

Wooglemai Environmental Education Centre Annual Report



2017



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Introduction

The Annual Report for **2017** is provided to the community of **Wooglemai Environmental Education Centre** as an account of the school's operations and achievements throughout the year.

It provides a detailed account of the progress the school has made to provide high quality educational opportunities for all students, as set out in the school plan. It outlines the findings from self-assessment that reflect the impact of key school strategies for improved learning and the benefit to all students from the expenditure of resources, including equity funding.

Wooglemai EEC has enjoyed yet another busy year, providing unique services in Environmental and Sustainability Education to NSW Department of Education (DoE) schools. We have conducted camps and day visits for schools from a wide geographical area spanning from Central, Western and Southern Sydney, the Illawarra, the Southern Highlands and Tablelands of NSW. We are proud to have provided services for schools with unique circumstances and special needs and to have involved all students from many different backgrounds and needs the opportunity to immerse themselves in nature and environmental education.

This centre's success is largely a result of the dedicated staff who continually provide exciting, highly educational and safe experiences that supplement in-school programs. Adding to this, we have a large community of schools who visit Wooglemai EEC each year as they seek quality, practical learning experiences for their students. We can be proud of their continuous visitation to our centre.

Our self assessment involving all staff at Wooglemai EEC identified key achievements in 2017 including:

- Visitations by 7322 students for various day and residential sustainability, leadership and outdoor education programs.
- Continued development of the website www.wooglemaieec.com.au. including the features such as the Calendar and program information sheets (accessible by visiting staff through Google drive). A new booking sheet has been implemented in response to LMBR. These features have assisted schools to facilitate booking dates and have made planning for excursions much easier. An effort has been made to guide teachers and students to our online resources and links pages to enhance student outcomes when they visit Wooglemai EEC.
- Development and delivery of student action camps for a number of primary and high school groups including Cobbitty PS, Woodland Road PS and Briar Road PS.
- Incursions by WEEC staff to a variety of schools undertaking sustainability/ environmental programs including Burrawang PS, Harcourt Public School and Ambarvale HS.
- Teacher Professional Learning conducted by Wooglemai EEC in 2017 included . . .
RG02457 Depth Studies for new Stage 6 Science Syllabus
- Coordinated and ran EZEC annual conference. This required a great deal of effort and forward planning to ensure the successful running of the conference.
- SEEDS network continued to provide professional learning and collegial sharing for Wollondilly Network teachers in the area of Sustainability

EZEC Community continued to provide professional learning and collegial sharing for WEEC teaching staff in the area of Sustainability. With staff attending TPLs in Aboriginal Education, School planning and the new Stage 6 Science Syllabus.

Luke Willcocks

Relieving Principal

School contact details

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School background

School vision statement

Our motto: Experiences for today, thoughts and actions for tomorrow.

Our vision: Learning and working together for a more sustainable world.

WEEC provides visiting students with “hands on” quality student-centred learning experiences that build on their normal classroom lessons and experiences.

We aim to ensure our students become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed global citizens and leaders.

Our core purpose is to assist students to make sense of their changing world (with specific regard to sustainability issues) and to realise that we are all capable of contributing to positive changes in our families, communities and society.

EZEC vision: EZECs will provide educational experiences and opportunities that will engage and motivate all students to learn, discover and critically analyse their knowledge, to equip them to become informed citizens of the future who are socially, environmentally and culturally aware.

School context

Wooglemai Environmental Education Centre (WEEC) is one of twenty five Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC) operated by the NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC). WEEC actively collaborates across this network to set directions and develop the organisation for environmental and sustainability education.

WEEC programs are designed to address primary and secondary key learning areas including fieldwork and sustainability education as a cross-curriculum priority. The centre also provides for residential recreational based camps (including outdoor activities such as kayaking, archery and high ropes challenges) designed to improve social outcomes and personal development of students.

