

Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2025

Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School 8383



School vision and context

School vision statement

At Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School we aspire, in all things, to demonstrate care for ourselves, others and our community so that all feel heard, seen, valued and accepted. We aspire to grow in understanding, individual expertise and creativity, striving with courage and cooperation, to flourish now and into the future. We recognise and celebrate optimism, engagement, achievement and the pursuit of personal excellence.

In all things we aspire the heights through care, opportunity and success.

School context

Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School is a 7-12 coeducational high school established in 1962. We are situated on the traditional lands of the Mulgoa clan of the Dharug people in Emu Plains, at the foot of the Blue Mountains. With an enrolment of 1054 in 2021, we proudly celebrate growth in learning for all our students. Our school community comprises a selective stream for students who excel in the Creative and Performing Arts in addition to local area enrolments, and a Special Education Unit which supports over 50 students with diagnosed hearing impairment and/or intellectual disability. The student cohort consists of 8.4% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and 16.5% of students from a language background other than English.

Our audition-based Creative and Performing Arts program enables students who demonstrate high potential and giftedness in one or more areas of the creative and performing arts to extend their talents beyond the regular curriculum. Our specialist fields include circus arts, creative arts, dance, drama and music. Auditioned students are offered extensive opportunities to perform and exhibit to wide audiences, to connect with the creative and performing arts industry, and to engage with experts in their chosen field. Our extensive extra curricular program, which is open to all students, focuses deeply on areas of specialty to enrich and further develop individual skills.

The school occupies spacious grounds and features a range of facilities including the Nepean Arts Centre, multiple specialised sporting fields, a large agriculture plot, and a wide range of dedicated learning spaces that support our broad curriculum. Our curriculum is tailored to the individual learning interests and needs of our students and is supported by a talented and experienced teaching staff. The Creative and Performing Arts ensemble programs and after school Homework Club enrich the learning opportunities available to all students.

We value our strong parental and community support partnerships, and enjoy positive links with our local primary schools through the Nepean Education Alliance. We have strong connections with our partner High Schools in the Penrith Educational Alliance, with whom we combine for professional learning opportunities, collaborate on educational initiatives, and offer enriched Vocational Educational pathways for students through the Penrith Valley Trade Training Centre. To support student transition beyond school we also partner with tertiary institutions such as Western Sydney University and TAFE.

A comprehensive and authentic situational analysis has informed the development of our Strategic Improvement Plan through consultation with all stakeholders across the Nepean community. Our school is committed to strengthening the literacy and numeracy capabilities of all students, supporting student attendance and engagement, and implementing programs that enhance the wellbeing and sense of belonging for all members of the school community. Our staff are committed to embedding evidence informed pedagogical practices within an evaluative learning culture, thus enabling every student to achieve personal success in learning.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

In order to continuously improve student growth in reading, numeracy and HSC attainment, we will explicitly teach targeted literacy and numeracy capabilities across the curriculum that are informed by evidence-informed pedagogical practices.

Improvement measures

Reading growth

Achieve by year: 2023

An increase in Check-in Assessment mean scaled score for reading in Year 7 and 9 in 2023 compared with Year 7 and 9 in 2022.

Numeracy growth

Achieve by year: 2023

An increase in Check-in Assessment mean scaled score for numeracy in Year 7 and 9 in 2023 compared with Year 7 and 9 in 2022.

HSC achievement - top 3 bands

Achieve by year: 2023

Increase the percentage of HSC course results in the top 3 Bands towards our lower-bound system target.

Aboriginal Student Retention

Achieve by year: 2025

Proportionally contribute to the Penrith Principal Network target of 17.8% uplift of Aboriginal students attaining the HSC in 2025, while maintaining their cultural identity.

Writing in Secondary

Achieve by year: 2025

All teachers understand and explicitly teach literacy to students at all levels of achievement, in all subject areas, with success that can be measured by improved student progress and achievement data.

Initiatives

Reading

We will embed effective, sustainable whole school practices to teach reading skills across the curriculum which are informed by analysis of student data and targeted to individual needs within the context of each curriculum area.

