



SILVER LINING FOUNDATION
A U S T R A L I A

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing
ANNUAL REPORT 2022
(based on 2021 data)

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BOARD CHAIR REPORT

Silver Lining School is situated on Wakka Wakka country at Ficks Crossing and backs on to the Cherbourg community in the South Burnett – I want to pay my respects to the elders past and present there and recognise the Wakka Wakka people and their connection to country and water in that area.

This year we lost a great champion of Silver Lining Foundation Australia, Bevan Costello. 'Pop' as he was affectionately known, was one of the first company directors of Silver Lining Foundation Australia Ltd and prior to that served as chairman for the Silver Lining Trust for many years. He was principal of our school in 2019 & 2020 and was a deputy principal of the former rodeo school that was run on the site for the last ten or so years. He will be greatly missed by all – his legacy will live on in the school.

It has been a tough couple of years for the people of Cherbourg with Covid and what that has meant for the community. We have gone from having military roadblocks stopping anyone coming in to the community to continual lockdowns for the school which has made it very difficult to operate any sort of educational program in the area. I want to recognise and thank all the staff and especially Jo Campbell the principal for the tireless work that they do in the community and for keeping the school operational and keeping the attendance going.

Silver Lining School has seen a significant shift in the way the school operates with Jo Campbell coming on as school principal. We have seen the students of the school embrace learning First Nation's land management practices through a forged relationship with the Bunya Mountains Indigenous Rangers. Students have been able to work with the rangers to improve the quality of the property and ensure that the land is managed correctly using traditional methods and knowledge. The improvement and transformation of the property is incredible as is the transformation of the young people who have repaired the land.

This year we began a temporary site / campus at Mooroolool in Cairns, as a satellite of our school at Ficks Crossing. Cairns has grown in leaps and bounds and has around 20-25 students enrolled and engaging with the educational program. Nicole Reardon heads this temporary site up and the application for it to become a registered campus is to be initiated in 2022. This will be the second school that Silver Lining School has started.

On behalf of the board of directors, we are very proud of the outcomes being achieved by the students, staff and members of the community at the Silver Lining School and look forward to what the following years will bring.



Nigel Daisy
BOARD CHAIR

SILVER LINING FOUNDATION AUSTRALIA

The Silver Lining Foundation Australia is a First Nation's charity working with Australian young people in areas of training and education. Established in 1999, the Foundation has been influential in helping to shape the lives of young Indigenous people in Queensland. The charity is governed by Indigenous people, and it runs programs on Traditional Land in Queensland.

Silver Lining Foundation Australia is committed to an Indigenous led response regarding the growing amount of disengaged young people in regional and remote Australia.

SILVER LINING SCHOOL - FICKS CROSSING

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing is a small co-educational independent secondary (years 7-12) school established to cater for the diverse learning needs of disenfranchised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners from our local community. The school delivers learning experiences that are culturally rich, age appropriate and academically achievable, while maintaining the integrity and intent of the Australian Curriculum.

Students are at the centre of our practice, with their needs, backgrounds, perspectives, and interests reflected in the learning programs.

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

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing acknowledges that United Nations statement regarding the Right to [an] Education that is “available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable.”¹ Furthermore the school aims to deliver a culturally appropriate education in consultation with community elders.



¹ Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 13 – the Right to Education, UN Doc E/C.12/1999/10 (1999), paragraph 6–7. *Our Community*

Our Local Community

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing is located 65 km north of Townsville, and 35 km south of Ingham at Crystal Creek, Mutarnee. In 2018, Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing resumed governance of the property at Crystal Creek to provide opportunity for struggling students to re-engage with their education.

The school is named after the nearby Ficks Crossing Station, which aims to improve opportunities for Nywaigi peoples through sharing the rich history and culture of the station through various enterprises including cultural tours. Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing is another Indigenous led response by the community elders in partnership with education and community services to create pathways to positive futures for their young people.

With the backdrop Crystal Creek, lush topical surrounds, and plenty of outdoor space, the property is an ideal location for students to engage in a variety of cultural learning activities. Traditional owners of the country are the Nywaigi peoples, with various Elders involved in the school.

The school services students from Ingham, Townsville, and Palm Island student who reside at the neighbouring Many Nations Student Hostel during the school term.

Many students who attend Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing are from families and communities where levels of poverty, unemployment, substance abuse, addiction, physical and mental health problems, domestic violence, incarceration, and suicide are concerningly over-represented.



Community, Cultural and Family

Connectedness of family and community is fundamental for Indigenous communities. When events are scheduled, there is a strong tradition for the mob to gather. This may be for ceremonies, celebrations or country-specific occasions. Students have often missed mainstream school to participate in these cultural events. As cultural learning is essential to the learning program, many of these activities are embedded into our curriculum and participation in the experience is a vital part of our learning.

