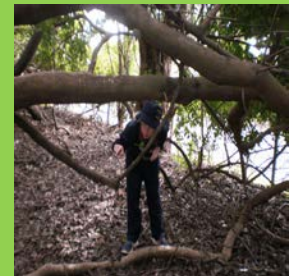


Red Hill Environmental Education Centre Annual School Report 2013



School context

Red Hill Environmental Education Centre (RHEEC) is located in Gulgong, nestled on the western edge of the Great Dividing Range on Wiradjuri Land. The Centre is close to nature reserves, state forests, national parks, and creeks and rivers. These local ecosystems form authentic outdoor learning areas for many of our science, geography and biology programs. Gulgong's heritage as a gold mining town provides the backdrop for our many history and built environment programs. Our local significant Aboriginal sites are visited by school groups to enhance Aboriginal Education learning opportunities.

RHEEC belongs to a series of interlocking networks such as the Cudgegong Learning Community (CLC); the Western Region Environmental Education Community (WREEC); the state wide Environmental Education and Zoo network (EZEC; and the state primary and high schools that make up Macquarie Schools Network. These networks enable Red Hill Environmental Education Centre to influence student learning outcomes, local School Environmental Management Plans and both regional and state environmental direction.

Principal's message

RHEEC provides focused Environmental and Aboriginal Education teaching and learning across many KLAs to support Kindergarten to Year 12 curriculum outcomes; encourage active and participatory citizenship; and to contribute to ecological sustainability.

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.

Cindy Picton

Relieving Principal

School Management Committee message

The Red Hill Management Committee meets monthly and has had an active role in planning for open days, promotions of the centre to the wider community and assisting in the development and implementation of a community use agreement. The committee provides the link with the lease holder of the site, Mid-Western Regional Council and as such has played an active role in the liaison with the council over matters pertaining to the use of the site. The community has an active role in Red Hill EEC and this is continually reflected through the activities of the Management Committee.

Susan Fuller

Student information

During 2013 the RHEEC assisted 3741 students from 46 schools, of which 16 schools were secondary; 27 were primary/infants and 3 Central schools. 4 were from Catholic or Independent schools. The majority were from the Central Tablelands and Central West Regions.

Attendance

Attendance profile	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of student days	109	134	160	111
Average attendance	31	33	31	34
Total attendance	3362	4478	4942	3741
Schools serviced by the Centre	34	54	53	46

Workforce composition

Position	Number
Principal	1
Classroom Teacher	1
School Administrative &	2
Total	3

25% of RHEEC staff are Aboriginal.

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

Qualifications	% of
Degree or Diploma	100%
Postgraduate	50%

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	30/11/2013
Income	\$
Balance brought forward	57870.41
Global funds	34686.34
Tied funds	71843.28
School & community sources	61430.27
Interest	1869.98
Trust receipts	0.00
Canteen	0.00
Total income	227700.28
Expenditure	
Teaching & learning	
Key learning areas	24504.44
Excursions	25316.73
Extracurricular dissections	340.77
Library	354.07
Training & development	0.00
Tied funds	32744.02
Casual relief teachers	0.00
Administration & office	28983.15
School-operated canteen	0.00
Utilities	14161.23
Maintenance	17250.70
Trust accounts	15262.41
Capital programs	0.00
Total expenditure	158917.52
Balance carried forward	68782.76

A full copy of the school's 2013 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Management Committee. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

School evaluation processes

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:

- Online evaluation survey
- Word of mouth, both student and teachers
- Repeat bookings

Intended Outcomes 2012 – 2014

- To demonstrate best environmental practice, onsite and offsite, to evoke behavioural change in school communities.
- To deliver quality environmental based programs that will enhance and support Australian curriculum.
- To ensure that all programs offered to schools are KLA based, have an environmental education foundation, and include Literacy and Numeracy.
- To include and recognise Aboriginal cultural heritage in all K-12 programs via 8ways pedagogy.
- To continue to offer culturally sensitive Aboriginal Education programs onsite and offsite.
- To continue to support significant environmental projects for CLC, and further, schools.
- To provide ongoing information to the local community by recognising environmental days throughout the year.
- To develop MyPL courses in order to provide professional learning for education students, and practicing teachers.

