‘INSPIRING YOUNG PEOPLE TO BUILD CONNECTIONS TO LOCAL ENVIRONMENTS THROUGH INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE’.

SILKWOOD SCHOOL PRESENTATION

Silkwood School is a small, independent, co-educational primary and high school. The site has been carefully planned to blend our natural bush surroundings and two creeks, with specially designed sustainable learning centres.
SPIRIT OF SILKWOOD

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSozS_AqOAo&feature=plcp

- This is a 4 minute film that highlights the natural learning features of Silkwood School, where learning is an adventure in itself. Two flowing creeks, native bushland & habitats, abundant birdlife and native creatures make our school surrounds their home.

- This film will take you on a journey through our interpretive bush trail, so you can see Silkwood’s beauty for yourself. We love to learn and explore in our natural learnscapes and we are focused on building connections to our local environment through indigenous knowledge.

- At Silkwood, kids teach kids how to connect with their environment. We’ve done our research, found community mentors and created workshops to run for other kids; even from other schools!

- At Silkwood, we connect to our unique environment everyday and do our bit to live clean and green.

- What is the spirit of Silkwood? Be inspiring, get connected, make a difference!
SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL VISION

OUR VISION

• A leading sustainable school: providing a diversity of learn-scapes, learning programs and native habitats; with inspiring educators and students, engaged in creating sustainable futures.

OUR MISSION

• To develop global and environmental citizens equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes to impact positively and sustainably at a local, national and international level.

• To build partnerships with other schools, community networks and national/international initiatives to expand learning opportunities provided on-site & beyond.
TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

- Silkwood School is part of Kombumerri country and the wider Yugambeh language region, which includes the Gold Coast, Scenic Rim and Logan regions. We respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of this land and their capacity and resilience as indigenous custodians.

- At Silkwood School we have explored the notion that in order to protect and sustain the environment, people have to connect with it in physical and emotional ways, through direct experience. The respect and intuition our traditional owners have for the land and the interconnectedness of all elements is an inspiration for us. There’s much to learn from spending time in native environments and using powers of observation & connection to become aware, note changes and take positive action. By getting in touch with our local indigenous communities we hope to inspire young people build deeper connections to themselves, others and their local environments in meaningful and authentic ways.
It’s All About Connection!

Teaching & Learning for Sustainability

PLACE

OTHERS

SELF

Personal Wellbeing & Identity

Strong Social and Cultural Relationships

Nature & the wider Community of Life
EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY

- School Strategic Plan – key drivers & directives reflect priorities.
- School Environment Management Plan – SEMP.
- Have a good look at what you have to work with. Find what’s unique & special about your school & focus on that first.
- Meaningful, authentic, purposeful engagement vs. tokenistic, occasional consideration. Work critically and creatively. What are explicit / implicit learning opportunities?
- School Culture – ‘This is the way we do things here...everyday’: Syndicate/Cohort leadership groups. Kids teaching Kids.
- Work with principles of mentorship, partnerships and collaboration – network, create and share – school community and beyond.
- Most importantly, connect children to nature. If they connect & learn through direct experience, they will develop a greater sense of care & stewardship for sustainable futures. Empower children as leaders & teachers!
Shared Leadership & Responsibility

• EARTH MUNCHERS

‘We are responsible for gathering, composting and worm farming organic matter from school lunches, tuckshop and staffroom.’

• WASTE CRUNCHERS

‘We are responsible for setting up and managing a recycling station and supporting individual classes, the office and staffroom and site team to responsibly reduce & recycle.’

• LEARN-SCAPERS

‘We are responsible for regenerating the bush, caring for learn-scapes and bush trails and educating the younger students and the community about Silkwood’s unique wildlife features.’
EMBEDDING INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

• Meaningful, authentic, purposeful engagement vs. tokenistic, occasional consideration. It is part of the everyday. Aboriginal culture is a living culture.

• Look for opportunities to integrate indigenous perspectives/studies in creative and integrated ways - hands-on/interactive.

• 8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning – consider indigenous pedagogy & learning engagement - for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

• Start local. Build relationships with local communities, language region groups and individuals. Connect to your place, your land.

• Work with principles of mentorship and collaboration - network, create and share - especially stories.

• Attitude – focus on what you CAN DO, not on what you can’t.

• Find opportunities to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island culture within your school – not just NAIDOC Week.
In Summary...

- Solid pedagogy – engaged learners
- Mentorship & community
- Meaningful, authentic & purposeful learning
- Seek out opportunities – start local
- Direct experience vs. indirect experience
- Explicit and implicit learning
- Connecting – self, others, place
- Students as teachers and leaders