

# School plan 2018-2020

## Observatory Hill Environmental Education Centre 5745



# School background 2018–2020

## School vision statement

### Centre Vision Statement

To promote environmental education by providing diverse learning experiences in urban settings, school based sustainability programs and professional learning.

### Environmental and Zoo Education Centers (EZEC) Network Vision

Leading environmental education to empower learners for a sustainable future.

## School context

Observatory Hill Environmental Education Centre (OHEEC) is one of 25 Environmental and Zoo Education Centres (EZEC) operated by the NSW Department of Education (DOE).

These specialised schools make up a learning community that lead schools in the implementation of environmental and sustainability education through experiential learning opportunities in both built and natural environments. They also provide support and advice to teachers and school communities (including professional learning opportunities) to assist them to integrate environmental education objectives across *Key Learning Areas* and sustainably manage school grounds and resources.

The Centre is located within the *Observatory Hill Education Precinct* in the *Millers Point Heritage Conservation Area*. Due to its location, adjacent to Sydney's CBD and historic Rocks precinct, the Centre:

- Provides unique, authentic and engaging experiential learning opportunities focussed on the urban environment
- Works with a variety of local commercial, government and community partners to enrich these learning opportunities
- Is easily accessible via public transport resulting in a wide drawing area of client schools from across Sydney and regional NSW

OHEEC also uses other inner urban sites, works in schools and presents at educational events. The Centre delivers environmental programs and professional learning opportunities to thousands of K–12 students and teachers per annum and caters for a range of learning needs. Teachers booking Centre programs are offered a variety of support including pre and post program resources and Risk Assessment advice.

## School planning process

Evidence to drive the planning process and articulate strategic directions.

The planning process is informed by the:

- Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians
- School Excellence Framework
- Public Schools NSW Strategic Directions – *Creating Futures Together 2015–2017*
- DOE School Planning guides and fact sheets
- Action Research on *Evaluation of Environmental Education programs*

And through guidance by School Planning Experts in the Leadership and High Performance Unit and the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation.

Consultation with key stakeholders:

- OHEEC staff – previewed and discussed the new school planning documentation and processes
- EZEC Principals – collaborated on the 2015–2017 EZEC common goals and strategic directions for improvement and innovation in sustainability education to inform planning and support schools
- Previous OHEEC program participants – surveyed
- Teachers – evaluations of Centre programs
- Students – evaluations of Centre programs


# School strategic directions 2018–2020



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 Empower Learners

### Purpose:

To develop students environmental knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to create environmentally literate citizens. This is accomplished through providing engaging and stimulating learning environments that empower learners to think and communicate creatively, collaboratively and critically to achieve positive environmental impacts.



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 Develop Teacher Capacity

### Purpose:

To develop the capacity of Centre staff in addition to those within our networks, as learners, teachers and leaders in environmental and sustainability education. This will be achieved through participation in, and the provision of, professional learning that improves teaching practice, resulting in the development of environmentally literate citizens.



## STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3 Strengthen Partnerships

### Purpose:

To extend and strengthen partnerships with our networks and communities through effective communication and a culture of collaboration. The impact of these relationships drives the provision of authentic, relevant and unique experiences which enable students to be confident and creative environmental citizens.

# Strategic Direction 1: Empower Learners

## Purpose

To develop students environmental knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to create environmentally literate citizens. This is accomplished through providing engaging and stimulating learning environments that empower learners to think and communicate creatively, collaboratively and critically to achieve positive environmental impacts.

## Improvement Measures

Maintain or increase program bookings from 2017 baseline.

Maintain excellent student and teacher evaluation data showing a high percentage of students indicating positive knowledge, skills, values or attitudes towards the environment.

## People

### Students

Provide engaging, stimulating and curriculum linked programs that inculcate positive knowledge, skills, values and attitudes towards the environment and inspire students to become environmentally literate.

### Staff

Foster a school culture of organisational learning and team leadership to enable collaborative sharing of best practice teaching strategies, and ensure visiting teachers support the centre's learning outcomes

## Processes

1 Provide engaging new programs and update existing programs where required, which are booked by visiting teachers with good evaluation feedback.