School planning 2012—2014: progress in 2013

School priority 1: *Aboriginal Education*

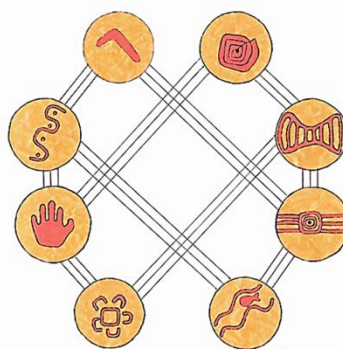


Outcomes from 2012–2014

- All RHEEC programs delivered will employ and promote 8ways pedagogy.
- **Ngangirra** outdoor learning centre development completed by 2014.
- The Empowerment Camp (2013) to be hosted annually:
 - continued collaboration of Aboriginal consultants from Dubbo Aboriginal Education Unit
 - Wambangalang and Warrumbungle EECs involved in development and implementation in 2014.
- Empowerment Camp to be offered annually as a Literacy/Numeracy/Aboriginal Education -8ways pedagogy MyPL professional Learning activity for education students and practicing teachers.
- Erect Aboriginal language and 8ways based signage around RHEEC site.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

Cindy completed 8ways pedagogy course and all program outlines display 8ways methods employed.



8ways signage is evident in Ngangirra Outdoor Learning Area.

Planning meetings were undertaken by RHEEC and Western Region DEC Aboriginal consultants for Empowerment Camp. The camp was hosted and very successful. Students learnt a lot about Aboriginal language and stories, leadership skills and team building strategies.



Above picture is students painting mural at the Empowerment Camp. The murals are on display around RHEEC site.

The Empowerment camp was approved as a MyPL course as a professional learning opportunity to existing educators and beginning teachers.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

Signage on bush tucker plants and around centre using nonverbal cues and Wiradjuri words to be brainstormed and completed Term 1-2, 2014.

Rainbow serpent walking trail to be extended by visiting students: drawing their own story using symbols on tiles.



The bough shed bark roof is being prepared and flattened and will be erected in early Term 1.



Empowerment Camp is to be hosted again at RHEEC with the collaboration of Western Region DEC Aboriginal consultants. Wambangalang, and Wurrumbungles EECs and Taronga Zoo - Western Plains EC will be invited to join the event. Once again the Professional Learning Opportunities of camp will be promoted with Head of Education Unit, CSU Bathurst, Barbara Hill.

School priority 2:

Curriculum –Environmental Education

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Evaluation and development of programs, teaching materials and resources 2013 - 2014
- CLC schools supported in environmental education and SEMP review 2013 – 2014.
- RHEEC grounds to demonstrate environmental best practice i.e. straw bale and vertical gardens, organic waste composting, chickens, permaculture and sensory gardens.
- Ongoing program of events and plantings for Regent Honeyeater Project 2013 - 2014.
- Sustainability in Action – Student Forum Environmental forum reviewed and continued in 2014.
- Environmental student programs delivered through DART assessed for viability in 2013
- Video conferencing lessons based on environmental and sustainability best practice offered in 2014

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

Evaluations of RHEEC programs were collected through an online evaluation process. All responses to RHEEC day and overnight programs were incredibly favourable and indicated return activities with our centre in the future.

RHEEC collaborated with Gulgong High School History teachers to improve our WWI WWII program and realign its student outcomes to the Australian Curriculum. The program was a great success and the new version was used with subsequent schools.



A DART video conferencing lesson-program was created and implemented by Katrina Odgers in Terms 1-3. Assessment of this project, whilst proving to be a powerful learning tool, the project was found to be not financially viable if not implemented by permanent teaching staff.

This year RHEEC continued to support local schools to resource and implementing environmental practice in their school grounds. We celebrated National Tree Day, World Environment Day and Earth hour with the local community and that of the CLC.



RHEEC funded Mark Heaney's Enviro-Music Program. This project is a significant Environmental Education competition where the Western Region Schools were invited to write lyrics for and perform Environmental songs. We are very proud of all schools that participated, especially the winners, Walgett Community College and Mark Heaney for his coordinating efforts.

