

Tallebudgera Outdoor and Environmental Education Centre

School-led review validation executive summary

About the school

The Tallebudgera Outdoor and Environmental Education Centre acknowledges the Koombumerri and Bundjalung people who are the Traditional Custodians of this land. We would like to pay our respects to Elders past, present and future, and all Aboriginal peoples whichever Aboriginal nation they may come from.

Education region	South East Region
Year levels	Prep to Year 12
Enrolment	N/A
Indigenous enrolment	N/A
Students with disability	N/A
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value	N/A

About the validation

This report is a product of a school-led review validation, carried out by the School and Region Reviews (SRR) branch at **Tallebudgera Outdoor and Environmental Education Centre** on **13 to 14 November 2023**.

- **Kylie Smith**, Senior Principal, Reviews, SRR (validation chair)
- **Darren Sengstock**, Principal, Reviews, SRR
- **Phil Harrison**, Peer Reviewer

Key improvement strategies

Informed by the school-led evaluation and prioritised by the SRR-led validation, key improvement strategies are listed in order of priority.

Domain 1: An explicit improvement agenda

Collaboratively develop and document roles, responsibilities and accountabilities with a focus on distributing leadership opportunities to build leadership capability, shared ownership of the strategic improvement strategy, and support succession planning.

Domain 2: Analysis and discussion of data

Prioritise ongoing collaboration within the centre and with external partners to refine collection and analysis of relevant data to systematically measure the impact of pedagogies and programs on student learning targets outlined in the strategic plan.

Domain 9: School-community partnerships

Strengthen partnerships with local schools, departmental partners and tertiary institutions to support cultural capability development of teachers, pre-service teachers and school leaders, and embed a range of evidence-informed pedagogies and practices.

Domain 5: An expert teaching team

Refine and implement a consistent and sustainable approach to peer coaching, mentoring and feedback to build teacher capability to enact the agreed pedagogical practices.

Domain 6: Systematic curriculum delivery

Review the whole-centre curriculum plan, in alignment to the Australian Curriculum (AC) including general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities, to ensure clear connections and links to curriculum plans of visiting partner schools and to extend student learning.

Key affirmations

The principal and leadership team have led a transformative journey to embed a strong vision and purpose across the centre.



A clear and purposeful vision for the centre has been collaboratively created. Staff articulate a commitment to 'create positive change in the lives of young people across Queensland'. The 2020–2023 Strategic Plan uses the image of expanding ripples as a metaphor for the impact staff have on students, visiting teachers, schools and the broader community. A sense of unity is clear in the way staff answer the question, 'Why are we doing this?'. The principal and staff indicate they are facilitating transformational learning experiences for both students and teachers engaging in the education programs offered. Camp Coordinators make adjustments to programs and access resources to ensure all students understand the purpose of, and actively participate in, learning programs. Staff articulate the design of the programs includes 'call to adventure' strategies to invite students on their learning journey and a strong 'red thread' that ensures all activities link and contribute to the established learning goals. Staff widely recognise the consistent, excellent leadership and commitment of the current principal over a number of years as key in the centre's successful improvement journey.

The centre staff team share an authentic and close connection to Country and to the First Nations community.



The centre partners authentically with First Nations Elders and community. Culturally safe and inclusive ways of working have been co-designed by staff and First Nations community members and are enacted in every facet of the centre's work. Strong ties with local Elders and the First Nations community have created welcoming places that include language, storylines, artworks and artefacts. Staff have intentionally created connections through a contextualised Acknowledgement of Country in Yugembeh language and allowing time for visitors and students to 'listen to' and 'feel' country. All staff use Yugembeh greetings, key instructions and names of places, flora and fauna in teaching and conversation. Several centre staff have undertaken language courses to develop basic fluency. The Kitchen Team at the Valley Campus have undertaken a bush tucker course, and regularly prepare Indigenous foods using locally sourced ingredients. Story line threads are integrated into programs at both the Valley and the Beach Campuses. The centre shares with and influences the system by providing cultural capability professional learning experiences for school leaders and staff.

Centre staff clearly describe and enthusiastically implement a consistent pedagogical approach.



All staff speak clearly and passionately of the centre's approach to teaching and learning and communicate the process of Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) and the student-centred inquiry-based learning framework. Students are invited to engage in a journey or quest of self-discovery. Systems and processes support centre staff to ensure the safety of the program while providing an environment of increasing student autonomy and agency. New staff are supported, guided and mentored by established staff to develop and hone their own understanding of the process. Opportunities for staff reflection on practice are valued, with a journey-based model supported through resources and workbooks. Academics from Southern Cross University have developed a partnership with the centre, and suggest the evidence of transformative learning is impressive and worthy of research.

Strong processes support capability development from induction to leader.



Leaders have developed a comprehensive induction process and ongoing mentoring and coaching support for beginning teachers and teachers new to the centre. The induction processes are designed to embed core values and beliefs to achieve the centre's vision and mission and develop the centre's approach to teaching and learning. This program has been successful in identifying and training skilled outdoor and environmental education teachers who are contributing to the ongoing improvement of programs and teaching practice across both campuses. New teachers are paired with a mentor and participate in observation and feedback opportunities, team teaching, and sharing of practice discussions. A recent implementation of 'triad' groups is systematically strengthening peer engagement. Academics from Southern Cross University are undertaking research into the developing collegial engagement process at the centre.

The centre staff team value the high levels of cohesion and collegiality felt by all.



Staff discuss appreciating the collegial support they receive from each other. This generosity and support extends to colleagues in their immediate team, across teams and from the leadership team. An authentically collaborative and respectful learning culture exists, built on open communication, trust and a strong commitment to the shared vision and values. Staff feel that their capability and skills are recognised. They have the voice and autonomy to co-design curriculum and programs. Staff articulate that the respectful 'journey' approach to student learning also translates to the way staff interact with each other, and support each other to grow and learn through discussion, sharing and providing quality mentoring and feedback. Strong distributive and parallel leadership systems enable individuals to learn, achieve and lead. Staff members thoroughly appreciate this strong collegial learning culture and the 'gift' of working at their centre as a team to provide the best programs and outcomes for young people that they can. Staff recognise the intentional focus of leaders on staff wellbeing.

Staff talk enthusiastically of the positive impact they have on Queensland's young people.



All staff are committed to, and consistently enact the mission, 'Creating positive change in the lives of young people across Queensland'. Staff speak with pride and satisfaction of seeing students grow across the course of a program. The centre is focused on measuring impact to inform future learning experiences and strategies. Teachers consistently use data to inform teaching moments, adjustments and program improvements. Teachers formally and informally use evidence to discuss student progress and their own teaching and learning practices. A key example of this is the collective commitment to differentiation and customising programs for the learners in any particular group to enable all young people to access and fully engage in learning experiences on the same basis as their peers.