

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Yaama. Ngaruki Gulgul Central School proudly celebrates Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and their rich culture.

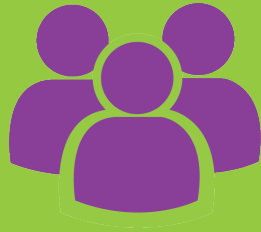
We pay respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners of the land and water on which we rely. We also specifically acknowledge the Darkinyung People; the custodians of Darkinyung Country, upon which our school operates.

We recognise the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to Australian life and how this enriches us all.

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114 students enrolled
53 female and 58 male
3 nonbinary/gender-fluid
42 First Nations
58 with a disability



9 job outcomes

12 teaching staff/trainers & 14
non-teaching staff
(3 being First Nations)



1 student successfully
completed their HSC



4 students graduated
Year 12



21 senior students
participated in accredited
trade/vocational training

V.E.T Pathways



SIR30216 - Certificate III in Retail



SIT20322 - Certificate II in Hospitality



AHC20422 - Certificate II in Horticulture



CPC20220 - Certificate II in Construction Pathways & CPC21020 -
Statement of Attainment from Certificate II in Construction Pathways



Industrial Technology (Automotive)

VET subjects are delivered by the AIS RTO ID #90413



3 Retail qualifications



1 full Hospitality
qualification achieved



8 work placements completed

NGC AT A GLANCE IN 2025

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT



In compiling the stories, outcomes and insights that comprise our 2025 annual report, there was one theme that kept coming up for me. That is, the importance of flexibility and adaptiveness. At Ngaruki Gulgul Central School (NGC), we don't just pay lip service to flexibility as if it's a bonus.

By contrast, it underpins every decision we make as a school; from the way we structure our staffing teams and our interpretation of the curriculum, to the specific and varying support we offer a young person, one day to the next.

NGC is positioned as a genuine alternative to both mainstream and non-traditional educational settings. There are so many components that enable us to truly do things differently, and our small size - relative to other schools - is absolutely key to this.

We have the strategic advantage of being agile, poised for in-the-moment collaboration and adaption, and ultimately less encumbered by the red-tape and bureaucracy that can impede larger organisations.

But to say our size, in and of itself, is the secret to our success would be reductive and doesn't explain how we can continue to maintain our commitment to flexibility even as we grow our footprint as a school. Rather, we have made the conscious choice to enable it, by making our learning holistic, personalised and inclusive at every opportunity. The 2025 year offers plentiful examples of this.

Firstly, we have gone to great lengths to ensure our classroom teaching is as neuro-inclusive and accessible as possible. At NGC, we think about accessibility as something you can 'bake into' learning design and delivery. Rather than retroactively coming up with basic adjustments for individual students, our teachers start from the assumption that everyone is coming to the topic at hand from different starting points. This shifts the focus to interpreting the curriculum through activities and concepts that are highly practical, diverse in their application and that don't assume prior knowledge or skills.



In 2025, we increased our number of teachers' aides in our classrooms by 30%, which makes having additional and one-on-one support available to anyone who needs it an expectation, rather than an exceptional circumstance. We also established a new Silver class for those Year 9-10 students who required even more extensive support on a consistent basis. With one designated teacher and aide, a focus on functional literacy and numeracy and strong use of the NESA Life Skills curriculum, this core Stage 5 class has yielded excellent results. You can read more about it on page 15 of the report.

Secondly, 2025 has seen us make important progress in how we blend teaching and learning with student welfare. True flexibility in education means seeing young people through a holistic lens, where their academic progress is inextricably connected to their mental and physical health, sense of belonging, cultural affirmation and connectedness, and access to material and wellbeing-based supports.



An exciting development in this area has been the launch of a highly engaging outreach program for students, which often took them outside the boundaries of everyday school life and where they could participate in activities including boxing, producing and song-writing, visiting community initiatives, engaging in cultural education, and finding role models amongst famous athletes and musicians.

I am excited to share that NGC will be taking our commitment to flexible, adaptive and personalised education to new heights in 2026. Our team, supported by our exceptional Board of Directors, have been working hard behind the scenes to prepare for our expansion into a new, second campus at Woongarra. In keeping with the ethos I have detailed above, we will be operating as an enterprise-based model, integrating vocational education, applied learning and intensive wellbeing support.

This is a huge development for us; one which came from considering what was truly possible for our future as a school, and listening to growing community demand for genuine alternatives to mainstream education.

These calls for change are coming from all over the Central Coast and with both our Kariong and Woongarra campuses working in tandem, we will be better equipped than ever to service a greater number of young people who need us.

None of this would be possible without the unwavering commitment of our staff, Board, supporters and partners. I am fortunate to lead a team of generous, creative and resilient educators who continue to innovate and adapt in order to better serve our young people. Most of all, I am grateful for the students of NGC, who put their trust in us and in many ways, become our greatest teachers.

Andrea Cingi, Principal

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT



2025 has been a tremendous year of growth at Ngaruki Gulgul Central (NGC). This growth can be seen in the structural changes to how our school currently functions and the foundations being laid for the future, in our increasing number of students and staff, and in the ever-expanding repertoire of educational and wellbeing-focused supports on offer. Most gratifyingly, it can also be observed in each of the courageous young people who have walked through our gates.

The change they undergo isn't an overnight or linear phenomenon, but the sum total of hundreds of positive, enriching experiences. As I read through this year's annual report, I have contemplated where such personal growth comes from. What enables our students to evolve beyond an initial state of apprehension, guardedness or self-doubt so they can ultimately flourish?

I think the first vital enabler is challenge. Young people come to NGC because they feel stuck in their mainstream educational journey. There can be many reasons for this sense of stagnation, and it doesn't mean that they aren't achieving in some capacity. But ultimately, the missing piece is often a lack of meaningful challenge. Without educational support that can accommodate their learning needs and provide appropriate and personalised opportunities to stretch to their limits, disengagement and retreat can be a natural conclusion.

At our school, we believe in challenging our students in purposeful ways. This isn't about adversity for adversity's sake, but rather taking difficult or new experiences and shaping them into something meaningful. It might be academic challenges that push young people beyond the limitations that they may have felt in mainstream settings or reconceptualise what it means to be smart and capable. It may also be social challenges as they find their feet amongst new friendship dynamics, forge positive relationships with teachers and staff, and feel a sense of belonging that was previously out of reach.

At NGC, facing challenges - with the right support at hand - is seen as the ultimate evidence that we can all do hard things.

The final, and perhaps most important, enabler of growth is self-belief. If you don't think you're capable and worthy of evolving, it simply can't occur. But when you have had many difficult experiences in life, it's not an easy mindset to cultivate. In these instances, we need to be able to borrow belief from others.



That is exactly what happens at NGC every day. Our staff hold up a mirror to our young people, reflecting their strengths and innate value back to them. They model what it means to be compassionate during times of struggle and they gently let them know that they are more than their past.

Ultimately, we can't take the credit - it is our students who do the hard work to tell themselves a new story of what's possible. They look at all the support around them and gradually, they internalise it as proof that they deserve to believe in themselves too.

In many ways, our growth as a school has relied on these same conditions of constructive challenge, relentless consistency and radical belief in our own potential as an organisation. Throughout 2025, we have implemented multiple strategies to help us to thrive on a structural, macro level. Some of these have included:

- Increasing our staffing team, including both classroom-based teachers and support staff, to ensure that our similarly growing number of students are sufficiently catered for. We have also been fortunate to have the expertise and generosity of multiple volunteers throughout the year. As we have expanded in this way, we have continued to prioritise staff wellbeing and optimising both systems and physical settings to enable greater collaboration has been key to ensuring that our team remains incredibly high-functioning (and happy!).
- Embedding student voice into our strategic direction in a meaningful way. We have created the position of Student Advisor within our Board, where a NGC alumnus commits to regular participation in board meetings and is on hand to offer their lived experience and advice. Teachers and support staff are also always finding touchpoints for young people to share their experiences and feedback, whether it's on a daily basis during classes, through confidential consultation and counselling, or keeping open lines of communication with their families.
- Ensuring strong financial performance, which can set the foundations for sustainable growth. Our Board plays a key role in this. The Directors all have diverse professional expertise that they apply to the operational and strategic realities of our school, and they are judicious and diligent in their decision-making. Here, I must mention the founding Director and former chair of the Board, Patrick Lewis. Pat has been part of NGC since its conception in 2014 and we wouldn't be where we are today without his leadership. Additionally, our financial wellbeing as an organisation relies on the contribution of multiple partners, funders and individual donors, and 2025 has seen strong growth in this area.
- Progressing towards the establishment of a second campus in late 2026. Located in Woongarra, the new campus will cater for up to 28 young people in Years 9 and 10. This is a milestone that reflects not only growth in size, but a deepening of our commitment to provide meaningful, relevant and future-focused education to students who may otherwise disengage from mainstream settings.

To conclude, I would like to thank every staff member who invests so much into the growth of our young people and adamantly believes in our mission as a school. In particular, I want to acknowledge our founding principal, Andrea. Her outstanding leadership empowers every staff member and every student to own their strengths and embrace a growth mindset. We couldn't do what we do without her vision and her formidable drive, often in the face of significant obstacles. Thank you to my fellow Board Members for volunteering their time and energy, to all sectors of the community that support and resource us, and to our students. Without you, we wouldn't exist and it is an honour to serve you.

Greg Groppenbacher, Board Chair



ABOUT NG CENTRAL

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Ngaruki Gulgul Central School (otherwise known as NG Central or NGC) is a registered and accredited non-government, special assistance school for students in Year 9 - 12. We believe that every young person deserves a purposeful future, and that school should be a pathway to achieving this.

However, many young people are not able to find success in traditional educational settings. The reasons for this are typically complex and intersecting. They include personal and systemic challenges of poverty, unstable home environments, low educational attainment and intergenerational unemployment in the family unit, substance use, contact with the justice system, neuro-developmental and mental health conditions, social isolation and housing instability.

