School context

Royal Far West School (RFWS) provides educational services to the clients of Royal Far West (RFW) clinical programs. Our cohort at Manly is entirely made up of students from rural and remote NSW. All come with a medical referral, primarily focusing on developmental concerns, learning difficulties, behavioural issues and emotional wellbeing.

Our school is an integral part of a multidisciplinary team that provides holistic diagnoses and treatment options, clarification of existing diagnoses for complex issues and a range of remote support services and programs.

RFWS also provides a service to the NSW Centre for Effective Reading. Our team at Manly carry out assessments for country children with complex reading difficulties and then work with referring schools and families to develop a plan for reading intervention.

RFWS and RFW are working towards a fully integrated model of health and educational assessment and support.

Student information

Virtually all clients and their siblings aged 3½ to year 12 come to RFWS during their admission to RFW clinical services. The school is an integral part of the assessment program and attendance is strongly encouraged by our combined services.

Approximately 20% of our students identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.

Some students who come to RFW are extremely school-avoidant, highly anxious or very oppositional. Every effort is made by school staff, in particular our school counsellors and Assistant Principal (School Operations) to work with families and students to develop a plan that will support reintegration into educational services.

Royal Far West School has 5 classes, including an integrated class for students with very high support needs. All students in these classes are clients of RFW health services.

RFWS also provides a range of remote services to schools and students. These include multidisciplinary videoconferences with referring schools and SOLVE IT, the RFWS literacy outreach program. SOLVE IT provides individual structured lessons three times a week to 30 students at any one time. Lessons are delivered using internet technology.

RFWS includes the Centre for Effective Reading Manly. The Centre provides multidisciplinary assessments and personalized programs to country students with complex reading difficulties. Students are referred from all school sectors. They are not generally clients of RFW.
**What our students say about our school?**

We love
- Jumping on the trampoline
- Playing with friends
- Singing songs

It's a really nice place and I have made many new friends. I want to come back

I really enjoy all the art activities

I love coming to RFWS because you get to learn in a fun way

I always miss RFWS when I go home

This school is good. Heaps better than normal school.

It is fun and awesome. I like the teachers.

It’s alright. I like the sport and meeting the other kids.

It’s mad and cool. You get to do what you want within the boundaries

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**Workforce information**

RFWS has a dynamic, flexible, experienced and innovative staff who are passionate about the power of education as an agent for change. We are proud to have a full-time Aboriginal Education Officer. All classes have a teacher and a student learning support officer (SLSO).

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**Workforce composition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal(s)</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Teacher(s)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher of severe reading difficulties</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Librarian</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Counsellor</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Administrative &amp; Support</td>
<td>8.822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18.022</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Teacher qualifications**

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements for teaching in NSW public schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>% of staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree or Diploma</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Professional learning and teacher accreditation**

All teachers (and most of our support staff) took part in a range of the following professional learning activities during 2014. These included training in:

- ✔ Literacy assessment and development
- ✔ Behaviour management
- ✔ Trauma-based classroom management
- ✔ Boys’ education
- ✔ Aboriginal Education
- ✔ Autism
- ✔ The Australian curriculum
- ✔ Assistive technology
✓ Social skills
✓ Child mental health
✓ The new business management systems in the NSW Department of Education and Communities

Approval to attend courses and the development of all onsite programs are clearly linked to our strategic directions.

Average expenditure per teacher for professional learning was $1262.

Total expenditure on teacher professional learning was $12,626.

Total expenditure of teacher and support staff professional learning was $20,630.

School development days were used for whole staff professional development in
✓ child protection, behaviour management
✓ Non-Violent Crisis Intervention,
✓ emergency care
✓ the Australian curriculum
✓ boys’ education
✓ assistive technology
✓ Aboriginal Education.