- Consolidate and refine existing practices relating to the effective teaching of reading across the curriculum.
- Implement high impact professional learning across all staff in best-practice teaching of reading skills, and develop school wide processes to systematically implement the teaching of reading skills through the curriculum.
- Evaluation of data will regularly be used to inform: the selection of teaching strategies in relation to student learning needs; the impact of the implemented strategies on student learning; teacher professional learning and school resourcing.

Numeracy

We will embed effective, sustainable whole school practices to teach numeracy skills across the curriculum which are informed by analysis of student data and targeted to individual needs within the context of each curriculum area.

- Consolidate and refine existing practices relating to the effective teaching of numeracy across the curriculum.
- Implement high impact professional learning across all staff in best-practice teaching of numeracy skills, and develop school wide processes to systematically implement the teaching of numeracy through the curriculum.
- Evaluation of data will regularly be used to inform: the selection of teaching strategies in relation to student learning needs; the impact of the implemented strategies on student learning; teacher professional learning and school resourcing.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

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.

Teaching and learning programs across the school show evidence that they are adjusted to address individual student needs, ensuring that all students are challenged and all adjustments lead to improved learning.

School data shows that student progress and achievement is greater than students at statistically similar schools on external measures, and this is consistent with strong student progress and achievement on internal measures. Progress and achievement of equity groups within a school is equivalent to the progress and achievement of all students in the school.

All teachers understand and explicitly teach literacy and numeracy to students at all levels of achievement, in all subject areas, with success that can be measured by improved student progress and achievement data

The school uses embedded and explicit systems that facilitate professional dialogue, collaboration, classroom observation, the modelling of effective practice and the provision of specific and timely feedback between teachers. This drives ongoing, schoolwide improvement in teaching practice and student results

Whole school and/or inter-school relationships provide mentoring and coaching support to ensure the ongoing development and improvement of all teachers, by expert teachers such as those accredited at Highly Accomplished or Lead.

The staff evaluate professional learning activities to identify and systematically promote and implement the most effective strategies to improve teaching and learning. Teachers collaborate with staff in other schools to share and embed good practice

Teaching staff demonstrate and share their expertise within their school and with other schools. All teachers have expert contemporary content knowledge and deploy

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Initiatives

Writing for the HSC

We will embed effective, sustainable whole school practices to teach writing skills across the curriculum which are informed by analysis of student data and targeted to individual needs within the context of each curriculum area.

- Consolidate and refine existing practices relating to the effective teaching of writing skills across the curriculum.
- Implement high impact professional learning across all staff in best-practice teaching of writing skills, and develop school wide processes to systematically implement the teaching of writing through the curriculum.
- Implement high impact professional learning in High Potential and Gifted Education to further support the teaching of writing skills for students who are identified as high potential and gifted, both in the Creative and Performing Arts and across all areas of the curriculum.
- Evaluation of data will regularly be used to inform: the selection of teaching strategies in relation to student learning needs; the impact of the implemented strategies on student learning; teacher professional learning and school resourcing.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

effective teaching strategies. The school trials innovative practices and has processes in place to evaluate, refine and scale success.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: What has been the impact of using consistent, explicit teaching of reading, numeracy and writing skills on student learning?

Data: These data sources will be collected and analysed by relevant teachers, leaders and teams:

- external student performance measures (NAPLAN, Minimum Standards tests, HSC);
- internal student performance measures (check in assessments, internal assessment task data);
- teaching programs;
- classroom observation records;
- student work samples;
- School Excellence Framework assessments.

Analysis: Data is triangulated and analysed to ascertain impact of the implementation of these initiatives on student learning.

Implications: Rigorous analysis of the data to determine impact will guide both ongoing implementation as well as future school planning to provide continuous improvement, ensuring students grow in their learning.

Strategic Direction 2: Evidence informed classroom practice

Purpose

We will embed high impact teaching strategies that improve learning for every student in every classroom by engaging in ongoing professional learning informed by research and school-based evidence.

Improvement measures

Student Engagement in learning

Achieve by year: 2023

Students report an increase in student engagement measures within Tell Them From Me Surveys, specifically in the areas of quality instruction, appropriate challenge, and expectations for success compared with the 2020 school-observed baseline.

