

Longneck Lagoon Environmental Education Centre

Annual Report



2016



LONGNECK LAGOON
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTRE

5690

Introduction

The Annual Report for 2016 is provided to the community of **Longneck Lagoon 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.

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Principal

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Message from the Principal

I would like to acknowledge the Darug people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land and waterways on which Longneck Lagoon EEC is situated. Longneck Lagoon Environmental Education Centre (EEC) has a long tradition of developing and delivering quality sustainability education programs for primary, secondary, tertiary students and their teachers. Ecology programs for all ages are supported by a range of leadership and gifted and talented programs focusing on a range of key learning areas. Partnerships have been forged with National Parks and Wildlife Service, other Environmental Education Centres and schools in order to enhance the learning. Longneck Lagoon EEC continues to reach beyond the local geographical borders via participation in events such as the Youth Eco Summit. The dedicated permanent and casual staff members bring a diverse range of highly valued skills to the Centre. The development of new programs that support current NSW Syllabus ensure that Longneck Lagoon EEC continues to play a key role in delivering sustainability and environmental education for students and teachers in the Greater Sydney area and beyond. During 2016, Longneck Lagoon EEC has improved its on-line presence by strategic use of social media. The professional development of Longneck Lagoon EEC staff and for visiting teachers continues to be a focus for development and delivery. I would like to thank the permanent and casual staff of Longneck Lagoon EEC for the magnificent work they do and thank all the students, teachers and parents that supported the Centre by attending excursions, events and school visits during 2016.

School background

School vision statement

Longneck Lagoon Environmental Education Centre Mission Statement

Longneck Lagoon Environmental Education Centre (LLEEC) provides experiences and resources to educate, inspire and engage students and the wider community with their world. With a focus on the natural environment and cultural heritage, students develop the knowledge, skills, values, capabilities and motivation to live more sustainably in the 21st Century.

Longneck Lagoon EEC is one of 25 Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC) across New South Wales and the network collaborates for a range of purposes.

EZEC Mission Statement

Strong partnerships for a sustainable future.

EZEC Vision

To support NSW Public Schools to implement sustainability education through meaningful learning experiences in and about the natural, built and cultural environments. We strive to be leaders in providing students with the skills, values and opportunities to act as responsible citizens.

School context

LLEEC is located in Scheyville National Park, 12 kilometres north of Windsor. The National Park comprises 952 hectares of Cumberland Plain Woodland, surrounding a freshwater lagoon.

Scheyville National Park has a significant Aboriginal and European heritage. Aboriginal middens and camp sites can be found around the lagoon. European history dates back to 1794 when the area formed part of the Nelson Common. Impacts from this land use can be observed around the Longneck Lagoon catchment.

LLEEC offers a range of high quality curriculum based excursions and school visits for students K–12. Student leadership skills are developed through team building and leadership programs.

A number of enrichment programs are offered to primary and secondary students across the Western Sydney metropolitan area.

Educational programs are also delivered to students from NSW TAFE.

A range of teacher professional learning is offered for teaching staff through dedicated teacher professional learning programs and staff meetings.

LLEEC supports local school communities through the development and provision of resources and activities that build the capacity of schools for a sustainable future.

LLEEC engages with a wide range of collaborative partnerships with tertiary institutions, government and non-government organisations with the aim of developing and delivering quality educational programs for students and teaching staff.

Self-assessment and school achievement

Self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework

For all schools (except those participating in external validation processes):

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. 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.

This year, staff from Longneck Lagoon Environmental Education Centre undertook self-assessment using the School Excellence Framework during a series of staff meetings. Staff examined the current school plan and current practices against the three domains of the school excellence framework.

Within the domain of Learning, a strong focus on curriculum and learning along with a focus on wellbeing has been reflected in a school culture that promotes high expectations across the school. A diversified and enriched teaching program for both excursions and incursions enables Longneck Lagoon EEC to cater for a wider range of students across a wider range of curriculum areas. Programs are readily adapted to meet the learning and physical needs of students with modified resources, equipment and language. The deeper understanding of Darug Cultural Knowledge developed by staff has resulted in greater acknowledgement and respect of Culture being expressed and shared with visiting students and teachers.