Financial summary
This summary covers funds for operating costs and does not involve expenditure areas such as permanent salaries, building and major maintenance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of financial summary</th>
<th>30/11/2014</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance brought forward</td>
<td>$216351.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global funds</td>
<td>$131300.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tied funds</td>
<td>$32192.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School &amp; community sources</td>
<td>$48116.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$3409.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust receipts</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canteen</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income</strong></td>
<td>$431370.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenditure**             |            |
| Teaching & learning         |            |
| Key learning areas          | $140151.35 |
| Excursions                  | $0.00      |
| Extracurricular dissections | $181.82    |
| Library                     | $125       |
| Training & development      | $20629.85  |
| Tied funds                  | $119120.88 |
| Casual relief teachers      | $41332.29  |
| Administration & office     | $17827.76  |
| School-operated canteen     | $0.00      |
| Utilities                   | $21373.24  |
| Maintenance                 | $8141.14   |
| Trust accounts              | $2129.12   |
| Capital programs            | $0.00      |
| **Total expenditure**       | $371012.45 |

| **Balance carried forward** | $60357.61 |
A full copy of the school’s 2014 financial statement is tabled at the annual general meetings of the School Council and/or the parent body. Further details concerning the statement can be obtained by contacting the school.

School performance 2014

Our programs focus on educational assessment, collaborative planning, targeted and intensive intervention and the use of cutting edge technology. Through innovation and strong partnerships with parents, rural schools and agencies and Royal Far West clinical services, we are impacting on the educational achievements and wellbeing of country students.

Academic achievements

As all of our students are enrolled elsewhere, RFWS does not hold results of state or national testing.

Significant programs and initiatives

In response to the needs of our students, we have a very strong focus on literacy, on early learning and on building the capacity of our parents, carers and partner schools. Technology is increasingly used to collaborate with referring schools.

Aboriginal education

Our Aboriginal Education Officer (AEO) provides support to our families prior, during and post visits to our Manly site. She also liaises with clinical staff regarding cultural issues and engaging our Aboriginal families.

Our classrooms and school environment are rich in Aboriginal resources and programs.

We have developed an early literacy program (SWAY) that embeds Aboriginal cultural knowledge (See detailed report below).

Multicultural education and anti-racism

We have a trained Anti-Racism Officer, an Aboriginal Education Officer and a strong culture of inclusiveness.

RFWS Learning and Support Program

The RFWS Learning and Support Program provides literacy assessments for all new clients of RFW clinical services as well as those in the period of transition to high school.

In 2014 RFWS carried out 382 literacy assessments. These assessments encompassed:

- Contacting referring schools for information about current supports and to clarify school issues and capacity.
- Detailed, tailored assessment matched to student and school factors
Assessment reports include a wide range of practical strategies and resources, referral to relevant services, offers of assistance and training.

- Detailed information to support the use of assistive technology is included in reports if appropriate, often in collaboration with the RFW Occupational Therapy team.
- Telephone and email support to rural and remote Learning and Support Teachers regarding specific students.
- Feedback sessions for parents/carers of all students assessed. These sessions are extremely important as parents gain an informed understanding of their child’s literacy skills and the strategies that they can implement at home. They also feel empowered to discuss their child’s literacy needs with the school and feel supported as they know we will contact the school to chat about recommendations.

- More detailed and extensive practical reports for referring schools and parents.
- Increased number of schools responding to the recommendations in the Learning and Support Report and students starting direct instruction programs.
- Increasing numbers of schools requesting training in structured reading program using videoconferencing.
- Commonly used assistive technology is embedded into the upper primary and high school classrooms at RFWS, enabling the Learning and Support Team to provide information to RFW clinical staff and referring schools regarding the suitability of pursuing technology as a way for students with literacy difficulties to more fully access the curriculum.

Thank you for the assessment results. We will respond to your recommendations.

Thank you sincerely for your ongoing support of our students. We greatly appreciate being able to send our students to RFW, and appreciate all the feedback we receive.

Principal, government primary school

Jenny (mother) wanted to pass on a huge thanks to the team as she feels as though both children are making fantastic progress. They feel so well supported by you all and are so appreciative for your ongoing care and commitment in supporting their family. (RFW clinician)

Achievements in 2014

- 382 literacy assessments, reports and parent meetings
- Increasingly close collaboration with RFW speech pathology and occupational therapy
- Greater contact prior and post assessments with rural and remote Learning and Support Teachers
- Increased participation in RFW multidisciplinary videoconferences

SWAY – Sounds, Words and Yarning

SWAY is an early oral language program developed at RFWS using funding generously provided by the Chairman’s Trust, CLSA. The program, which has a theoretical framework based in speech pathology, Early Education and literacy teaching, embeds Aboriginal cultural knowledge and ways of learning. The program is the result of a collaboration between the local Guringai community (through the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group), the Aboriginal
community in Bowraville, RFWS and Bowraville Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff, speech pathologists, National ICT Australia (NICTA) and parents and carers.

