

2010 Annual School Report Red Hill Environmental Education Centre

NSW Public Schools – Leading the way



Messages

Principal's message

Red Hill Environmental Education Centre provides curriculum based programs for students from Kindergarten to Year 12. Our program spread includes Environmental Education, both built and natural; Environmental Sustainability; Climate Change and Aboriginal Education. Our quality teaching / learning programs are based on Kindergarten to Year 12 Board of Studies Syllabus outcomes and are developed and tailored to support outcomes implemented in schools.

In 2010 we have continued our program of change and innovation; the further redevelopment of well-loved and established programs, as well as the development of new and innovative programs for Kindergarten through to Year 12, has been our focus. A particularly innovative program for 2010 and beyond is our "Student Forums – Sustainability in Action" which involved years 8 – 10 students from local schools in using parliamentary debating skills to address the local issue of 'Biodiversity in Agriculture' at the Mid Western Regional Council Chambers and the wider issue of 'Climate Change', at Parliament House in Sydney. This program will involve other Western Region students and schools in 2011 and beyond.

Red Hill Environmental Education Centre has continued its strong association with the Cudgegong Learning Community. CLC schools have supported '2010, The Year of Learning for Sustainability' through programs such as 'Climate Clever' and the implementation of School Environmental Management Plans.

As Principal I am fortunate to have the support of talented and dedicated teaching and administration staff as well as an active Red Hill Management Committee. New faces on our Management Committee include

Margie Field, Sue Fuller and Lee Wilson. The hard work and dedication of all involved with Red Hill ensures that the Centre continues to thrive and grow.

The grounds of Red Hill continue to look a picture; this is due to our wonderful team which has worked tirelessly to maintain it. A new addition to our grounds in 2010 is the shade house and teaching spaces kindly supported by Mid Western Regional Council and Shireen Murphy, the Council's Manager for the Environment.

In 2011 our immediate priority will be the continued development of K – 12 programs; the development of regional sustainability programs and the implementation of programs to support our local Aboriginal students. This is reflected in the three year planning cycle 2009-2011.

I certify that the information in this report is the result of a rigorous school self-evaluation process and is a balanced and genuine account of the school's achievements and areas for development.

Christine Cooke

School context

Red Hill Environmental Education Centre is on the site of the original school built in 1892 in the gold heritage town of Gulgong. Gulgong is nestled on the western edge of the Great Dividing Range in Wiradjuri Country. The Centre is within a forty minute drive of nature reserves, state forests, national parks, creeks and rivers, all of which are utilised for our natural environment programs. The town provides numerous opportunities for the study of our built environment.

Red Hill belongs to a series of interlocking networks ranging from the Cudgegong Learning Community comprising twenty-two schools in our immediate area; the Dubbo Principal's grouping; the state wide Environmental Education network of twenty-

three Centres and the state primary and high schools that make up Western Region. These networks enable Red Hill Environmental Education Centre to influence student outcomes, local School Environmental Management Plans and both regional and state environmental direction.

Staff information

Red Hill Environmental Education Centre is ably supported by dedicated teachers, both permanent and casual; a School Administration Manager and casual SAS staff; a General Assistant and casual GA staff who maintain the extensive grounds and cleaning staff who ensure that the facilities are always ready to receive our visiting students.

Staff establishment

Position	Number
Principal	1
Classroom Teacher	1
School Administration Manager	1
Total	3

There are no Indigenous staff members working at Red Hill.

Teacher qualifications

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

Qualifications	% of staff
Degree or Diploma	100%
Postgraduate	N/A

Professional Learning

In 2010 we continued to train two School Administration Staff to be proficient in Red Hill administrative duties. We will continue this program in 2011.

