

Numinbah Valley Environmental Education Centre

Executive Summary





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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Numinbah Valley Environmental Education Centre** from **17 to 18 May 2021**.

The report presents an evaluation of the school's performance against the nine domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#). It also recommends improvement strategies for the school to implement in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

For more information regarding the EIB and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the EIB [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Lesley Vogan	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Lyndal Symonds	Peer reviewer
Howard Nielsen	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Nerang-Murwillumbah Road, Numinbah Valley	
Education region:	South East Region	
Year levels:	Kindergarten to Year 12	
Enrolment:	n/a	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	n/a	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	n/a
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	n/a
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	n/a	
Year principal appointed:	2020	



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, Business Manager (BM), three teachers, unit support officer, two cleaners and cook.

Community and business groups:

- Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, two representatives Seqwater, representative Watergum, two Indigenous community members, facilities contractor and infrastructure advisor Department of Education (DoE).

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Four principals of partner schools and eight teachers from partner schools.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Councillor for Division 9 City of Gold Coast, State Member for Mudgeeraba and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2021	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2021
Investing for Success 2021	Strategic Plan 2018-2021
School pedagogical framework	Standard Operating Procedures
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning plan 2021	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	Activity booking documents
School Opinion Survey	Student Code of Conduct
Curriculum units and Curriculum Activity Risk Assessments	Service satisfaction surveys from partner schools
School newsletters and website and Facebook	Headline Indicators (October 2021 release)



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Visiting teachers describe the centre as successful in providing meaningful, tailored learning experiences that meet school curriculum and wellbeing goals.

The centre provides experiential learning programs to students from pre-Prep to Year 12, with environmental and sustainability themes embedded. Most learning occurs in the outdoors and the centre's location within Springbrook National Park enables engaging educational experiences that utilise the hinterland and catchment areas of the Nerang River, the forests and geology of the Springbrook plateau, and other unique locations. Sustainability practices are apparent across the centre site and are woven into learning activities and programs. These practices highlight and demonstrate how the centre operates on solar power, accesses tank water, uses worm farms to compost biotic waste, and separates abiotic items for recycling.

Framed around 'Purpose, People, Place', the principal is building an Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA).

The EIA is focused on collaboratively reviewing the 'why, what and how' of the centre to build a united and explicit path forward. Through reference to the State School Improvement Strategy 2021-2025: Every Student Succeeding and the Outdoor and Environmental Education Centres' (OEEC) statement of intent, the principal is building a clear and shared purpose for the centre that is student-focused and prioritises teaching and learning. Teachers articulate the refocus relating to the core principles and purpose of the centre as an important shift in thinking, and are supportive of their day-to-day work with schools and students.

Centre teachers have developed curriculum knowledge over time and are confident in delivering challenging and engaging programs.

Teachers from visiting schools describe the contribution made to program planning by sharing work samples and having professional conversations with staff. Planning with cluster schools in the past was additionally referenced by some teachers. The principal articulates that curriculum delivery quality is assured through a cycle of planning, assessing, internal moderation, and reviewing teaching and learning practices. Centre staff identify collaboration on program design and content, and have recently reviewed programs. The development of the senior secondary programs has had significant input from the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) and secondary Heads of Departments (HOD) and teachers. The level of consultation outside of the school in other programs is yet to be as rigorous and programs are yet to reference the required standards of the Australian Curriculum (AC) and indicate where programs support students' progress towards the standard.



Staff members express high levels of confidence in delivering programs and meeting the needs of students through teaching practices they have developed and honed over time.

Visiting teachers comment on the expert practice of teachers at the centre with some teachers articulating the opportunity to watch centre teachers work with their students as a highlight of the visit to the centre. Centre teachers are able to articulate how they engage students in learning, utilise the environment, activate student prior knowledge, and create challenging and fun tasks. The principal and teachers acknowledge the need to backward map teaching practices to develop a clear understanding of effective practices and approaches that are engaging students and universally utilised by members of the centre teaching staff. The principal articulates this review of practice and exploration of further pedagogical approaches will best meet the needs of learners visiting the centre, and inform the development of the school's next agreed pedagogical approaches.

Teachers work to ensure that targeted student support is provided for every visiting school, based on individual and group learning profiles provided by the visiting schools.

Teachers strengthen differentiation strategies to suit the diverse groups of learners visiting the centre through conversations with classroom teachers, assessing the group on arrival to identify student interest, talents and concerns, and utilising the natural environment. Centre teachers describe how they adjust tasks including reading components to support students with learning difficulties. The principal acknowledges the centre has an ongoing focus on providing an equitable learning experience and access for all students. A facilities audit and upgrades are targeting identified barriers for full access to all students.

The principal has a targeted and systematic approach to realign school-wide policies, practices, budgets and programs to support the centre to respond to the needs of schools and individual learners.

The principal understands the importance of providing programs and services to meet the demands of partner schools and the community, whilst holding strong on the purpose of the centre and the care for the natural environment. The principal acknowledges the upgrade of facilities, reviewing of resource spending, and staffing demands will support the development of a sustainable plan for centre operation moving forward.

The principal acknowledges building trust and healthy relationships as an important component of valuing staff.

Implementing strengths-focused leadership practices is a key action identified in the school Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) to increase staff awareness relating to best practices for working individually and in a team. Staff members have undertaken strengths profiling and a strengths coach is working with individual staff members prior to working as a whole team.



The rich Aboriginal history of Numinbah Valley is integrated into learning programs with traditional and contemporary cultural land management practices explored.

Representatives of First Nation people provide significant input into the learning culture at the centre. There is significant support from the Indigenous community for the work carried out at the centre that highlights learning in relation to Indigenous perspectives. Schools with significant religious, gender and racial diversity are participants in the programs delivered by the centre and consistently 'strongly agree' that centre programs meet the needs of their students. The principal and staff invite all students to be co-learners and environmental champions while engaging with the learning programs. The centre's priority to develop positive relationships with visiting students and staff is commented on by school representatives and interactions are described by visiting staff as professional, friendly and focused on maximising learning by students and visiting teachers.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Provide further opportunity for teachers to collaboratively build knowledge of all aspects of the AC to enable greater rigour in planning and alignment with the AC required standards.

Deepen teacher understanding and implementation of agreed teaching practices through a range of Professional Development (PD) opportunities, including observation and feedback within and external to the centre.

Review centre programs, facilities, documentation and processes through an inclusive practices lens.

Create a sustainable plan that builds the capability of the centre's facilities and staffing allocations to meet the expanding demands and opportunities of partner schools and the community.