WEEC is located at Oakdale, adjacent to Nattai National Park and the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. The centre is a 16 ha residential camp site catering for 7,500 students K–12 pa. As well as programs at Wooglemai, WEEC uses other sites, works in schools and presents at education events. Schools using the services of WEEC are drawn primarily from the Illawarra, Southern Highlands and Metropolitan South West areas.

Teachers booking WEEC are offered support (including phone conversations, pre-excursion visits, written confirmation, program advice and online support via the WEEC website) to ensure the service we provide meets their needs. Communication covers logistics, special needs of students, syllabus links, learning experiences, resources and risk assessments.

WEEC caters for Aboriginal students and/or students from areas of socio-economic disadvantage. WEEC also offers differentiated learning experiences for schools and communities of schools to provide for gifted and talented, intellectual and physical disadvantage and students at risk of disengagement.

NSW DEC has a lease with Guntawang Catholic Youth Centres Incorporated for exclusive use of the Wooglemai site during school terms.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

This section of the Annual Report outlines the findings from self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework, school achievements and the next steps to be pursued.

This year, our school undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework. The framework supports public schools throughout NSW in the pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of high quality practice across the three domains of Learning, Teaching and Leading.

As an EEC, we are significantly different to mainstream school and so the way the School Excellence Framework is used

is different and needs to be altered to our unique educational setting. The framework is extremely beneficial to the ongoing planning and evaluation of Wooglemai EEC, though it has some barriers for our circumstance. EZECs are continually working together to find the best way it can be used to help better service our intended outcomes.

Learning

In the domain of Learning, our Strategic Direction focused on the educational experiences and opportunities that our centre could provide to engage and motivate students to become informed and aware global citizens. The centre has primarily focused on the presentation of the various Curriculums (particularly Science, Geography and History) through the delivery of authentic, engaging, student-centred programs. WEEC teaching staff continued to review existing programs and explore and develop new activities and programs to align with the BOSTES syllabus. Staff were involved in a range of professional collaboration and learning to support their delivery of the syllabus.

Teaching

In the domain of Teaching, our focus has been on teacher learning and development in order to provide a consistent high standard of educational practice. The setting of goals through individual PDPs was effective in providing teachers direction in their professional learning. A range of professional learning events have been used to develop staff skills and ensure the best possible outcomes for students. Staff continue to align teaching and learning with New South Wales Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum and with the NESA teaching standards. Staff are accredited at proficient by NESA and will begin their maintenance cycle.

Leading

In the domain of Leading, our school has focused being leaders for our CoS in the provision of Sustainability and Environmental Education. We have lead initiatives such as environmental audits and NADOC day celebrations in a number of schools and imbed sustainability and Aboriginal Education in all lessons. We also have a rich history of developing and running student leadership programs. We have focused on establishing meaningful partnerships to deliver all teaching and learning programs and endeavour to provide leadership and assistance to a wide range of schools, both teachers and students.

Our self-assessment process will assist the school to refine our school plan, leading to further improvements in the delivery of education to our students.

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/school-excellence-and-accountability/sef-evidence-guide>

Strategic Direction 1

Improving learning outcomes for all students through consistent high standard educational practice.

Purpose

To provide educational experiences and opportunities that will engage and motivate all students to learn, discover and critically analyse their knowledge, to equip them to become informed citizens of the future who are socially, environmentally and culturally aware.

Overall summary of progress

We have continued to critically evaluate our programs and respond to school's curriculum needs.

We consulted with visiting teachers (both before and during visits) on expectations for Stage 6 Biology students. Some teachers were content with the program whilst others hoped for higher application of the fieldwork methodologies to a 'real' problem. We developed a Depth Study that incorporates online pre and post visit activities, analysing data and applying results to a scenario in order to provide a scaffold for an individual inquiry based report. We have developed several inquiry questions for Module 3 and Module 4 of the Biology Syllabus.

We ran a TPL course for local teachers and Wooglemai staff on Depth Studies. This was attended by 11 teachers and the feedback was positive. Students are expected to experience greater relevance through seeing the scientific methods and data gathering they performed as relevant to allow problem solving, higher order thinking and to providing solutions to the inquiry based question they were presented with or have had time to develop.

