

Silver Lining School
Annual Report 2021
(based on 2020 data)



embracing

educating

empowering

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Silver Lining School acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures; and to Elders past, present and future.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Bahun Jal Mónó was the name given to our property at Ficks Crossing by Aunty Beryl Gambrill when the program first commenced back in the 1990s. In Wakka Wakka language, it roughly translates to the 'place for people of tomorrow'. The board of directors wants to recognise the Traditional Owners and the Historic Owners of the area and pay our respects to elders past and present and recognise their connection to the land and water. Aunty Beryl sadly passed away back in 2012, but in so many ways her contribution to the area and her people is still a part of the very foundation of our school today.

2020 was a tough year for the Cherbourg community due to the Covid restrictions that were put in place by the government. In many ways the entire community was isolated with an army checkpoint being put in place on the outskirts of the community to restrict people from coming and going. Students were allowed to attend school, but it was a difficult process for all involved. I wanted to personally thank all the staff for their work in 2020. In what were very trying circumstances, the team were able to keep the school open and deliver some great outcomes for the young people attending.

In January we were delighted to have an additional site at Barcaldine and I want to thank Cheryl Thompson and the team for their commitment and work with the 'Desert Mob' young people.

Working with horses has been a significant component of the educational program at Ficks Crossing, I need to recognise the tremendous amount of effort that Toby Gorringe and Vanessa Fox have put into the horse program and their commitment to making sure that this program was carried out in a safe and successful way. Bevan Costello's secondment from the Department of Education with our school ended in December 2020, and he has returned back to work with the department in 2021. This has meant that our school is entering a new pathway for 2021 with the appointment of Jo Campbell as the principal. The strategy for 2021 under Jo's leadership will centre around caring for country and connecting in with conservation and Indigenous land management practices. On behalf of the board of directors at Silver Lining Foundation Australia, we wanted to thank Bevan for his years of investment into the organisation and all the work he has done at the school.

Nigel Daisy

Board Chairman

ABOUT US

Silver Lining School is an Indigenous led response by the community elders in partnership with education and community services to create pathways to positive futures for their young people. Silver Lining School is an independent, co-educational Special Assistance School for 7 - 12, catering for the diverse learning needs of disenfranchised, mainly Aboriginal, learners from over two distinct sites, one at Ficks Crossing and one at Barcaldine. Where students attending Ficks Crossing come from Cherbourg, Murgon, Wondai and the surrounding areas, students from the Barcaldine site are from remote communities in far north west Queensland and the Northern Territory.

The school caters for young people and offers an alternate, hands-on approach to learning within multi-age groupings. Students may be referred to the school by the community elders, Department of Communities, Child Safety, Youth Justice and other local schools.

Ficks Crossing, with Barambah Creek to the east and the Bunya Ranges to the west, features gently sloping paddocks of gums. This provides an excellent position for students to engage in their learning with a heavy focus on culture, and connecting & caring for country. The property was titled Bahun Jal Mono by local elder, Aunty Beryl Gambriell. The meaning is 'Place of People of Tomorrow', evoking a hope for better futures for the young people. The totem is the Powerful Owl.

The Barcaldine site is positioned with easy access to the community sporting facilities, arts and cultural centres, local rivers and a culturally relevant station property, thus affording students a broad range of learning experiences as they journey through their ACARA curriculum program.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of Silver Lining School is to provide an educational environment in which young Indigenous people can prosper spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, physically and materially, and be empowered for life in all its fullness.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

To empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to achieve positive futures through providing high quality education and real pathway opportunities.

AIMS

Silver Lining School aims to:

embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, cultural knowledge and wisdom to foster in students strong, positive identities as a basis for the educational program.

create a *safe* environment in which students further their academic knowledge, skills and confidence to achieve their full potential, attain economic independence, and contribute positively to their families, their communities and Australian society.

be a *leader* in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and enable life-long learning.