In these cases, young people need a genuine alternative to mainstream schooling which can cater for their complex needs and avoid further marginalisation. NGC offers this alternative. We seek to address our students' barriers to engagement holistically and provide a community that nurtures their strengths, skills and aspirations.



Our name translates to 'Standing Strong' in Darkinyung language, which is both an ethos and a lived experience that we want our students to embody because of their time with us.

At NGC, we take a practical, flexible and enterprising approach to education, combining:

- NSW Education Standards Authority school curriculum
- Vocational training in Horticulture, Hospitality, Retail, Automotive and/or Construction
- Wraparound, personalised support that considers academic, behavioural, neuro-developmental and welfare needs
- Wellbeing programs.

We encourage our students to connect their learning with the world around them through the integration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, social and environmental perspectives, and opportunities for civic participation in our local community.

Work experience and hands-on training - both at school and in external workplaces - are also key to our approach, helping our students prepare for the workforce and build their employment skills, readiness and aspirations.

SCHOOL INFORMATION

NGC is not politically or religiously affiliated. Our campus is located at Green Central, 2 Kangoo Road, Kariong NSW. Our sustainable and wheelchair accessible classrooms and communal spaces are set against the beautiful bush setting of Mt Penang Parklands. We have a wide range of additional facilities onsite to aid both classroom learning and vocational training. These include a BBQ area, hot house, nursery, vegetable and bush tucker garden, construction and automotive shed, hair and beauty salon, education centre, café/kitchen, gym, NG Jam Room (music hub), library, cultural space, mini-cinema and meeting rooms.

Kofi Annan, former secretary-general of the United Nations, and a powerful and humble leader said:

“Young people should be at the forefront of global change and innovation. Empowered, they can be key agents for development and peace. If however, they are left on society’s margins, all of us will be impoverished. Let us ensure that all young people have every opportunity to participate fully in the lives of their societies.”

This encapsulates what we are striving for at Ngaruki Gulgul; to create the conditions where young people can access the skills, knowledge and support they need to determine their life trajectory and become positive, independent and fully integrated citizens who can actively contribute to our community.

APPROACH TO CURRICULUM

At NGC, we believe all young people deserve to learn and have substantial ability and aspirations to do so, when given the right conditions and support. Unfortunately, many of our students come to us having had fraught and even traumatising experiences in the mainstream education system for a variety of reasons.

NGC aims to rewrite the limiting script they can often internalise from a young age, where they doubt their capacity to learn. Our approach is strengths-based, encourages high expectations and champions tenacity, accountability and a growth mindset as being crucial for success.

Our dedicated, experienced staff use the formal curriculum as a springboard from which to design practical, personalised educational experiences that feel relevant to the world beyond school and cater to a variety of learning styles. Rather than focusing on the acquisition of factual knowledge, we find ways for students to constantly apply their learning to real scenarios.

In our globalised and technologically connected world, digital and media literacy is more vital than ever. NGC is keenly aware of this and seeks to help our young people confidently and critically evaluate the abundance of information and media available to them. We know academic learning doesn't happen in a vacuum and intentionally embed diverse cultural, social and environmental perspectives across our key learning areas.

RoSA and HSC Pathways:

We are registered and accredited to deliver a core curriculum of subjects approved by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), alongside a selection of vocational education and training (VET) courses. These subjects/courses include:

Year 9 & 10

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- PDHPE
- Geography
- History
- Try a Trade
- Outdoor Recreation
- Cultural Education
- Art

It is assumed that students have completed their mandatory Technological and Applied Studies (TAS), Creative Arts and Language in Year 7 and 8.

Year 11 & 12

- English Studies (Mandatory)
- Numeracy
- Investigating Science
- Sport, Lifestyle & Recreation Studies
- Photography, Video & Digital Imaging, OR an eVET course.

One of the following subjects*:

- Industrial Technology (Automotive)
- Certificate II in Hospitality (SIT20322)
- Certificate II in Horticulture (AHC20422)
- Certificate II in Construction Pathways (CPC20220)
- Statement of Attainment from Certificate II in Construction (CPC20120)
- Certificate III in Retail (SIR30216)
- OR an eVET course.

*VET subjects are delivered under the Independent Schools NSW RTO. RTO ID 90413

Young people who attend NGC have the opportunity to gain a Record of School Achievement (RoSA), a certificate that can be requested through NESA. The RoSA is the credential for students who leave school after Year 10 and before they receive their Higher School Certificate (HSC). It is a cumulative record of all academic achievement to date, detailing grades for the courses a student commences and/or completes until the time they leave school. This measure acknowledges the fact that some students begin senior secondary study but then leave school for employment or other training opportunities before receiving their HSC.

NGC also provides a Year 11 and 12 program which offers a curriculum option for students who are wanting to achieve their HSC. This meets the requirements of the Education Act and has Board Developed and Board Endorsed Content status. It does not lead to an ATAR, which is required for entrance into university. A student will be considered to have satisfactorily completed a course if, in the Principal's view, there is sufficient evidence that the student has:

- Applied themselves with diligence and sustained effort to the set tasks and experiences provided in the course by the school
- Achieved some or all of the course outcomes
- Followed the course developed by the Board.



EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

NEURODIVERGENCE AT NGC

NGC exists for young people who need flexible educational and wellbeing support that surpasses what they can receive within the mainstream system. There are multiple, often intersecting reasons that this is the case, and therefore the support we offer must be as differentiated and diverse as our student body.

This need for differentiation is particularly relevant in the context of neurodivergence; a broad spectrum of conditions like Autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and dyspraxia. While capturing exact figures can be challenging because rates of formal diagnosis vary, over half of our students are Autistic and/or have ADHD. A sizable number also present with neurological disabilities that affect the way their language and numerical processing, written expression and/or interoception.

However, a key feature of our approach is that we believe that neuro-inclusivity and accessibility should be the standard for education. This means that the supports we offer are available to all students, regardless of a diagnosis or any prescriptive set of characteristics. Every individual has varying neuro-developmental, psycho-social and sensory processing needs, so we try to create a baseline of inclusive practices and opportunities for differentiation that cater to the many learner profiles that are represented amongst any group of our students.

Our teachers and support staff are intentional in de-centring neurotypical modes of thinking, learning and behaving as the default. It's this intention that not only directly benefits neurodivergent young people, but means that all students benefit.

This is known as the curb-cut effect; a phenomenon where initiatives and accommodations designed to improve accessibility for marginalised groups become highly utilised by and effective for everyone. Throughout 2025, we worked on a number of educational support strategies, as follows:

The Introduction of Silver Class:

In Term 1 of 2025, we introduced a new Silver class for young people who required a more high-support learning environment and the oversight of a single generalised teacher in order to access the curriculum. While primarily comprising Year 9 and 10 students, eligibility was based less around strict year groups and more around their need for consistent scaffolding and differentiation, as well as diagnoses such as ADHD, Autism, dyslexia and dyscalculia, complex trauma and/or intellectual disability.

This class was intentionally smaller than usual, targeting only eight to twelve students to allow for higher one-on-one teacher support, individualised instruction and rapport-building. It combined content from both the NES Stage 5 and Stage 5 Life Skills curriculums, with English, Maths, History, Geography and Science content being taught within the class by the one teacher and an aide. PDHPE and vocational trade tasters were then delivered by specific subject-matter experts, as per NGC's usual structure.

Throughout the year, Silver Class continued to build on Life Skills outcomes through engaging, hands-on learning experiences that connected across multiple subject areas and reflected students' individual interests. They worked on a range of creative and practical projects that combined literacy, numeracy and real-world problem solving, from repairing bikes for the school community to writing and publishing their own stories.

Students engaged in real-world budgeting and financial literacy through social outings, where they applied concepts such as percentages, cost comparisons and price increases, as well as using fractions in authentic contexts. A prime example was our visit to Sydney City's Lexus Dealership. Cooking was a key - and much-enjoyed - component of the program, with students planning, budgeting for and preparing meals using both indoor and outdoor methods (even a fire pit!). This allowed them to demonstrate independence while applying measurement, sequencing and teamwork skills.

NEURODIVERGENCE AT NGC

Individual Plans and Learning Adjustments:

Individual Plans (IP) are one of our key educational support strategies at NGC. These plans are formulated by our Student Enrichment Manager, Inclusive Education Teacher, School Counsellor and Case Manager, in collaboration with our students and their families. Far from being a static document, they are a dynamic representation of a young person's:

- Learning goals (literacy, numeracy, social, and behavioural)
- Identified strengths and areas for growth
- Customised support strategies and classroom adjustments/accommodations
- Wellbeing and welfare considerations.

This process begins with an initial consultative meeting before they begin at NGC, in order to facilitate the smoothest transition into our school as possible. Where a student has a formal diagnosis of any kind, we also use this opportunity to gather insights and reports from psychologists, paediatricians, GPs and case managers. Our team also work with families around any required medication, vision or hearing issues, disability and neurodivergence, and NDIS referrals.



An IP considers any adjustments a young person might need to participate at NGC. These include supports specific to classroom learning and wellbeing, such as:

- Visual schedules and step-by-step instructions
- Chunked tasks and simplified language
- Differentiated teaching strategies for literacy and numeracy
- Flexible seating and movement breaks
- One-on-one or small group support via an aide
- Modified assessments (reduced workload, alternative formats)
- Assistive technology (speech-to-text, reading support tools, using a scribe)
- Access to sensory spaces or quiet areas
- Planned or responsive breaks
- Check-in/check-out systems
- Explicit teaching of coping strategies
- Counselling and case management support
- Managing medications
- Parent/carer collaboration.

The IP is then formally reviewed every six to twelve months, depending on the student in question. It's an intentionally fluid process that also includes regular check-ins with students and staff to make real-time changes. Family communication is also key, and our meetings provide opportunities to informally build skills and capacity for emotional regulation and support amongst parents and caregivers, especially when their young person is navigating neurodivergence or particularly complex behaviours.



