

The Bidgee School

Annual Report



2017



5758

Introduction

The Annual Report for **2017** is provided to the community of **The Bidgee School** 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.

Marianne Mitchell

Principal

School contact details

The Bidgee School

21 Mitchelmore St

Wagga Wagga, 2650

www.thebidgee-s.schools.nsw.edu.au

Thebidgee-s.School@det.nsw.edu.au

6925 4403

School background

School vision statement

In our culture of care, compassion and connection, we support young people to build inner resourcefulness. We understand young people as learners and as individuals. We develop positive relationships, held within high expectations, to support our school community to develop a wide repertoire of transferable skills and the key competencies necessary for learning and life.

School context

The Bidgee School is an educational setting providing specialist intervention for students impacted by complex trauma, abuse, neglect, family violence, autism and mental health conditions. The Bidgee School provides intensive support that focuses on educational/academic and wellbeing and emotional regulation with three classes from years 5 – 10, as well as four new Emotional Disturbed (ED) classes established in 2017 and 2018 for years 2 – 10.

The Bidgee School utilise knowledge of trauma, and how it affects the brain–body system to develop innovative pedagogy that is responsive to the needs of our young people. By understanding and responding to the source of the behaviour, rather than how it is expressed, this intervention explicitly reshapes adaptive trauma–based behaviour.

The Bidgee School program draws on current research of best and newest broader educational pedagogy, trauma–informed practice, brain–based neurobiology, cognitive–behavioural psychology, mind –body integration, mindfulness, coaching, breath–work and explicit contemplative and experiential practices to reduce internal stress and build psychological resilience.

The Bidgee School provides intensive support that focuses on quality educational and wellness development and emotional regulation. Across the setting, our learning community champion responsive and targeted neurological intervention to support our young people to thrive academically and in life.

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.

Learning

In 2017 The Bidgee School continued to develop our positive learning culture. We maintained our already strong and respectful relationships between students and staff. Teachers tailored learning to suit the needs of their students through the use of Individual Education Plans. In 2017 The Bidgee School also began to develop Individual Care Plans for their students, taking into account the reasons behind their behaviour in order to better address our student's complex needs. Care plans will eventually take the place of our existing Behaviour Management Plans. Staff at The Bidgee School maintain high academic expectations for their students, delivering flexible and targeted learning opportunities to engage our learners in relevant curriculum.

Whole staff participation in ongoing Professional Development in HOW2Learn (Higher Order Ways to Learn) continued to be a requirement in 2017. This resulted in staff and students developing a deeper knowledge of growth mindsets as well as the capacity to monitor and strive towards achieving academic and personal goals. In addition this year saw the introduction of our Mind Up curriculum, teaching our students how their brain works, explaining their reactions to various stimuli, as well as teaching strategies for helping them cope when things go wrong.

Teaching

Teachers at The Bidgee School regularly use student performance data to guide their teaching ensuring effective classroom practice. This includes diagnostic testing, self-assessment tools and tracking of both academic progress and wellbeing levels. Lessons are planned around individual student needs based upon initial testing with progress monitored periodically throughout the year.

Teachers give explicit feedback on set tasks, providing students with information on how to improve their skill set. Strengths are celebrated and deficiencies are attended to. Students are also supported to set their own learning goals, and report back on their progress.

Teachers at The Bidgee School collect and collate data from their students in order to design and implement targeted learning opportunities that will both engage and challenge their students. High interest tasks are designed around student interests with an element of fun such as creating an animation, designing a 'Kahoot' and coding.

Leading

In 2017 our Principal (Marianne) began a Graduate Certificate in Developmental Trauma, delivered by the Australian Childhood Foundation. Information Marianne gleaned from the course has been passed on to staff through various in house professional development sessions. This has assisted staff in using a theoretical framework to inform our practice in how to best meet our cohort's needs.

The Bidgee School leadership team have been working on expanding their relationships within the community during 2017. Staff have consolidated their ongoing relationship with TAFE, with a number of students continuing their TVET courses. The inception of the primary school aged trauma class saw new relationships develop with all partner schools, working together for the benefit of our new cohort.

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

High quality educational practices.