CORE VALUES

Silver Lining School values:

Resilience - the development of a robust, Indigenous context underpins all aspects of school life & learning.

Learning – learning, and the joy and opportunities that it can bring to individuals and communities.

Community - healthy communities where individuals feel valued.

Respect - individual self-respect and respect for others, their property and their reputation.

Relationships - healthy and productive relationships between all members of the Community.

Reconciliation - reconciliation between first nation and second nation people.

Diversity - the world view & cultural perspective of all individuals and what this offers the whole community.

Personal excellence - the striving for personal excellence in all aspects of life.

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Typically, students attending Silver Lining School have previously been adversely impacted by barriers to their attendance, engagement and learning. These may include:

- Remoteness, transience
- Family/cultural timetables and expectations
- Poverty, unemployment
- Mental health - attachment disruption, anxiety, depression, suicide
- Social health - domestic violence, crime, incarceration
- Physical health - substance abuse, poor nutrition
- Historical trauma
- Overwhelming 'shame' caused by increasing gaps in learning, Thinking 'I can't achieve'.
- Disabilities
- English as an Additional Dialect/Language

Silver Lining School provides pathways to re-engagement through understanding the barriers to learning experienced by its students, and creating an environment to mitigate these factors.

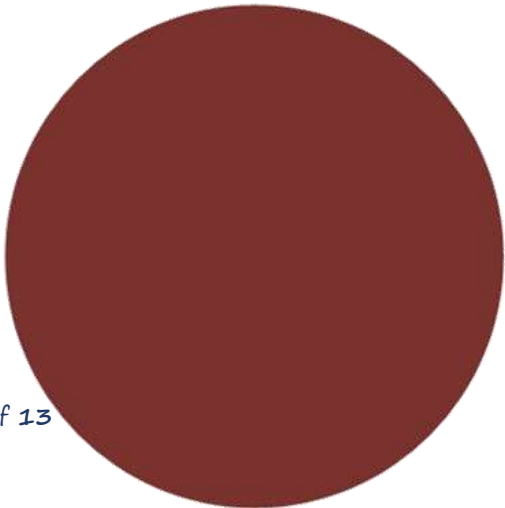
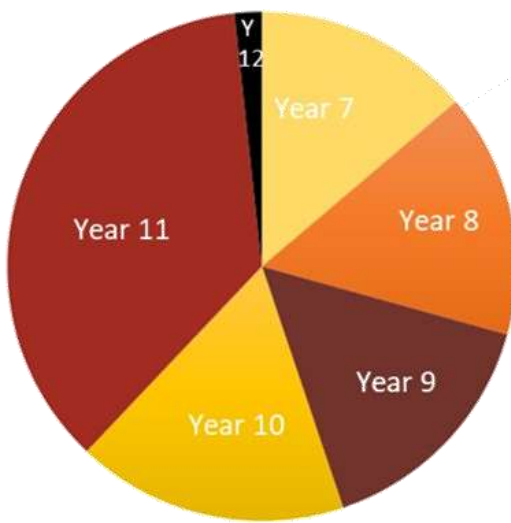
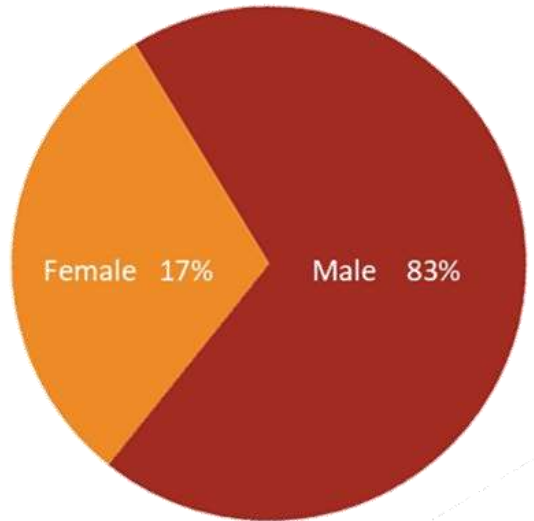
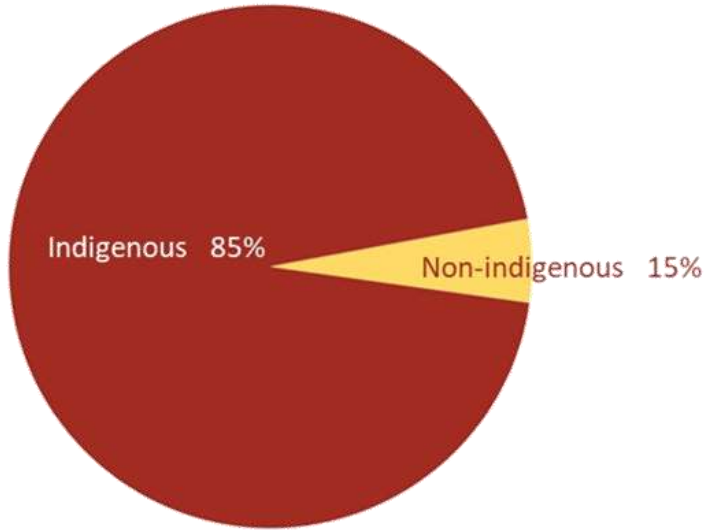
As these barriers negatively impact students' attitudes, motivation and behaviour toward learning, Silver Lining School staff continue to focus on the positive in every student, always celebrating successes and alleviating feelings of shame and fear of failure.

