

School plan 2015 – 2017

Highlands School 5576



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1

Alternate Curricula opportunities for students; particularly disengaged and 'at risk' youth





School vision statement

The fundamental purpose of flexible learning programs is to provide relevant and productive learning and teaching in order to enable viable futures for their students. Positive outcomes from education open doors – and for most young people in flexible learning programs, education and/or training qualifications provide one of the few avenues available to break the cycle of disadvantage impacting on their life and career choices

The vision of Highlands in the next three years includes:

- continuing the success Highlands School already experiences while extending the capacity of the school to provide behaviour intervention and support planning to schools within the local systems,
- creating a new class for children with complex behaviour and mental health needs, and
- providing a Sanctuary Class for senior students with mental health disorders that inhibit attendance at regular schools.

School context

Highlands School is a School for Specific Purposes; predominantly for the re-engagement and intervention of students with significant behavioural disorders. The school has currently 5 classes with a new class soon to be established. There are 3 classes for students with significantly challenging behaviours, with the rest for students with a diagnosed suite of disabilities including Autistic Spectrum Disorder, mental health disorders and occasionally mild intellectual disability. These classes; considered Multi-categorical classes, represent new challenges to the school which has always been solely for behaviour disturbance. The staff and students are working collaboratively with our school community to ensure the safety and well-being of all of our students in a context of awareness around individual needs, interests and ability levels. Davies, Lamb and Doecke (2011, pp.33-38) identify five core pedagogical strategies, each of which Highlands School utilises in engaging youth:

- Making learning less formal.
- Providing flexible learning options.
- Addressing literacy and numeracy skill development needs.
- Making learning applied and hands on.
- Offering programs that integrate technologies.

School planning process

The staff, students and community of Highlands School has collaboratively identified the schools' strengths, the preferred direction of the school, and the steps that will be required to achieve our goals.

Our strategic direction includes:

1. Continuing to provide alternate curricula opportunities that are relevant, engaging, and non-threatening. These opportunities are planned with students' interests and strengths in mind and represent opportunities for the students to experience autonomy in the choosing process, and success in the completion of tasks and projects they find success participating in.
2. Providing the means to re-engage students with severe behaviour and mental health needs through expertise and experience working with students with complex personal histories. Utilising the experience and expertise we have in providing advice, professional development and the breadth information contained within the Behaviour Focus Website. As an SSP we are already considered a 'Centre of Expertise', and we are happy to continue to offer and extend support to the schools in the public system.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1

Alternate curricula opportunities for students; particularly disengaged and 'at risk' youth

Purpose:

Highlands School presents a flexible learning program for disengaged and predominantly 'at risk' youth. The school's primary aim is to be committed to stay flexible and responsive to change and open to creative solutions that best meet the learning needs of our students, staff and community.

The fundamental purpose of flexible learning programs is to provide relevant and productive learning and teaching in order to enable viable futures for their students.

- To extend pathways towards further education and work.
- Empower flexibility in staff to create a curriculum that is responsive to student's needs and goals.
- To extend the personal knowledge, commitment and perspectives of staff.
- To use a curriculum that is connected with students' worlds as well as being intellectually challenging.

Strategic Direction : Alternate Curricula opportunities for students; particularly disengaged and 'at risk' youth

Purpose

Highlands School presents a flexible learning program for disengaged and predominantly 'at risk' youth. The school's primary aim is to be committed to stay flexible and responsive to change and open to creative solutions that best meet the learning needs of our students, staff and community.

The fundamental purpose of flexible learning programs is to provide relevant and productive learning and teaching in order to enable viable futures for their students.

- To extend pathways towards further education and work.
- Empower flexibility in staff to create a curriculum that is responsive to student's needs and goals.
- To extend the personal knowledge, commitment and perspectives of staff.
- To use a curriculum that is connected with students' worlds as well as being intellectually challenging.

Improvement Measures

- The number of articles/resources added to the Behaviour Focus Website will increase by at least ten percent.
- 100% of teaching staff will identify and engage with relevant research that can be effectively applied to the craft of teaching. 100% of teaching staff will be using BOSTES framework to direct the identification of relevant research.
- Development of videos and Adobe Connect course that facilitate the effective management of behaviour at school, class and individual level.

People

Students:

Students will benefit from the use of innovative practice based programs founded on current pedagogical trends identified in research. Students will be included in this endeavour by directly.

Staff:

The staff will be evaluated using the concepts and principles of Glickman's Differential Supervision for the purposes of professional discussion of the new programs, their applicability mainstream teaching and the benefits of students and their families.

Parents:

There is no formal parent group at Highlands School.

Parents are warmly welcomed. Information and resources will be available as and when needed.

Processes

- Trial innovative practices based on current research using a united collegial approach to evaluate the effectiveness.
- Creation of new styles of student profiles that record skills already acquired and suggested opportunities that can consolidate and extend these skills,
- Opportunity planning, based on data already collected on student preferences and skill consolidation so that opportunities are offered in a timely manner in order to acquire and consolidate nominated skills.

Evaluation plan:

Evaluation will be ongoing through observation, teacher and community feedback and through data collected on the number of successful students who transition from Highlands School to their home school, further education or into full time employment.

Products and Practices

Products:

- Maintain currency with the Highlands School Behaviour Focus Website resulting from the innovative programs founded at Highlands School
- Quality links to the teacher accreditation organisation (currently BOSTES) taking into account the innovative delivery style of Highlands School
- Develop modules, derived from school based practice, focusing on behaviour that can be delivered face to face state wide via computer programs such as Adobe Connect.

Practices:

- Actively seek the most current pedagogical advances in the world.
- Develop adaptable resources that can be effectively accessed by all government staff.
- Investigate and incorporate premium computer face to face computer programs that can be accessed by departmental staff.
- Development of DEC specific videos for inclusion on website