School Excellence Framework - Effective Classroom Practice

Achieve by year: 2025

School self-assessment of the element 'Effective classroom practice' indicates improvement from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling

School Excellence Framework - Assessment

Achieve by year: 2025

School self-assessment of the element 'Assessment' indicates improvement from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling.

School Excellence Framework - Teacher learning and development

Achieve by year: 2025

School self-assessment of the element 'Learning and Development' indicates improvement from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling.

Initiatives

Embedding evidence-informed pedagogical practices

Improve effective classroom practice through a focus on high impact teaching strategies that focus on formative assessment practices aligned to the What Works Best research, and informed by the work of educational researchers such as Sharratt, Wiliam, Hattie, and Hopkins.

- Deliver whole-staff professional learning in the embedding of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria across the curriculum, utilising the successful work of existing teacher expertise in this area, and complemented by educational research.
- Deliver high impact professional learning to all teaching staff on the place of feedback in the teaching and learning cycle, and implement school-wide feedback protocols.
- Develop school-wide peer- and self-assessment protocols and deliver professional learning to support the implementation of these protocols.
- Develop and implement school-wide practices to support student goal setting.
- Embed the use of formative data collection and feedback and reflection on teaching effectiveness.

Visible instructional leadership

The leadership team maintains a focus on distributed instructional leadership to sustain a culture of effective, evidence-based teaching and ongoing improvement so that every student makes measurable learning progress and gaps in student achievement decrease.

- The leadership team establishes a consistent framework that fosters a culture of high expectations and differentiated support for staff at all career stages.
- The leadership team establishes a professional learning community which is focused on continuous improvement of teaching and learning.
- The leadership team participates in capacity

Success criteria for this strategic direction

All teachers are committed to identifying, understanding and implementing the most effective explicit teaching methods, with the highest priority given to evidence-based teaching strategies.

Teachers share criteria for student learning through learning intentions and success criteria (LISC). There is evidence of teachers and students using LISC to support learning growth in every classroom. LISC are evident in teaching and learning programs across the curriculum.

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.

Teachers employ evidence-based effective teaching strategies. Effective methods are identified, promoted and modelled, and students' learning improvement is monitored, demonstrating growth.

Teachers routinely review learning with each student both in class and on work submitted, ensuring all students have a clear understanding of how to improve. Student feedback is elicited by teachers and informs their teaching. Student errors and misunderstandings are explicitly addressed until teachers and students are confident that mastery is demonstrated. Feedback from students on their learning derived from assessments informs further teaching.

Formative and summative assessments are used as opportunities for students to receive feedback on their learning. The practice of providing feedback to students supports next steps in teaching and learning, is embedded within teaching and learning practices, and is evident in daily classroom practice.

Consistent school-wide practices for assessment are used to monitor, plan and report on student learning across the curriculum. Formative assessment is integrated into teaching practice in every classroom, confirming that students learn what is taught. Assessment is used flexibly and responsively as an integral part of daily classroom instruction. Formative assessment is

Strategic Direction 2: Evidence informed classroom practice

Initiatives

- development programs and implements principles of evaluative thinking, continually monitors the impact of programs and approaches used by all teachers, and improves practice as required.
- The school uses embedded and explicit systems that facilitate professional dialogue, collaboration, classroom observation, the modelling of effective practice and the provision of specific and timely feedback between teachers. This drives ongoing, school wide improvement in teaching practice and student results.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

practised expertly by teachers.

The staff evaluate professional learning activities to identify and systematically promote and implement the most effective strategies to improve teaching and learning.

Students engage in peer- and self-assessment against co-constructed success criteria which supports student learning, with practices embedded in daily classroom practice and throughout teaching and learning programs across the curriculum.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: What has been the impact of using consistent, explicit teaching protocols with a focus on formative assessment practices had on student engagement in learning?