Creating Our First Ever Sensory Space:

We would like to acknowledge Greater Bank and their Community Funding Program on the Central Coast for their support. In 2025, they provided much-needed and appreciated funding towards the creation of our NGC sensory space.

There is so much research to show how sensory experiences affect a young person's ability to regulate their emotions, concentrate on a task at hand, discharge stress and feel a sense of autonomy. Designed by our Inclusive Education teacher and our students themselves, this dedicated space will be equipped with all kinds of tools and supports that cater to their diverse sensory processing needs. Think fidget and textural tools, sound-proofing, noise-cancelling headphones, weighted blankets, wobble tools, colouring books and so much more!

Targeted Literacy and Numeracy Support:

Throughout 2025, NGC also experimented with targeted interventions into literacy and numeracy, using a 'back to basics' approach. This focused on the mastery of foundational skills through explicit teaching and direct instruction (rather than discovery-based methods that don't always function as well for students who are challenged in these areas).

We implemented small-group support strategies, withdrawing one or two students from their class at a time to work on extensive skill-building and a highly structured, sequential progression through key concepts. When focused on literacy, young people engaged with the science of reading, repetition-based activities, visual and scaffolded resources, and systematic phonics (matching sounds to letters).

This resulted in strong improvements in reading confidence, fluency and decoding. Numeracy was similarly taught through differentiated online platforms and a focus on practical, everyday skills like budgeting, measurement and financial literacy.



VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

NGC'S APPROACH TO V.E.T

Vocational education and training is a cornerstone of NGC's unique offering. While many schools deliver VET courses for senior school, we integrate trade-based learning experiences into our Stage 5 curriculum via a weekly program. Leveraging our high-quality onsite facilities, NGC provides trade tasters across horticulture, hospitality, hair and beauty, retail, construction and automotive for our Year 9 and 10 students. This continued throughout 2025, with young people participating in these weekly 'try a trade' sessions.

Throughout the year, we experimented with the cadence of these sessions, settling on one afternoon a week. We found that compartmentalising VET to the afternoon time-slot, following classroom subjects, was a logical flow that utilised our young people's energy and gave them a post-lunch boost, without distracting from other learning.

In 2025, we also welcomed new trainers to our ranks, who have unique dual skillsets that benefit our students. They are both technically qualified with industry experience, and have a real penchant for mentoring and teaching young people. Examples of this include our Retail trainer being a long-time business owner and working hairdresser, with psychology qualifications and Department of Communities and Justice case management experience, or our Construction trainer who not only operates his own company but has worked within juvenile justice. It has been fantastic to witness how their skills and knowledge have sophisticated our vocational education and training offering even more.

Once they reach senior school, our students select a VET subject for their Preliminary and HSC courses. From here, they undertake accredited training with both 'on-job' (practical) and off-job (theory) components, with the goal of achieving a Statement of Attainment or Certificate II or III in the trade of their choosing.

In 2025, 21 young people participated in accredited VET training, with the following full qualifications achieved:

- **1 x Certificate II in Hospitality**
- **3 x Statement of Attainments from the Certificate III in Retail**



Structured work placement is a prerequisite to achieving these qualifications. Throughout Year 11 and 12, students visit a local employer and undertake a 35-hour work placement, which they are assigned by the fantastic team at The Skill Engineer. This is a hugely beneficial experience where they not only recognise the technical skills required in their trade of choice, but what it takes to be an engaged, valued employee. Turning up promptly every day, navigating interactions with real clients and customers and tackling tasks under time pressure are all part of the experience!

In 2025, NGC had eight young people complete their work placements. We would like to give a special acknowledgement to Hospitality student, Jesse, who was the proud winner of The Skill Engineer's Hospitality VET Award. This celebrates his outstanding commitment to the subject and his mastery of both practical and theoretical skills.

In some cases, our students wish to explore other accredited training options in fields like animal care, IT, make-up artistry and community services. NGC works with partner RTOs to secure their places in these courses and either oversees their remote participation while they are onsite at school or helps transport them to in-person classes and examinations on the Central Coast.

NGC'S APPROACH TO V.E.T

Youth Scoot Program:

A highlight of 2025 was our participation in the Youth Scoot (E-Cruiser) Program, facilitated by our friends at The Skill Engineer. Bringing together NGC, Brisbane Waters Secondary College and Erina High School students, this fully-funded STEM initiative saw our young people work in teams to build their own electric scooters from the ground up!

Over the course of a term, they gained valuable, hands-on skills in welding, electronics, mechanical assembly and workplace safety. The process included plenty of guidance from The Skill Engineer's apprentice mentors and an information session with Central Coast Group Training. We were so impressed with how our students persevered throughout the program and it was fantastic to watch them graduate and present their work at the recent community showcase. Big thanks to The Skill Engineer for offering us this amazing opportunity!



'Back to the Future' Alumni Event:

One of our biggest priorities at NGC is helping our young people to consider what's possible for them in their life beyond school. Through exposure to learning, training, role modelling and wellbeing support, they gradually begin to envision a future that includes engaging work, a career path they can actively pursue, and the means to contribute to their families and wider community. While skills and knowledge are a huge part of this, attributes like resilience, perseverance, self-responsibility and empathy are just as essential to their pursuit of purposeful futures long after they leave us.

Our annual Back to the Future alumni event is one strategy we employ to open our students' minds to what their career trajectories can look like. For the third year running, we invited NGC alumni to meet our current students and share their life experiences since leaving school. In 2025, we were absolutely thrilled to have Ellie, Danielle, Jacob and Tommy on our line-up.

We started with speeches before moving into small-group discussions where everyone could ask questions and get targeted advice. Along with our alumni, we also invited representatives from Construction Trade Qualifications and Regional Work Skills Australia. A big thanks to our Vocational Programs Manager, Anthony, and Case Manager, Lee T, for making this event happen!

Matching Vocational Pathways with Personal Passions:

A focus for VET throughout 2025 was considering how we can customise the suite of internal and external pathways we offer to the current interests of our students. Beyond our trade tasters, our Vocational Programs Manager seeks out a wide array of training opportunities to expose young people to new skills, connections and even industries they didn't know existed. Examples of courses, industry visits and external speakers that were identified for students throughout the year included:

- The Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP)'s Float Your Boat Program, which focuses on opportunities in the Marine and Fishing sectors. This was a great fit for a NGC young person who loves fishing and boating.
- Multiplex's Jump Start Program at their John Hunter Hospital site in Newcastle, which is a monthly event that introduces young women to career options in Construction. We were able to send along an interested student who had a great experience.
- The djurali Creative Pathways workshop series at the Museum of Contemporary Art, which comprises four two-hour sessions on career options in the creative and cultural industries. It was the perfect opportunity for one of our students.
- The Pulse @ Parkes incursion run by CSIRO, where a scientist brought the Parkes telescope to our site. This was inspired by a student's passion for astronomy.
- A visit from a blind facilitator and representative from Guide Dogs Australia, who spoke to our students about disability awareness and opportunities to work with and train guide dogs.
- A Childcare Taster Day at Ourimbah TAFE where our students could talk directly to professionals working in the industry.
- The Apprenticeship Pathways Explorer event in Maitland, which showcased many different types of apprenticeships.
- A tour of the University of Newcastle's Central Coast clinical school campus, where young people toured their outstanding nursing wing in Gosford.
- RIEP's 4-day Engineering in Action Workshop.



NGC'S APPROACH TO V.E.T

A particularly noteworthy example of matching training opportunities to a young person's interests was our experience with Year 10 student, May. After experiencing a difficult period where she was unable to attend consistent classes at NGC, May sat down with our Vocational Programs Manager, Anthony, to design a re-entry into school that would incrementally build up her confidence and provide avenues for skill development without risking cognitive and emotional overload.

As a passionate seamstress with a keen eye for design, fashion and colour, we determined that May's primary interest at this time was textiles. Our team then set her a challenge to deliver her own small Textiles class as a 'try-a-trade' option for students in Term 3. Supported by a staff member, May took complete ownership over the class, planning the lesson content and delivering it with ever-increasing confidence.

This ultimately encouraged her to set up her own business delivering small-group sewing workshops, and the momentum of these successes saw her return to multiple classes at NGC, with great results. Excitingly, May's entrepreneurial savvy caught the attention of the Zonta Club of the Central Coast, an organisation that advocates for girls to achieve their full potential. They invited NGC students to submit applications for funding that could support their training and educational goals, and May was fortunate to be chosen alongside her peers, Sophie and Matilda. This provided her with financial backing to operate her small business.

May then made the decision to transfer into a mainstream high school for Year 11 because of their substantial Design and Technology offering. We are tremendously proud of her resilience, creativity and willingness to explore new solutions when faced with tough times.





**ADDING VALUE
TO EDUCATION**

STUDENT ENRICHMENT TEAM

At NGC, we always strive to see our students through a holistic lens and acknowledge that their learning never happens in a vacuum. Each young person comes to us with a range of experiences in both their educational journey and personal life, their own individual strengths, and different barriers that have made mainstream learning environments challenging for them.

When our students arrive at NGC seeking an alternative, we focus on their highest priority needs both inside and outside the classroom, so they can embrace a fresh start and grow to see themselves as capable, confident young adults and lifelong learners.

This is where our NGC Student Enrichment Team comes in! Our staff work collaboratively to provide holistic wellbeing support for our young people that is personalised to their specific needs and barriers.

As well as educational assistance in the classroom, this can include:

- Providing counselling and case management
- Sourcing crisis accommodation
- Offering cultural support, liaison and expertise
- Accompanying young people to medical appointments and court appearances
- Transporting young people to and from school
- Coordinating groceries and clothing
- Non-denominational support in the area of spirituality and faith, via the National Student Wellbeing Program (formerly the School Chaplaincy Program)
- Ensuring young people have healthy breakfasts, via the support of Foodbank's 'School Breakfast 4 Health' Program
- Having informal 'check-in' conversations with students
- Utilising animal-assisted therapy, with our Business Manager bringing in his delightful dog, Gizmo, and weekly visits from a therapy dog, Sunny, and owner, Ray.