As staff at Longneck Lagoon EEC have participated in the professional development framework a more collaborative and strategic action plan has been developed resulting in great gains in the domain of Teaching. Collegial discussions following professional development activities, lesson observations and professional dialogue have improved practices. The development of new teaching programs has resulted from feedback from visiting teachers and students and have included programs for new syllabuses.

While Longneck Lagoon EEC is a small school, the development of leadership skills in all staff has built the capacity of all. The temporary engagement of an early career teacher three days per week has facilitated the development of a coaching role as accreditation is sought. Longneck Lagoon EEC is an active member of our local and broader school communities, taking the lead role in joint projects across both primary and secondary schools.

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

For more information about the School Excellence Framework:

<http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-the-department/our-reforms/school-excellence-framework>

Strategic Direction 1

Empowering learners

Purpose

Engage and empower students to effect a positive change for sustainable futures through learning experiences that are authentic and model quality teaching. Facilitate quality learning so students are informed, active and responsible citizens with the necessary 21st Century skills capable of positively influencing their future.

Overall summary of progress

During 2016, staff attended professional learning on new syllabus and collaborated in the development of three new excursion programs and the revision and update of two others. Significant pre and post resourcing for two of the new programs was completed. These programs commence delivery in 2017.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
25% increase in the number of programs available for excursion and in-school visits (based on 2014 data).	2014 – 13 excursions, 0 incursion programs 2016 – 21 excursions, 4 incursion programs New programs promoted and uploaded to website.	\$15000.00
50% of new programs to include pre/and/or post visit learning.	2016 – 3 new programs developed – 2 with pre/post visit learning included.	Included in expenditure above

Next Steps

- Trial new programs, revise as feedback indicates.
- Continue development of new primary and secondary programs to support new syllabus.
- Identify opportunities to develop and include pre and post learning to support programs.

Strategic Direction 2

Building teacher capacity

Purpose

Engage and empower teachers to effect a positive change for sustainable futures for themselves and their learning communities.

Overall summary of progress

Longneck Lagoon EEC has continued to collaborate in the development and delivery of syllabus focus teacher professional learning during 2016 with a strong focus on Geography and project based learning. Staff have attended professional learning events and then provided feedback to colleagues. The implementation of the professional development plans and lesson observations continue to underpin professional learning and collegial discussions.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Increased range of registered and accredited courses offered.	2014 – 2 non-registered courses 2016 – 2 non registered courses and 5 registered courses developed by LLEEC As part of the EZEC Network LLEEC has the ability to schedule an increasing range of registered and non registered sustainability courses.	\$5000.00
Increased number of teachers participating in professional learning courses.	2016 – 22 teachers participated in K-6 Geography PD; professional learning sessions delivered via staff/stage meetings on project based learning and sustainability.	Included in expenditure above

Next Steps

- Develop and deliver teacher professional learning activities to support the GoMAD Challenge.
- Develop and deliver teacher professional learning activities to support and promote the sustainability action process learning resources.

Strategic Direction 3

Strong and sustainable partnerships

Purpose

Ensure innovative and strategic support to schools in learning for sustainability. Demonstrate sustainable operations through collaboration, innovation, thereby building capacity of learning communities for sustainable futures.

Overall summary of progress

LLEEC has continued to build on the positive relationship with National Parks and Wildlife Service resulting in two collaborative programs and sharing of resources. The strengthened relationships with some of the local schools has led to the development of high quality project based learning ventures. LLEEC has contributed to the development of statewide learning resources and during 2016 undertook the role of lead EEC for the 2017 Go Make A Difference Challenge for NSW in partnership with the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Progress achieved this year	Funds Expended (Resources)
Improved strength and diversified range of partnerships that enhance student and teacher learning and outcomes (based on 2014 data).	Finalised the sustainability action process learning resources Collaboratively secured grant funding for 2017 GoMAD Challenge	\$15000.00 from OEH
Increased number of sustainability focused events and/or projects delivered in collaboration with DEC and non-DEC partners (based on 2014 data).	Partnership with Glossodia PS utilising project based learning pedagogy	Nil

Next Steps

- Continue to look for opportunities to partner with other schools and with outside organisations to promote sustainable practices and communities.
- Collaborate with Western Sydney University and Local Governments in the delivery of the POWERful Youth Ambassador Program.

