

About Kalkaringi School.



Kalkaringi school, serving the twin communities of Kalkaringi and Daguragu, has a student enrolment of around 130 students from Pre-school to Year 12. Currently there are 11 teaching positions, 4.5 FTE Assistant Teachers, a Ngumpin Coordinator, a Registrar, a Cleaner/Groundsperson, and 3 ancillary staff funded by the local C.D.E.P.

Although a school presence has been in the community for decades, the school has been at the current site since 1976. In 2002 the school became a Project School for the Provision of Secondary in a Remote Location. A new secondary facility was constructed in 2004, funded by a capital grant application of \$1.2 million.

Currently a full secondary curriculum is delivered at Kalkaringi, with the first NTCE graduates completing Yr 12 in 2003.

LOCATION & WEATHER

Kalkaringi is located approximately 460 kms south west of Katherine and approximately 800 km from Darwin. The township of Kalkaringi occupies 260 hectares and was gazetted as an open town in September 1976. Because it is an open town, permits are not required for residents or visitors. Daguragu is located 8 kms north of Kalkaringi via a bitumen road. Permission from traditional owners, through the Central Land Council, is required to visit Daguragu.

The populations of Kalkaringi and Daguargu are approximately 350 each, however the population is quite transient and does vary during the year.

While the normally used spelling for the town is Kalkaringi, it is sometimes alternatively spelled Kalkarindji, or known by its old name of Wave Hill.

The climate is subject to monsoonal influence, but the distinct seasonal patterns of wet and dry do not strictly occur. The annual rainfall is between 400 - 500 mm, most of which falls in December, January and February. The hottest months are December and January with temperatures averaging 36 - 39 degrees. Of course, monsoonal rainfall cools things down to a large degree when it does fall. The cooler months of June and July are very pleasant with temperatures averaging 24 - 27 degrees maximum and 9 - 12 degrees minimum.

FACILITIES

Facilities provided in Kalkaringi include a general store that is able to provide most of the basic needs and also takeaway food. The store also provides diesel and unleaded fuel. It is open normal weekday business hours and Saturday mornings.

There is a caravan and camping ground is located next to the store on the highway.

Fresh beef is available, butchered in town. The bakery in Daguargu provides fresh bread. Supplies can also be ordered from Katherine or elsewhere, and arrive on the truck each Tuesday morning.

Mail is delivered by aeroplane, which visits twice weekly on Tuesdays and Fridays. Mobile phone services, including mobile internet, are available but only for phones connected to Telstra Next-G.

There is a council office in Kalkaringi, providing normal council services. The council also operates the mechanics workshop. There are also a resident plumber and electrician in town.

The Baptist church normally meets twice each Sunday, at about 9:30AM in Kalkaringi and at around sunset in Daguragu. There is a resident missionary who is shared with Lajamanu.

A social and sports club operates in the evening, where residents and visitors (over the age of eighteen) can meet for a light meal and a drink under strictly controlled conditions. Note, that being a 'controlled community', it is unlawful to possess or consume alcoholic beverages outside of the club without a liquor permit.

There is a sealed, fenced, all-weather airstrip capable of accepting small and medium light aircraft, located about half way between Kalkaringi and Daguragu.

The clinic is operated by the Katherine West Health Board, normally with a resident doctor present. A dentist and other specialists visit on an occasional basis. Any urgent medical cases are evacuated by the Royal Flying Doctor Service to Katherine or Darwin.

There is a permanently staffed police station and an NTES facility.

For students and residents wishing to advance their studies further, Bachelor TAFE offer a limited range of courses according to community needs. Studies in agriculture are also available through the Northern Territory Rural College in Katherine.

The nearest alternative centre having a store and other facilities is Lajamanu, approximately 110 km to the South.

CONDITIONS

Kalkaringi school is a category 3 school. Teacher housing is supplied at Kalkaringi. The school is in the remote category that provided housing and utilities free of charge. All houses are furnished. Terms and conditions for this category can be found at ['Teaching in the Territory'](#) website.

PROGRAMS

All grades are provided for, from pre-school through to year 12. The curriculum is the standard NTCF, however, because the main population of the area is aboriginal, English as a Second Language (ESL) is taught rather than English.

Year 11 and 12 students are prepared for examinations leading to the standard NTCE.

In addition, VET subjects are also offered and currently include engineering, hairdressing and training as stockmen.

OPPORTUNITIES & HISTORY

Kalkaringi is located in the area of Wave Hill Station, which was opened as a station in 1883. Cattle have been the main economic industry for much of this time. In 1966, the Gurindji people working on Wave Hill Station went on strike over wages, conditions and land. The famous Gurindji Walk Off followed, and eventually Australia's first successful land rights claim was recognised when the then Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, handed back the land at Daguragu, in 1975, to the Gurindji leader, Vincent Lingiari.

An important occasion on the annual calendar is Freedom day, celebrating the 'Wave Hill Walkoff' in 1966. This is officially August 23rd, and many events are held across the weekend closest to this date.

Traditional Aboriginal owners belong to the Gurindji language group. There are also other residents of Daguragu and Kalkaringi who belong to other language groups, including the Warlpiri. The population of Daguragu/Kalkaringi is approximately 700 people although there are always a number of visitors from other communities and tourists travelling through Kalkaringi. Kalkaringi is situated on the Buntine Highway, which runs between Top Springs, NT, and Halls Creek, Western Australia.

The country within the Daguragu Land Trust varies considerably, hilly spring country in the south to rolling grass and scrublands in the north. The soil can be shallow, stony or heavily textured grey/brown/black varieties

supporting vegetation ranging from stunted Spinifex and desert oak to mulga and coolabah trees. The Victoria River and many of its tributaries provide an irregular supply of surface water, but there are several large permanent waterholes, which provide year round fishing, particularly for barramundi, and swimming.

The Victoria and Buntine Highways are sealed all of the way from Katherine to Kalkaringi, although only one-lane along much of the Buntine Highway. The roads are generally kept in good condition. They do get cut off occasionally during the wet season when rivers and gullies become flooded, although these floods are usually short-lived. When travelling along the Buntine Highway in particular, one needs to be very careful of road-trains and large animals wandering on the road. If at all possible, it is best to avoid travelling at night, when cattle, donkeys, horses and kangaroos will often come on to the road.

The Buntine Highway, continuing from Kalkaringi to Halls Creek in Western Australia, is mostly an unmade dirt road with a variable surface. Note that there is no fuel available between Kalkaringi and Halls Creek, a distance of about 400 km.

Visit the ['Out Bush'](#) section of the ['Katherine Region'](#) pages of the Rivers Cluster site to learn more.