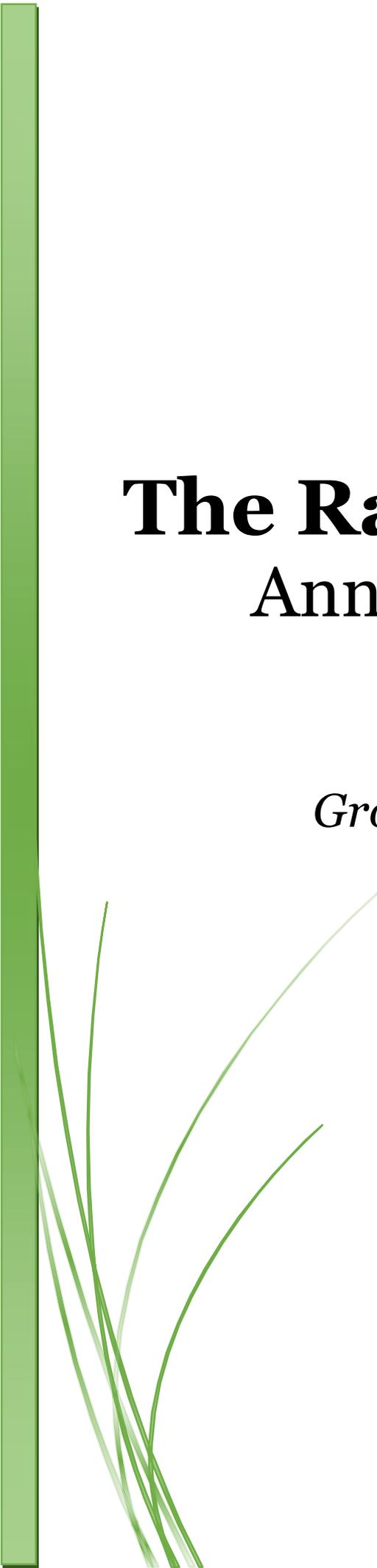


The Rainforest School

Annual Report 2023

Grow Slow, Grow Strong



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Webpage	Additional information about The Rainforest School is located on trs.qld.edu.au and the <i>My School</i> website
Contact person	Julie Abbott - Principal Carolien Franken – Business Manager

School Sector

Independent

Total Enrolments

26

Year Levels Offered

Prep – Year 6

Co-educational or Single Sex

Co-Educational

School Background

The Rainforest School is a government approved, independent, co-educational primary school (Prep – Year 6) located in the hinterland of Mission Beach, Queensland.

Mission

Our mission is to deliver a child-centred and holistic approach to education which considers the individual needs of the child: academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

Vision

A home-away-from-home, where self-confidence is fostered, authentic relationships are nurtured, and a connection with nature and a love of learning is embedded.

Motto

Grow Slow, Grow Strong

Pillars

Connection – Community – Conservation – Creativity

Social Climate

The Rainforest School is an independent primary school, located in the beautiful hinterlands of Mission Beach. Our school is a high-set Queenslander that is surrounded by lush rainforest. The Rainforest School is intentionally small by design. The atmosphere is warm and welcoming, with consideration given to beauty, simplicity and the use of natural materials. We encourage intrinsic motivation so that our learners can reach their full potential.

Fostering authentic relationships and the use of restorative practice assists our students to build on their social and emotional knowledge. Each learning space is designed to support unity and collaboration. Student wellbeing is a priority at our school as we understand that it leads to successful learning. Our wellbeing program provides valuable life skills and promotes a growth mind set, while our daily circle time encourages student voice.

During this circle time we promote and support a growth mindset and focus on relationship building to instill a sense of belonging. Our relaxation enables our students to calm and clear their minds. It is this unwritten curriculum that helps to create the unique culture of The Rainforest School.

Characteristics of the Student Body

In 2023 we taught a small composite cohort of 26 students. All our students live regionally and in the vicinity of Mission Beach, Tropical North Queensland.

Boys: 14

Girls: 12

Indigenous: 3

Our approach to curriculum delivery

We deliver the Australian Curriculum in a unique and vibrant way. Our teaching is child-centered, with a balanced mix of hands-on, real-life and explicitly taught lessons. We deliver an education that is inclusive of all students at our school. We strive for our students to become creative, innovative and resourceful individuals who can draw on their knowledge and experience to solve problems. Our subject units and student projects are selected or developed around our distinct local context, student interests and alignment to our school values.

The classroom layout is designed to support our teaching practice, with flexible and fluid learning spaces, where students have a shared ownership of every school resource and space. Our flagship Kitchen/Garden Program provides students with real-life skills and daily nutritious vegetarian meals. Students do not bring a packed lunch to school, instead all meals are shared from the one table, which helps to create a culture of belonging. Our whole school reading program gives students access to the essentials of effective, evidence-based reading instruction matched to their level of reading development. We believe that learning is a continuum, and we strive to ensure that every student experiences success as they progress on their learning progression.

