

# Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2024

## Gibberagong Environmental Education Centre 5714



# School vision and context

## School vision statement

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***Inspiring school communities to know, value and act for the environment.***

**Inspiring school communities** through quality pedagogical practices that are developed through a cohesive and innovative quality teaching process.

**To know, value and act for the environment** is assessed through researched-based student and teacher assessment processes that inform what, how and why we teach.

## School context

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Gibberagong Environmental Education Centre (GEEC) is a Department of Education (DoE) school located on the traditional lands of the Guringai people at Bobbin Head in the Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

**Our students** attend the Centre from local primary and high schools for one to three day programs that aim to inspire students to know, value and act for the environment.

**Our school** achieves this through the provision of high quality field work and environmental and sustainability education programs for school students K-12 at excursion locations in northern Sydney or at sites near or within schools.

**Our teaching staff** are qualified and experienced educators in outdoor and environmental education who are passionate about connecting students and visiting teachers with the important natural, cultural and built environments that we have access to.

Our school is informed through **our collaboration** as a member of the DoE's Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC) network, who is committed to being a leader of environmental education in NSW.

Our school has achieved rich learning outcomes for visiting students through the development and nurturing of **our strong partnerships** with many local schools, the local Aboriginal community, councils and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

This School Improvement Plan was developed through a consultation with students, Gibberagong staff, teachers from local schools and the AECG.

The Situation Analysis provided insight into the operations of the school and highlighted two significant areas of school improvement, assessment of student learning and developing teacher capacity. Over the next four years, we will implement initiatives in these areas that improve what we teach and how we teach it.

# Strategic Direction 1: Assessment of Student Learning

## Purpose

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In order to maximise student learning outcomes during our one day excursion programs, we intend to research and implement student and teacher assessment methods that will monitor student achievement and inform student learning to ensure students learn what is taught.

## Improvement measures

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### Target year: 2022

All excursion programs will have learning outcomes and exit understandings explicitly identified

### Target year: 2024

Student assessment strategies will be embedded in all one-day excursion programs

### Target year: 2024

All Gibberagong teachers will be using data to inform program content and their teaching practice

## Initiatives

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### Embedding assessment strategies

Student learning will be assessed through a series of formative and summative assessment processes. This initiative will include:

- Professional learning on assessment of learning in our context
- Review learning outcomes and develop exit understandings for all programs to ensure clarity of learning expectations
- Design and implement appropriate formative and summative assessment processes.

### Data Skills and Use

Data collected from student assessment and teacher evaluation will be utilised to inform teaching practice

This initiative will include:

- Professional Learning on data skills and use in our context
- Analysis of data during regular meetings and professional learning days
- Embed processes to use data to inform ongoing monitoring of programs.

## Success criteria for this strategic direction

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In our special context, consistent school-wide practices for assessment are used to monitor, plan and report on student learning for our one-day learning programs. Formative assessment is integrated into teaching practice in every program to confirm that students learn what is taught. The school analyses this data and other contextual information to inform teaching practice.

## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

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Question: To what extent have explicit systems for collaboration, curriculum planning and assessment analysis been responsive meeting the needs of all students involved in our one-day programs?

Data: These data sources will be collected and analysed by relevant teachers and leaders: formative student assessment data; teacher evaluation data; teaching programs; classroom observations; staff surveys; professional learning evaluations

Analysis: Data is analysed and triangulated regularly to determine the extent to which purpose and improvement measures have been achieved

Implications: Rigorous analysis of this data to determine impact will guide both ongoing implementation as well as future school planning to provide continuous improvement, ensuring students know what they are learning and learn what is taught.

# Strategic Direction 2: Develop Teacher Capacity

## Purpose

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To increase the quality of teaching at Gibberagong EEC, teaching staff will develop and undertake a robust process of collaborative practice, observation and reflection which suits the context of our Centre. Through an innovative process of investigation, we will deepen our understanding of different contextual teaching pedagogies and utilise the data collected to help inform our community.

## Improvement measures

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### Target year: 2024

All Gibberagong teachers will engage in a robust system of peer observation and feedback within the Centre that is embedded in the teaching and learning cycle.

### Target year: 2024

All Gibberagong teachers will be using data to inform program content and their teaching practice.

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## Initiatives

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### Effective Teaching Practice

GEEC teaching staff will develop and engage in a robust system for peer observation and feedback through:

- Evidence informed research on the best form of teaching assessment for our context ie Quality Teaching Rounds, Spirals of Inquiry, Learning Sprints.
- Professional learning on an agreed method of observation and reflection
- Implementation of effective teaching practice with a focus on explicit teaching and engagement.
- Data collection to demonstrate impact

### Collaborative Practice, Expertise and Innovation

GEEC staff will engage in innovative ways to explore the pedagogy of outdoor and environmental learning through:

- Evidence informed research of different ways of learning in our context
  - Undertaking observation and reflection with peers outside of GEEC (schools, other EZEC's, other outdoor centres)
  - Gather data on effective outdoor pedagogy to inform local teachers on teaching outside.
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## Success criteria for this strategic direction

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In our special context, GEEC has embedded and explicit systems that facilitate professional dialogue, classroom observation, the modelling of effective practice and the provision of specific and timely feedback between teachers.

Through this process, teachers employ evidence-based effective teaching strategies and feedback is elicited by teachers and informs their teaching.

Through a focus on outdoor pedagogies, teaching staff demonstrate and share their expertise within their school and with other schools

## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

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