Our Young People

Silver Lining School – Ficks Crossing works collaboratively with local high schools, support agencies, and community elders to identify young people who have disengaged from mainstream schooling options for referral to the school. The school offers a culturally appropriate, hands-on, and highly individualised approach to learning which aims to prepare students for a transition to the workplace or further learning. The school welcomes both indigenous and non-indigenous students.

Referrals to the school are primarily from community service providers including CTC, Mercy Community, CRAICCHS, Cherbourg Youth Justice Centre, and local schools. Young people are considered for the program when they have been unable to access mainstream schooling options due to significant social, emotional and learning needs. The school continues to work collaboratively with community services to ensure that wrap-around support is provided for young people and their families.

YOUNG MEN'S PROGRAM

The Young Men's Program was reestablished by the Silver Lining Foundation Ltd in 2019 after the program had been previously closed by another education provider. Silver Lining School spent the first few years establishing trust with community elders, families and services that the school would be a long-term option for young people. The Young Men's program began mid-year 2019 with 11 young men who were ready to re-engage in their education journey and grew to 15 enrolments during 2021.

YOUNG WOMEN'S PROGRAM – FUTURE PLANNING

In 2021 Silver Lining School – Ficks Crossing began community consultation for the establishment of a *Young Women's Program*. The school began working alongside community service providers and the local secondary schools to identify young women who would benefit from an alternative schooling program. Workshops were held during 2021 each Wednesday in Cherbourg, where a core group of prospective students for the program met to develop trust and rapport with the Silver Lining School staff and identify what they felt was important in an educational program for young women in the community.

TEMPORARY SITE - CAIRNS

In 2021 Silver Lining School – Ficks Crossing established a new 'temporary site' in Cairns. This program began in July 2021, with 24 enrolments by August.

EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS

Statement of Philosophy

To empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to confidently navigate the two worlds they live in, by prioritising cultural learning and growth, alongside academic learning.

Aims

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing aims to:

Embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, cultural knowledge and wisdom to foster strong, positive identities for our young people.

Create a safe environment in which students can develop their emotional literacy, cultural knowledge, academic knowledge, skills and confidence to achieve their full potential so that they may contribute positively to their families, their communities and the broader society.

Provide opportunities for learning that have real world links to vocational outcomes.

Core Values

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing core values are:

Country	Look after country, and all that share it.
Responsibility	Understanding shared and individual responsibility, and the interconnectedness of us all.
Culture	Ensure culturally appropriate knowledge underpins all aspects of school life & learning.
Belonging	Understanding that belonging is an integral part of the human experience, and a need we all share.

Mission Statement

The purpose of Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing is to provide an educational environment in which young Indigenous people can grow culturally, emotionally, intellectually, and physically, empowering them to engage positively and successfully in their culture, their community, and the broader world.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy (2015)

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing is an Indigenous led response to the ever-growing disengagement and educational gap of young Indigenous people. The local culture of the Wakka Wakka people and maintaining relationships of trust and respect are foundational in meeting the educational needs of our students.

The School's Education Program is guided by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy (2015). The principles that underpin the strategy include:

- ✓ High expectations for our young people to achieve their potential
- ✓ Equity of educational opportunities for young people in our community
- ✓ Accountable, transparent and responsive practices
- ✓ Recognition of our community's culture, histories, values and languages
- ✓ Time spent in our community to develop meaningful relationships
- ✓ Partnerships with the community to make decisions for the school
- ✓ A local approach which maximises educational outcomes
- ✓ Quality programs based on knowledge, evidence and research

The *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy* 'priority areas' that are reflected in our Education Programs include:

1. Culture and Identity
2. Partnerships
3. Attendance
4. Transitions
5. Literacy & Numeracy

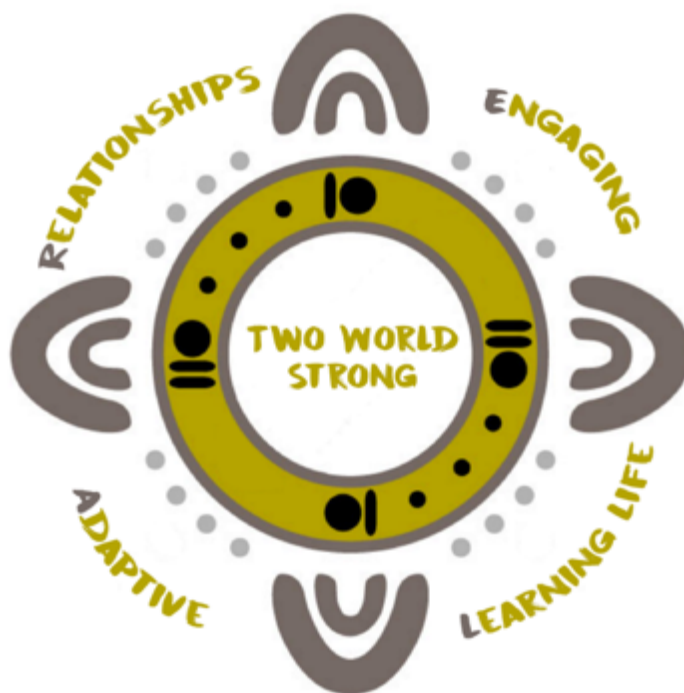
PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK – Keeping it R.E.A.L.