SWAY has a number of elements:

- A whole classroom program that embeds activities to develop strong early literacy skills
- Individual and small group speech pathology sessions using a specially designed web-based, interactive, culturally inclusive and child and user-friendly interface
- Capacity-building of staff and community in rural and remote areas using a range of outreach services including group staff training in key early literacy areas, tutor training and ongoing mentoring
- The defining element of SWAY is that it is designed to be localised. This means that every community will be able to use their own stories, their own language, their own images and their own people to personalise the SWAY resource making it relevant, engaging and respectful.

A second year of funding from CLSA Chairman’s Trust enabled the SWAY program to continue to develop.

Achievements in 2014 included:

- Completion of the 6 learning modules of the SWAY program
- Provision of remote speech pathology intervention to targeted students at Bowraville Central School (70 occasions of service). All students were supported by a teacher’s aide during sessions. This resulted in improved generalisation of targeted speech and language skills in the classroom setting. It also facilitated the building of skills and knowledge of the teaching staff involved. All students made reportable gains within the speech and language areas targeted during the intervention period.
- Building of a positive working relationship with staff at Bourke PS. Bourke PS has approximately 70% of students who identify as Aboriginal. Access to speech pathology services is at best sporadic. Weekly meetings were held with school staff using a specially designed interface.
- Creation of the SWAY website. The website, once completed in early 2015, will provide a detailed overview of the program to interested schools. It will also be used as a platform for classroom teachers to access SWAY resources and to share their classroom experiences.
- Continued capacity building of staff at Bowraville Central School
- Moving towards sustainability. Plans were developed to enable SWAY to become self-sufficient during 2015. SWAY will be offered as a package of staff and community training with resources included to ensure local involvement and ownership. Revenue from the training package will enable the ongoing development of the program.

Video Conferences with Rural Schools

Multidisciplinary video conferences with home school teams, including parents, have become an integral part of the assessment and support package offered by RFWS and RFW.

Students are identified as being suitable for a video conference at our weekly health and education case conferences.

RFWS office staff contact schools to make the offer of a video conference with the RFW-RFWS team and manage all associated documentation, ongoing communication, video conference room bookings, agendas and technical information.

Video conferences are based in one of the two RFWS Connected Classrooms. Participants at Manly may include a paediatrician, paediatric
psychiatrist, psychologist, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, social worker, special educator, school counsellor, Aboriginal Education Officer and literacy teacher. Videoconferences are chaired and minuted by the RFWS Principal, Assistant Principal or school counsellor.

Our partner rural school teams generally include a member of the executive, classroom teachers, school counsellor, Aboriginal Education Officer, Learning and Support Teachers and possibly regional staff. Parents are always invited and encouraged to attend.

The videoconferences provide an open venue for information sharing and collaboration. As the minutes are being taken, a plan is developed with specific goals and planned actions. The people responsible for the implementation of the plan and a timeframe for the plan are included. The agreed plan is read out to the participants during the videoconference. Minutes, including the plan, are emailed to all participants, generally within 48 hours.

The demand for video conferences is increasing dramatically, with 95 held in 2011, our first year of operation, 132 in 2012, 184 in 2013 and 200 in 2014.

Achievements in 2014

✔ Organized, chaired and minuted approximately 200 multidisciplinary videoconferences with rural schools in NSW

✔ Over 156 different schools across NSW participated in these videoconferences. Of those schools, 149 were government schools, while 40 were either private or faith-based schools.

✔ Increasing number of videoconferences that have included local practitioners and Learning & Engagement Advisors.

✔ Clear trend for schools who have already participated in a RFW multidisciplinary videoconference to offer to make any adjustments needed to accommodate the VC as they are perceived as being extremely valuable.

What do our partners think about our multidisciplinary videoconferences?

I think this is a great for the RFW and School teams had a chance to meet to develop a targeted approach to assist ‘client’ and his family (Principal, government primary school)

We are pleased to be involved with making ‘client’s’ transition to school as smooth as possible. (Preschool Director)

Thank you so much for your recommendations made at the recent videoconference. We did put them into place and (student)’s reading has improved out of sight and this is carrying across into all the other KLAS plus his self-esteem is soaring. (Learning and Support Team member, government school)

Thanks for making it all look so straightforward...thanks again for all your patience and help (RFW speech pathologist)

SOLVE IT (School outreach learning using volunteer educators and Information Technology)

SOLVE IT (Reading) provides instruction in a structured reading program using internet-based technology and an interface designed by the NSW Curriculum, Learning and Innovation Centre (CLIC) based on Adobe Connect.