In Term 3 RHEEC identified areas of improvement needed to the grounds so they could be used as demonstration areas for visiting schools, students and teachers. 'Sustainable Living Programs' will be tied to this. Straw bale and vertical gardens were established and linked to programs. The compost bays were cleaned out and a new cycle has been started. Worm farms are up and running. It is envisaged that RHEEC best practice will act as a catalyst for behaviour change in visiting school teachers/students.



A tree audit was done in Term 4 and a Tree Management Plan has been established. It has a time frame over the next 3 years.

Schools and partners were once again involved in the Regent Honey Eater Project this year but to a lesser degree. The mines made a commitment to plant out regeneration areas with species that are known to be the endangered species habitat. Trees planted on National Tree Day were similar species. This gives the activity authenticity and encourages deep knowledge.

The Sustainability Student Forum was once again implemented with this year. It was trialled at the Sustainability Outreach conference also. A local forum was hosted at Coonabarabran, Orange and Mudgee local Chambers and a culminating forum was held in Sydney Parliament House again in Term 4. This year 55 students from 7 schools attended the Sydney conference.



Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

In 2014 RHEEC hopes to fund the Enviro-Music Program and collaborate with coordinator Mark Heaney on this worthwhile project.

RHEEC will continue to support local schools to resource and implementing environmental practice in their school grounds. We will support Environmental Education as a cross Australian curriculum subject by conducting audits and workshops, collating data for SEMP's and assisting schools implement the new Sustainability Education Policy being implemented in 2014.



We will investigate the viability of RHEEC staff doing short environmental education based workshops via VC. It is envisaged these will be short conferences 1-2 hours offered by RHEEC staff to students and/or teachers.

The Tree Management Plan is to be implemented over the next 3 years. Funding is to be sought through council.

RHEEC's **Ngangirra** area is to be planted out with understory plants in 2014. Schools and partners involved in the Regent Honey Eater Project will be invited to participate in these plantings. Nest boxes are to be erected near the bird hide for viewing. Binoculars have been ordered and will be shared with Gulgong Public School. Bird watching was added as an activity in our National Parks Day program and this will continue due to the positive feedback it received.

The Sustainability Student Forum was assessed by discussion and evaluation surveys. Consensus was to continue with this worthwhile program but host the forum at Parliament House in Term 3, 2014. Parliament House has been booked for Week 8, Term 3.

School priority 3: *Leadership & Management* Outcomes from 2012–2014

- DEC Sustainability Education and Management Policy introduced and implemented in schools 2013 - 2014.
- Climate Clever Energy Savers program supported through Western Region 2013.
- Outreach programs for isolated schools within day reach developed and implemented 2013 – 2014.
- Increase the number of Professional Learning opportunities offered by RHEEC 2013 – 2014.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

The Sustainability Policy is still in draft form and RHEEC teaching staff is assisting in its editing. When implemented it shall promote the embedding of SEMP's into every School Plan.

RHEEC Environmental Workshop and SEMP building program continues to support the existing Environmental Education Policy.

Climate Clever Energy Savers (CCES) was once again implemented in schools across the Western Region. Climate Clever Energy Savers is a statewide program that supports schools in the development of energy saving initiatives. Schools were once again supported with workshops, assisted energy audits, proposal development and funding for energy saving initiatives.

RHEEC once again co-coordinated Sustainability Outreach, which was held in Broken Hill this year. It was received well and was a great way to bring

Environmental Education to isolated schools.



Surveys were sent to all schools involved in CCES as were commemorate plaques. Schools were funded for proposals such as raising awareness campaigns, skylights, curtains and outdoor learning areas.



This year RHEEC staff created and managed an approved MyPL course based on standards demonstrated at the 'Empowerment' Camp.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:

When the Sustainability Policy is implemented RHEEC shall assist schools in this action by attending CLC meetings, school staff meetings and Video conferencing methods. It is hoped that lessons on how to implement this policy

may be made as a RHEEC MyPL course in the future.

The CCES project will be scaled down this year with less funding available and a limit to schools that can participate. RHEEC will once again work with Wambangalang EEC to coordinate the running of the project.

After RHEEC staff reviewed its outreach commitments of 2013-2014 it was decided that RHEEC will concentrate their outreach efforts on schools that are within a distance that classes can be taught in one day i.e. schools within 1-2 hours from RHEEC. This will be reviewed at the end of 2014.