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing aims to consider all aspects of *Curriculum, Teaching and Learning* in ways that keep it REAL! Our Pedagogical Framework highlights the evidence-based approaches that are central to what we do, and the way we do it.

Central to the 'Keeping it R.E.A.L. framework' is the emphasis on an approach to Curriculum, Teaching and Learning that is 'TWO WORLD STRONG'. The framework acknowledges the importance of students becoming strong in their ability to engage in both their culture and in the wider community. Value is placed on both aspects of learning, with neither being emphasised at the cost of the other.

Keeping it R.E.A.L highlights 4 core elements that underpin our pedagogical framework; *Relationships, Engaging, Adaptive, and Learning Life*.

Relationships	Attachment Aware Approach, Restorative Practices, Relationship Framework, Wellbeing Focused.
Engaging	Explicit and responsive instruction, hands-on learning projects, student centred, strengths-based approach.
Adaptive	Data informed, responds to individual needs, inclusive universal design and differentiated learning.
Learning Life	Learning to Learn, transferrable skills, preparation for employment and further education, active and informed citizens, real world problem solving, learning for life.



CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNING

Learning Areas and Subjects

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing offers a flexible curriculum program which caters for the needs of students of all students. All students Years 7 -12 participate in a variety of *Immersed Learning* activities, *Wellbeing Program*, and *Cultural Learning* experiences in addition to the core learning areas.

Years 7-9 Curriculum

The School's Years 7-9 program has a significant focus on Literacy and Numeracy as well as providing students opportunities to engage with other learning areas in a way that is both culturally and developmentally appropriate.

The 7-9 Curriculum is founded in the Australian Curriculum including all ACARA Learning Areas, General Capabilities, Cross-Curricular Priorities. The Framework for Aboriginal Language and Torres Strait Islander Languages forms a foundation for the cultural learning program.

Senior Curriculum (Years 11-12)

The Senior secondary education program offered at Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing is based on the QCAA senior syllabus and includes and other courses recognised by the QCAA.

Students are given options regarding their senior program through the SET plan process.

In addition to the QCAA senior subjects and courses available, students may also continue with elements of the Year 7-10 program, including individual literacy and numeracy programs.

STUDENT WELLBEING

The wellbeing of students is foundation for developing a healthy learning community at Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing. Student wellbeing is achieved through a learning community where young people are active participants in the learning community, and where their views and ideas are valued. Students who do not feel safe and supported in their school environment are at greater risk of disengagement from the school and wider community.

STUDENT DISENGAGEMENT

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing recognises the significant barriers students face on a daily basis which impact on their attendance, engagement and learning. Some of these barriers are influenced by factors including:

- *Remoteness*
Family & Cultural Needs
- *Social Disadvantage & Poverty*
- *Health & Wellbeing*
- *Disabilities*
- *English as an Additional Language or Dialect*

The school recognises that student disengagement is rarely caused by a single factor or event and is usually the result of a complex process which has resulted from barriers related to the individual, family, school, and wider community.

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing provides a pathway to re-engagement through understanding the barriers to learning experienced by its students, then creating an environment to mitigate these factors. By understanding the powerful impact students' attitudes, motivation and behaviour toward learning; staff focus on student strengths, celebrate successes with the goal of alleviating shame and fear of failure.

YARNING CIRCLES AND RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Yarning Circles are an important process within both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This practise allows a learning community to develop the skills for respectful and honest interactions where members can have a space to hear from others and the chance to respond. Students participate in a daily Yarning Circle where relationships are further developed, cultural learning takes place, and matters impacting on the community are discussed and resolved. The use of Yarning Circles provides the basis for building a healthy environment where Restorative Practices can be implemented.

