

## Improved literacy, numeracy, and other academic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Calrossy Anglican School

### **Purpose**

To improve academic outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Calrossy Anglican School through development of better learning practices in organisation, consolidation, and revision of classwork, as well as preparation for assessment tasks and self-identification of learning support required.

### **Target group**

Nine Indigenous boarding students, including one male and eight female students in Years 7 through 12.

### **Activities**

Tutoring was provided in two boarding houses by two former Calrossy Anglican School students, to support current students in undertaking more purposeful study during Prep time. Students met with their tutor for 40 minutes once a week. Most tutoring was provided on a one to one basis, however two students from the same Year group sometimes met with one tutor when working on common subjects or tasks. Learning activities conducted during tutoring included:

- Going through student diaries to ascertain due dates and areas of study requiring support
- Setting up study and assessment completion schedules
- Revision of key learning areas, with a focus on complex processes in Maths and Science, and essay structure and writing in English.

### **Outcomes**

Indigenous students reported feeling more confident in their school work following tutoring, and this was demonstrated through their increased application and engagement in class. Students also reported feeling more organised with their work, and teachers indicated that students were completing tasks on time and to a higher standard. Feedback was positive from both students and parents, as well as teachers, and suggested there had been direct benefits of the tutoring. Positive changes related to tutoring were particularly pronounced for students in Years 7 to 10. Year 11 and 12 students found the relationship with the tutor a bit slower to build and had not experienced the extent of change reported by their younger peers.

### **Learnings**

At Calrossy Anglican School, we have learned that our Aboriginal students thrive when receiving continued support and help to understand the assessment requirements of our school. This format of tutoring worked very well in our context. We would advise working with tutors who are ex-students or current university students. The relationship students had with the tutor was essential to the success of the program, so take time and care to pick the right person for your students.

78% (n=7) of students answered either 'A great deal' or 'A lot' to the question "Did you find tutoring helpful during Prep time?"

*"I have found [the tutor] very helpful and I would love to continue this next Term."*

*(Indigenous student feedback, Term 2 2020)*

*"I would like to continue using [the tutor] next Term as I felt I was on top of all my work, getting organised for tasks. It was helpful."*

*(Indigenous student feedback, Term 2 2020)*

*"[Student name] began the year confidently, engaging enthusiastically in class and willingly volunteering her solutions to demonstrate her developing understanding of the concepts covered."*

*(Mathematics teacher, feedback on tutored student)*