Our Student Enrichment Team also organised a range of extracurricular initiatives, delivered both internally and externally, that broadly fall under our in-school 'Standing Strong' Program or our newly established Outreach Program. Such initiatives ranged from cultural education, to outdoor recreation, to specialist workshops. These are covered throughout the following pages.

GIRL TALK

Girl Talk is an in-school program, facilitated by our school counsellor, Caroline, and case manager, Lee T. It is designed for female-identifying young people and offers a safe, supportive space to communicate about relevant topics. In these weekly, confidential sessions, we covered topics like understanding what makes a healthy relationship, navigating sexuality, gender and identity, practising self-care, positive self-talk and healthy coping mechanisms, managing stress and mental health challenges, bullying and online behaviours, and discovering personal strengths.

A by-product of Girl Talk is the increased social connection it nurtures between the young women in our school. Fun activities and games like 'Stand Up If?' were used as gateways to honest, authentic conversations around both light-hearted and serious topics. We observed our students showing empathy and encouraging vulnerability without judgement. It was wonderful to see them opening up and taking care of themselves and each other in the process.



'OUT OF THE BOX' PROGRAM

2025 was another fantastic year for our much-loved 'Out of the Box' initiative. Led by our Case Manager, Lee T, and our Aboriginal Education and Community Liaison Officer, Brad it uses boxing and gym training as a vehicle for students to build healthy habits, routines and confidence.

Utilising his extensive experience as a former pro boxer, Brad, takes interested young people through a weekly session that combines boxing techniques with strength and conditioning work. This kicks off at 6am, meaning that our crew is waiting for the school bus to pick them up from 5am onwards. Getting up before the sun and committing to a challenging workout is the ultimate way to develop discipline and get those endorphins flowing! This is followed up by a healthy, protein-packed breakfast, prepared by Lee, so students feel replenished and ready to tackle the school day.

Many young people haven't tried boxing before or trained at a professional gym, and Out of the Box offers an ideal first experience. The focus is never on superficial metrics or going beyond your capabilities. Rather, it's about small, incremental wins and the momentum that comes from showing up week after week. We continue to see positive impacts flow on from Out of the Box, including more positive interactions with staff and peers and better concentration in the classroom. This can be attributed to the way that physical activity helps our young people to discharge stress, process sensory information and regulate emotions.

This program was supported by multiple partners in 2025, including the Lions Club of East Gosford, Grill'd West Gosford, the Rotary Club of Umina Beach, the Rotary Club of Kariong/Somersby, and premium boxing equipment retailer, Powrbox. It was also a fantastic experience to have our students attend Powrbox's store opening, where they were generously gifted brand new gloves to use in their workouts! These contributions are essential to keeping initiatives like Out of the Box going and we sincerely thank everyone involved.



CULTURAL EDUCATION

In 2025, NGC continued our flagship Cultural Education program, led and designed by First Nations staff and external supporters with diverse lived experience and cultural expertise. Just as we don't pay lip service to accessibility, we see integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and traditions into our classrooms and whole-school events as the standard.

We appreciate how this integration not only affirms our First Nations students, but creates a richer, more dynamic learning and community environment for all. Whether it's through practices like Acknowledgement/Welcome to Country, smoking ceremonies, yarning, visiting significant sites across the Central Coast and learning about their history, or expressing culture through art or artefacts, we believe that everyone thrives when we take meaningful actions around truth telling, sharing knowledge and recognition.



Making Possum Skin Cloaks:

During the year, our female students had the special opportunity to learn from Wiradjuri woman and mentor, Vicki Gale. They participated in weekly sessions where they made their own possum-skin cloaks from scratch and yarned about relevant topics along the way. This involved mastering traditional techniques like sewing the skins together and detailing them with meaningful motifs using burning methods and ochre.

Possum-skin cloaks are hugely significant in Aboriginal culture. Not only are they exceptionally warm, waterproof and multi-functional, but they also tell ancestral stories about their owners. A single cloak may be etched or painted with many motifs that symbolise language groups, major life events and the link between the physical and spiritual realm. It was a privilege for our young women to learn about this sacred practice that brings together Indigenous crafting and ceremony, and they were so proud of their final creations!

Creating Cultural Artefacts:

Our male First Nations students had the opportunity to learn through hands-on cultural practice, thanks to fortnightly workshops at Eleanor Duncan Aboriginal Services in Mardi. Here, they joined the 30+ Indigenous men who attend the centre in creating a wide range of Aboriginal artefacts like didgeridoos and clap-sticks.

As well as enjoying the practical and spiritual dimensions of this important work, our young people were able to yarn with the older folk and showed great respect for the wisdom and life experience they shared. These opportunities for intergenerational understanding are vital and we were grateful to Eleanor Duncan Aboriginal Services for allowing us to participate.



Attending External Events:

In 2025, our Cultural Education program included exciting external events and performances, which were wonderful opportunities for community engagement. One of these events was in celebration of National Reconciliation Week. In 2025, the chosen theme was "Bridging Now to the Next". This calls on all Australians to push forward towards reconciliation, using the successes and setbacks of our national journey to date to propel us into the future.

This certainly speaks to everyone at NGC, and our deep belief that First Nations peoples deserve rights, recognition and justice. It was fantastic to take action that aligns with this belief, when we attended the 2025 Central Coast Reconciliation Week March and Gathering. Hosted by Coast Shelter, it is the region's largest event of this nature and brought together First Nations individuals and organisations, not-for-profits and community services, local businesses and young people.

Our students were able to march down Mann Street, alongside community members of all cultures and walks of life, before arriving at Industree Group Stadium. They then enjoyed an Acknowledgement of Country and a series of celebratory song, dance and Yidaki (didgeridoo) performances.

Another excellent event we attended was a Bangarra Dance Theatre performance in Sydney. Bangarra showcases professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performers, drawing on 65,000 years of culture and fusing it with theatre, dance, music, poetry and design.

Several of our female students were fortunate to watch their performance of Illume, which explored the ways light has captivated and sustained Indigenous cultural existence for millennia. As well as the incredible show, we all enjoyed sight-seeing along the harbour and soaking up the novelty of a trip to the big smoke!

Finally, NGC was proud to participate in the 2025 Cooina Cup. This is an annual traditional Indigenous games gala day, which brings together First Nations students from local Central Coast high schools.

The 2025 edition was hosted by Henry Kendall High School and saw young people trying their hand at modified Koori games like kick tennis, hockey, cricket, athletics and marngrook (similar to AFL). Excitingly, we took out second place on the day, graciously ceding victory to Gosford High School.

Expressing Ourselves through Saltwater Art:

A highlight of our 2025 calendar was the Indigenous art program that ran throughout Term 4. Facilitated by Kyle Waters of Banuwa Art and funded by the amazing Inner Wheel Club of Gosford North, these weekly sessions exposed young people to a range of traditional art techniques and materials.

As a proud Gomeri Man living on the lands of the Darkinjung people, Kyle is drawn to saltwater motifs that hold great significance for local mob. This inspired the art that our students created, as they created a story for their piece, selected saltwater backgrounds and animals that resonated with them, and presented their finished works to the class. Additionally, Kyle also shared his knowledge around the importance of ochre in Aboriginal art and ceremony and taught young people how to identify its many different colours.

PET DAY

Coordinated by our amazing Year 12 students and Science teacher, Janice, NGC's second annual Pet Day was all about bringing young people, staff and furry pals together. Activities included students photographing their four-legged models, exhibiting pet art in an interactive display, tackling some outdoor rec activities, enjoying animal-themed baked treats and participating in a dog parade around the COLA.

Studies show that introducing pets into classrooms can be linked to a growth in self-confidence, with students being more willing to take risks in front of their peers if their pet is present. This sentiment was totally reflected in Janice's observations of NGC young people throughout the whole-school event.

"It was such a connective experience for everyone. People love their pets and that becomes an excellent tool to facilitate conversations between peers and with staff as well. I notice that students seem much more confident around animals, with some of our more socially anxious or withdrawn young people coming out of their shell."

Thanks to Janice, our Year 12 organisers and our staff for making this day so successful.



NGC OUTREACH PROGRAM

An exciting development of 2025 has been our NGC Outreach Program, coordinated by our Aboriginal Education and Community Liaison Officer, Brad. So far, this initiative has connected young people with a range of community members who can engage, educate and uplift our students through sharing their life experiences.

The response to the program has been fantastic, with young people being able to confidently engage with role models who they otherwise may not come into contact with. There is significant scope to continue expanding this initiative over time and to create new opportunities based around our students' specific interests.

NGC OUTREACH PROGRAM

Some highlights throughout 2025 included:

- A visit to the Maroubra-based recording studio of Aboriginal singers and rappers, Kobie Dee and Tasman Keith. This was an amazing day out where our aspiring song-writers got to record their lyrics, put them to a beat and get one-on-one tuition from Kobie. We were blown away by their courage and raw honesty!
- A meet-up with rugby league and union legend, Mahlia Murphy. Some female NGC students were able to travel to Windsor Football Field to meet the Parramatta Eels captain and Indigenous All Star. They connected deeply with Mahlia's story of growing up in Blacktown, never giving up on her sporting dreams and cultivating discipline and self-belief as an athlete.
- A special keynote presentation from Adam Smith, who talked about the dangers of gang recruitment and violence. Adam's life experience is extremely compelling and he uses it as a cautionary tale to advocate for positive masculinity, men's mental health and avoiding the slippery slope of crime, incarceration and substance use. This also aligned with our Stage 5 English module at the time, *The Outsiders*, where the novel's protagonists paralleled some of Adam's past struggles.
- A visit to Sharnell Dargan's boxing gym in Waterloo, where female NGC students were able to meet the pro athlete in person. She holds multiple championship titles at a national, regional and world level and has so much wisdom to share about not only what it takes to succeed in the world of sports, but about relationships, self-love and mental health. As a domestic violence survivor and advocate, her candour around the tough experiences that shaped her was incredibly powerful for our young people to hear.
- Excursions to The Glen Centre for Men at Chittaway Point and The Glen Centre for Women at Wyong Creek. These centres support both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people with drug and alcohol rehabilitation. Young people had the opportunity to talk with many of the residents and we were blown away with the courageous, transparent way that everyone shared their experiences and counselled our students to make positive choices for their future. The visits also included a site tour, a BBQ, traditional Aboriginal dance, some gym time and a competitive game of touch footy!