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

Kitchen – Garden Program

Our Kitchen - Garden program provided our students with daily real-life learning. Students, parents and staff engaged in planting and tending the vegetable garden as well as harvesting and using the ingredients in the kitchen to cook lunch for the school community. Our students were active participants in the full food cycle experience, from preparing the vegetable beds all the way through to composting the food scraps left after food preparation. This program provided students with important life skills and integrated various subject areas such as, English, Maths, Science and Design Technology.

Wellbeing Program

Our students participated in daily mediation practices, where students were taught breathing techniques to the sound of a gong and mindfulness with the aid of visualization stories. Student voice was encouraged during our circle time, where they could decide on topics ranging from finding solutions to problems to the planning of the following term's menu.

Swimming Program

As part of our HPE program we ran a weekly swimming program in Term 1 and Term 4 at our local aquatic centre. These lessons were subsidised by Sporting for Schools Grants and provided our students with valuable water safety and swimming skills.

Gymnastics Program

As part of our HPE program we ran an 8-week program in Term 2 at our local Gym and Tramp Club in Tully. These lessons were subsidised by a Sporting for Schools Grant.

Tennis Program

As part of our HPE program we ran a 9-week program in Term 3 at our local Tennis Club in Mission Beach. These lessons were subsidised by a Sporting for Schools Grant.

Instrumental Music

Under the professional guidance of a music teacher, our students have taken part in a weekly Instrumental Music Program focusing on percussion, harmonica, keyboard, ukulele and guitar.

Dance Lessons

As part of HPE and The Arts Program, our school provided weekly lessons with a professional dance instructor. During these lessons our students learnt fundamental movement skills and dance elements.

Art Exhibitions

In 2023 our students exhibited their artworks at Mission Arts to connect with community and give real-life authenticity to student learning. Students entered two artworks in two exhibitions. Each student also entered a Post Impressionist inspired self-portrait painting in the 'People' exhibition. Students also exhibited their custom-made ceramic platter or bowl in the 'Earth & Fire' exhibition.

End of Term Performance

At the end of each Term our staff and students showcase their work to our school community in a variety of ways, including exhibitions, events, concerts and performances.

School Production

The school conducted a whole school production called 'The Circus'. Students researched the history of the circus and practiced their scripts, acting, singing and dancing throughout the term. The school held three performances to the wider community.

Harmony Day Luncheon

Each student custom made a ceramic platter or bowl to serve their family favourite/traditional meal with the school community in a shared luncheon for Harmony Day.

Excursions

In 2023 we facilitated two excursions to our local library to participate in:

- National Simultaneous Storytime: the reading of 'The Speedy Sloth' by Rebecca Young
- Book Week: 'Read, Grow, Inspire'

In addition to these excursions, we facilitated the following outings:

- Mission Beach Community Arts Centre 'People' art workshop
- 'Read To Me Day' at Tully
- Clean Up Australia Day Excursion at the Indigenous Fish Trap
- Beach Excursion for Design & Technology & HASS
- Lucy Locket Shadow Puppet Show at the C4 Theatrette, Mission Beach
- Guided tour of the Cairns Aquarium and Bangarra Dance Theatre's production 'Waru'
- Thistle Rd tree planting for National Tree Day
- CCRC Tree Planting at Reid Rd, Mission Beach

Incursions

In 2023 we welcomed the following experts to our school:

- Councillors of the Cassowary Coast Regional Council visited our school to educate our students on waste management.
- Local artist, Dee Dean came and conducted a ceramic workshop with the students of our school to create custom-made platters and bowls for Harmony Day.
- To celebrate Sea Week and World Turtle Day, our students took part in two web conferences with Reef HQ Great Barrier Reef Aquarium.
- Tangaroa Blue worked with our students to audit the litter that was collected by our school and the wider community at our Clean Up Australia Day.
- Local pottery artist Justin McCallum came to conduct a workshop with our students to create a keep sake / jewellery box.
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council, the Mandubarra Rangers and Dr. Paul York from TropWATER JCU to our school to talk about the importance of seagrass for turtles and dugongs in the Great Barrier Reef.
- A Djiru Exhibition 'Echo of the Past' historical photo exhibition, an educational talk about how everyday items have changed over time and a cultural nature walk, delivered by Leonard Andy and Valerie Boll.
- Children's author and illustrator, Kim Michelle Toft worked with our students on a writing and painting workshop.
- The Pain Revolution's Rural Outreach Tour conducted a talk and activities from the Brain Bus, a mobile pain science lab, which included visual illusions and storytelling.