Students log onto SOLVE IT at their own school and are linked to a tutor working from RFWS in Manly. Using a headset and webcam, the tutor and student are able to see and hear each other and the instruction screen.

SOLVE IT operates using trained volunteer tutors from the Manly area working under the direct supervision of a highly skilled literacy teacher.
During 2014 the SOLVE IT Coordinator and our team of awesome volunteers worked tirelessly to develop robust organisational systems and strengthened the level of monitoring of daily sessions to ensure that the program is personalised in direct response to the student performance and needs.

Give IT a Go

Technology can be of enormous benefit to students with ongoing complex literacy difficulties. In 2014 we continued to develop our Give IT a Go program which includes:

- Whole class use of key literacy software for students in upper primary and high school to enable screening for suitability for more targeted support during visit to RFW
- Learning and Support Team liaise with RFWS classroom teachers to discuss suitability of technology for students with literacy difficulties (either reading, writing or both)
- Recommendations for consideration of technology included in Learning and Support Team report sent to referring school, including link to RFWS Give IT a Go website (giveitagorfws.com)
- During videoconferences schools are asked to look at recommended technology on Give IT a Go website and to contact RFWS Learning and Support Team if they would like assistance to implement technology supports for their student
- Links have been made with RFW Occupational Therapy and RFW Speech Pathology where appropriate regarding suitability for trial of technology support
- Identified students are recommended for group or individual therapy through RFW for students with complex health and educational issues. Group programs are run within the RFWS classes.

Health and Education Integrated Programs

During 2014 RFWS and RFW clinical services launched integrated health and education programs. These programs, generally delivered within the classroom by a team of clinical and education staff, covered areas such as transition to high school for students with autism; transition to school for pre-schoolers with autism; social language skills; and transition to high school for students with mild intellectual disabilities.

A typical – and very successful – group program was run in the group 1 classroom in August 2014. The group, “Living with Autism Spectrum Disorder – Transition to School” was jointly developed by clinicians from RFW and the Group 1 teacher. Occupational therapists, speech pathologists, psychologists, teachers, support staff, the school counsellor and parents all
worked together for a one week program to develop knowledge and skills to assist in a smooth transition into the school environment.

Each child was observed closely across all areas of development and an individual profile was produced covering social, emotional, physical, cognitive and creative domains. These profiles included suggestions as to how each area could be best developed within the school setting.

What did parents think about the integrated health and education camps?

Parents were very involved in all aspects of the program. They gave very positive evaluations of the camp. They felt that they had been given strategies that would ensure that their child had a smooth transition to school. They were encouraged to be advocates for their child and to communicate their child’s needs and interests to the school where they were enrolled. By the end of the one-week program parents reported feeling more confident. They also reported that they now saw their child as having strengths as well as challenges and felt that those strengths should be celebrated and catered for in the new school environment. Parents were encouraged to look at what made their child happy, safe and secure.

Parents who had previously had experience of 1:1 therapy were surveyed to find out what they thought of group programs run by health and education staff in the school setting. Their comments included:

I think this is a very important shift from 1:1, as my daughter gets to practice straight away with others the skills she is learning (in a relatively natural setting-her classroom). This is hard to replicate in therapy room or just with 1:1.

My son was very positive about attending the therapy, the week ran very smoothly and there was far less angst because of less coming and going from school. Maybe the opportunities to practice what’s being learned immediately.

Not being disturbed going in and out of the room

Continuation of classroom activities

Getting to know the group

Not being singled out as different

It is a social activity and doesn’t involve removal from class.

Good they could do in class and could see peer role modelling in context.

Learning social skills and communication skills.

It was great that they could stay in class for the group-so much less disruptive/less difficult for the children. And it was great that siblings can join in, too!
The NSW Centre for Effective Reading provides direct support for rural and remote primary-aged students with complex reading difficulties and their teachers.