NGC HEADS TO PARLIAMENT

There is nothing better than seeing our young people stand up for the causes they care about! In 2025, Year 11 student, Sophie, had an amazing opportunity to share her lived experience with Zoe Robinson. Zoe is the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People and came to NGC to conduct a consultation with young people about issues that affect them.

She was so impressed with Sophie's insights that she invited her to attend NSW Parliament and talk with some of Australia's political leaders. Throughout the day, Sophie met:

- Shadow Minister for Regional NSW and Agriculture, Dugald Saunders MP
- Deputy Opposition Leader in the Legislative Council and Shadow Minister for Education and Early Learning, Sarah Mitchell MLC
- Chair and Deputy of the Select Committee of Foundational And Disability Supports for Children and Young People, Abigail Boyd MLC
- A representative of Kate Washington MP, current Minister for Families and Communities, and Disability Inclusion.



Sophie confidently spoke about her own 'invisible' disabilities and how these can impact job security and independent living for young people just like her. The conversations ranged from accessing NDIS funding to adapting the curriculum to better support learning disabilities. When reflecting on her experience, Sophie said:

"I had an amazing time meeting with Zoe and all the Ministers and MPs. I got to talk about how young people are falling through the cracks in school when they don't get the support they need for disabilities like ADHD and dyslexia. And I told them about what NGC does to step in and help, showing us that we can do all the things that we didn't think we could."

My nan always instilled in me that if you see something unfair happening, you have to say something and stick to your guns! I get frustrated when people who can make a difference choose not to - that's why I will always speak about the issues I care about."



SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

Graduation and Formal:

Some of our favourite days of the school year are those where we get to truly celebrate the achievements of our students and all the work our staff do to help make these happen. When life at NGC is such a hive of activity, it is so important to occasionally take pause and reflect on all the positive impacts we create together.

Our Year 12 Graduation offers exactly this opportunity. Watching the Year 12 cohort cross the proverbial finish line was incredibly special, surrounded by the teachers, peers and dedicated families who have supported them along the way. We started the day with a smoking ceremony conducted by Uncle Mick, along with a wonderful contemporary Aboriginal dance from the performers at NAISDA Dance College. Students then received their certificates, heard encouraging words about their futures from our team, and presented NGC with a spectacular painting that will remind us of their legacy long after they leave us!

The graduates also passed on the NGC message stick to Year 11 students. This important artefact is carved to look like our school's resident (and harmless!) black snake and has campsites etched into it, with rings representing Year 9, 10, 11 and 12. From the tip of the stick hangs the message of 'a safe, healthy journey', evoked by healing hands and mundis (footprints). Finally, our school band delivered an amazing performance, with a line-up of some of their greatest hits and crowd-pleasers!

Celebrations were still far from over from here, as we headed home to get ready for the formal at Bistro Eden, Cooranbong. Everyone looked stunning in their evening wear and we danced and ate to our hearts content. Thank you to the staff who put in countless hours to prepare for both events and to the Inner Wheel Club of Gosford North for their generous donations to our graduating class.



SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

Christmas:

Our festive celebration offers another chance to acknowledge all the hard work and achievements of the year. In 2025, we had students, staff, families, Board, partners and wider community members gathered together for a delicious hot lunch in our COLA. As well as the presentation of certificates, we got to hear from several students with live MC'ing, poetry-reading and another stand-out performance from the school band. Thank you to the Inner Wheel Club of Wyong for providing a boot-load of Christmas gifts for our young people, and to some of our incredible staff for providing monetary donations so every single student received a present. It's always a highlight of the day to see everyone's excitement when Santa (Brad) and his happy helper (Lee T) turn up!



OUTDOOR REC & EXCURSIONS

One of the highlights of every school year comes in the form of our Rewards Excursions. These are scheduled at the end of each term and to be eligible to attend, you need to have demonstrated consistently high attendance and engagement over the previous ten weeks, with no N-Awards received.

Our Programs Manager, Rick, has a knack for sourcing activities that get students outside their comfort zones and trying new things. The 2025 line-up involved:

- Exploring the Sydney Royal Easter Show, where they sampled all the best showbags, got up close and personal with farm animals at the nursery, cheered on the wood-chopping competitors, and watched death-defying aerial stunts at the Moto-X display.
- Testing our tactics through the Glenworth Valley Laser Skirmish, otherwise known as the one day of the year that staff and students can gang up on each other in the name of competitive spirit!
- Identifying all the weird and wonderful animals at Sydney Zoo in Eastern Creek. Wildlife from all over the world is represented there, from predators you would see in the Sahara Desert to aquatic creatures that would be right at home in Finding Nemo.
- Tackling an array of dizzying rides at Luna Park. Whether it was defying gravity on the Rotor or losing our voices on the Mousetrap rollercoaster, there was something for everyone to try.

OUTDOOR REC & EXCURSIONS

Outdoor recreation is another key way we support our students to productively blow off steam, destress and recharge in nature. In 2025, our students enjoyed multiple excursions to some of the Central Coast's best beaches and bush settings. Some top contenders were Norah Head Lighthouse, Terrigal Skillion, 'Pearly Ponds' and a secret Kariiong waterhole that we are resolutely keeping under our hats.

NGC also partnered with local charity, It's Sunny Somewhere Inc, for the third year in a row. Under the guidance of physical education expert, Ryan, our young people experimented with mountain bike rides across Ourimbah and beyond. The combination of the great outdoors, a solid dose of healthy adrenaline and lots of group encouragement made for some amazing days out!



NGC JAMS



At NGC, we are firm believers in the power of creative expression. Giving our young people opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas through art and music not only affirms their talent, but can be a healing experience. 2025 offered many of these chances including:

- A three-week program with Musicians Making a Difference, where students engaged in song/rap-writing, performed and recorded their own tracks. We greatly appreciate the support of Central Coast Council Youth Services to allow us to offer this special initiative.
- Weekly jam sessions and special performances with the NGC band. As well as assorted guest vocalists joining in at lunch-time or our graduation and Christmas celebrations, students could also flex their performance abilities through the addition of music lessons into the Stage 5 timetable throughout Term 3.



STAFF INFORMATION

NGC BOARD - 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Anne Byrne

A highlight of 2025 was witnessing the increasing and ever-improving levels of engagement amongst our students. Their drive to succeed is not only the product of their own hard work, but of the incredible skill and commitment of the NGC staff who support them. I would particularly like to acknowledge our principal, Andrea, whose exceptional leadership ensures that the school continues to thrive.

Greg Groppenbacher

A highlight of 2025 was dedicating the Pat Lewis Education Centre, in recognition of Pat's leadership in founding Ngaruki Gulgul and his long-term chairmanship. The continuing development of our branch campus in Woongarra has also been extremely exciting and is attributable to the strong financial performance of the school throughout 2025.

Ken Yeaman

A highlight of 2025 was making significant progress on the second NGC campus and being on target to open in 2026. This represents a huge amount of effort from many people and will benefit students and the broader community of the northern Central Coast. At the same time, our Kariong school grounds are looking terrific, and I thank all involved in their improvement and ongoing upkeep!

Andrea Cingi

A highlight of 2025 was being able to successfully secure Australian Government Capital Grants Program funding. This enabled the completion of both a Solar Installation Project and a Disability Access Project on schedule. The Disability Access Project included the construction of accessible toilets, disability parking bays, pathways, ramps and signage. This significantly improved accessibility and fostered a more inclusive environment for all students, staff and visitors. The solar installation further enhanced the school's sustainability initiatives, reducing energy costs and supporting our commitment to environmental responsibility.

Paul Carroll

A highlight of 2025 was the inclusion of a member of the school's alumni at our board meetings. This has enabled the Board to hear from a young person who is uniquely qualified to speak about the NGC student experience and means we can now more effectively consider this perspective in our discussions and decisions and care to the school and the welfare of students and staff.

NGC BOARD

Celebrating Pat Lewis; Founding Board Chair:

In 2025, we farewelled one of the Central Coast's most esteemed educators and a man who has played a seminal role in our school since its establishment, Mr Pat Lewis. Long before he became the founding Chairman of Ngaruki Gulgul's Board, he was a tireless public education advocate, teacher and school principal for over 40 years.

This deep expertise and belief in education as a vehicle for social justice has been hugely valuable to NGC. Pat has chaired countless board meetings, negotiated complex agreements, resolved difficult conflicts and above all, put the welfare of young people first at every turn.

He has always led and contributed with an open mind and heart, and that allows him to access the incredible joy and satisfaction of the work we do. It has been a pleasure to have him at NGC for so many proud moments throughout our school's history - moments that he himself has helped to create.

In honour of his service, staff and students held a special ceremony where people shared stories of Pat's tenure and we officially unveiled the 'Pat Lewis Education Centre' on our site. Thank you for everything Pat.



Introducing Tommy, NGC Youth Advisor:

At NGC, we do everything we can to elevate the voices of young people. We are firm believers in the power of listening, and in using the lived experience of our students to inform how we teach and support them. One of the ways we have focused on embedding this practice of listening and learning is through the introduction of a Youth Advisor role on our Board. In 2025, NGC alumni and 2021 graduate, Tommy Pittman, assumed the role.