Purpose

To consistently develop high quality educational practices to improve literacy and numeracy skills across the Key Learning Areas. Engaging students through high quality practices will foster lifelong learning in young people.

Overall summary of progress

In 2017 Bidgee School staff continued to refine their delivery of high quality educational practices. Staff continued their journey with How2Learn, periodically undergoing in house staff training during weekly staff meetings. Staff were presented an opportunity to attend a writing workshop which provided a useful toolkit in enhancing students' creative writing skills. Teacher feedback indicated that the implementation of the toolkit assisted in providing engaging learning opportunities for students to expand their vocabulary and develop a deeper understanding around writing. The Bidgee School also introduced the MacqLit program in 2017. MacqLit is designed to systematically and explicitly teach word attack skills in order to improve reading fluency. All students who engaged in the program have seen their reading fluency improve.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Quality teaching is embedded across all facets of classroom practice resulting in all students improving by one cluster on the literacy and numeracy continuums within 12 months of commencing attendance at The Bidgee School.	Aboriginal Education Funding \$6303 Low Socio Economic Funding \$12445 Resources and Staffing	Teachers at The Bidgee School ensure high quality learning opportunities for their students, resulting in improved literacy and numeracy results. 100% of students displayed growth on the literacy and numeracy continuums in the past 12 months.

Next Steps

As part of the new school plan (2018–2020) we will continue to strive for high quality educational practices. We will aim to deliver quality student centred learning experiences to support students, as well as a culture of feedback to develop positive and respectful educational relationships.



Strategic Direction 2

Develop a positive school environment.

Purpose

To foster successful student participation in school life through the development of a positive school environment. All students will learn the values of respect and responsibility. When students are engaged at school improved attendance rates and positive student outcomes will follow.

Overall summary of progress

The introduction of the Mind Up curriculum in 2017 has enhanced the school environment by providing curriculum around how we respond to various stimuli and why. Mind Up, along with our therapeutic approach to discipline has assisted in taking the blame out of our students' behaviour. Students at The Bidgee School are provided opportunities to make mistakes in order to learn to make better choices, and are taught self-regulation skills, as opposed to being punished. In 2017 we also implemented elements of the BrainGym program, also centred around self-regulation. Brain Gym activities are helping our students access their pre-frontal cortex by giving them tools to help them bypass their amygdala when they are unable to attend to their learning or are struggling with their emotional responses to a situation. Students have reported feeling 'fresher' and 'not trapped' after engaging in various Brain Gym activities. With our new Year Two to Four class beginning in 2017 we have been provided with an opportunity to provide increased peer learning experiences. Older students are given leadership opportunities, guiding our younger cohort with peer interactions, reading, and friendship.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Programs are directly connected to student interest and will result in students' willingness to attend school and participate in all aspects of school life. Unexplained absences will decrease by 10%.	Aboriginal Education Funding \$6303 Low Socio Economic Funding \$12445 Resources and Staffing	The highly engaging, personalised activities at The Bidgee School resulted in increased attendance during the 2017. Teachers monitor active engagement in their classrooms, regularly recording active engagement in lessons and activities. Throughout 2017, active engagement scores increased for many of our students.

Next Steps

As part of the 2015–2017 School Plan we developed and refined a number of practices to ensure our students came to school and felt supported in a positive school environment. Our daily learning opportunities supported inclusion, diversity and acceptance. When developing our new 2018–2020 School Plan we decided to focus on empowering our young people to develop mindsets and competencies for learning to improve literacy and numeracy results.



Strategic Direction 3

Social and emotional wellbeing.

Purpose

To facilitate a holistic education by providing teaching and learning opportunities which nurture the whole child and which are responsive to individual needs. This will enhance health, wellbeing, learning and behaviour.

Overall summary of progress

The Bidgee School prides itself on its holistic approach to education, providing a high level of nurturing and care, responsive to individual needs. Implementing the Mind Up curriculum enhanced wellbeing, providing strategies for students who feel they have no control over their reactions. Students continued to access our specialised wellbeing teacher, providing space and time for reflection, as well as developing skills in self-care. The Bidgee School's assistance dog Humphrey continued to provide unconditional support throughout 2017, strengthening bonds with several of our most vulnerable students.