Future directions will include showcasing of a range of successful student work to visiting teachers in order to demonstrate the valuable outcomes as a result of holistic engagement in authentic scenario-based fieldwork program.

A second focus has been on Stage 2 Geography. We developed a program titled "Wally's Diary" for Stage 2 as part of the new Geography syllabus. This program was developed with considerable collaboration with HSIE consultants and staff within the EZEC network, including a number of other EECs who are developing similar programs. Wally's Diary was trialed during 2017 and was enjoyed by both students and teachers, students were given hands on experiences while completing a series of tasks related to local habitats and geography.

The new "Spring into Sustainability" program for students across Stage 2 – 4 has been an increasing focus for visiting schools in 2017. Visiting staff have shown increasing enthusiasm for their students becoming involved in scientific investigation method related to sustainability and the environment.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Positive evaluation by visiting schools of pre and post visit material.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anecdotal feedback from teachers suggests strong interest in the program (almost all visiting teachers)• 66% pre-reading completed• 33% whole program implementation• Student work samples demonstrate positive comprehension and application of key concepts
Increase in number of students actively engaging in sustainability programs	\$2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional programs created to fulfil curriculum requirements that connect students to the environment (ie Wally's Diary Stage 2 Geography)• Student projects developed in schools following visitation Woodland Road PS, Cobbitty PS.

Next Steps

- Extend new programs to more schools through online advertising (SchoolBiz, Wooglemai website)
- Further develop, incorporate and evaluate new Stage 6 science Depth Studies.
- Continual evaluation and editing of programs through teacher responses to trials of new programs

- Continued support to schools for sustainability projects
- WEEC staff visit schools to assist with implementation of sustainability projects

Strategic Direction 2

Building stronger partnerships to achieve systems improvement

Purpose

To build strong partnerships that will provide a range of varying expertise to support and enable systems to improve the quality of outcomes. Working collaboratively enhances organisational and individual health and well-being. Teaching staff in EZEC's require collaboration overcome geographical and professional isolation.

Overall summary of progress

We have continued to evolve and improve learning outcomes through strengthening our partnerships in 2017.

The EZEC Network continues to share professional practice and work together to create new programs and improve existing ones. EZEC has implemented a "Collaborative Practice across a Community of Schools". Face to face meetings at residential or day conferences, through staff visitation at other EECs, via video conference or phone links has provided continued collaboration that improves how staff perform, the content and quality of the excursion programs we offer and learning outcomes for students.

WEEC organised and coordinated the 2017 NSW EZEC Annual Conference. This was a 3 day residential professional learning event for the 75 staff of the state's Environmental and Zoo Education Centre teaching principals and teachers. Considerable time was dedicated to organizing the venue, accommodation, meals, speakers, presenters, workshops, transport and other logistics involved with such a large event. The event is the most important professional learning in each calendar year for our EZEC group and took place from 31 January to 2 February 2017. The EZEC conference was a successful event with positive feedback from participants.

WEEC partners with schools from the Ultimo School Area and in particular the Wollondilly Network of Schools. There is significant uptake of WEEC programs and excursions by local schools as a result of networking through Principals meetings, SEEDS meetings, emails and direct contact.

We have continued our partnership with Wingecarribee Council, participating in the Wingecarribee Schools Environment Day and providing a link to local schools through our SEEDs newsletters.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
SEEDS attendance improved.	\$1500	Our partnership with the Wollondilly school network has provided the opportunity for sustainability ideas to be exchanged through a SEEDs newsletter.
Significant correlation between visitation and network participation.		12 visits were from Wollondilly network schools out of 75 total visits by school (day and overnight visits). This represents 16% of our total visitations.
Visiting Teacher surveys show positive feedback based around program outcomes.		Feedback is overwhelmingly positive around program outcomes. WEEC received a rating of 4.8 out of 5 for satisfaction.
Improvements in centre utilisation—return visits as well as overall schools accessing WEEC services.		Visitation remains stable, however there has been a slight decline in visitation due to site facilities (number of beds in dorms). We continue to receive a high number of return bookings.