- **Students accessing the services of the NSW CER are referred from government and non-government schools.**
- **A multidisciplinary team provides cognitive, educational and speech and language assessments.**
- **Intervention support to schools of referred students through collaborative planning, professional learning and teachers and other key personnel and through regular monitoring of the student’s program.**
- **Support includes planning to address students’ needs across the curriculum. CER Manly works with each student’s school to ensure adjustments are made to programs and teaching strategies in response to student progress.**
- **Based on their response to intervention, students may be referred to the Centre’s Learning and Support Team. This team meets to discuss and recommend ways to further support students and schools. It consists of representatives from all four hubs of the NSW CER (Wagga, Dubbo, Westmead and Manly) as well as other staff, as required.**
- **Centre staff have developed resources to address the areas of language difficulties (specifically vocabulary), cognition (attention, organisation and planning) and transition to high school. These high quality, evidence-based resources will assist in building capacity of schools and address the learning needs of students with complex reading difficulties. These materials are now available on the Centre website for access by all schools in NSW. Staff from CER Manly are members of new ESES working parties.**
- **We look forward to our role within the Rural and Remote Education Strategy and to continue to work closely with schools in rural NSW.**
- **We encourage teachers and parents to access the Jill Sherlock Memorial Learning Assistance Library which provides resources to support the teaching and learning needs of students with learning difficulties. Schools that are being supported through the Centre may borrow materials from the reserve section of the library.**

For more information about the operation of the NSW Centre for Effective Reading please go to

What did parents and carers tell us about CER Manly during 2014?

Thank you to everyone for your wonderful help and also making us feel very welcome. (Feb 2014)

Wish we could come back, (student) loved the way you helped her. Thank you (May 2014)

The Centre is a fantastic service. Thank you. (May 2014)

I am so impressed with all the staff. The care and time taken by all the staff to explain what was to happen and why was excellent. Thank you so much. (June 2014)

Staff were exceptional – welcoming, friendly, caring and professional. Thank you. What could have been a stressful two days was an enjoyable two days. (July 15)

The staff were knowledgeable, caring and kind to both myself and my daughter. Thank you for your time. (Aug)

All the staff were wonderful, caring and friendly. (Aug 18)

The teachers were warm and engaging. (Student) was happy to be with them at all times and talked positively about each session at the end of the day. (Sept 16)

Thank you to all involved in (student)'s assessment. We both had a great time and (student) came away feeling very positive about himself. Thanks. (Sept 16)

Sitting in on assessments was very beneficial as it showed the problem spots clearly that we needed to focus on. (Oct 30)

The service we received was exceptional. The staff were all very kind, caring, professional and easy to talk to. (Oct 30)

Thank you so much for all your care, you really made us feel special and cared about. We really appreciate all the time and effort you all put in. (Student) was very, very nervous on Tuesday but by Wednesday he said “I wish we could come back for another day.” Thanks again. (Nov 21)

What did teachers tell us about CER Manly during 2014?

One of the best outcomes for me has been to alter some of my teaching strategies especially when teaching spelling to my whole class. This has been as a result of the discussion we had with your team and following up your report. (Classroom teacher)

Thank you again for the opportunity to help these boys. I have seen firsthand with (student) what a difference it makes in their lives. (Student) is reading so fluently and is coping so much better with work across the curriculum. (Learning and Support Teacher)

Thank you for arranging the meeting this morning. I believe that the program is making a difference to (student)’s life chances. It is fantastic that 2 teams of people one in the city one in rural NSW can work together so effectively to ensure the learning needs of individual children can be met! (Learning and Support Teacher)
**CER Manly Technology Focus**

For some students with severe reading difficulties, appropriate use of technology can be highly effective. CER Manly has a particular focus in this area. The team provide:

- Training and mentoring to all Centre for Effective Reading hubs through the CER Learning and Support Team
- Training and mentoring directly to rural and remote schools with students who are being supported through the NSW CER where appropriate
- In some cases, students with severe reading difficulties transitioning to high school may be referred through the CER Learning and Support Team for intensive technology skills training in collaboration with their home school and their future high school team.