Progress towards achieving improvement measures

Improvement measures (to be achieved over 3 years)	Funds Expended (Resources)	Progress achieved this year
Students will increase success rates of Behaviour Management Plan targets as each term progresses. In order to prepare students for transition back to mainstream, regular conferencing with students is held to develop conflict resolution strategies and maintain social relationships. This will lead to a decrease in the entry of negative incidents on Sentral and suspensions.	Aboriginal Education Funding \$6303 Low Socio Economic Funding \$12445 Resources and Staffing	Staff at The Bidgee School continued to participate in professional development focusing on trauma and the brain. As a result of an increased knowledge base, we were better able to cater to individual students and provide each student with a Trauma Care Plan, which details strategies to support the student at school.

Next Steps

Since the 2015–2017 School Plan was implemented, our staff have developed a much deeper understanding of student wellbeing, in particularly, the effect trauma can have on a young persons brain. As a result, the new 2018–2020 School Plan delves further into our understanding of trauma and the brain, and our new focus is to facilitate a holistic education which nurture the whole child and are responsive to individual needs.



Key Initiatives	Resources (annual)	Impact achieved this year
Aboriginal background loading	\$18910	All indigenous students at The Bidgee School have individual care plans and a personalised learning program. These adjustments have resulted in all students showing some growth against the literacy and numeracy continuums during 2017.
Socio-economic background	\$37336	Students at The Bidgee School participate in highly engaging learning experiences each week, designed to increase attendance and engagement. Delivering learning experiences 30% decrease in unexplained absences compared to 2016.



Student information

Student enrolment profile

Students	Enrolments			
	2014	2015	2016	2017
Boys	18	16	15	22
Girls	2	3	4	5

Workforce information

Workforce composition

Position	FTE*
Principal	1
Deputy Principal(s)	0
Assistant Principal(s)	1
Head Teacher(s)	0
Classroom Teacher(s)	3.52
Teacher of Reading Recovery	0
Learning & Support Teacher(s)	0
Teacher Librarian	0.17
Teacher of ESL	0
School Counsellor	0
School Administration & Support Staff	5.18
Other Positions	0.2

*Full Time Equivalent

The Bidgee School employs two Indigenous staff members.

Teacher qualifications

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

Teacher qualifications

Qualifications	% of staff
Undergraduate degree or diploma	80
Postgraduate degree	20

Professional learning and teacher accreditation

There were a range of professional development courses accessed by staff at The Bidgee School during

2017. They included school based training, conferences, workshops and online modules. Courses focused on student learning, administration and teacher development. These included:

- HOW2Learn training
- LMBR training
- Expressive Art Therapies
- MacqLit
- Severe Trauma in Children
- Online NAPLAN Training
- eLearning modules on Teaching and Non Teaching Performance and Development Plans

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.

Receipts	\$
Balance brought forward	164,411
Global funds	63,033
Tied funds	37,210
School & community sources	267
Interest	1,087
Trust receipts	0
Canteen	0
Total Receipts	101,598
Payments	
Teaching & learning	
Key Learning Areas	12,925
Excursions	988
Extracurricular dissections	28,348
Library	0
Training & Development	1,423
Tied Funds Payments	28,972
Short Term Relief	664
Administration & Office	15,079
Canteen Payments	0
Utilities	6,396
Maintenance	4,073
Trust Payments	165
Capital Programs	0
Total Payments	99,033
Balance carried forward	166,976

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.

	2017 Actual (\$)
Opening Balance	0
Revenue	295,355
Appropriation	291,202
Sale of Goods and Services	164
Grants and Contributions	3,989
Gain and Loss	0
Other Revenue	0
Investment Income	0
Expenses	-124,382
Recurrent Expenses	-124,382
Employee Related	-33,753
Operating Expenses	-90,629
Capital Expenses	0
Employee Related	0
Operating Expenses	0
SURPLUS / DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	170,974
Balance Carried Forward	170,974

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.

	2017 Actual (\$)
Base Total	338,642
Base Per Capita	6,134
Base Location	1,803
Other Base	330,705
Equity Total	56,246
Equity Aboriginal	18,910
Equity Socio economic	37,336
Equity Language	0
Equity Disability	0
Targeted Total	764,927
Other Total	1,625
Grand Total	1,161,440

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.