Teaching staff have attended a range of courses and conferences including:

- the Western Region Principal's Conference;
- the Western Region Principal's Conference – Improvement by Design;
- the NSW Environmental Education Conference;
- the NSW Environmental Education Principal's Conference;
- the Western Region Environmental Education Conference;
- Aboriginal Education Policy training;
- Flat Water Canoe Instructor's Course;
- the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People;
- Cudgegong Learning Community Professional Development;
- CPR and Senior First Aid Training;
- Occupational Health and Safety Training;
- David Langford – Plan, Do, Study, Act

Student information

Students supported through Red Hill Environmental Education Centre range from Kindergarten to Year 12. Programs have been developed to provide for the educational needs of students at the Red Hill site, in National Parks and State Forests, or outreached to schools.

Attendance Profile

Attendance profile	2009	2010
Number of student days	71	109
Average attendance	43	31
Total attendance	3024	3362
Schools serviced by the Centre	67	34
Other groups using the Centre	28	19



Financial summary

This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Date of financial summary: 30/11/2010

Income \$

Balance brought forward	123 857.55
Global funds	43 849.45
Tied funds	13 488.23
School & community sources	55 533.34
Interest	4 992.80
Trust receipts	0.00
Canteen	0.00
Total income	241 721.37

Expenditure

Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	7 613.11
Excursions	21 967.96
Extracurricular dissections	149.28
Library	581.87
Training & development	238.64
Tied funds	24 031.57
Casual relief teachers	0.00
Administration & office	48 686.66
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	12 696.69
Maintenance	18 299.62
Trust accounts	198.00
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	134 463.40
Balance carried forward	107 257.97

A full copy of the school's 2010 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2010

Achievements

Red Hill Environmental Education Centre is undergoing a program of restoration and refurbishment. In 2010 our achievements include:

- further development of the frog pond as a teaching resource and the associated stage 2 program "Frogs Alive";
- further redevelopment of the sensory gardens;
- the development of a perfumed garden;
- the redevelopment of the citrus garden;
- the redevelopment of the spiral garden;
- the installation of a shade house and associated teaching space;
- the continued upgrading of the accommodation and facilities offered to visiting teachers and students;
- the further development of program resources;
- the redevelopment of the school house;
- the implementation of a program of community action through the Red Hill Management Team.



Significant programs and initiatives

Significant new programs and initiatives developed in 2010 include:

- the implementation of School Environmental Management Plans in eight Cudgegong Learning Community Schools;
- the development of a pilot program for 'Sustainability in Action - Student Forums' for stage 5 students;
- the development of a stage 4 / 5 team building program that use current technology;
- the upgrading of canoeing safety equipment for staff and students; improvements to and formalisation of the stage 6 Science and Biology programs;
- the development of 'Our Families' a stage one program that explores families and their heritage using photography;
- the development of a stage 5 program that explores local involvement in WW1 and WW11;
- for stage 2, the development of 'A Red Hill Feast', a program that explores the importance of garden to table; 'A Bug's Tale', an environmental program that introduces the wonders of microscopes to younger students and 'National Parks', a program that explores the many reasons why we should protect our National Parks;
- significant improvements to our stage 2 / 3 Time and Change program.

Aboriginal education

Our achievements in Aboriginal Education in 2010 are addressed in “Progress on 2010 Targets – Target 1”.

Respect and responsibility

All programs offered at Red Hill recognise Aboriginal custodianship of the land and foster respect for, and understanding of, traditional owners and their connection to Country.

All schools accessing Red Hill built and natural environment programs are taught the importance of respect for the sites we visit and their responsibility to ensure that similar sites in their local area are protected for future generations.

Through programs promoting the concept of sustainability, Red Hill staff seeks to foster understanding of, and responsibility for, sustainable practices now and in the future.

Progress on 2010 targets

Target 1

All schools in the Cudgegong Learning Community and local Wiradjuri Elders consulted about the development of Red Hill programs for Aboriginal students.