Students are encouraged to set individual goals to improve their future outcomes, and then equipped and supported along their journey. Staff work to maintain a safe school culture where students feel respected and valued; and enabled to re-engage, participate and succeed.

Silver Lining School networks with vocational educators, health care professionals, local businesses and community service providers, working towards establishing better options for healthy and meaningful futures.



STUDENT DATA



SOCIAL CLIMATE

GURRI / YARNING CIRCLES

Gurri Circles have been used in indigenous communities for centuries and are an integral part of the culture and community life at Ficks Crossing. Circle-time provides structure and purpose at the start and end of each school day. It is an opportunity for staff and students to 'check-in' and share how their day is going, and for the group to discuss important matters for the day. Morning circles offer a platform for local elders to share culture, and allows for clear goals and expectations to be established. While afternoon circles are generally shorter, they provide a daily group reflection time and a chance to celebrate individual and group achievements. Gurri circles provide plenty of opportunities for students to provide feedback and contribute to the school community.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Silver Lining School uses Restorative Practices to:

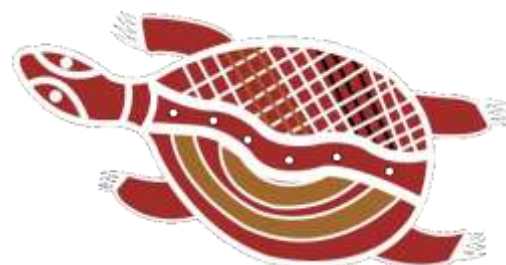
- promote healthy relationships
- teach positive negotiation skills (especially when working through issues with others)
- give opportunity for individuals to own responsibility for any harmful behaviour choices
- to 'make things right' - restore relationships
- improve student engagement

When a conflict, bullying or wrongdoing occurs, the emphasis is on restoration of relationship rather than blame and punishment. Natural consequences may follow, rather than punishments imposed. (eg: if a student defaces a wall they will get to clean the wall.)

For ongoing, complex and/or highly sensitive issues, students and/or staff may access the support of relevant local services.