2 All staff are experienced in effective delivery of centre programs evidenced by evaluation feedback and peer review. Pre and post resource support is available to extended classroom learning, evidenced by positive evaluation data.

## Evaluation Plan

1 Teacher and student feedback on the program's offered, as well as observations of student learning and collegial discussions with visiting teachers.

2 Teacher evaluation data on professional learning and program support

## Practices and Products

### Practices

1 The EEC provides stimulating and engaging hands-on learning experiences.

2 Visiting teachers link EEC programs into their curriculum planning.

3 EEC Teachers demonstrate high quality teaching and learning practices that have been informed by a program of identified professional learning.

### Products

New program developed, or existing programs modified, to improve student's knowledge, skills, values and attitudes resulting in greater environmental literacy.

# Strategic Direction 2: Develop Teacher Capacity

## Purpose

To develop the capacity of Centre staff in addition to those within our networks, as learners, teachers and leaders in environmental and sustainability education. This will be achieved through participation in, and the provision of, professional learning that improves teaching practice, resulting in the development of environmentally literate citizens.

## Improvement Measures

Numbers of teachers (both EEC and school) engaged in professional learning opportunities.

Maintain positive evaluation data on EEC teacher effectiveness and maintain or increase centre bookings evidenced by teacher satisfaction with centre programs.

## People

### Staff

Provide professional learning opportunities for EEC staff to gain the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively develop and deliver engaging environmental and education for sustainability (EFS) programs, including professional learning opportunities for schools.

### People

## Processes

1 Model best practice in curriculum linked fieldwork

2 Undertake professional learning in environmental education and EFS development and delivery.

## Evaluation Plan

Positive teacher evaluation data showing high quality teaching and learning practices by Centre staff and positive evaluations of PI opportunities provided by OHEEC.

## Practices and Products

### Practices

OHEEC identifies and delivers increased opportunities for teachers professional learning for EEC and school teachers.

OHEEC staff collaborate on program development and work collegially as a team to reflecting on, and respond to program effectiveness.

### Products

High quality EEC teachers able to provide a variety of engaging, curriculum linked programs including effective EFS incursions that promote sustainability in school communities.

A number of professional learning opportunities in environmental and sustainability education delivered by the Centre to school teachers.

# Strategic Direction 3: Strengthen Partnerships

## Purpose

To extend and strengthen partnerships with our networks and communities through effective communication and a culture of collaboration. The impact of these relationships drives the provision of authentic, relevant and unique experiences which enable students to be confident and creative environmental citizens.

## Improvement Measures

- 1 The number of students involved in leadership programs
- 2 The number and variety of partners supporting the centre
- 3 The number of school engaging with leadership programs

## People

### Students

Develop student environmental leadership capacity by providing opportunities for them to develop their leadership and networking capabilities for the environment.

### Staff

Facilitate EEC staff to support and strengthen local school environmental networks and Centre partnerships

### Community Partners

Source new, and strengthen existing partnerships (including EZEC), that provide opportunities and enhance the quality of centre teaching and learning.

### Leaders

Ensure school leaders are aware of EEC services and support their teachers to engage with Centre learning programs.

## Processes

- 1 Collaborative projects are developed with schools, and/or networks of schools, including environmental leadership programs.
- 2 To develop appropriate partnerships (including with EZEC) that enhance the quality of Centre teaching and learning.
- 3 To work with individual schools and networks of schools (eg regional school sustainability networks) to promote environmental education across the DOE and to enhance student's environmental literacy.

## Evaluation Plan

- 1 to gather data on environmental leadership programs
- 2 The number and variety of partners supporting the centre
- 3 Teacher evaluation data about EEC direct engagements with schools and school networks

## Practices and Products

### Practices

- New programs are developed and existing ones strengthened using partnership resources.
- To develop and support regional high school and primary school leadership programs

### Products

- A strong network of Centre partners
- A number of collaborative projects are developed with schools, and networks of schools, including student environmental leadership networks