School Camp

In 2023 our Y3-Y6 students took part in a school camp at Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre, where students visited the Cairns Aquarium, Turtle Rehabilitation Centre and Marineland Melanesia Crocodile Park. Students took part in a glass bottom boat tour, a Wunyami Cultural Tour and a mangroves boating experience. At the camp, students participated in team building challenges and water games. The overall aim of this camp was to:

- extend on students' learning about Ocean Ecosystems and Marine Animals
- extend on the delivery of nature-based, outdoor learning
- promote and foster team building and co-operative learning
- improve and enhance our students' self-confidence, and independence and to improve their ability to work with others by developing their social and emotional and leadership skills
- enhance friendships and memorable school moments

Extra-curricular Activities

Nature Walks

Our nature walks around the property of Dundee Park included highlights such as a rainforest mini golf and the largest butterfly aviary in the Southern hemisphere.

Circle Time

Our school promotes Circle Time, where we promote and support a growth mindset and relationship building by providing a safe space to reflect. Our students are given the opportunity to share ideas and speak freely about their experiences and feelings.

Pampering Day

During the last week of Term 2 students came to school dressed in their pyjamas and experienced a variety of ways to self-care, including foot spas, facial masks, pedicures, hair creations, tea parties and pastry making.

Halloween Disco

Students came dressed in 'Halloween' themed costumes and had a lovely time dancing at a whole school disco.

Parental & Community Involvement

Our school welcomed parent and community volunteers to assist with our project time and gardening. Parents assisted with our morning Reading Program with the Preps to Year 2. Parents were invited to join some of our excursions, which included a visit to the local library for Book Week and Read to Me Day, Clean Up Australian Day, two tree plantings (one for National Tree Day and one for the local council) and a visit to the local art gallery to view the exhibited student entries.

Twice per term the school conducted 'Parent Circle' meetings, where teachers gave classroom updates and (fundraising) projects, aligned to our four corner-stone pillars were generated. Students and staff used this time to ask parents for advice or assistance with student-led projects. It was also an opportunity for the principal to give school updates and for parents and carers to ask questions, give feedback and input to the school.

Our school has a public Facebook Page to connect with parents and our wider community, which reaches to across Australia and as far as the United Kingdom, United States, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Indonesia, Vietnam, Argentina and South Africa.

Another initiative to connect with the local community has been achieved through the hosting of the Mission Beach Boomerang Bags movement. The school took over this project in 2019 and welcome community members to sewing bees at our school. The project aims to recycle donated fabric into funky bags to reduce the use of plastic bags, which aligns with our four pillars 'Connect, Conservation, Community and Creative'.

Spring Fair

In September 2023 the school hosted our annual Spring Fair. The families of our students helped making this event a big success. At this event we welcomed over 300 visitors to our school. It was a great way to connect with our local community while promoting our school values. Students were given the opportunity to sell their own handmade products, which provided them with a real-life learning experience.

Parent/Carer, Teacher and Student Satisfaction with the School

Satisfaction Data derived from the 2023 quantitative Parent/Carer and Student Survey showed a high to very high average satisfaction. Both Parent/Carer and Student Survey had a 100% participation rate. Our school community is very small, and this means the results should be read in that light.

Student Conclusions

The 2023 Student Survey had a 100% response rate. Students were asked to rate statements on the following scale:

Rating	Score
Strongly Agree	5
Agree	4
Neutral	3
Not Agree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

Generally, our students experienced a high to very high satisfaction, with an average score of 4.7.

Average Ratings Student Survey 2023	2023 Score	2022 Score	Variance
1. I like being at my school	4.7	4.8	-0.1
2. I feel safe at school	4.5	4.7	-0.2
3. My teachers care about me	4.7	4.9	-0.3
4. My teachers motivate me to learn	4.5	4.8	-0.3
5. My teachers expect me to do my best	4.9	4.8	0.1
6. My teachers provide me with useful feedback about my school work	4.7	4.7	0.0
7. I can talk to my teachers about my concerns	4.5	4.6	-0.1
8. Student behaviour is well managed at my school	4.4	4.6	-0.1
9. Teachers at my school treat students fairly	4.5	4.7	-0.2
10. My school takes students' opinions seriously	4.4	4.6	-0.2
11. My school looks for ways to improve	4.8	4.8	0.0
12. My school is clean	4.2	4.3	-0.2
13. I like the cooking we do at our school	4.7	4.6	0.1
14. I like Morning Circle	4.6	4.9	-0.3
15. I like the Meditation and wellbeing we do at our school	4.5	4.8	-0.3
16. I like the Sporting programs (tennis, gymnastics and swimming)	4.9	4.4	0.5
17. I like the Dancing program	4.8	4.3	0.4
18. I like the instrumental music program (ukulele, guitar, keyboard & Percussion)	4.9	4.9	0.0
19. My school gives me opportunities to do interesting things	4.7	4.8	0.0
Average Score	4.6	4.7	-0.1

Parents/Carers Conclusions

The 2023 Parent/Carer Survey had a 100% response rate. Parents/Carers were asked to rate statements on the following scale:

Generally, the Parents/Carers Satisfaction scored an average of 4.7.