This has been a wonderful, mutually beneficial partnership so far. Tommy has been able to attend some Board meetings and build his confidence in connecting with our Directors, in settings he may not have otherwise encountered. This has offered him authentic opportunities to articulate his perspective as both a NGC alumnus and a young man who is navigating the world beyond school in the present.

Simultaneously, our Principal and Board have been able to apply Tommy's insights in our strategic planning and development of programs and supports that can assist current and former NGC students going forward.

WORKFORCE COMPOSITION



All NGC teachers are in category i. of the Teaching Standards and have teacher education qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or as recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines.

Teaching Staff	12
Full-Time Equivalent Teaching Staff	8.6
Non-Teaching Staff	14
Full-Time Equivalent Non-Teaching Staff	10.1
Conditional	0
Proficient Teacher	7
VET Trainers and Assessors	5

At NGC we embrace all cultures, abilities, genders and backgrounds for both our staff and students. 3 staff members identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and we strongly encourage applications from First Nations teachers.



MEET THE TEAM - 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Andrea Cingi, Principal

My 2025 highlight was seeing how our school band energised everyone through their organic music performances. And of course, the milestone achievement of securing a Construction Certificate and a capital building grant, which enabled us to begin refurbishing our second campus. This is a huge step forward for our school and the young people we serve!



Cameron Livingstone-Thomas, Deputy Principal & Automotive Teacher

My 2025 highlight was watching our students graduate. There is something special about the shift a young person goes through at NGC, where they may come to us in Year 9 believing that they don't have what it takes to finish school and ultimately end up completing Year 12, which is especially impressive when they are the first member of their family to do so.



Rick Corderoy, Programs Manager

My 2025 highlight was riding with students at Ourimbah Mountain Bike Park, thanks to our friends at It's Sunny Somewhere. It's always an invigorating activity and I love seeing some of our students really come alive in that scenario.



Vidar Tysvaer, Business Manager

My 2025 highlight was seeing our staff come together outside the workplace, particularly at our end-of-year Christmas lunch. This offered a chance to pause and connect after a year of exceptional dedication to our students' education and wellbeing. It was a pleasure to see my colleagues relaxed and smiling, enjoying well-deserved time together.



Anthony Foti, Student Enrichment & Vocational Pathways Manager

My 2025 highlight was supporting our senior students as they made decisions about their education and futures and being able to showcase and celebrate their accomplishments at the end of the year. I also can't go past playing in the school band! It's fantastic to watch our young people become more confident performing in front of others.



Brad Hardman, Aboriginal Education & Community Liaison Officer

My 2025 highlight was coordinating the NGC Outreach Program. I am able to connect our students with so many inspiring people who are making a difference in the community and often have had very similar life trajectories to those at NGC. It's brilliant taking everyone to different events that suit their unique skills and interests and watching their confidence grow.

MEET THE TEAM - 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Caroline Cardier, School Counsellor

My 2025 highlight was all the times I got to connect with our students in different settings. Whether it was through our Girl Talk program, taking walks in the Kariong Gardens, heading out on excursions to the Jewish Museum or an Indigenous cruise around Sydney Harbour, it is wonderful to see young people feeling relaxed and open to talk and share.



Lee Trethowan, Case Manager

My 2025 highlight was some great memories with Brad and our boxing students during our early morning training sessions, as well as taking the crew to visit Kobie Dee's recording studio in Sydney. I was also very proud to support Adrian in his 'Slam Poetry' nights and watch him stand up and recite his amazing raps.



Janice Montgomery, Curriculum Coordinator & Science Teacher

My 2025 highlight is hearing the delight that students express when they have a light-bulb moment during Science, where we bring real-life experiences into every topic. It is so rewarding to see them appreciate the natural environment around us, and surprise themselves with the high standard of work they can achieve in class and through their assessments.



Jade Morrow, Inclusive Education Teacher

My 2025 highlight was all about creating real, authentic and unforgettable connections. Every day, I see little wins happening around me, and I think of how lucky I am to be part of those ongoing stories.



Kirk Oakley, English Teacher

My 2025 highlight was being able to utilise a book written by a former student with my Year 11 class. This even led to having the author write a personal note in an autographed copy of the book and gifting it to a NGC student. It felt like a powerful full-circle teaching moment!



Kat Staples, Generalist Teacher

My 2025 highlight was taking my class out on many hikes through the bush. Students respond so well to being outside in these peaceful, natural landscapes. It is such an important tool to help them regulate and let go of stress and anxiety, as we all have fun adventuring together.



Mike Cook, PDHPE & SLR Teacher

My 2025 highlight was all the wonderful celebrations we had, from our Year 12 formal that was full of great food, drink and karaoke, to our school band Christmas performance, where many new students sang in front of people for the first time. Lawn bowls at Ourimbah RSL with my fellow staff was also a fun opportunity to let our hair down and enjoy each other's company.



Patty Polson, PVDI, Geography & History Teacher

My 2025 highlight was watching our young people feel proud of themselves when learning a new technique and experimenting in photography, like Light Painting. It's also hard to go past having fun with Lee Tree and seeing students so happy to receive their Christmas gifts from 'Santa'.

MEET THE TEAM - 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Louise Guest, Maths Teacher

My 2025 highlight was joining the NGC team. Everyone has been very welcoming, and I feel energised and excited to be working alongside such passionate people and curious, clever students. The Luna Park Rewards Excursion was the perfect way to bond, as we hit the rides and had a laugh.



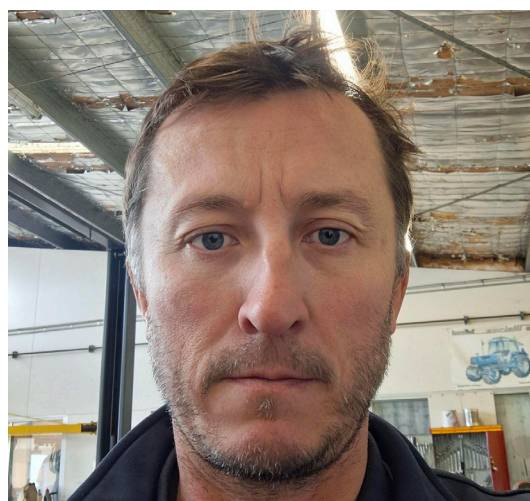
Samm Hutchinson, Generalist Teacher

My 2025 highlight was watching students grow in confidence and celebrate their own progress, no matter how small. It is such a wonderful feeling to see the moment where learning 'clicks' and you see genuine excitement and pride on their faces. Building strong relationships with our young people and sharing laughter and positive classroom moments is very special.



Kylie Jarmain, Hairdressing/Retail Trainer & Education Support

My 2025 highlight was becoming a teacher's aide for our Year 11 students, alongside teaching the Certificate III in Retail course. There are so many rewarding moments when you help them to understand a new concept or flex a new skill. I also appreciated learning about Indigenous customs and beliefs as part of the Cultural Education program.



Justin Glenn, Construction Trainer

My 2025 highlight was completing two deck construction jobs with our students. It is fantastic to see how their skills continue to grow over time, with some even developing the confidence to take charge and lead a project.



Rory White, Hospitality Trainer

My 2025 highlight was Adrian graduating Year 12, as I have supported and mentored him through his Hospitality training. It felt very rewarding to see him reach that finish line. I also had a great time attending the Jobs Fair with students in Gosford, as they explored potential career options.



Lee Santi, Education Support

My 2025 highlight was watching our senior students reaching out and guiding the new young people coming to our school. They have walked in those same shoes in the past and now have a lot of wisdom to share as excellent role models. At NGC, everyone always comes together to support each other!



Kylie Josephson, Education Support

My 2025 highlight was our excursion to Luna Park. Alongside the students, I learned how to wait in lines and recognise that the wait is often very worthwhile (especially on a ride like the Hammerhead!). It has been a pleasure to meet and work with new students in our Green Class and be part of so many amazing Standing Strong activities, like making possum-skin cloaks.



Chris Winters, Education Support

My 2025 highlight is all the little moments of connection I have with NGC students, from driving the school bus to welcoming new young people into the school band and seeing them develop the confidence to lead songs. It was also particularly special to watch the first students I supported as a teacher's aide graduate Year 12.

MEET THE TEAM - 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



Larissa Little, Education Support & Administration Officer

My 2025 highlight was transitioning into my new role at NGC. It has been incredibly rewarding to move from my long-time experience in reception to becoming a teacher's aide. I'm grateful to have been supported by my team throughout this change and seeing young people have break-through moments in the classroom is amazing.



Felicity Kemp, Admin Officer & WHS Coordinator

My 2025 highlight was watching all our students grow, develop and strive to be the best they can. It's always wonderful to see them reflect on their success at the end of year Christmas party, where they get involved and are so grateful for the lunch and gifts that they receive.



Melissa Thomas, Reception Support

My 2025 highlight was our Pet Day. Everyone brought in their beautiful dogs for lots of games and competitions. I was able to bring my dog, Kiwi and it was so fun to have them at work with me!



Karen McKeon, Cafe Coordinator

My 2025 highlight was being able to watch our students visiting the cafe every day and seeing how they learn to be polite and respectful in the space, both towards staff and to each other. I love being around their happy energy and chatter.



Charlie Morgan, Grounds Maintenance

My 2025 highlight was all the quiet moments pre-sunrise, setting up the school for the day. Like clockwork, everything awakens and the leaf blower breaks the morning silence. Not long after, the cleaners arrive to attend to the classrooms like a well-oiled machine. So much is done before the rush of students arriving to enjoy their day at our beautiful site.



Miranda Titshall, School Assistant

My 2025 highlight is seeing our students celebrate important milestones throughout the year. Year 10 young people put together their own formal this year, which gave everyone a chance to mark the moment before heading into senior school. Our Year 12 graduation is always a special day too, made even better by our school band performing some awesome songs for everyone.