Student information

Longneck Lagoon Environmental Education Centre does not have an enrolled student cohort. Visiting students from Kindergarten to Year 12 participate in a large range of environmental education and fieldwork activities. Most programs occur within the woodland and wetland environments at Longneck Lagoon. Programs are also provided for TAFE students and teacher professional development.

2016 visitation numbers

- 4913 Students
- 362 Teachers
- 127 Parents
- 152 Community members

Program breakdown

- 3239 Syllabus linked programs
- 305 Enrichment programs
- 478 Leadership
- 203 Other programs
- 688 Youth Eco Summit

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Classroom Teacher(s)	1
School Administration & Support Staff	1.19

Permanent staff are well supported by a number of specialist casual teachers who add to the quality and delivery of programs and resources. All teachers are experienced in both classroom and environmental education. There are no Aboriginal staff currently employed permanently at Longneck Lagoon EEC. One of the casual teachers frequently employed by Longneck Lagoon EEC identifies as Aboriginal. Where appropriate, members of the local Darug community are consulted.

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	100
Postgraduate degree	

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

All permanent and casual staff at Longneck Lagoon EEC accessed a range of professional learning throughout 2016. Two casual teachers currently

employed by Longneck Lagoon are registered with NESAs, one is currently seeking accreditation at Proficient level and the other is currently maintaining accreditation at Proficient level. Professional learning activities included: Mandatory Training (Permanent and casual staff); Annual Environmental and Zoo Education Centre Conference; Primary Geography; Environmental Network Workshop; Principal Network Meetings and the training of all staff in new programs.

Financial information (for schools using OASIS for the whole year)

Financial information

This summary financial information covers funds for operating costs to 30 November 2016 and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

Income	\$
Balance brought forward	37 153.00
Global funds	35 306.00
Tied funds	55 996.00
School & community sources	47 009.00
Interest	1 089.00
Trust receipts	0.00
Canteen	0.00
Total income	176 553.00
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	39 725.00
Excursions	0.00
Extracurricular dissections	55.00
Library	175.00
Training & development	11 272.00
Tied funds	18 998.00
Short term relief	4 233.00
Administration & office	10 072.00
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	3 962.00
Maintenance	3 598.00
Trust accounts	0.00
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	92 090.00
Balance carried forward	84 463.00

Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

During 2016, online surveys for visiting teachers and students were distributed via email following excursions.

Teacher survey results indicate:

- a high or very high level of satisfaction with the quality of the learning environment and programs including modifications to suit learning needs
- a high or very high level of satisfaction with the expectations placed on student learning and behaviour
- further opportunities for pre/post learning resources to support excursions to be developed.

Student survey results indicate:

- a high or very high positive engagement with the learning tasks undertaken
- a high or very high increase in understanding of content covered
- they identify the value of caring for the environment.

Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

Longneck Lagoon EEC acknowledges the Darug Nation as the custodians of the area. Staff have received further training on the inclusion of Darug Culture and Knowledge to teaching and learning programs. More than 50% of the school staff have received professional development on Aboriginal Pedagogies and programs are being reviewed in light of this training. As part of the Environmental and Zoo Education Centres Network, Longneck Lagoon EEC has participated in the development and implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan.

Multicultural and anti-racism education

All programs are developed to be suitable for students from various cultural and religious backgrounds. ARCO Training has been renewed by the permanent teacher at Longneck Lagoon EEC and a review of processes is scheduled for all staff in early 2017.

Other school programs

Student leadership

Student leadership training is provided for school student leadership teams such as captains and prefects, SRC representatives and sports captains. Approximately 500 students participated in this program during 2016.

Environmental education and sustainability

All Centre programs have an Environmental Education

for Sustainability perspective. We endeavour to model sustainability at the Centre. Teacher professional learning is offered to schools on embedding sustainability into the curriculum.