

# Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2025

## Red Hill Environmental Education Centre 5750



# School vision and context

## School vision statement

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Leading environmental education for a sustainable future as students learn from our past to inform our future.

## School context

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Red Hill Environmental Education Centre (EEC) is a facility of the NSW Department of Education (department) located within the Mudgee Network in Central West NSW.

Red Hill EEC's motto is, 'Learning from our past to inform our future'.

We acknowledge that Red Hill EEC is on Wiradjuri Country. We thank the Wiradjuri people for sharing their country with us. Together with our students, we action our respect to Elders, Past, Present and Future by teaching, listening, learning and caring for land, rivers, animals and people of Country.

Red Hill EEC was established in 1995 as a specialised Urban Field Study Centre in rural NSW, with a focus on supporting the teaching of history. With our location in the historic Gold Rush town of Gulgong, many of our programs work to support the NSW history syllabus with experiential, hands-on activities that lead to a deeper knowledge and understanding of this pivotal time in Australian history. Red Hill EEC works closely with our local community and the many historical museums and resources within the town to enhance student engagement and improve student outcomes.

In addition, as a department Environmental Education Centre, Red Hill EEC develops and delivers high quality teaching and learning programs that support our community of schools with environmental and sustainability education from Early Childhood Education to Year 12. The focus is on education for sustainability, with a past, present and future orientation and has strong intrinsic links to learning for Aboriginal cultural awareness. Education for sustainability empowers students to feel that they are able to act, individually and collectively, in ways that contribute to a sustainable future.

Red Hill EEC is strongly supported by our local Aboriginal community through the Gulgong Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) as we collaborate to authentically deliver Aboriginal cultural programs and build capacity of teachers to do the same. A strong Aboriginal perspective in our programs provides opportunities for all students, staff and the wider community to acquire knowledge and develop a deeper understanding of Aboriginal histories, cultures and experiences.

Red Hill EEC is one of 25 Environmental Education and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC) within NSW. Red Hill EEC is a proud and active member of the EZEC Network, working collaboratively with our colleagues across the state to lead environmental education for a sustainable future.

Through the 2020 Situational Analysis process, Red Hill EEC consulted with principals, teachers, students, parents/carers, community partners and the general community to review our achievements and identify areas for improvement. Participants were asked "Which improvement focus areas do you believe will have the greatest impact on student outcomes?" The strongest responses were to 'deepen cultural awareness and culturally safe opportunities for students, teachers and community', 'further enhance site facilities to increase student and community engagement' and 'broaden educational partnerships to enhance 'real-life' learning experiences'.

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As these responses aligned closely with our 2019 External Validation results, as well as our continued progress through the domains of the School Excellence Framework, Red Hill EEC has identified the following high-impact Strategic Directions as our focus for the 2021-2024 Strategic Improvement Plan:

- Authentic Connections to Culture
- Authentic Connections to Community

Through this process, Red Hill EEC has also identified the need to further enhance the ways in which the Centre collects, collates and analyses data to inform our practice, and will subsequently focus on this as an additional area for improvement.

Moving forward, Red Hill EEC will continue to provide high quality environmental education opportunities for students, both within the urban and natural environments, and will continue to focus on the strategic improvement of our Centre to support the learning outcomes for all students.

# Strategic Direction 1: Authentic Connections to Culture

## Purpose

To embed a whole-school approach to wellbeing and engagement that enhances authentic cultural awareness and improves student learning both at Red Hill EEC and in Mudgee Network Schools.

## Improvement measures

Achieve by year: 2025

100% increase in the number of Red Hill EEC programs that deliver Aboriginal perspectives in a culturally safe environment.

Achieve by year: 2025

Increase the number of Mudgee Network Schools engaging in Red Hill EEC Aboriginal Education professional learning courses to greater than 70%.

## Initiatives

### Wellbeing

Develop a strategic and planned approach to whole school wellbeing processes that support the wellbeing of all students so they can Connect, Succeed, Thrive and learn.

### Learning and Development

Ensure professional learning is aligned with the school plan, and its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes is evaluated. Explicit systems for collaboration and feedback are in place.

### Data Skills and Use

School wide focus on data to identify achievements and progress in order to reflect on teaching effectiveness and inform future school directions.

## Success criteria for this strategic direction

Red Hill EEC collects, analyses and uses data including valid and reliable student and staff surveys/feedback, to monitor and refine a whole school approach to wellbeing and engagement, to improve learning.

Inter-school relationships provide mentoring and coaching support to ensure the ongoing development and improvement of teachers at Red Hill EEC and Mudgee Network Schools.

Red Hill EEC 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.

Red Hill EEC leadership team comprehensively analyses student data for insights into student learning and wellbeing and discusses results with the whole staff. All Red Hill EEC teachers contribute to gathering and analysing data.

## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

**Question:** Has Red Hill EEC embedded a whole-school approach to wellbeing and engagement? Has Red Hill EEC enhanced authentic cultural awareness and improved student learning at Red Hill EEC and Mudgee Network Schools?

**Data:** Evaluation will be based on various sources of evidence and will include: Program specific evaluation data, Teaching program audit data, Performance & Development Plan data, Booking data, Landscape Design Master Plan data, Annual Impact Survey data undertaken by Mudgee Network Schools.

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

**Implication:** Rigorous analysis of the data to determine impact will guide ongoing implementation and future school planning for continuous school improvement.

# Strategic Direction 2: Authentic Connections to Community

## Purpose

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To develop an integrated approach to curriculum planning and delivery, enhanced by learning alliances with other schools and/or organisations, so that all students can access 'real-life' learning experiences through educational partnerships that promote learning excellence.

## Improvement measures

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Achieve by year: 2025

Increase the number of Mudgee Network Schools engaging in Red Hill EECs Eco-Schools program by 100%.

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Achieve by year: 2025

Increase the number of active partnerships between Red Hill EEC and community organisations/industry by 100%.

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Achieve by year: 2025

Monitor and review active partnerships between Red Hill EEC and local Early Childhood Education providers.

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## Initiatives

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### Curriculum

Develop an integrated approach to curriculum planning and delivery, through active learning alliances that promotes learning excellence and responsiveness in meeting the needs of all students.

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### Learning and Development

Ensure explicit systems for collaboration and feedback are in place through effective learning alliances. Ensure professional learning is aligned with the school plan, and its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes is evaluated.

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### Data Skills and Use

School wide focus on data to identify achievements and progress in order to reflect on teaching effectiveness and inform future school directions.

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## Success criteria for this strategic direction

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Red Hill EEC's curriculum provision supports high expectations for student learning. The curriculum provisions offered at Red Hill EEC is enhanced by learning alliances with other schools and/or organisations.

Red Hill EEC identifies expertise within its staff and draws on this to further develop its professional learning community. Teachers are supported to trial innovative or evidence-based, future-focused practices.

Red Hill EEC leadership team comprehensively analyses student data for insights into student learning and wellbeing and discusses results with the whole staff. All Red Hill EEC teachers contribute to gathering and analysing data.

## Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

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**Question:** Has Red Hill EEC developed an integrated approach to curriculum planning and delivery? Has Red Hill EEC promoted learning excellence through 'real-life' learning experiences that have been enhanced by established learning alliances?

**Data:** Evaluation will be based on various sources of evidence and will include: Program specific evaluation data, Teaching program audit data, Performance & Development Plan data, Booking data, Partnerships Analysis Tool data undertaken by learning alliance partners.

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

**Implication:** Rigorous analysis of the data to determine impact will guide ongoing implementation and future school planning for continuous school improvement.