Data: These data sources will be collected and analysed by relevant teachers, leaders and teams:

- external student performance measures (NAPLAN, Minimum Standards tests, HSC);
- internal student performance measures (check in assessments, internal assessment task data);
- TTFM survey data;
- Sentral wellbeing data;
- Performance and Development Plans
- Evaluations of Professional learning activities
- student work samples;
- teaching programs;
- classroom observation records
- School Excellence Framework assessments.

Analysis: Data is triangulated and analysed to ascertain impact of the implementation of these initiatives on student learning.

Strategic Direction 2: Evidence informed classroom practice

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Implications: Rigorous analysis of the data to determine impact will guide both ongoing implementation as well as future school planning, to provide continuous improvement in evidence informed classroom practice, which results in positive growth in student learning.

Strategic Direction 3: Evaluative learning culture

Purpose

We will implement high impact evaluative thinking routines in order to embed a learning culture that drives evidence informed classroom practice to support student growth and attainment.

Improvement measures

Wellbeing

Achieve by year: 2023

An increase in the proportion of students reporting Expectations for Success, Advocacy, and Sense of Belonging at school toward the lower-bound system target.

School Excellence Framework - Learning Culture

Achieve by year: 2025

SEF assessment of the element 'Learning Culture' indicates improvement from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling.

Attendance >90%

Achieve by year: 2023

Increase the proportion of students attending greater than 90% of the time towards our lower-bound system target.

School Excellence Framework - Data Skills and Use

Achieve by year: 2025

Self Assessment against the SEF in the element of Data Skills and Use improves from Delivering to Sustaining and Growing.

School Excellence Framework - Wellbeing: Behaviour

Achieve by year: 2025

Self Assessment against the SEF in the theme of 'Behaviour' indicates improvement from Sustaining and Growing to Excelling.

Initiatives

Learning Culture

We will establish a community of learners through effective whole school processes that support the wellbeing of all students so they can connect, succeed and thrive.

- Consolidate and refine existing practices that contribute to effective learning environments.
- Implement high impact professional learning across all staff in best-practice approaches to support student wellbeing.
- Evaluation of data will be regularly used to structure student wellbeing programs and identify priorities for interventions to support learning, teacher professional learning, and school resourcing.

Evaluative practice

Staff will engage with cyclic processes that support frequent and meaningful evaluation of the impact of daily classroom practice on student learning.

- Deliver high impact professional learning on action research practices, data literacy, data analysis and data use in teaching for all staff.
- Implement short and frequent evaluative cycles to review the impact of teacher practices on student learning progress and adapt practice in response, evaluating growth over time and monitoring student achievement.
- Expertly use formative and summative student assessment data to reflect on teaching effectiveness and provide individualised, explicit, differentiated and responsive learning opportunities for students.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

The whole school community demonstrates aspirational expectations of learning progress and achievement for all students and is committed to the pursuit of excellence. Effective partnerships in learning with parents and students mean students are motivated to deliver their best and continually improve.

Teachers, parents and the community work together to support consistent and systematic processes that ensure student absences do not impact on learning outcomes.

The school has implemented evidence based change to whole school practices, resulting in measurable improvements in wellbeing and engagement to support learning.

Positive, respectful relationships are evident and widespread among students and staff and promote student wellbeing to ensure optimum conditions for student learning across the whole school.

Teachers use data effectively to evaluate student understanding of lesson content.

All teachers contribute to gathering and analysing data.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Question: What has been the impact of strengthening learning culture and embedding cycles of classroom-based action research on student learning?

Data: These data sources will be collected and analysed by relevant teachers, leaders and teams:

- external student performance measures (NAPLAN, Minimum Standards tests, HSC);
- internal student performance measures (check in assessments, internal assessment task data);
- TTFM survey data;
- Sentral wellbeing data;
- student work samples;

Strategic Direction 3: Evaluative learning culture

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

- teaching and learning programs;
- classroom observation records;
- meeting minutes;
- student and staff focus groups;
- School Excellence Framework assessments.

Analysis: Data is triangulated and analysed to ascertain impact of the implementation of these initiatives on student learning.

Implications: Rigorous analysis of the data to determine impact will guide both ongoing implementation as well as future school planning, to provide continuous improvement in our evaluative learning culture, which results in positive growth in student learning.