



Yiyili Aboriginal Community School (YACS) Annual Report 2017

Compiled February 2018

Audience:

- Parents and carers
- Local community
- Visitors and involved agencies (government and non-government)
- Funding bodies (State and Federal)
- Department of Education Services

History

Influenced by the Noonkanbah and Strelley experience, the school's genesis was when a group of mainly Gooniyandi people shifted from the station camp at Louisa Downs Homestead to set up a new camp approximately 7 kilometres to the east. Establishing their own school seemed a better alternative to sending their children to the hostel at Halls Creek where parents felt they would lose control of the children. Since that time the school has expanded considerably to include six outstation communities who bus their students into Yiyili.



Physical Setting

Yiyili Community is an excision on Louisa Downs station situated 170kms south east of Fitzroy Crossing in the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

Louisa Downs is owned and operated by Yiyili Community members. The community is 5 kms off the Great Northern Highway and the station is 11 kms off the Great Northern Highway. It is easily accessible during the dry season. During the wet season a 4WD is often required to negotiate the track into the community.

Halls Creek is 120kms east of Yiyili, and is the only town of the Central Kimberley. There is a small supermarket, butcher, bakery, two fuel outlets, post office, hotel and public swimming pool in the town. It also has a well-resourced hospital and a pharmacy.

Kununurra has the closest airport and is approximately 500 kms north of Yiyili. Broome however, 570kms east of Yiyili, is the Kimberley regional capital and major service point for the school and community.

The winter months (or dry season) are usually cool; the temperature can range from 4-10 degrees in the mornings and evenings and between 18-30 degrees during the day. The weather becomes very hot in late September until it begins to rain. The range during this time is from 36-46 degrees. The wet season varies from year to year.

The Community

Yiyili acts as the hub for six Independent outstation communities : Ganinyi, Goolgaradah, Kurinyjarn, Moongardie, Pullout Springs and Rocky Springs. Outstations range from small communities with their own power and water to seasonal camps occupied at culturally appropriate times throughout the year. Each community is situated on culturally significant land with important sites (cultural and dreaming) nearby.

Approximately 250-300 people live in and around Yiyili.

The language spoken by all the children and a large majority of the adults is Kriol. Gooniyandi is the traditional language, however there are only a few fluent speakers in the community and they are mostly elderly. Standard Australian English is spoken at school, and time is made for students to learn their traditional language. With the support of AISWA and WA Department of Education Yiyili Aboriginal Community School is in the process of reviving Gooniyandi language. This was an important focus of the school in 2017 as is discussed in more detail later in this report.

Yiyili was established in 1981. People had left the station earlier when equal pay issues faced non-Aboriginal station owners and Aboriginal people were told to leave cattle stations. When people returned, they lived in shelters on the edge of the Margaret River. They also did mustering and fencing on Louisa Downs in return for a space on their traditional land.

The school was established in 1982. Initially the mobile Kindy teacher, who visited Louisa Downs Station camp as part of her job, was employed to start Yiyili Aboriginal Community School. Community members built basic facilities, and classes were conducted in bough sheds. In 1986 Yiyili was granted an excision allowing permanent housing and a school building to be erected. A teacher's house was built in 1986 and then another in 1988. During 1989 the lease for Louisa Downs Station was handed back to the Cox family. It was purchased by ATSIC and leased to the community for 99 years. The station employs people from Yiyili and they are mainly members of the Cox and related families.

During 1990 a building that housed the clinic and the store was built. A community office building was erected in 1996. The store is owned by the people of Yiyili and is currently managed by Outback Stores. A doctor and nurse visit the community every Wednesday. In case of emergency, an ambulance is sent from Halls Creek (120km away) and a community vehicle is used to transport the patient until they meet the ambulance. There is an unsealed airstrip on Louisa Downs Station if the Flying Doctor needs to be called.

Governance

The school is governed by a School Board. It is made up of elected community members from Yiyili and its' outstation communities, and the School Principal. Decisions concerning governance of the school are decided by the School Board. The Rule Book of Yiyili Community Indigenous Corporation (YCIC) recognises the School Board and delegates the running of Yiyili Aboriginal Community School to the School Board (YCIC Consolidated Rule Book - Objective 2.6). Day to day management of the school is the responsibility of the Principal. The Principal and School Board periodically report to Yiyili Community Indigenous Corporation.

Employees

In 2017 the school employed 7 FTE Non-Indigenous Staff and up to 20 Indigenous Staff. Indigenous Staff included Aboriginal Education Workers (classroom), cooks, cleaners, language teachers and maintenance/gardeners. Non- indigenous staff included the Principal, 5 classroom teachers and a special wellness coordinator/administrator. All teaching staff at YACS have the required qualifications to teach and are registered with the Teacher Registration Board, including the Principal. Teaching staff are held accountable to the National Professional Teacher Standards and using a process called PRICE actively move forward through the standards in a systematic way.

Curriculum

Yiyili School encourages an educational relationship among students, staff and parents where communication is open, friendly and invites involvement. Both community members and teaching staff promote an atmosphere of reasonableness and understanding where young people know they are cherished in an environment the supports both the wealth of their traditions and acknowledges equality for all through improved educational outcomes.

YACS places a high emphasis on literacy and numeracy and highly experienced literacy and numeracy leaders are continuing to refine whole school plans, in line with the Australian curriculum. As part of this ongoing focus, the Whole School Plan was revisited and updated in Semester 1, 2017.

An internal needs analysis in 2015 identified science as an area requiring increased focus, without diminishing the continuing focus on literacy and numeracy. The school has further developed its' science curriculum utilising expertise and resources, especially from Sci-Tech. The school is happy to show and explain the curriculum documentation at any time.

Physical Resources

Yiyili Aboriginal Community School is a very well established and resourced remote school. Even though the cost of doing business in remote Australia is high, the school board has planned for and allocated sufficient resources, taking into account student enrolments, to ensure that it exceeds like schools in the quality of resources and the knowledge of how best to use them.

The school has five well equipped classrooms, all with the latest interactive whiteboard technology, computers and iPads. Facilities also include a music studio/library, traditional language classroom and music room. Of particular note is the instructional kitchen and café where students participate in hospitality skill set training, particularly barista training (utilising the tourist traffic into the school managed art centre). There is also a school kitchen where students' lunches are prepared (the school provides 4 cooked lunches per week based on a source of carbohydrates, protein and at least 3 vegetables), and on Fridays kitchen staff prepare sandwiches. The instructional kitchen underwent a refurbishment and extension in 2016, bringing it up to the standard of a commercial kitchen, with addition of bakery equipment to further develop the hospitality training and the possibility of business opportunities for community members when catering for the tourist trade during the dry season. In 2017 the upgraded instructional kitchen was used extensively as an integral part of student learning. 2016 also saw the construction of a vehicle workshop facility, where high school students, and other members of the community, will be able to participate in training for vehicle maintenance and undertake mechanical work on school and community vehicles. During 2017 the workshop began to be used by high school students to undertake practical activities. This will be further developed in 2018.

Enrolment and Attendance

Average enrolments across 2017 were a total of 64 students from PP-10. This is excluding Pre-Kindy students. This is very similar to 2016 enrolments. Attendance rates for 2017 are as follows:

YEAR	No. of students enrolled averaged across all terms	Average attendance across Terms				Average attendance 2017
		T1	T2	T3	T4	
Pre-Kindy	2	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Kindy	4	70%	59%	62%	57%	62%
PP	6	65%	88%	68%	52%	68.25%
1	9	63%	54%	66%	73%	63.75%
2	5	70%	58%	81%	88%	74.25%
3	6	67%	76%	73%	76%	73%
4	2	77%	39%	52%	72%	60%
5	6	71%	78%	57%	87%	73.25%
6	12	83%	72%	76%	83%	78.5%
7	5	74%	88%	83%	90%	84.5%
8	4	77%	53%	78%	94%	75.5%
9	1**	67%	37%	73%	68%	61.25%
10	4**	61%	27%	42%	100%	57.5%
Total	66	72.7%	63.8%	70.1%	80%	71.65%

* Although Yiyili Aboriginal Community School has registration to Year 10, the strong community preference is for students of that age to go to Boarding School. Years 9 & 10 students will attend YACS whilst awaiting travel to these schools, and often upon their return to the community for cultural reasons or at the end of the term. As the students are often only here for those times attendance statistics for these year levels tend not to have a great deal of meaning.

It is noticeable that there are fluctuations in attendance across the whole school throughout the year. There are many factors responsible for the fluctuations. Weather patterns, cultural imperatives, family responsibilities and medical issues all play a part in the attendance patterns for students. In-Community attendance at Yiyili Aboriginal Community School is excellent. However as with all Kimberley Schools student transience, because of factors discussed above, remains an issue.

Non-attendance is managed in a number of ways. Each day teachers submit "pink slips" to the Principal or administrative staff. This allows real time notification of non-attendance. This is followed up with the community. If students are not in the community every effort is made to ascertain their whereabouts. If necessary, other local schools will be notified that they should look out for them and if the intention is for them to stay a transfer note will be requested and sent. Chronic non-attenders are monitored closely and efforts are made to discuss issues with family to try and maximise the likelihood that the student can return ASAP.

The following table shows current enrolments as of February 2018 :

YEAR	No. of Students	ATSI
Pre-Kindy	4	4
Kindy	3	3
PP	3	3
1	5	4
2	11	11
3	7	7
4	8	7
5	5	5
6	5	5
7	11	11
8	6	6
9	4	4
10	5	5
TOTAL	77	75

As the above table demonstrates there has been an increase in the order of 17% in the number of students beginning the 2018 school year compared with 2017. The school will monitor closely whether this will be sustained throughout 2018, and ensure as much as possible that all students whereabouts remain known, even if they leave Yiyili Aboriginal Community School.