In 2014 RHEEC hopes to add to the MyPL Environmental Professional Learning Accreditation programs available to teachers and education students through our centre.

School priority 4: *Community Links*

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- RHEEC to recognise Environmental days such as Earth Hour, World Environmental Day, National Tree day with school and community events 2012 – 2014.
- RHEEC staff to be involved in the coordination and running of the annual Green Day with other local community environment groups 2012- 2014.
- RHEEC to continue to be involved with the Adam's Lead Reserve community project 2013 – 2014
- RHEEC to be involved in Putta Bucca Wetland's development as an Outdoor Learning Centre
- RHEEC to host community lunch annually to recognise the

contributions made to our centre by community members.

Evidence of progress towards outcomes in 2013:

This year RHEEC continued to celebrate Earth Hour, World Environment Day and National Tree Day with CLC schools and local community. RHEEC also joined with other Community Environmental Educators at the Small Schools Environmental Day, hosted by Goolma PS.



We continue to publish media reports to the Gulgong Gossip and Mudgee Guardian with articles to publicise environmental events. This raises awareness within the community.

In 2013 RHEEC hosted a Community Thank You lunch to recognise the contributions made to our centre by community members. The day included a planting of a miniature native Eucalyptus by the front gate with a plaque commemorating the role of the community assisting RHEEC.



Once again RHEEC co-coordinated Green Day 2013. Over 500 students attended and evaluations were extremely positive. This event has become recognised as a valuable, annual Environmental Education Activity Day amongst all the local schools and students.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

World Environment Day, Earth Hour and National Tree Day will be promoted in 2014 with raising awareness campaigns and school/ community events.

RHEEC will continue to host an annual community lunch to recognise the contributions made to our centre by community members.

RHEEC hope to have a bigger presence in the Adam's Lead Reserve Community Project and Putta Bucca Wetlands committees and will assess the logistics of using these locations as outdoor learning areas for school programs.

World Environment Day 2014 will focus on Sustainable Living to coincide with the launch of the new Sustainability Policy.

RHEEC to co-coordinate the running of Green Day 2014 with National Parks, Mudgee Landcare Central West Catchment Management Authority, Mudgee Council and other Environmental Educators.

Professional learning

Cindy completed 8ways pedagogy course and continues with her Accreditation at Professional Leadership level. She has attended conferences for Environmental and Zoo educators (EZEC); Wester Region EEC (WREEC); Climate Clever Energy Savers (CCES) and Aspiring Leaders of Environmental Education Centres.

Susan Fuller completed her Senior First Aid Course.

Kate Metcraft continues to add to her canoe log book hours

A Literacy and Numeracy based MyPL approved course was created to compliment the "Empowerment Camp". In 2014 RHEEC hopes to add to the MyPL Environmental Professional Learning Accreditation programs available to teachers and education students through our centre.

In Term 4, 6 teachers from Lithgow High came to our centre for a professional learning day. Our centre, especially the Ngangirra Area was showcased. They were delighted with RHEEC and will continue to use RH staff as consultants in the creation of their own Bush Tucker Garden and Aboriginal Area in their school.

Parent/caregiver, student, and teacher satisfaction

In 2013, the RHEEC sought the opinions of parents, students and teachers about the centre via word of mouth, online evaluation surveys and repeat visits.

Feedback was positive in all our programs and many schools have booked ahead in 2014.

Some responses are presented below:

'Thank you for a fantastic excursion. Our students had an absolute ball!! The hands on activities and the scope for adventure was amazing and they learned sooooo much!! We will definitely be back'.

Shelley Darcy, Eumungerie PS, Dec 2013

'Thanks for a fantastic program and hands on experience for Ballimore students - the kids, myself and parents, had a ball! The program covered a multitude of informative and pertinent topics, and the facilitation and program delivery was impressive and reflected quality teaching. I was most impressed with the development and initiatives being implemented at the Red Hill Centre since my last visit in 2009. Keep up the great work!'

Lea Berry, Ballimore PS, Oct 2013

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.

Cindy Picton: Relieving Principal

Kate Metcraft: SAM

Sue Fuller Relieving Teacher / Red Hill Management Committee

School contact information

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

<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/high-performance/annual-school-reports>