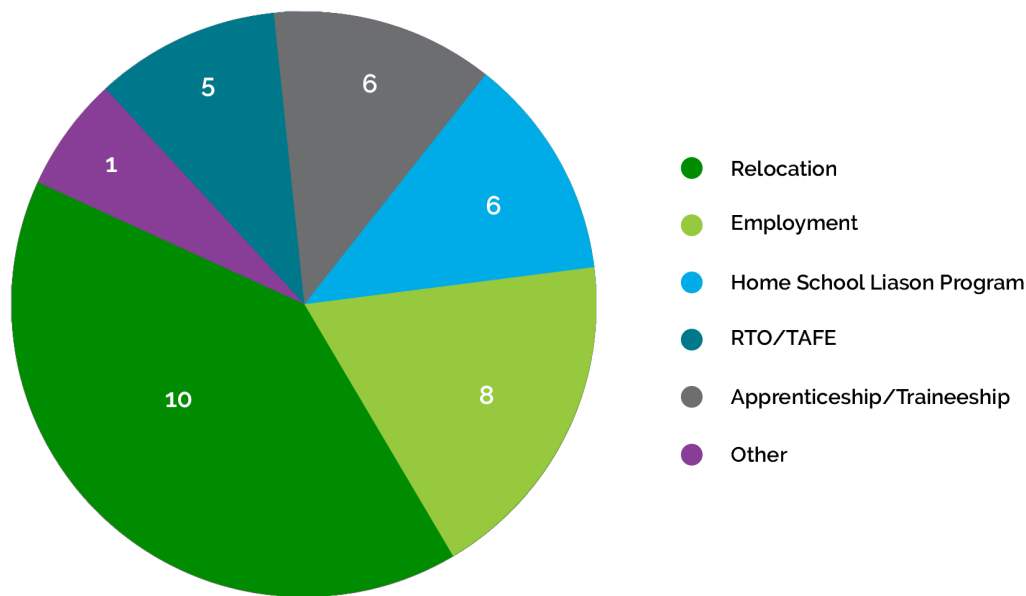


**ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION**

STUDENT OUTCOMES

2025 Post-School Destinations and Exits:

Following the completion of their education, NGC young people who graduated at the end of Year 12 pursued a variety of pathways including enrolling in TAFE, obtaining employment or transitioning to a job agency. These are captured in the graph below, as well as the post-school destinations of those young people who left in either Year 10, 11 or 12 throughout the 2025 school year.



2025 Attendance Rates:

Year 9	61%
Year 10	60%
Year 11	67%
Year 12	67%
Indigenous Students	59%
All Students	62%

The school manages student non-attendance through its implementation of a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support framework. MTSS supports all students through interventions ranging from a school-wide approach to an individualised, collaborative system for developing personalised plans for all students. Students with low or irregular attendance also have attendance plans. It only takes one or two students with extremely low attendance from our small cohort of young people to negatively skew the average percentage rate of attendance.

2025 NAPLAN:

Most of our young people and their carers choose to withdraw from NAPLAN resulting in a low participation rate compared to other schools. NGC's standardised testing and NAPLAN data is available to view at <https://myschool.edu.au/school/50710/naplan/results>

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Year 12 Outcomes in 2025:

QUALIFICATION	NO. OF YOUNG PEOPLE
2025 HSC	4
2025 Year 12 RoSA	3
2025 AQF Certificate II	1
2025 AQF Certificate III SoA	2

Retention rates are based on data relating to students who have been tracked from the completion of Year 10 to the completion of Year 12 in 2025. In 2023, 18 students completed their Year 10 RoSA and in 2025, 5 Year 12 students graduated, hence a 28% retention rate. As students turn 17 years of age, many opt out either to seek employment or to make the transition into employment.

HSC Results:

In 2025, 1 student sat the Investigating Science exam, being the only mandatory exam for the NSW Higher School Certificate from our pattern of study. The other exams are optional with a spread of results across bands 2, 3 and 4.

COURSE NAME	COURSE ID	STUDENTS INCLUDED	STUDENTS OMITTED	E.M MEAN	STATE E.M MEAN	SCHOOL/STATE VARIATION	Z-SCORE
English Studies Examination 2-Unit	15126	2	1	57	58.72	-1.72	-0.17
Hospitality Examination (Food and Beverage) 2-Unit	26589	1		47	74.39	-27.39	-2.85
Industrial Technology 2-Unit	15200	1		61.8	70.62	-8.82	-0.73
Investigating Science 2-Unit	15215	1	2	71.8	75.13	-3.33	-0.31
Retail Services Examination 2-Unit	26999	2	1	62.6	71.06	-8.46	-0.92



TESTIMONIALS

What Our Young People and Families Are Saying about NGC:



In 2025, many families expressed their deep gratitude to NG Central School and noted meaningful improvements in their child's attendance, confidence, and emotional wellbeing.

"Today Claire had maths, a subject that has made her doubt her intelligence and really took a hit on her self-esteem. Claire told me she felt confident in her work and that she could answer questions without stressing. She came home so happy and has also said she feels supported and comfortable to be herself and is actually learning! She has made new friends and adores her teacher Katherine and Brad. From the bottom of my heart, thank you all at the school for giving my daughter this opportunity."

"May's success is a massive testament for NGC. She was just so broken when she got there, and you have given her strength and courage to change her trajectory. Having transitioned back into mainstream school, she has now attended 9 days in a row and is growing more confident each day. She is trying very hard and wants to take her skirts to sell at the Easter show next year!"

"This school experience has been transformative for Edmund. I've never seen him happy to attend school nor found him in such good spirits when he returns home. He raves about the teachers, the classroom environment and about his new friends. He is happier in himself and less anxious - as if the heavy burden of pretending has been lifted. I'm incredibly grateful that such a school exists."

"Following his time at NGC, Zac was at the crossroads when he was offered a job with the Katoomba Council Chambers. In 2026, a First Nations Arborist Team was established in the Blue Mountains and Zac was fortunate to join. He has learned so much since he started, from identifying that there are 900 types of gum trees to mastering correct, safe trimming techniques. Alongside this work, Zac is currently studying Year 11 at TAFE and learning the Dharug language online. He is very interested in his heritage and has been independently researching his mob, Nari Nari and Dharug. Zac has also been in a stable, happy relationship for six months and life beyond NGC is looking bright"

TESTIMONIALS

What Our Young People and Families Are Saying about N&C:

"I came to N&C on my very first day of Year 9 back in 2021. Before that, I'd struggled in a mainstream high school. It was a lonely experience, especially because I was a very shy person. Arriving at this school, I immediately noticed a difference. Not only were we surrounded by beautiful nature in such a peaceful environment, but everyone seemed to feel like they could be vibrant and authentically themselves. I've been able to come out of my shell so much because people can actually get to know you here.

The staff are able to personalise the content they teach and they have a strong understanding of neurodivergence and mental health. Most of all, they are really passionate about their work and are 'in it for the kids'. I also have to thank our principal, Andrea. She took a chance on me and I owe my entire education to her.

If I was talking to any young person considering this school, I would say "Do it!". Putting your hand up and asking for help is the very best thing you can do. I am so nervous AND so excited to graduate, after thirteen years of education. My current plan is to take a gap year and focus on getting my drivers' licence so I can be independent. Beyond that, I would love to pursue being a registered nurse so I will be exploring TAFE or university as my pathway to get there."

- Sylus, Year 12 Student in 2025

TO MY SCIENCE TEACHER

2022 - 2025

Janice, in your lab the world cracked open wide,
atoms, stars, and cells all danced side by side.

You showed me the veins of the earth,

the fire in the sky,
the chemistry of wonder,
the physics of why.

I still see your hands measure sparks of the flame,
teaching us truth wasn't just theory, but game.

Science became poetry when you spoke of the stars,
turning microscopes into telescopes,

erasing the bars.

Even experiments gone wrong had lessons to unfold,
teaching me failure itself is brilliant and bold.

I'll miss the hum of curiosity in your voice,
and how you made learning feel like a choice.
Janice, your wisdom made the universe small,
and I'll miss your science stories most of all.

By ADRIAN



TESTIMONIALS

Staff Satisfaction in 2025:

When asked what they value most about working at NG Central School, our staff expressed that seeing students thrive amidst new challenges and have light-bulb moments in their learning was a real highlight. They also cited our beautiful site and the collaborative, good-humoured and passionate attitudes of their colleagues.