CER Manly has received very positive feedback from parents and referring school staff about our assistive technology services. Typical comments include:

*He is the happiest he has ever been and is now able to show what he knows* (Mother)

*We had a ‘WOW’ moment when (student) demonstrated his intelligence and understanding through the use of technology* (Teacher)

The study looked at the effectiveness of video conferencing technology to provide language assessment to rural & remote students with reading difficulties. The students, rather than being assessed by the speech pathologist on-site, interacted with a speech pathologist via a web-based video conference. The on-site speech pathologist, working alongside the student also took notes about his or her answers. The two speech pathologists later compared their information to see whether the same results were obtained. Results from the study are very exciting, suggesting that remote assessments, monitoring and therapies may well become a great option in the future.

**Remote Therapy**

The CER speech pathologist provided an intensive speech therapy block via the Adobe Connect web conferencing program for a student with Childhood Apraxia of Speech. The student, school and family all commented that they could see significant improvements in the student’s speech skills after the therapy block.

**CER Manly Speech Pathology Highlights**

**Research Project**

The CER Manly speech pathologist participated in a research study that was conducted at the NSW Centre for Effective Reading in conjunction with the NSW Department of Education and Communities.
School planning and evaluation 2012—2014

NSW public schools conduct evaluations to support the effective implementation of the school plan. The processes used include:
- Pre and post intervention assessment data
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Discussions with parents, RFW staff, RFWS staff, students and referring school staff

School priority 1

Literacy

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Increase in literacy skills as measured by individual standardized assessments from below to above age appropriate levels
- Students with severe literacy difficulties accessing the curriculum with the assistance of technology
- SOLVE IT facilities and technology being used by RFW clinical services to provide outreach speech pathology and psychology

Evidence of achievement of outcomes in 2014

- 314 students received remote individual speech pathology from RFW clinical staff using RFWS technology and facilities
- RFWS website contains growing bank of best practice resources for literacy development from preschool to high school level
- Development of new technology website and support service – “Give IT a Go” to assist schools to incorporate assistive technology into the classroom to support students with severe literacy difficulties
- Use of assistive technology embedded into upper primary and high school groups for all students.
- Partnership between RFW Learning and Support Team, classroom teacher and RFW clinicians to identify students where the use of assistive technology is appropriate and process to support implementation at referring school.
- Centre for Effective Reading Manly embedding use of technology as a support strategy from the beginning of support program if indicated.
- RFWS Learning and Support Team taking part in Multidisciplinary video conferences.
- Introduction of group programs targeting students with language and literacy difficulties developed and delivered by integrated health and education staff
- 200 multidisciplinary videoconferences held with RFW health and education team, referring school and local services and family to develop a plan to optimise learning and wellbeing

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- Liaison with RFW Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy Departments to further integrate assessments and recommendations to schools
- Expansion of Give IT a Go website and support service
- Enhancement of RFWS website resource section
- Establishment of a Google community with Centre for Effective Reading staff to develop skills in context
- Greater use of email between clinical and education staff on a daily basis to fine-tune assessments and develop support plans
School priority 2

Wellbeing and engagement

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- 28 students received remote individual psychology service from RFW clinical staff using RFWS technology and facilities. This program targeted anxiety using the Macquarie University program “Cool Kids”
- Modified version of “Rock and Water” program embedded into high school program
- Introduction of group programs developed and delivered by integrated health and education staff
- Incorporation of trauma-based strategies into all classroom environments
- 200 multidisciplinary videoconferences held with RFW health and education team, referring school and local services and family to develop a plan to optimise learning and wellbeing

Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014

- Planning sessions with RFW and RFWS staff to develop a suite of group programs
- Facilitate meetings between NSW DEC IT teams and RFW IT teams to develop technology integration plan to enable clinical remote therapy to access NSW DEC technology
- Professional learning in trauma-based psychology

School priority 3

Aboriginal Education

Outcomes from 2012–2014

- Increased percentage of Aboriginal students who attend RFWS completing year 12 or recognised vocational training
- Increase in numbers of Aboriginal students attending RFW and RFWS
- Increase in number of Aboriginal students accessing SOLVE IT
- Increase in numbers of Aboriginal students referred to NSW Centre for Effective Reading
- RFWS Aboriginal Education Officer participates in all video conferences involving Aboriginal students
- RFWS Aboriginal Education Officer contacting families prior to admission
- Completion of SWAY program modules; development of framework and content for SWAY website; bookings for 2 rural and remote schools to come to RFWS for 3-day training in SWAY in term 1 and 2 2015. See details of SWAY achievements earlier in report.
- 200 multidisciplinary videoconferences held with RFW health and education
team, referring school and local services and family to develop a plan to optimise learning and wellbeing. RFWS Aboriginal Education Officer in all videoconferences for Aboriginal students.