Our achievements include:

- hosting a fully funded Aboriginal Education Policy workshop for Cudgegong Learning Community Principals and teachers;
- linking Cudgegong Learning Community Schools with the Western Region Aboriginal Education Team;
- providing information to schools through the WRAET team about ‘Eight Ways’, Wiradjuri Language courses and Aboriginal Cultural courses;

- providing information to schools about the development of School Aboriginal Education Teams.
- hosting a fully funded day for Cudgegong Learning Community schools, the WRAET team and local Aboriginal groups to discuss their school needs and how Red Hill can support CLC Aboriginal students and programs;
- developing an agreed set of outcomes for the direction of Red Hill for 2011 and beyond.



Target 2

All Stage 4, 5, 6 programs to be evaluated in 2010

Our achievements include:

- reviewing all stage 4, 5 and 6 programs;
- involving Cudgegong Learning Community schools in the review;
- staff training to support program development;
- upgrading resources and equipment;

- employing staff to write programs;
- increasing the spread of programs across KLAs;
- linking program outcomes to the National Curriculum.

Target 3

Begin to develop strategies to support the incorporation of Connected Classroom technology in Red Hill programs.

The installation of a Connected Classroom at Red Hill in late 2009 has allowed us to implement programs previously unachievable.

Students from many schools in the Sydney Regions have for some years come together to debate sustainability issues. This has been achieved through training days, where students are brought together to learn about sustainability, develop skills in parliamentary debating and begin writing speeches to be delivered at a parliamentary forum at Parliament House in Sydney.

Through Connected Classrooms, this program is now available to Western Region students. In 2010, 35 students were involved in a pilot program that provided regional students with the same advantages as their Sydney counterparts. Students came together to develop their skills through Connected Classroom forums. They developed and practiced their skills at local Council Chambers. A second Connected Classroom forum program was then developed to support the students debating in Parliament House in Sydney.

Our teachers and students rated this program as an outstanding success. Comments from our Regional Director, Carole McDiarmid includedthe level of engagement and enthusiasm displayed by the thirty five students from the five participating schools is outstanding....

We look forward to bring many more Western Region students together, through Connected Classrooms, to debate sustainability issues in 2011.



Key evaluations

It is a requirement for all NSW public schools to conduct at least two annual evaluations – one related to educational and management practice and the other related to curriculum. In 2010 Red Hill EEC carried out evaluations of all K-12 Teaching and Learning Programs and Occupational Health and Safety.

Educational and management practice

Occupational Health and Safety

Because of the unique nature of Red Hill EEC, it has been necessary to undertake a complete review of all OHS policies and procedures. The following changes and improvements have been undertaken:

- Two staff members attended and completed the 4 day OHS course.
- OHS Commitment Statement was reviewed and updated.
- OHS Self-Assessment Tool was completed.
- OHS Management Action Plan was written and a Table of Evidence developed.

- Hazard Identification and Workplace Inspection processes were reviewed and upgraded.
- Emergency Management Plans were again reviewed and entered onto the DET 'Incase of Emergency' system.
- Associated policies were reviewed and upgraded.
- Where necessary, new policies were written, e.g. Canoeing Policy.
- Risk Assessments were reviewed and upgraded.
- All registers were reviewed and upgraded.
- Copies of Maintenance Registers have been placed in the General Assistant's shed.
- Sign in systems have been reviewed and upgraded.
- An OHS information book has been developed for staff visiting on overnight excursions.
- An OHS board has been placed in the general office area.
- Induction and Risk Assessment Booklets have been developed for new staff.
- A program of review of all aspects of OHS has been formalised.



Curriculum

K-12 Teaching and Learning Programs

The process of reviewing and redeveloping K-6 programs begun in 2009 has continued in 2010. Changes and initiatives include:

- employing additional staff to write programs;
- the development of processes to support casual teachers delivering unfamiliar programs, this includes the development of a 'Teacher's Program Handbooks';
- the development and trialling of new programs;
- the upgrading of all resources.