SCHOOL SATISFACTION

Feedback has come from students, parents, carers, local elders, community services, other local schools, Youth Justice, Overwhelmingly the feedback is positive, with people grateful for the school's caring for and providing a specialised program for students who have been unable to maintain enrolment in mainstream schooling. Staff have found this 'covid' year difficult and had to work through some difficult situations. Parents, carers and relevant community workers have commented positively on the program offered, and on how staff are prepared to 'go the extra mile' for the students' education and well-being. Parents, carers and students are grateful for the breakfast program, the door to door daily transport, flexibility of delivery and the commitment to cultural learning. Several parents have commented that their son "now wants to come to school". One student wrote in a report to Community Services that "school was his safe place".



EDUCATION PROGRAM

Silver Lining School offers flexibility in learning for students in Years 7 – 12. The needs, backgrounds, abilities and aspirations of our students undergird the development of the curriculum and delivery of the learning.

The school's Education Program has been developed with consideration to the following documents:

- The Australian Curriculum (ACARA)
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy
- Queensland Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Framework
- Vocational Education and Training under the Australian Qualifications Framework
- P – 10 Australian Curriculum in Queensland document
- Anti-discrimination Act 1991
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- Alice Springs Mparntwe Education Declaration 2019 (Modified February 2020)

MIDDLE SCHOOL LEARNING

Our Middle School curriculum is delivered in multi-age or 'family' groupings. Multi-age grouping is the organisational structure we believe allows us to put into practice our learner centred philosophy and to develop learning environments where individual needs are most effectively met. It is particularly suitable for curriculum delivery to our small student groups. The 2-year rotation of Integrated Themed Units include content descriptors across the range of Australian Curriculum learning areas. Time allocation for each Learning Area has been carefully considered to align with QCAA requirements. Teachers use inclusive strategies to make adjustments to delivery, learning experiences and assessment tasks to enable all students to demonstrate knowledge, skills and/or competencies. As well as embedding ACARA English and mathematics in the units, they are timetabled separately to enable explicit teaching of specific concepts, and the opportunity for students to fill in the gaps in their individual learning. Students' cultures, ages, abilities/disabilities, aptitudes, special needs and development help inform curriculum delivery decisions.

Years 7-10	Middle School Program
English/Foundational Literacy	Individual programs
Mathematics/Foundational Numeracy	Individual programs
Integrated Themed Units	Units are developed to deliver content descriptors and elaborations from all learning areas of the Australian curriculum over a 2-year cycle. (Third year of cycle in development)
Cross-curricular focus	ATSI History & Culture, Sustainability, Asia
Cultural learning options:	Art, celebrations & ceremonies, local history, Gurri/Yarning circles, language, cooking, didgeridoo playing, craft, tool making, story-telling, fishing, land care. (Students will participate in a range of these possible activities.)
Group Electives: (Students will participate in a range of these possible activities.)	Horse husbandry, swimming, basketball, gym, Indigenous games, volunteering, horticulture, bird watch, bush walking, cooking, music, arts, craft, woodwork, property maintenance program, farm experience, mustering, land care, fishing, adventure-based learning opportunities, citizen scientist projects.
Well-being:	On-going throughout the year: Daily Gurri Circle, Growth Mindset Education, Restorative Practices, Mental Health Education, Guest educators: Sex Education, Drug and Alcohol Awareness Education.

YEARS 11 – 12 CURRICULUM, PATHWAYS AND TRANSITIONS

Students who attend Silver Lining School may be eligible for either the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) or the Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA). The QCIA is generally reserved for students with significant learning needs who have not been able to meet the requirements to bank QCE credits. The school recognises that for some students, 20 QCE points may not be achieved by the end of Year 12 for a variety of reasons. However, all students are provided with opportunities to achieve 20 credits (in line with QCE requirements) as part of their Senior Program. Some Year 10 students choose to embark on their senior program under the QCAA's Variable Progression Rate.