Next Steps

- Continued collaboration with EZEC staff through planning days to improve diversity and quality of programs through effectivenessharing
- Collaboration with visiting school staff in relation to programs, pedagogy, etc Stage 6 Biology
- Maintain SEEDs collaboration through Newsletters and other means to improve learning outcomes in schools

Strategic Direction 3

Fostering excellence in positive values and student leadership

Purpose

To develop and facilitate student social skill programs that enable successful peer support and student leadership at school level, effective transition to high school, specialist programs for Aboriginal students, those at risk of disengaging with school and sustainability ambassador/ leadership programs for our Youth Environmental Network.

Overall summary of progress

A number of leadership programs were conducted with Briar Road Community of Schools, Woodland Road and Oakdale PS. WEEC staff worked closely in consultation with visiting school staff to deliver programs based on team and personal challenges that developed a student's ability to use logic, creative thinking, perseverance, self-regulation, team spirit and helped them to develop resilience.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
YEN successfully endorsed (student attendance/ school numbers).		
Leadership camps successfully endorsed (student numbers).	\$1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continued bookings of student leadership day visits and transition to high school daysStudent Leadership camps run with Woodland Road and Oakdale PS

Next Steps

- Develop Indigenous Leadership Program with Briar Rd PS and their COS
- Liaise with Brewongle EEC as to the strengths of their Indigenous Leaders program.
- Design and promote leadership camps for school leaders in both HS and primary schools
- Continue promotion and development of our leadership programs.

Student information

Wooglemai EEC has no permanent student enrolments. Student numbers are dependent on school requests for visitation to the Wooglemai site for day visits and camps, on requests for WEEC staff to visit schools or other sites or for requests for our staff to run special events and workshops in a variety of locations.

WEEC hosted 7322 students in 2017 for a range of day and overnight experiences both onsite and offsite.

In 2017 Wooglemai EEC staff allocated their time to:

1. Overnight camps – 60 days (two or three day experiences onsite at Wooglemai EEC)
2. Single day visits – 58 days (single days visits to Wooglemai EEC)
3. Offsite day experiences – 7 days (teaching days at other schools or venues)
4. Principals meetings – 3 days (EZEC or Wollondilly Network)
5. LMBR training – 11 days SAM, 6 Days Principal (offsite training)
6. Professional Development – 12 days (First Aid, EZEC TPL and Conference, Child Protection etc)
7. Weekend teaching programs – 3 days
8. Cancellations due to wet weather occurred on 7 days
9. Schools cancelling camps – 7 days (some of these days were not rebooked due to late notice from schools. Reasons for cancellations were LMBR rollover and teachers on leave)

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	0
Assistant Principal(s)	0
Head Teacher(s)	0
Classroom Teacher(s)	1
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Learning & Support Teacher(s)	0
Teacher Librarian	0
Teacher of ESL	0
School Counsellor	0
School Administration & Support Staff	1.19
Other Positions	0

*Full Time Equivalent

No staff members identify as being Aboriginal or Torres

Strait Islander background.

Teacher qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	100
Postgraduate degree	0

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

Both WEEC teachers commenced service prior to the new scheme for teacher accreditation taking effect. WEEC staff completed the mandatory training in Child Protection, Code of Conduct and First Aid/ CPR and Anaphylaxis in 2017.

WEEC staff also enrolled in a range of courses in line with their own Professional Development plans including Australian Botanic Garden Aboriginal heritage tour, NSW EZEC Annual Conference and T4 Principal's Conference as well as the Wollondilly Network Principal's Conferences.

WEEC staff also ran professional learning courses (in Stage 6 Depth Studies) for beginning and experienced teaching staff in 2017.

Financial information (for schools using both OASIS and SAP/SALM)

Financial information

The three financial summary tables cover 13 months (from 1 December 2016 to 31 December 2017).