**Strategies to achieve these outcomes in 2014:**

Whole site training in Aboriginal cultural awareness and 8-Ways training

Resources for SOLVE IT expanded to include age-appropriate, culturally engaging reading materials

Revamp of existing high school learning and support materials on website to become more engaging and culturally inclusive

**What our partners, colleagues and staff say about our school**

The school is full of warmth, from the moment you walk in the door (RFW clinical staff)

I believe the school does everything perfectly (RFW staff)

The staff are amazing (RFW clinician)

Incredible commitment to the kids (RFW School Council)

Embracing change (RFW management)

**Strong in technology and Aboriginal Education (RFW staff)**

The videoconferences are wonderful – we need to do more of them. Every child would benefit from one. (RFW clinician)

In a scary world the children we see, with multiple difficulties, find a safe haven where they enjoy learning (RFW clinician)

I enjoy working with RFWS staff...all of them are generous with their time, friendly and lovely to work with (RFW clinician)

Royal Far West School - a unique, specialised school with incredibly dedicated staff who collaborate with and support each other, their students, schools, parents and other professionals. Everyone works to achieve the best outcomes for their students in every aspect of their lives (RFW staff member)

**RFW 90th birthday party**

RFW and RFWS jointly celebrated the 90th birthday of RFW “caring for country kids”. The day was celebrated with an open house with the school and parts of the clinical service being open to the public. The playground was alive with stalls, music, activities and delicious food and regular tours of the facility were well-attended.

Many past clients and students were able to come to Manly for the big day, including Andrea who was a student at the school in 1976. She was delighted to spot a photograph of herself on our history wall!

Andrea in 2014 and at RFWS in 1976
The youngest of the Drummond clan tries her hand at being a SOLVE IT tutor. This little girl is a descendant of the Reverend Stanley Drummond, founder of the Royal Far West back in 1924. Her family are still closely involved with RFW.

**Future Directions**

**2015-2017 School Plan**

NSW DEC is implementing a new school planning process for 2015-17. The new plan will be published on the school's website from the beginning of Term 2 2015.

During 2014 we had extensive consultation with all stakeholders – our staff, students, families, RFW, the RFWS School Council, RFWS P&C and partner schools. The outcome was three clear strategic directions:

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**Strategic Direction 1**

**Integrated health and education service**

**Why?**

To provide a multidisciplinary service that addresses the ‘whole child’ rather than being tied to individual disciplines or presenting problems. This will result in a service that is practical, realistic, effective, innovative, focused and efficient.

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**Strategic Direction 2**

**Build the capacity of partner schools, health services and parents/carers to meet the needs of children with complex health and education needs**

**Why?**

To give students and their families equitable access to expert, evidence-based, specialist teaching and learning in their local area, reducing the impact of disadvantage and remoteness.

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**Strategic Direction 3**

**Personalised learning and support**

**Why?**

To improve educational outcomes for students with complex learning and health needs in rural and remote NSW by enhancing engagement and wellbeing and by promoting a culture of high expectations, flexibility and innovation.
A special thanks to...

Our dedicated volunteers

We rely heavily on amazing local SOLVE IT tutors. We would also like to thank our classroom volunteers, in particular Christine.

Our P&C

Our P&C group are passionate supporters of the school. They fundraise annually to support our SOLVE IT program.

Our School Council

We are lucky enough to have a very involved and active School Council. Their role will be particularly important as we move towards a more integrated health and education service

CLSA Chairman’s Trust

Who have made SWAY possible

And a special hello to the wonderful Val Hunt

Until poor health forced Val to “retire” she volunteered in our preschool room 4 mornings a week and had done so for many years. We miss you every day Val, especially at morning tea time!

About this report

In preparing this report, the self-evaluation committee has gathered information from evaluations conducted during the year and analysed other information about the school's practices and student learning outcomes. The self-evaluation committee and school planning committee have determined targets for the school's future development.

All staff at RFW lead by:

Jenny Rayner, Principal
Lynda Edwards, Assistant Principal
Frankie Tait, Assistant Principal
Odeta Juska, School Administration Manager

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Parents can find more information about Annual School Reports, how to interpret information in the report and have the opportunity to provide feedback about the report at: