



Yiyili Aboriginal Community School (YACS)

Annual Report 2018



Compiled February 2019

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 5kms off the Great Northern Highway and the station is 11kms 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, a butcher, a bakery, a fuel outlet, a post office, two hotels 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-east of Yiyili. Broome however, 570kms west of Yiyili, is the Kimberley's 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 amount of rainfall in the wet season varies from year to year.

The Community

Yiyili community acts as the hub for six independent outstation communities: Ganinyi, Goolgaradah, Kurinyjarn, Moongardie, Pullout Springs (Girriyoowa) and Rocky Springs (Tharmindi). Outstations range from small communities with their own power and water supplies 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 Community.

The language spoken by all the children and a large majority of the adults is Kriol, a recognised language in its own right. 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, the Wyemando Bequest (and other philanthropic organisations) and WA Department of Education, Yiyili Aboriginal Community School is in the process of reviving Gooniyandi language. This continued to be an important focus of the school in 2018 as is discussed in more detail later in this report.

Yiyili community 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 a mobile Kindy teacher, who had been visiting 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 Community 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 its outstation communities and these employees 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 Community and is currently managed by Outback Stores. A doctor and nurse from Halls Creek Hospital 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 (as an ex-officio, non-voting member). 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 2018 the school employed 8 FTE Non-Indigenous Staff and up to 20 local Indigenous staff. Indigenous staff included Aboriginal Education Workers (classroom), cooks, cleaners, language teachers and maintenance/gardeners. Non-indigenous staff included the Principal, five classroom teachers, a teacher support teacher and administrative support worker. 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. All staff are required to have a current Working With Children Check.

Curriculum

Yiyili AC 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 valued in an environment that supports both the wealth of their traditions and acknowledges equality for all through improved educational outcomes.

YACS places a high emphasis on English and Mathematics and highly experienced English and Mathematics leaders are continually refining whole school plans, in line with the Australian curriculum.

In 2018, the school has introduced whole school planning outlines for other area of the curriculum other than English and Mathematics to include the breadth of the Australian Curriculum. The school also places an emphasis on Gooniyandi language and is looking to use the framework for Aboriginal Languages, Learner Revival Pathway in the Australian Curriculum to support strong teaching and learning in this area.

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, Gooniyandi language classroom and two multi-purpose rooms. Of particular note is the instructional kitchen 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 four cooked lunches per week based on a source of carbohydrates, protein and at least three 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. The upgraded instructional kitchen is 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 2018 the workshop began to be used by high school students to undertake practical activities. This will be further developed in 2019.

Enrolment and Attendance

Average enrolments across 2018 were a total of 62 students from PP-10. This is excluding Pre-Kindy students who are not formally enrolled at Yiyili AC School. This was slightly down on 2017 student numbers. Attendance rates for 2018 are as follows:

| YEAR | No. of students enrolled averaged across all terms | Average attendance across Terms | | | | Average attendance 2018 |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------------|
| | | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | |
| Kindy | 5 | 71.49% | 66.38% | 78.23% | 72.22% | 72.27% |
| PP | 1 | 65.31% | 81.53% | 69.39% | 70.37% | 70.33% |
| 1 | 5 | 83.67% | 77.89% | 74.08% | 67.34% | 74.93% |
| 2 | 10 | 68.54% | 62.87% | 66.35% | 66.79% | 66.44% |
| 3 | 6 | 83.33% | 37.50% | 64.08% | 85.78% | 70.32% |
| 4 | 7 | 70.69% | 63.27% | 74.83% | 70.00% | 70.03% |
| 5 | 5 | 74.24% | 60.88% | 54.79% | 44.91% | 59.16% |
| 6 | 4 | 84.36% | 71.01% | 61.73% | 84.72% | 76.16% |
| 7 | 9 | 71.97% | 55.60% | 63.59% | 74.15% | 67.17% |
| 8 | 5 | 71.65% | 65.56% | 50.00% | 79.44% | 67.36% |
| 9 | 3** | 54.79% | 64.04% | 63.95% | 73.33% | 63.84% |
| 10 | 1** | 34.48% | 61.54% | N/A | 77.78% | 57.93% |
| Total | 61 | | | | | |

* 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. Also, a school is required to keep a student enrolled (and therefore a part of its attendance statistics) until they have formally enrolled at another school or a period of 20 school days has passed. This means that often students have moved to another community but continue to be reported in YACS attendance data.

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 to school ASAP.

The following table shows current enrolments as of February 2019:

| YEAR | No. of Students | ATSI |
|-------|-----------------|------|
| Kindy | 8 | 8 |
| PP | 3 | 3 |
| 1 | 4 | 3 |
| 2 | 8 | 7 |
| 3 | 10 | 9 |
| 4 | 5 | 5 |
| 5 | 5 | 4 |
| 6 | 6 | 6 |
| 7 | 3 | 3 |
| 8 | 5 | 5 |
| 9 | 2 | 2 |
| 10 | 3 | 3 |
| TOTAL | 62 | 58 |

As the above table demonstrates there was higher than usual enrolment numbers at the beginning of 2018. This was due to three significant funerals held at Yiyili Community in Term 1, 2018. Also, there were several older students who began the school year at Yiyili AC School. The enrolments at August census were slightly lower than expected. Some families had returned to home communities after funerals had finishes; some older students enrolled in boarding schools. Two families (with a total of 7 students) moved out of community as a result of a change in care arrangements.

Yiyili School starts each day at 8am and finishes at 2:30pm with 5 hours and 40 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 aged students (unfunded and not officially enrolled) are hosted for 8 hours per week with their parents/care givers in a community led playgroup. Yiyili AC 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 2018

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 English and Mathematics as well as 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 and Willetton Senior High School.

Some students find they are not best suited to living away from home, and so 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 2018, the YACS high school class travelled to Hamilton in Victoria and spent a week at Baimbridge College and Hamilton District Skill Centre. The Bush to Belly programme and its focus on developing hospitality skills remains an important means for keeping older students engaged in education.



2018 School Highlights

Registration Renewal

Two independent assessors visited Yiyili AC School at the beginning of Term 4, 2018. The school subsequently received the maximum term of five years registration without any further conditions. The school board and its chairperson, Jocelyn Cox, were integral to this process as well as the Yiyili AC School staff.

Language/Culture

During 2018 the further development of the Gooniyandi Language and Culture Program was an exciting highlight. The school has a dedicated Language Teacher who is undertaking an accredited Traditional Language Teaching course through the WA Department of Education. In 2018, the school also received an \$12,888 grant from the Wyemando Foundation specifically for school trips to important cultural locations. These trips took place for all class groups each term in 2018 and were a great success.



NAIDOC Ball

Yiyili AC School hosted its inaugural NAIDOC Ball which was catered for by the students in Galamoorda class. The event was a great success and many thanks to all the community members who volunteered their time to help set up for the ball as well as all those that came to join in the celebrations. In particular, the school recognised all the women who contribute to Yiyili AC School in line with the NAIDOC theme – 'Because of her we can'.

Mural Project

Yiyili AC School hosted IHHP and artists Andrew Bourke in late Term 3, 2018. It was a great celebration of Yiyili AC School and all the people who have built up the school to what it is today. The mural allowed the school to recognise Norman Cox - a man with great vision and determination to educate children on Gooniyandi country.



Alison Lester and Jane Godwin visit

The Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA) organised for authors and illustrators Alison Lester and Jane Godwin to visit the school. Guided by Alison and Jane, students wrote several books which will soon be published. There is a short video that summarises the visit, found at <https://vimeo.com/311192257>

Fence

The school undertook to fence the school grounds at the end of 2018 for two main reasons. Firstly, to ensure student and worker safety and keep vehicles outside school grounds. Secondly, the fence will also stop animals, mainly cattle, from entering school grounds. This again improves student and worker safety and allows the school to continue with its focus on improving the school grounds by allowing trees to grow as well as opening the possibility to grow lawn.

School Garden

Working in association with the EON Foundation, the school gardens continued to thrive in 2018. 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 funding was secured for a further two years to continue EON's support of Yiyili AC School.

Gooniyandi Family Days



The school board continues to see Gooniyandi language and culture as fundamental to life at Yiyili AC School. Gooniyandi family days allow students, staff and community members to come together to enjoy time on country and recognise the central importance of time on country to student and community well-being.

School Income 2017:

Federal Per Capita: \$1,438,412
State Per Capita: \$331,515
Indigenous Wages: \$483,000
Special Education: \$46,961.80
Universal Access: \$5,685.96
Art Gallery: \$38,723.42
Interest: \$10,887.32
Donations: \$30,072
Digital Literacy Grant: \$40,000
Accommodation (Staff & Visitor): \$26,357
Connecting to Country Grant: \$49,815
NAIDOC grant: \$1500
Literacy Acquisition (LAPS): \$7,000
ROSLA grant: \$5,000
Wyemando Bequest (Language): \$12,880
Other income: \$19,901.95

Total Income \$ 2,547,711.45