The Rainforest School - Parent/Carer Survey			
	2023	2022	Variance 2023/2022
Total - Average Score	4.7	4.4	0.34
CARE FOR STUDENTS	4.8	4.6	0.3
My child likes being at The Rainforest School	4.8	4.9	-0.1
My child feels safe at school	4.8	4.6	0.2
My child has a positive relationship with his/her teachers	4.9	4.6	0.3
Teachers at The Rainforest School treat my child fairly	4.9	4.5	0.4
My child feels nurtured and cared for at school	4.9	4.5	0.3
I trust that the staff have my child's best interest at heart	4.8	4.5	0.3
My child feels comfortable to approach his/her teachers	4.8	4.3	0.5
My child is making good progress socially and emotionally	4.8	4.6	0.2
TEACHING AND LEARNING	4.7	4.5	0.2
I am happy with the quality of teaching at The Rainforest School	4.8	4.6	0.2
Teachers at The Rainforest School inspire and motivate my child to learn	4.8	4.4	0.4
Teachers at The Rainforest School expect my child to do his/her best	4.8	4.4	0.4
My child is making good progress with their learning at school	4.7	4.6	0.1
My child's learning needs are being met	4.6	4.5	0.2
Teachers provide my child with useful feedback about his/her learning	4.5	4.2	0.3
Teachers meet my child's specific needs	4.7	4.2	0.5
The combination of hands-on, real-life and explicit learning contributes to my child's educational development	4.8	4.8	0.0
BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT	4.5	4.3	0.2
Student behaviour is well managed at our school	4.4	4.1	0.2
I value the implementation of restorative practices rather than punitive consequences for behaviour	4.6	4.5	0.1
RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION	4.8	4.2	0.5
I can talk to my child's teachers about my concerns	4.8	4.3	0.5
My opinions are taken seriously by the school	4.8	4.2	0.5
I am well informed about what is happening at school	4.7	4.1	0.6
I feel comfortable to approach staff	4.9	4.2	0.6
I believe any concerns that I raise are dealt with in a timely and appropriate manner	4.8	4.2	0.6
I feel part of the school community	4.6	4.4	0.3
OTHER	4.9		
The Kitchen/Garden Program adds value to my child's education	4.9	4.8	0.1
The sporting programs (tennis, swimming, gymnastics) delivered by external coaches contributes to my child's education.	4.9		
I value the instrumental music (ukulele/guitar, keyboard and percussion) delivered by professional musicians	5.0		
I value the dance program delivered by a professional dance instructor	4.9		
The practices (yoga, meditation mindfulness and breathing exercises, etc) taught at The Rainforest School assist my child's wellbeing	4.9	4.9	0.0
I value the 4 pillars of The Rainforest School (Connection, Community, Conservation & Creativity)	5.0	4.9	0.0
The Rainforest School has a strong focus on sustainability	4.9		
I value that my child can connect with nature at The Rainforest School	4.9	4.7	0.2
The Rainforest School delivers an indigenous perspective and connects with first nation people	4.8		
The Rainforest School looks for ways to improve	4.9	4.5	0.4

School Income Broken Down by Funding Source

School income, reported by financial year accounting cycle using standardized national methodologies and broken down by funding source is available via the <http://www.myschool.edu.au/> website.

Staffing Information

Staff Composition, Including Indigenous Staff:

Description	Teaching staff*	Non-teaching staff	Indigenous** staff
Headcounts	3	5	0
Full-time equivalents	2	2.4	0

*Teaching staff includes School Leaders.

** *Indigenous* refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.

Teacher Qualifications	
Masters	50%
Bachelor's degree	50%

Key Student Outcomes

Average student attendance rate (%) for the whole school:

The average attendance rate for the whole school as a percentage in 2023 was 87.5%

Average student attendance rate for each year level

The Rainforest School had 26 enrolments in 2023. For privacy reasons we are unable to disclose attendance rates for all year levels.

Year levels	Average attendance rate for each year level as a percentage in 2023
Prep	88%
Year 1	81%
Year 2	90%
Year 3	91%
Year 4	95%
Year 5	Data withheld to ensure confidentiality
Year 6	Data withheld to ensure confidentiality

The attendance roll is marked twice a day, and parents are contacted in case of an absence. In 2023 all students did meet the attendance requirements for compulsory schooling and no further action had to be taken.

NAPLAN results for Year 3 and Year 5 in 2023

There are no 2023 Naplan results available.

Contact Person for Further Information

For further information about The Rainforest School, enrolment information and policies, please contact admin@trs.qld.edu.au