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing uses restorative approach to developing healthy learning communities where individuals are held responsible when they have caused harm to others. The approach provides opportunities for individuals to accept responsibility for their role in conflicts and take the necessary steps to repair the damage caused.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing is committed to providing the highest quality Indigenous Special Assistance Education for young people who have disengaged from education for a variety of complex reasons. The school acknowledges the privilege and responsibility that comes with providing students with another chance at education. Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing is committed to the implementation of policies, processes and practical strategies which emphasise the importance of tracking and assessment, regular monitoring of students, and strategies for engaging relevant students.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The average student attendance rate for the whole school in 2021 was 54%, with 15% of students attending 90% or more of the time. Please note, the My School data for 2021 also included data for Desert Mob Silver Lining School (Barcaldine) which has been reported in a separate Annual Report. The attendance rates for this Annual Report has been calculated based on 63% attendance rate for Ficks Crossing, with 33% of students attending 90% or more of the time, and 58% attendance rate for the Cairns (temporary) site, with 4% of students attending 90% or more of the time.) 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.

The school implements a variety of evidence-based models and strategies to promote the engagement of student with complex needs in the teaching and learning process These models include:

- ✓ Community Breakfast and Lunch Programs
 - ✓ Student Centred Approach
 - ✓ Attachment Informed Schooling
 - ✓ Restorative Practices
 - ✓ Cultural Learning
 - ✓ Connecting with Country
 - ✓ Explicit or Direct Instruction
 - ✓ Learning to Learn
-
- Door to door school pick up by Education Support staff who undertake wellbeing check-ins for students and families
 - Clear communication with students and parents/carers regarding expectations around school attendance and school policy for approved absences
 - Daily communication with parents/carers regarding school absenteeism (often initiated by the school)
 - Ongoing tracking of absenteeism to identify students who require early intervention and family support strategies to maximise school attendance (e.g., initiating home visits and support and advise from community elders)
 - The proactive monitoring of student attendance including community visits and an integrated approach by other community youth service providers (e.g., drug/alcohol support services, housing support, mental health support)

- Working with students, parents/carers, and other stakeholders to identify barriers to school attendance, and strategies to overcome these barriers
- Notification to relevant government agencies when reporting of extensive absenteeism or non-attendance is required (e.g., Centrelink, EQ Regional Office)

NAPLAN RESULTS

In 2021 there were a total of seven Year 9 students who participated in the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy. The small number of participants and available background data meant that there were 'no comparisons available' for students with similar backgrounds. However, when school results were compared with 'all Australian students', Ficks Crossing's results were considered 'Well Below' the average.

Year 9	Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar	Numeracy
School Average	415	332	421	417	492
National Average	577	551	580	573	588

YEAR 10 – 12 RETENTION RATES

Our first cohort of students who had attended from Year 10 to Year 12 graduated in 2021. In 2019 there were a total of 4 students enrolled in Year 10. In 2021 two of these students graduated Year 12.

YEAR 12 OUTCOMES

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing were proud to have 7 students graduate Year 12 in 2021.

- ✓ All 7 students were awarded a Senior Education Profile & Senior Statement
- ✓ All 7 students had gained points towards the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) to continue working towards with post-school studies.

POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS

This data will be available by September 2022.

OUR STAFF

In 2021 Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing (including Cairns temporary site) had 3 teaching staff (FTE 3.0) and 2 non-teaching staff (FTE 1.5) on campus. An additional 7 staff provided the school with support from head office (allocated FTE 1.25). Our staff operate as a collaborative professional team, sharing a wide range skills and experience in supporting young people with diverse backgrounds and learning needs. The school employed 5 Indigenous staff; 3 who worked on campus and 2 providing remote support. The average attendance rates for staff in 2021 was 98%. *(Please note, My School staffing rates for 2021 will vary from these rates as they also included the Barcaldine/Desert Mob temporary site.)*

	Teaching Staff	Non-teaching Staff
Number of Staff	3	12
Full-time equivalent	3	7.5

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Ficks Crossing

Learning	Professional Standards Included	# Staff
First Aid	4, 6, 7	5
Mental Health First Aid	1, 4, 6, 7	4
Child Protection	4, 6, 7	5
Oz Identities – Self-awareness training	6, 7	4
Trauma and Brain Development	1, 4, 6, 7	5
Volatile Substances	4, 6, 7	5
Indigenous Principals Biennial Forum	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	1
Community Health Training	4, 6, 7	5

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Cairns Temporary Site (opened Semester 2, 2021)

Learning	Professional Standards Included	# Staff
First Aid	4	4
Child Protection	1, 4, 5, 6, 7	4
Curriculum, Teaching and Learning	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	2

TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER QUALIFICATIONS

Highest level of qualification	Number of qualifications
Doctorate	-
Masters	-
Graduate Diploma	-
Bachelor Degree	3
Diploma	-
Certificate	-

SCHOOL FUNDING

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



SILVER LINING FOUNDATION
A U S T R A L I A

Silver Lining School - Ficks Crossing acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners of this country throughout Australia, and their connection to land and community.

We pay our respect to all Traditional Owners, and to their Elders past, present and emerging.