

Media Release

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School's award-winning strategy comes to life in every classroom

For MacKillop Education Waranara School, success is seen every day when students, once school-refusing, are in class again with their education back on track.

The school's commitment to achieving these outcomes was recognised nationally when it won the *PeopleBench Best School Strategic Plan Award* at the **2026 Australian Education Awards** held last Friday.

The Award recognises the best strategic plan developed by a school in Australia in the 2025 academic year.

"This is a fantastic achievement for our school, and the recognition is even more significant considering we are a small Special Assistance School," said elated School Principal, Rachael Peet. "It reflects the extensive consultation process that has authentically captured who we are—our vision, purpose and values—and how these align with our strategic goals designed to have the greatest impact on our students and community."

"This win is a testament to the collective effort of our staff, especially our school leadership team, who worked collaboratively with our students and school community to bring these ideas to life in our plan."

[Waranara School's strategic plan](#) was shaped through extensive consultation with students, families, staff, alumni and community partners, ensuring it reflects the needs and aspirations of the young people the school serves.

"The plan established a clear and shared direction for the school community," said Rebecca Robinson, Director of MacKillop Education. "It outlines measurable priorities, clear timelines and a strong implementation framework grounded in data and evidence-based practice. I congratulate the entire staff of Waranara School, as well as the students and their families who together make it a wonderful place of learning."

[MacKillop Education Waranara School](#) which incorporates the [ReLATE](#) program is an Independent Special Assistance school in Sydney supporting students in Years 9-12 who have difficulty staying engaged with school.

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About

[MacKillop Education](#) provides a safe and supportive school environment that caters for children and young people who are disengaged, or at risk of disengaging, from education. It is part of national child and family welfare organisation, [MacKillop Family Services](#).

(Photo provided)



Caption: MacKillop Education Waranara School celebrates their win for Best School Strategic Plan