7 – 12 Teaching and Learning Programs

Evaluation of our 7 – 12 programs resulted in the following changes and initiatives:

- Staff from local high and central schools involved in a review of current programs and the development of new programs.
- 7 – 12 programs linked to the National Curriculum.
- Additional staff employed to write programs.
- Processes to support casual teachers delivering unfamiliar programs developed; this includes the development of a 'Teacher's Program Handbook'.
- New programs trialled and developed.
- All resources upgraded.

Student and teacher satisfaction

All programs at Red Hill are individually evaluated by Red Hill staff at weekly staff meetings and by participating schools through written formal evaluations after each program has been completed. Schools often include student evaluation information with their reports. Evaluations are collated and reviewed each semester. Program presentation, content and teaching resources are then further improved and / or upgraded.

Evaluation of our 2010 programs resulted in:

- most schools returning evaluations;
- all schools responding positively to Red Hill programs;
- most schools giving Red Hill programs an overall rating of excellent or very good;
- a small number of schools rating Red Hill programs as good;
- no school being dissatisfied with the overall programs;
- a small number of schools suggesting improvements to use of resources;
- some schools suggesting new ideas to enhance existing programs.

School development 2009 – 2011

Targets for 2011

Target 1

Local Aboriginal stakeholders and schools in the Cudgegong Learning Community involved in the development of Red Hill programs for Aboriginal students.

Programs developed and trialled.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- working towards a set of agreed program outcomes and timeline for implementation;
- developing staged based programs that support the educational outcomes and cultural aspirations of Aboriginal students;
- involving Aboriginal students and local groups in the development of Red Hill resources for teaching and learning programs, including native food gardens and cultural activities.

Program trials:

- Stages 1 – 3 (2011)
- Stages 4 – 6 (2012)

Our success will be measured by:

- the number of Cudgegong Learning Community schools involved in supporting programs;
- the number of Aboriginal students involved in trialling the program;
- the involvement of local Aboriginal groups in program development and trials;
- the success of the programs trialled.

Target 2

Develop long term environmental projects for stages 3, 4, 5.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

The further development of 'Sustainability in Action, Student Forums' for stage 5 students by:

- presentation of a workshop at the EE Conference in February;
- presentation of a workshop at the Western Region Principal's Conference in March;

- formalising the program;
- up loading to the website;
- providing professional learning for teachers;
- providing Connected Classroom programs for staff and students;
- facilitating a Mudgee Forum in term 2;
- supporting other Regional Forums in term 3;
- facilitating a Sydney Forum in November.

The development of a long term project for stage 5 students that will involve them in protecting the ground water fed wetlands known as 'The Drip' by:

- involving all stakeholders including CMA, Local Aboriginal Groups and the mines;
- develop the program with CSU;
- setting up base line data for water biodiversity, waste, geology;
- setting up a program of ongoing student monitoring of the site.

Work with Taronga Park Zoo to develop an endangered species program for stage 3 students.

Our success will be measured by:

- the numbers of schools involved in the 'Sustainability Forums';
- the success of the Forums;
- the involvement of stakeholders in the development of the stage 3 'Endangered Species' program and the stage 5 program for 'The Drip'.

Target 3

By the end of 2011, 60% of Cudgegong Learning Community Schools will have active School Environmental Management Plans.

Strategies to achieve this target include:

- supporting the development of active SEMP's in CLC schools;
- providing one day's funding to release teachers to assist with the development of SEMP's;
- providing two days of Red Hill staff time to support SEMP development;
- assisting with the setting up of committees;
- assisting with the auditing of energy, water, waste and biodiversity;
- assisting with the format and writing of SEMP;
- providing resources and expertise to schools to support SEMP development.

Our success will be measured by:

- the number of active SEMP's in CLC.



About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

Christine Cooke Principal

Kate Seis SAM

Cindy Picton Teacher / Red Hill Management Committee

Margaretta Teacher / Field Red Hill Management Committee

Lee Wilson Teacher / Red Hill Management Committee

School contact information

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Parents can find out more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the reports and have the opportunity to provide feedback about these reports at:

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/asr>