"I value how much our Board trusts us with the freedom to do things differently. We're not boxed in, but instead can adapt, innovate and respond in real time to what our young people need. As they change, we change - and that's where the magic happens." - Andrea

"I value how every student is empowered to learn in ways that suit them best and to set personal goals, whether that's around reading, social skills or mastering a trade." - Cameron

"I value that every day at NGC is a new challenge. The question I'm always thinking about is 'how do we achieve the educational goals we need to, while having some fun at the same time?'" - Rick

"I value that all NGC staff are appreciated for their unique strengths and dedication. Supporting their wellbeing remains a priority no matter what, and this means they do their best work for the school." - Vidar

"I value the site, the people, the holistic, creative approach to learning and wellbeing, and the young people themselves. There are many opportunities to learn more about what actually helps in practice, and to implement systems that can make a difference". - Anthony

"I value how varied and challenging my role is. Every day is different and all the staff play a pivotal role in helping me grow and thrive, with plenty of laughs along the way." - Brad

"I value the opportunity I have to make every student feel unique, safe and valued. It is a privilege to show up every day with compassion to acknowledge them, validate their pain and remind them that they matter." - Caroline

"I value how much flexibility we have to help our students return to their baseline and feel safe, whether it's in the cafe each morning or in our wonderful Wellbeing Hub. I also have so many opportunities to connect with our young people's families, our amazing, retired teachers and volunteers, and university students on placement from Ourimbah TAFE." - Lee T

"I value that NGC is a school of second chances. Every student has the chance to understand Science in a new light, and I love seeing them being inquisitive and achieving things they didn't think were possible. I believe in them so much and it is a joy to help them believe in themselves." - Janice

TESTIMONIALS

Staff Satisfaction in 2025:

"I value the daily challenges and opportunities to help those young people who might not otherwise succeed in mainstream schools. When I see a student get a job or tell me that they have achieved their first A grade, it makes it all worthwhile." - Kirk

"I value seeing the smiles and genuine happiness of our students when they reach their goals. It is a privilege to participate in so many exceptional educational experiences alongside them!" - Kat

"I value that there is always a new teaching challenge that pushes me to adapt, reflect and improve my approach. Every day is different, there is never a dull moment, and the teaching staff and admin team are always willing to help each other. They are the best crew I have encountered in my years of teaching." - Mike

"I value forming bonds with the students, guiding and nurturing them and then seeing or hearing of their great success stories. It's always special when they see you at the shops and come running over to share what they've been up to. Our team is also so understanding and supportive." - Patty

"I value how special the N&C community is. Everyone is united in their belief in our young people and will go to great lengths to help them and each other." - Louise

"I value being part of a supportive team that genuinely cares about student wellbeing and success. The opportunity to make meaningful differences to young people's lives every day is so special." - Samm

"I value how many opportunities I have to make a difference at N&C. Being a Year 11 Teacher's Aide allows me to support students and grow as a mentor; while teaching Retail means I help young people build real-life skills for their careers. I also have broadened my perspective so much through taking part in cultural activities and learning about Indigenous customs here." - Kylie Jarmain

"I value seeing how our students evolve over their time at N&C. In Construction, I see how they shift from struggling to even be in a classroom, to becoming respectful, engaged young men." - Justin

"I value everyone I work with at N&C. The staff are passionate and energetic, always looking to find solutions to help young people, and the students themselves are curious and doing their best to learn and grow." - Rory

Staff Satisfaction in 2025:

"I value that our staff all have such great senses of humour and can always find the chance to laugh. Every day at N&C is different and the teamwork and support we show each other helps us achieve great results." - Lee S

"I value the diversity of our students. No young person - and no two days at N&C - are the same. I'm grateful to work with amazing staff to provide a wonderful learning environment." - Kylie Josephson

"I value how N&C teaches our students real-life lessons that apply to the world beyond school. Everyone is committed to giving them as many opportunities as we possibly can." - Chris

"I value the opportunity to work directly with our students and support them throughout their educational journeys. There are many small wins happening all the time and it's wonderful to witness." - Larissa

"I value how unique our team is with their vast array of skillsets. This enables everyone to chip in and help each other. All the staff are so committed to giving our young people the best education and experience possible." - Felicity

"I value my N&C family because they all look after me so well and show me a lot of kindness. I love working here!" - Melissa

"I value all the staff and students who make me feel like I'm doing well and who care so much about me. It makes this school a very special place to work." - Karen

"I value that every young person has their own distinctive personality and attributes. These are fully celebrated and embraced, and that's what makes this school unique." - Charlie

"I value that there are so many opportunities to step outside the box at N&C. I am always learning something new on any given day, and it makes coming to work so engaging and fun." - Miranda



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NG Central School is proudly connected to our Central Coast community. We could not achieve the outcomes we do without the support of local volunteers, businesses, community organisations, government and individuals across multiple sectors. Thank you to all our partners for their shared commitment to creating purposeful futures for our young people.

- Dr Gordon Reid MP
- Leisel Tesch MP
- Adam Crouch MP
- David Harris MP
- Emma McBride MP
- NGC Alumni, Roy, Danielle, Jacob, Tommy and Ellie-May
- Zoe Robinson and the Office of the Advocate for Children and Young People
- Greater Bank
- Mibilla Foundation
- Inner Wheel Club - Gosford North
- Inner Wheel Club - Terrigal and Wyong
- The Rotary Club of Kariong/Somersby
- The Rotary Club of Umina Beach
- The Lions Club of Gosford
- The Zonta Club of the Central Coast
- The Skill Engineer
- Youth Booth
- Adam Smith
- Regional Youth Support Services
- Mooney Mooney Progress Association
- Volunteering Central Coast
- Relationships Australia (ARC)
- Flipside IT
- Tyrepower West Gosford
- Green Blower
- Bara Barang
- Bangarra
- Uniting Org
- Headspace
- Catholic Care
- Community Compass
- NSW Health - Central Coast LHD
- Central Coast Council Youth Services
- Central Coast Primary Care
- Write Thing Media

- Food Bank (Breakfast 4 Health Program)
- It's Sunny Somewhere Inc
- Anne Bubici
- Trish Oakley
- Cheryl Gilroy
- Ingrid and Vidar Tysvaer
- Sheree Thomson
- Caroline Cardier
- Melissa Darke
- Musicians Making a Difference (MMAD)
- Regional Industry Education Partnerships
- Guide Dogs Australia
- Regional Work Skills Australia
- Construction Trade Qualifications (CTQ)
- Multiplex
- CSIRO
- Kobie Dee
- Tasman Keith
- Mahalia Murphy
- Shanell Dargan
- Kyle Waters, Banuwa Art
- Eleanor Duncan Aboriginal Services
- Powrbox
- Vicki Gale
- NAISDA
- Lexus Dealership of Sydney City
- Bangarra Dance Theatre
- The Glen Central Coast (Men and Womens')
- Grill'd West Gosford
- Louise Guest
- Lee Trethowan
- Karen McKeon
- Cameron Thompson
- Felicity Kemp
- Dave Mills
- AISNSW
- Central Coast Community News

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acknowledging the Mibilla Foundation:

We would like to thank Michael Hatton and the Mibilla Foundation for their generous donation of \$25,000 towards the purchase of a 2015 Mitsubishi Rosa bus. This contribution has significantly enhanced our capacity to support students and families through safe, reliable and accessible transport.

In addition to providing daily student transport, our buses play a vital role in enabling participation in excursions, cultural experiences and community engagement activities. They are also regularly used to assist families and carers in attending important school events, including parent-teacher interviews, celebrations and community meetings.

The new bus has expanded our transport capabilities, while allowing us to retain our existing 12-seater vehicle for smaller transport needs. As not all staff hold heavy vehicle licences, maintaining a mixed fleet provides greater flexibility and ensures we can continue to respond effectively to the diverse needs of our students, families and programs. We are sincerely grateful to Michael Hatton and the Mibilla Foundation for their ongoing support of NGC and our commitment to removing barriers to participation, engagement and educational success.



Acknowledging the Australian Government Capital Grants Program:

In the 2025 school year, NGC was fortunate to receive funding from the Australian Government under the Capital Grants Program. These funding streams supported our Solar Installation Project and our Disability Access Project. The former focused on reducing energy costs and enhancing sustainability, while the latter included the construction of accessible toilets, disabled parking bays, pathways, ramps and signage.

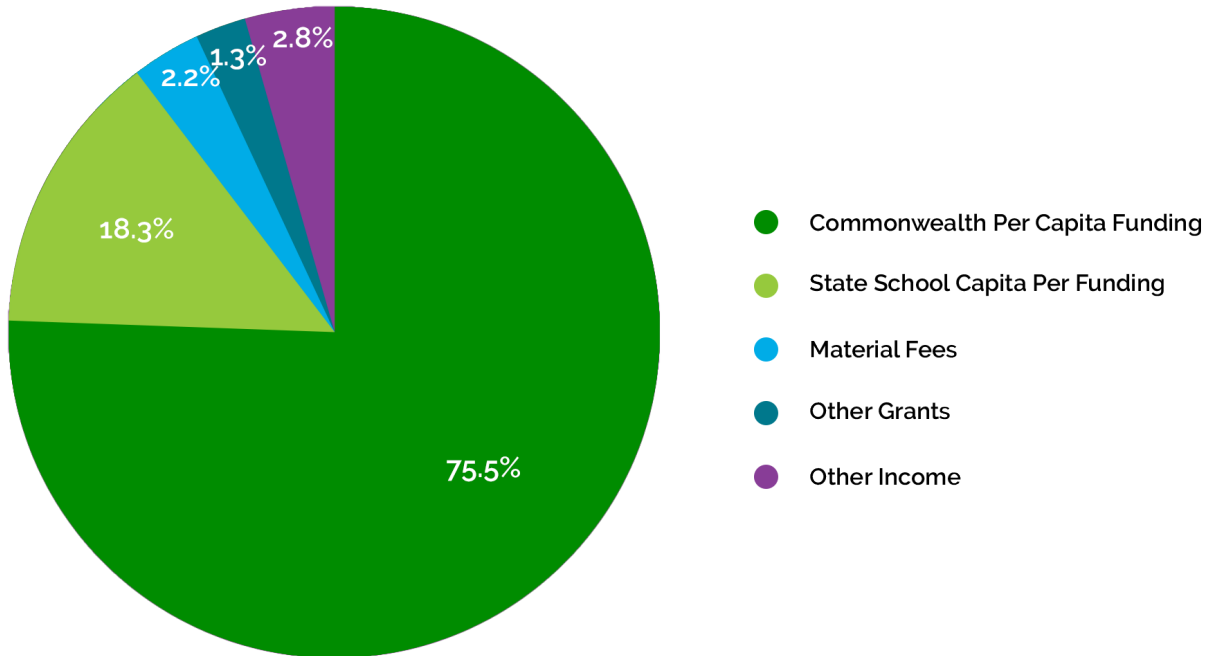
POLICIES

The following policies are publicly available on NGC's website (www.ngc.nsw.edu.au/policies):

- [Enrolment policy](#)
- [Child protection policy](#)
- [Anti-bullying policy](#)
- [Discipline policy](#)
- [Complaints policy](#)

FINANCIALS

Percentage of Income:



Percentage of Expenditure:

