

# Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2024

## Brewongle Environmental Education Centre 5694



# School vision and context

## School vision statement

**Brewongle vision:** To connect every learner to the natural world and inspire change for a sustainable future.

**Environmental and Zoo Education Centre (EZEC) network vision:** Leading environmental education for a sustainable future.

## School context

Brewongle Environmental Education Centre is one of 25 Environmental Education and Zoo Education Centres supported by the NSW Department of Education. We are located on Darug Country in the forest above Dyarubbin - the majestic Hawkesbury River at Sackville North, NSW.

The Centre supports schools with curriculum, leadership and wellbeing implementation across a range of subjects with an emphasis on sustainability and environmental values. Student centred /inquiry based learning techniques form the basis of our hands on, authentic learning programs. We offer teachers and students pre and post excursion tasks to provide context and extend the learning beyond the field trip experience. We offer both day and camp programs for students from K-12 and work with many outside agencies to achieve excellence in our program delivery. We design and deliver an extensive array of professional learning events for teachers with a major focus on Aboriginal Education.

During 2020 Brewongle embarked on an extensive situational analysis. This included a review of all our teacher and student evaluations and an extra online teacher evaluation. Consultation and interviews were conducted with Brewongle staff, teachers and students from visiting schools, partners including Western Sydney University, the UN-RCE, Penrith City Council and the Darug community. These yielded many interesting findings that have influenced our future directions.

The outcomes of that review included the following:

- Many current programs are content heavy.
- Student wellbeing/resilience is a prime area of need for schools - EZEC Catalyst Lab research.
- We need to target all learners - inclusive education should be a focus.
- Students felt that a memorable experience was important.
- Day programs could include a dedicated wellbeing in nature element.
- Cultural education is currently excellent, but other areas of focus could include hard topics like frontier wars and dispossession with students.

Our high level areas for improvement have been identified as -

- *Wellbeing.*
- *Inclusive education and integration.*
- *Targeted infrastructure improvements*
- *Auditing curriculum content to ensure effective teaching.*

# Strategic Direction 1: Student wellbeing and inclusive education

## Purpose

To ensure that every student has a strong connection to nature and opportunities to enhance their wellbeing and learning regardless of differing needs or backgrounds.

## Improvement measures

### Target year: 2024

Brewongle has piloted, evaluated and improved 3 x 1 year long programs targeting students with a selected disability, behavioural needs and vulnerable students. Students within these programs have shown improved wellbeing, nature connection and learning outcomes as measured by Brewongle evaluations and assessment tools. *Every student is known, valued and cared for.*

### Target year: 2024

Brewongle programs will be reviewed and improved to allow for time for connection, reflection and exploration. These will be explicitly written into curriculum based programs and day sheets

Students' evaluations will show that students have improved nature connections, time to explore and improved wellbeing as a result of adjustments to programs. *Every student is known, valued and cared for.*

## Initiatives

### Effective Classroom Practice for all students

Brewongle will collaborate with support units, wellbeing advisors and integration experts to ensure a school wide evidence driven approach is utilised to design new programs that contribute to the learning of students with special needs.

### Wellbeing and personalised learning for all students

Staff will engage in professional learning in the wellbeing framework, inclusive education and the disability strategy to ensure we have implemented evidence based change to whole school practices, resulting in measurable improvements in wellbeing and engagement to support learning.

## Success criteria for this strategic direction

Brewongle EEC is a leader in providing long term wellbeing/specialised programs for students with special needs including disabilities, behavioural needs and vulnerable students. All lessons are systematically planned as part of a coherent program that has been collaboratively designed. Accommodations and adjustments are made to suit needs as they arise.

All Brewongle EEC programs will incorporate time for nature connection, exploration, nature play to enhance student wellbeing as well as different methods of recording fieldwork/results. We will have implemented evidence based change to whole school practices, resulting in measurable improvements in wellbeing and engagement to support learning.

## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Q: Have we designed new programs for students with special needs and included wellbeing elements in all programs using an evidence based, collaborative approach?

D: Regular data gathering during design and pilot phase of new programs.

Annotated evidence of new program collaborative program design and testing.

Student/teacher evaluations and feedback in pilot phase

Student assessments during pilot phase.

A: How are we going? How do we know?

I: Where to next?

## Strategic Direction 2: Innovative improvements to teaching and learning

### Purpose

To plan, prioritise and fund improvements to enhance the learning environments and experience for all learners to ensure effective practice and future focused learning.

### Improvement measures

#### Target year: 2024

Brewongle teaching and learning programs will have been audited for curriculum content and adjusted after collaboration and consultation to ensure that there is time for evidenced based teaching strategies to be utilised by all teachers.

#### Target year: 2024

We will have utilised available funding to create innovative and planned changes to identified teaching and learning areas. These include the camp kitchen area, wisdom tree and welcome areas, camping facilities and ponds. This will also include integration funding to ensure Brewongle is accessible to all students.

### Initiatives

#### Curriculum provision adjustments to maximise learning

We will ensure our teaching and learning programs are dynamic with high expectations for student learning. They will be audited for content and ensure that our teaching maximises evidenced based strategies like effective feedback, explicit teaching, wellbeing and the use of data to inform practice.

#### Educational Leadership for school resources

We will take a creative approach to our physical learning environments to ensure they maximise learning, student engagement and wellbeing through targeted infrastructure investment.

### Success criteria for this strategic direction

The school's curriculum provision supports high expectations for student learning. The curriculum is enhanced by learning alliances with other schools or organisations, where useful and practicable. Students' learning and courses of study are monitored longitudinally (for example K-2; K-6; 7-12) to ensure continued challenge and maximum learning.

Teaching and learning programs are dynamic, showing evidence of revisions based on feedback on teaching practices, consistent and reliable student assessment and continuous tracking of student progress and achievement

The leadership team takes a creative approach to use of the physical environment to ensure that it optimises learning, within the constraints of the school design and setting.

*DoE Target: Our school infrastructure meets the needs of a growing population and enables future-focused learning and teaching*

### Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: Have our teaching and learning programs been audited and show evidence of dynamic revision, collaboration and consultation?

Question: Have our physical teaching and learning areas been designed with innovative forward thinking to improve teaching and learning?

Data: Annotated evidence of revised programs, physical improvements completed as evidenced by photographs and student usage.