Yiyili School starts each day at 8am and finishes at 2:30pm with 5 hours and 30 minutes of instruction time each day including 30 minutes of physical education and health instruction. We closely follow Western Australian Government term dates however due to isolation and weather these dates may at times differ.

Kindy students attend for 5 full days per week. Pre Kindy students (unfunded) attend for 8 hours per week. Yiyili School is still seeking additional funding to run an age 0 to 3 program which has been identified by board and community as of paramount importance. All agencies, including government, recognise the importance of quality programs for this age and the impact they have on the future prospects of students. As yet this cohort remains unfunded.

NAPLAN 2017

Please refer to the MySchool website for details (<http://www.myschool.edu.au/>). The school, school management and board are committed to NAPLAN and are able to discuss school results, and individual results with parents and carers at any stage. We have a number of internal reports which can be shared upon request.

Secondary Education

Yiyili Aboriginal Community School is registered to cater for secondary students from Year 7 – Year 10. Our emphasis is on learning literacy and numeracy, and preparing students to successfully engage in secondary education at a boarding school of their choice. A lot of families are choosing to enrol their children in boarding schools in Years 9 and 10. A large number of students are thriving in their boarding school environments and are experiencing success both academically and in extra-curricular activities.

YACS currently has students enrolled in the following secondary schools in WA: Wongutha CAPS, CAPS Coolgardie, Willetton Senior High School and Bindoon Agricultural College.

Some students find they are not best suited to living away from home, and re-enrol at Yiyili Aboriginal Community School. It can be a challenge to fully re-engage students upon their return, and the school offers a range of programs to help them remain motivated to remain at school and attend well. The opportunities to engage in hospitality training and interstate school trips are proving successful at re-engaging and retaining secondary students. In 2017, these opportunities were enhanced and extended by the completion of the vehicle mechanics workshop and kitchen extensions as mentioned previously (part of a successful application for a funding grant from the Indigenous Advancement Strategy).

The instructional kitchen and workshop are vital components in ensuring secondary students who are not away at boarding schools remain engaged as students of Yiyili Aboriginal Community School.

2017 School Highlights

Language/Culture

During 2017 the further development of the Gooniyandi Language and Culture Program was an exciting highlight. The school has a dedicated Language Teacher who, in association with another school AEW, is undertaking an accredited Traditional Language Teaching course through the WA Department of Education. Also in 2017 the school received an \$10,000 grant from the Wyemando Foundation specifically for school trips to important cultural locations. These trips took place for all class groups each term in 2017 and were a great success.

This focus will be developed even further in 2018, as the School has been successful in acquiring a grant of approximately \$50,000 from the “Connecting to Country” Program.



Playground

In 2017 the school received a gift of old truck tyres kindly donated by Beaurepaires, Broome. Teachers and students worked together to place these tyres in the playground. They were used to block vehicle access, and also as playground equipment in a variety of ways. They were also painted up and provide a new, attractive and useful addition to playground activities for students. The School was also able to purchase some additional playground equipment including a sand wheel, flower table, talking tubes and a set of outdoor drums.

School Garden

Working in association with the EON Foundation, the school gardens thrived in 2017. Two locations were used, and an excellent array of fruit and vegetables were produced. This produce was used in cooking activities across all classes. The association with EON continues, and the gardens will be further developed in 2018.

High School Canberra Trip

In 2017 the High School students had a school trip to the nation's capital. Using the Australian Institute of Sport as a base, many of Canberra's famous attractions were visited. This included new and old Parliament Houses, the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, Australian War Memorial and the National Gallery. The trip was an outstanding success with students gaining a deeper understanding of the workings of Australian democracy, as well as having lots of fun. Fun activities included basketball at the AIS, Segway bikes around Lake Burley Griffin, a session at a trampoline facility, and family barbecue with family members of the High School teacher.

Instructional Kitchen and Workshop

Following the renovations of the instructional kitchen and construction of the workshop shed in 2016, these facilities were used extensively in 2017, allowing for excellent learning extension activities to be undertaken. It is envisaged that their use will continue and in fact expand in 2018.

Gooniyandi Indigenous Hip Hop Project Video

The Indigenous Hip Hop Project (IHHP) has been doing music projects at Yiyili Aboriginal Community School for over 10 years. Their work has always been greatly appreciated, and over the years they produced some excellent music videos. In 2017 for the first time ever in IHHP's work in Australian Schools a traditional language music video was produced. The Gooniyandi lyrics were written by the Traditional Language teachers. This was a matter of great pride for both IHHP and Yiyili Aboriginal Community School. This video is available for viewing on YouTube at the following address :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AqU3StOSMQo>

School Anniversary

While IHHP was at the school, the 35th Anniversary of Yiyili Aboriginal Community School was celebrated. From 1982 – 2017 the school has been the hub of Yiyili Community and its outstations. This continues to this day with several generations of family members now having passed through

the school as students. The vast majority of community adults who work at the school are past students.

The continuing existence and ongoing development of Yiyili Aboriginal Community School is a justifiable source of great pride for the community members and families of Yiyili and its outstations.