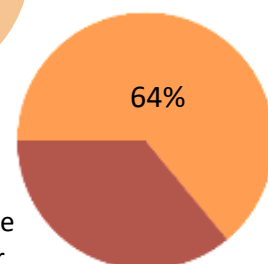
Senior Curriculum Offerings

QCE Category	Credits	Course	
Max of 8 QCE credits	Preparatory	1	QCAA Short Course in Literacy
	Preparatory	1	QCAA Short Course in Numeracy
	Preparatory	2	Can do Kids – Workplace Training
	Complementary	2	Independent Living Skills – Nutrition & Well-being
Min of 12 QCE credits	Core	4	Agricultural Practices – Animal and Plant Studies 2019
	Core	4	Arts in Practice
	Core	4	Building and Construction Skills
	Core	4	Early Childhood Studies
	Core	4	Sport and Recreation
VET Certificate courses	Students may enrol in Certificate courses where the school partners with external RTOs.		
Cultural learning options: (Students will participate in a range of these possible activities.)	Art, celebrations & ceremonies, local history, yarning circles, language, dance, hunting, cooking, didgeridoo playing, craft, tool making, story-telling, fishing, land care.		
Group Electives: (Students will participate in a range of these possible activities.)	Horse husbandry, swimming, basketball, gym, Indigenous games, volunteering, horticulture, bird watch, bush walking, cooking, music, arts, craft, woodwork, property maintenance program, farm experience, mustering, land care, fishing, adventure-based learning opportunities, citizen scientist projects.		
Well-being:	On-going throughout the year: Daily Gurri/Yarning Circle, Growth Mindset Education, Restorative Practices, Mental Health Education, Guest educators: Sex Education, Drug and Alcohol Awareness Education.		
Work Readiness: (Students participate in a range of these possible activities.)	Baseline Learning Skills, Work experience, social enterprise, workplace visits, TAFE visits, guest speakers.		

STUDENT OUTCOMES

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

2020 was a year of disruptions for all Australians with Covid-19 impacting on education delivery and the cancellation of NAPLAN. Students from indigenous communities were significantly affected with many in extended lockdowns. The average student attendance rate for the whole school in 2020 was 64%. Please note, the average attendance rate for each year level has not been included due to the low number of students in each year level.



Silver Lining School has processes in place to encourage students engagement and school attendance.

- School bus collects students from their homes giving opportunity for daily communication with parents/carers, whilst also removing 'transport' as a barrier to attendance.
- Clear communication with students and parents/carers regarding expectations around school attendance and school policy for approved absences.
- Ongoing tracking of absenteeism to identify students who require early intervention and family support strategies to maximise school attendance.
- Local elder/s, collaborating with the school, are in a position to address external issues that inhibit attendance, and then offer support towards student re-engagement.
- Working with students, parents/carers, community elders and other stakeholders to identify barriers to school attendance, and implementing strategies to overcome these barriers
- Notification of relevant government agencies (e.g. Centrelink, Youth Justice) when absenteeism is identified as an ongoing issue.

APPARENT RETENTION RATES

As our first year was 2019 we will not have retention rate data from Year 10 - Year 12 until 2021.

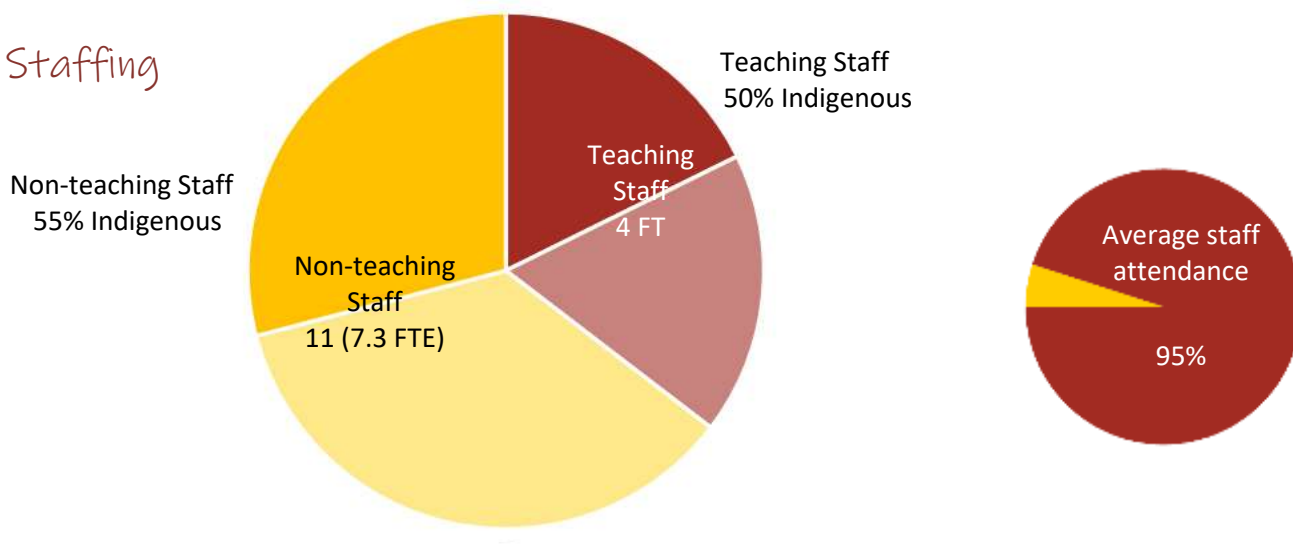
YEAR 12 OUTCOMES

We are proud of our only Year 12 'Class of 2020' who graduated with a senior certificate, a Certificate II in Sport and Recreation and attained their Queensland Certificate of Education.

POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

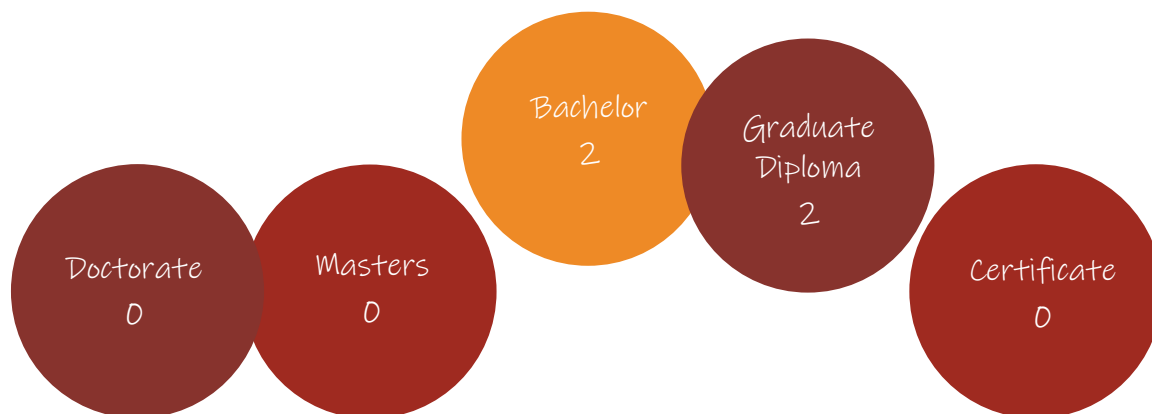
To be uploaded by 30th September 2021

Staffing



QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERS

Number of teachers who hold these qualifications.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Beyond more formal qualifications, the team have also engaged in Professional Development opportunities to deepen knowledge and understanding.

Learning	Professional Standards Included	# Staff
First Aid	4	8
Professional Boundaries in Teaching	1, 4, 5, 6, 7	2
Child Protection	1, 4, 5, 6, 7	9
Restorative Practices	1, 4, 5, 6, 7	9
Students with Disability	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	2
QCAA Webinar on Short Courses	2, 3, 5, 6	1
EAL/D Bandscaling for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students (2 days)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	2

In 2020 \$6106.00 was spent on staff Professional Development.

SCHOOL FUNDING

Information regarding the school's funding sources can be found at the My School website
www.myschool.edu.au .