School performance

NAPLAN

In the National Assessment Program, the results across the Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 literacy and numeracy assessments are reported on a scale from Band 1 to Band 10. The achievement scale represents increasing levels of skills and understandings demonstrated in these assessments.

The performance of students in our school during NAPLAN is not reported due to the small number of students registered for participation in each year level.



Parent/caregiver, student, teacher satisfaction

This year The Bidgee School used Tell Them From Me, an online survey system run state wide to help our school capture the views of students, teachers and parents. Overall, evaluation data was positive: in many cases data improved significantly on last year's results, and was substantially higher than the state average in many areas.

Students reported:

- 89% were intellectually engaged and found learning interesting, enjoyable, and relevant.
- 67% felt accepted and valued by their peers and by others at their school.
- 89% tried hard to succeed in their learning
- Students scored teachers at 6.5/10 (state ave 5.6) for being responsive to their needs, and encouraging of independence with a democratic approach.

Parents reported scores of above the state average for:

- Being regularly informed by teachers about the progress of their child
- How the school supports learning

As well as:

- 9.6/10 for teachers have high expectations for their child to succeed.
- 9.6/10 for my child is encouraged to do his or her best work.
- 9.3/10 for the school supports positive behaviour.

Teachers reported scores of above the state average for:

- Leadership within the school
- Collaboration among staff
- Learning Culture of the school



Policy requirements

Aboriginal education

The Bidgee School has a significant number of Indigenous students enrolled. Teachers of all classes teach Aboriginal Education and frequently share their classroom practises with other staff at regular structured meetings. Teachers develop Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs) and meet with student's parents/carers each semester to discuss the implementation of these strategies to support student's learning goals. Teachers ensure inclusion of all students both in the classroom and outside in the playground.

Aboriginal perspectives are embedded across all KLA's. In Science students studied the unit Aboriginal Health. In this topic we have learnt about traditional Aboriginal diet compared to modern day Aboriginal diet and analysed the effect of European settlement on overall Aboriginal health. During the year students participated in Aboriginal sports/games. The Bidgee School held an excursion and climbed The Rock (normal" > Kengal), holding great Aboriginal significance as it is a sacred men's site. Students have also studied Aboriginal Artworks and used these as inspiration in their own art-making practise.

We had Aunty Gail come to visit The Bidgee School for NAIDOC Day, and taught students how to do basket weaving and make talking sticks. Aunty Gail shared her knowledge and wisdom with students.



Multicultural and anti-racism education

The Bidgee School is inclusive of all cultures and values diversity within our community. Students learn respect, tolerance and responsibility within our classrooms through teaching practice and learning activities.

The Bidgee School had an ESL student enrolled this year and organised an interpreter to assist with her education. This assistance improved academic performance and social skill development.

Wellbeing provides students with these necessary social skills to be inclusive of all cultures within our school and community and to demonstrate open-mindedness.

Cooking has been offered to students weekly as a BEEP elective, and allows students the opportunity to cook and try a variety of different cultural foods. The Bidgee School celebrated Harmony Day as a whole school event, where each class chose a country to study and prepare a meal to share with all other classes.

Other school programs

The Bidgee School Wellbeing Program draws on current research of best and newest broad educational pedagogy, trauma-informed practice, brain-based neurobiology, cognitive-behavioural psychology, mind-body integration, mindfulness, coaching, breath work and evidence-based experiential practices. We engage in diverse contemplative practices to nurture and nourish self-awareness and creativity and support emotional regulation. We learn how our brain works and how our thoughts impact our body and our mind. Together, we experience positive development in mood, attention, communication, self-regulation and self-esteem. Through diverse practises of Yoga we nurture and nourish our nervous-systems. This effectively reduces internal stress and builds psychological resilience.

We consistently practice evidence-based trauma-sensitive strategies that reduce anxiety and support a greater attentive capacity. This propagates our capacity to learn and supports consistently high levels of engagement across the disciplines.

Strong, strategic and rigorously responsive to our learning community, The Bidgee School Wellbeing Program has lead changes in teaching that guide strong student progress on internal measures and achievement data. Through innovation and differentiated responsiveness we have met the ever-changing needs of our young people with powerful results.