff expertise and confidence in personalising learning for students and to improve the pedagogical practices of teachers to ensure they have an increased capacity to personalise learning for Aboriginal students and students in equity groups

Data informed practice

Data informed practice is about ensuring every student's learning and wellbeing improves. The value comes from the ability to 'see students' and provide support and intervention so students progress. It relies on the ability to interpret what data means and the ability to use the information to inform decisions about student learning and wellbeing, classroom instruction and whole school practices and programs. It's the systematic use of a variety of forms and levels of data for the explicit purpose of visible student growth and achievement.

Redbank School will:

- embed a whole school practice for the systematic collection and analysis of high quality educational data as evidence of student learning and growth and evidence of staff investigating, reflecting and making the most of available data in their daily practice
- establish and use an instructional leader position to work with staff to interpret and extrapolate data and collaboratively use this to inform individual student, whole class and whole school planning including learning and wellbeing interventions, teaching practice and whole school initiatives

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Initiatives

- engage all staff in high impact professional learning on data literacy, data analysis and data use in teaching and planning

Strategic Direction 2: Sustainable wellbeing

Purpose

To empower students with the resources to sustain a level of wellbeing that enables them to continue their journey through education and achieve their educational goals.

Improvement measures

Target year: 2024

All students achieve their educational goals.

Target year: 2024

All students demonstrate growth in wellbeing in a variety of specific school based wellbeing measures.

Initiatives

Educational achievement through wellbeing

Educational achievement through wellbeing values students sustaining a level of wellbeing that enables them to achieve their educational goals and aspirations. It involves the provision of quality programs underpinned by evidence-based practices to minimise the impact mental illness and mental health related difficulties can have on a student's education and educational trajectory. It includes addressing the many interconnected and interdependent elements of student's school, home and community life.

Redbank School will:

- improve the effectiveness of the school's practices for improving student wellbeing with a focus on improving student's connection to school, attendance at school, engagement in learning, participation in school and community activities and journey toward the achievement of their educational goals
- improve the effectiveness of the school's programs in supporting students to manage the symptoms of mental illness that often create barriers to student's progressing toward and achieving their educational goals with a focus on additional support for students identified as particularly vulnerable to lower levels of wellbeing, Aboriginal students and students in equity groups

Student growth in wellbeing

An innovative approach to measuring student wellbeing and student growth in wellbeing over time using specific school based wellbeing measures will enhance student learning and provide interventions to support student growth. It relies on the ability to interpret what data means and to use the information to inform decisions about individual and whole school wellbeing interventions and initiatives.

Redbank School will:

- research, develop and implement a range of school-based wellbeing related assessment tools to collect

Success criteria for this strategic direction

The school has implemented evidence-based change to whole school-practices resulting in measurable improvements in wellbeing and engagement to support learning (SEF - A planned approach to wellbeing).

The school has identified what growth is expected for each student and students are achieving higher than expected growth on internal school progress and achievement data (SEF - Student growth).

The leadership team measures student, parent/carer and community satisfaction and shares it's analysis and action in response to the findings with its community. (SEF - Community satisfaction).

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Questions - what has been the impact on student wellbeing and achievement of education goals for all students? Does the progress and achievement of Aboriginal students and students in equity groups equal or exceed the progress and achievement of all students?

Data - all students goal achievement and wellbeing data, Aboriginal student data, students in equity groups data, community engagement and satisfaction data .

Analysis - judgement as to the effectiveness of the initiatives on student growth in wellbeing and achievement of their educational goals.

Implications - the findings of the analysis informs future directions, next steps.

Strategic Direction 2: Sustainable wellbeing

Initiatives

- and analyse the data to measure student wellbeing and to monitor student growth in wellbeing
- continue to evaluate, refine and review the approach to ensure the data being used to measure and monitor student wellbeing is complete and accurate and continues to meet the intended purpose
- embed a system for the ongoing analysis of student wellbeing and growth in wellbeing data to be used to plan and evaluate the impact of individual and whole school wellbeing interventions and supports

Community engagement

Community engagement is about learning and working with students and the school's diverse and dynamic community through a cycle of continual improvement and journey toward our shared vision. It's about building and maintaining strong and strategic relationships to create networks of support and shared responsibility for student and school success. It is based on the belief that when we connect with and draw on the expertise, contribution, feedback and support of our community, student learning and wellbeing will improve, the school's capacity to achieve its specific purpose will be strengthened and community satisfaction will be more visible.

Redbank School will:

- embed systems to better understand the values, needs and strengths of the school's changing community and use the information to continuously revise engagement practices and effect change for improvement in collaboration with the current and emerging community
- continue to identify and build community partnerships with businesses and community organisations to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for students and community satisfaction
- deliver a systematic and structured process for students to improve student's ongoing access to and engagement with on-site and community mental health services with a focus on additional support for

Strategic Direction 2: Sustainable wellbeing

Initiatives

students during specific stages of recovery from mental illness