The financial summary consists of school income broken down by funding source and is derived from the school Annual Financial Statement.

Wooglemai EEC is continuing to purchase teaching resources for programs. Activities such as archery, ropes and kayaking constantly require equipment to be safety checked and replaced when needed.

Receipts	\$
Balance brought forward	93,369
Global funds	78,330
Tied funds	2,124
School & community sources	32,674
Interest	906
Trust receipts	0
Canteen	0
Total Receipts	114,034
Payments	
Teaching & learning	
Key Learning Areas	18,641
Excursions	0
Extracurricular dissections	10,806
Library	0
Training & Development	0
Tied Funds Payments	4,663
Short Term Relief	2,419
Administration & Office	56,892
Canteen Payments	0
Utilities	3,666
Maintenance	17,877
Trust Payments	0
Capital Programs	0
Total Payments	114,964
Balance carried forward	92,439

	2017 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	0
Revenue	140,902
Appropriation	114,567
Sale of Goods and Services	1,298
Grants and Contributions	24,763
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	274
Expenses	-41,281
Recurrent Expenses	-41,281
Employee Related	-18,403
Operating Expenses	-22,878
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	99,620
Balance Carried Forward	99,620

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

The information provided in the financial summary includes reporting from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2017.

The Opening balance for the 2017 school financial year is displayed in the OASIS table as Balance brought forward. The financial summary table for the year ended 31 December 2017 shows the Opening balance as \$0.00 because the Opening balance for the 2017 school financial year is reported in the OASIS table (as Balance brought forward).

The amount displayed in the Appropriation category of the financial summary table is drawn from the Balance carried forward shown in the OASIS table and includes any financial transactions in SAP the school has undertaken since migration from OASIS to SAP/SALM. For this reason the amount shown for Appropriation will not equal the OASIS Balance carried forward amount.

Financial summary equity funding

The equity funding data is the main component of the 'Appropriation' section of the financial summary above.

	2017 Actual (\$)
Base Total	381,379
Base Per Capita	9,170
Base Location	324
Other Base	371,886
Equity Total	0
Equity Aboriginal	0
Equity Socio economic	0
Equity Language	0
Equity Disability	0
Targeted Total	0
Other Total	0
Grand Total	381,379

Figures presented in this report may be subject to rounding so may not reconcile exactly with the bottom line totals, which are calculated without any rounding.

A full copy of the school's financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the parent and/or community groups. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

WEEC surveys a random sample of its school clients each year to gauge the opinions of both students and teachers about our service.

Teacher surveys include questions around . . .

- Relevance of excursion activities to in school programs
- Meeting expected teaching program outcomes
- Organisation of program/timetable for the visit
- Student response to program/activities
- WEEC staff management of visiting students
- WEEC staff focus on student welfare
- WEEC staff assistance to visiting teachers
- Standard of Centre facilities, buildings, accommodation, etc.
- Overall rating of Wooglemai E.E.C. service

Overwhelmingly visiting staff reported positively on all aspects of the performance of WEEC staff and the quality of the teaching programs conducted.

Full details of these survey results can be obtained by contacting the EEC.

Student surveys included questions around their engagement in and enjoyment of WEEC programs, and the WEEC teacher performance in relation to quality teaching practice, student welfare, etc.

These surveys are continually evaluated in order to make modifications to teaching programs to ensure the best possible outcomes for students.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

WEEC has an established Aboriginal Education policy. Both WEEC teaching staff have completed the 8 Ways Aboriginal Education training.

Wooglemai has assisted in the implementation of the EZEC Reconciliation Action Plan.

Wooglemai EEC staff attended both Harcourt and Bonnyrigg Public Schools for NAIDOC Day celebrations delivering programs to students K–6.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

WEEC has an established Multicultural Education and Anti-racism policy. The centre recognises that multicultural education permeates all curriculum areas. This ensures that students are given the opportunity to develop knowledge and attitudes required in a modern and culturally diverse society.