Mudgeeraba Special School

School Review Report

School Improvement Unit

Queensland Government

Acknowledgment of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands from across Queensland. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia's cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.

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Contents

1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Mudgeeraba Special School** from **26** to **29 August 2109**.

The report presents an evaluation of the school's performance against the nine domains of the _National School Improvement Tool_. It also recommends improvement strategies for the school to implement in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU website.

1.1 Review team

Jenny Hart	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Mona Anu	Peer reviewer
Paul Herschell	External reviewer

1.2 School context

Location:	School Street, Mudgeeraba
Education region:	South East Region
Year opened:	1981
Year levels:	Prep to Year 12
Enrolment:	151
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	7 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	100 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1015
Year principal appointed:	2002
Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):	39.3
Significant partner schools:	Merrimac State High School, Nerang State High School, All Saints Anglican School, Somerset College, St Michael's College, Emmanuel College
Significant community partnerships:	University of Queensland (UQ) Social Emotional, Montrose Therapy & Respite Services, Choice, Passion, Life (CPL), Centacare, Specialcise and Sentis.
	Partnership Alliance Members: A Gentle Touch Funerals, The Australian Foundation for Disability (Afford), The Wine Barrel Restaurant, National Disability Support Partners (NDSP), AON, Woodchoppers Inn, Endeavour Foundation, atWork Australia, Aruma, Volunteering Services Australia
Significant school programs:	Montrose Playgroup, Partnerships Alliance, STEMosphere, Sunshine Singers, Mobility Options Via Education (MOVE), MyTime, art specialist, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and Balanced Literacy Knowledgeable Others, school chaplain

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal; two deputy principals; two Heads of Curriculum (HOC); guidance officer; occupational therapist; physiotherapist; 11 teacher aides; 31 teachers; Professional Learning Community (PLCs) – Age-appropriate pedagogies (AAP), Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Literacy progressions, Abecedarian, Social emotional; Sub focus group – Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), Curriculum team, Wellbeing team, Leading Learning team, Data team, Workplace Health and Safety Committee; Coaches – Writing, Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC); Senior school coordinator, Business Manager (BM), administration officer, chaplain, schools officer, student council, president of the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C), office bearers and members, 25 parents and 35 students.

Community and business groups:

- Alliance partners, Country Women's Association (CWA), Woolworths Mudgeeraba, Bunnings, Professionals Mermaid Beach and A Gentle Touch Funerals.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principals of Robina State High School and Mudgeeraba State School, members of the Greenheart Cluster Schools, Logan City Special School, Chair of the South East Special School Alliance, Everyone Deserves Music and Montrose Therapy and Respite Services.

Government and departmental representatives:

- MyTime coordinator, Gold Coast Councillor, State Member for Mudgeeraba and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2019

Explicit Improvement Agenda 2019

Investing for Success 2019

Strategic Plan 2016–2019

Headline Indicators (April 2019 release)

School data profile (Semester 1, 2019)

OneSchool

School budget overview

Professional learning plan 2019

Curriculum planning documents

School improvement targets

School differentiation plan or flowchart

Induction Handbook and planner

Behaviour management processes and plans

School pedagogical framework

Professional development plans

School data plan

School newsletters and website

School action plans and playbooks

Coaching and feedback overview

School Opinion Survey

School OneNote

Balanced Score Card

Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students

Student report cards and Individual Curriculum Plans

School-based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework

Professional learning team plans and documents

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The tone of the school reflects its commitment towards educating and caring for all students, embodied in the school's vision.

The school strives to create a safe environment and a caring, supportive community that provides positive meaningful outcomes for all, reinforcing the vision *'Happiness through achievement'*. This is demonstrated through positive relationships between staff members, students and parents. All staff have high expectations of themselves and the students with whom they interact.

The school has a comprehensive and sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that supports consistent teaching and learning expectations.

A collaborative approach to curriculum planning across the school is apparent and ensures that the curriculum is aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC), whilst at the same time being adapted to meet the learning needs of the students and of the local school context.

The principal is reflective of the four-year journey of the school to implement the school's strategic plan, Annual Implementation Plans (AIP) and school-developed priorities.

A self-assessment evaluation process has been undertaken to look back on the school's journey and reflect on success, progress, challenges and celebrations. A visual learning wall is developed as an artefact of this work. The enactment of the four years of work is apparent across the school. School leaders and staff take pride in the journey of improvement in the school and are keen to share with others and learn from research and schools to strive for further improvement.

The principal and members of the leadership team are committed to building a team of highly capable teachers and support staff.

The school has built a culture of collaborative professional learning that has resulted in a highly skilled and capable workforce. School leaders, including the principal, spend time working with all staff. This is valued by all and has promoted a culture of continuous professional learning that has led to skilled instructional leaders and high levels of staff expertise.

The school delivers Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses to students.

It uses its skills development initiative to support young people in the workplace undertaking VET certificates. School staff and community partners agree that an opportunity exists to further develop students' enterprise and entrepreneurial skills and capabilities through the delivery of the VET courses and the skills development program.

The use of Balanced Literacy is an expected pedagogical practice and has been supported over past years with professional learning and resources.

School leaders set weekly expectations in relation to classroom and teacher practice. Observations in classrooms and discussions with teachers indicate that this pedagogical approach to teaching literacy is utilised in all classrooms and embedded in everyday teacher practice. Some teachers require support to fully integrate this pedagogical approach across the curriculum.

School leaders have commenced discussions with the regional and central office requesting the development of a Master Property Plan.

School facilities are constrained by land space and the layout of existing buildings. Staff recognise that there is a need to enhance school facilities to meet community expectations and the diverse learning needs of students particularly those in the senior school.

The school articulates the belief that the collection of meaningful data to provide a holistic profile for individual students is crucial to inform future student learning and to reflect on distance travelled.

There are clear expectations that teachers analyse and utilise data to understand their learners. The Balanced Scorecard features a range of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment tools used to assess students' learning. It clarifies expectations including how to make informed and consistent judgements to improve student learning.

A culture of collaboration has been built in the school and includes all staff.

Staff speak highly of the collegial relationships and support of colleagues that exist in the school and the support they receive from members of the leadership team. Staff describe a school community that is built on open communication and trusting relationships. Staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to students and the school.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Utilise networks and key educational leaders including academics, universities and schools nationally and internationally to further share school-developed expertise and maintain a forward focus on school improvement.

Explore opportunities for staff to share their instructional leadership and expertise in a range of educational contexts, including conferences and events within and outside the special education context.

Explore opportunities for students to further develop enterprise and entrepreneurial skills and capabilities through the delivery of the VET courses and the skills development program.

Build teacher capability to use the Balanced Literacy pedagogical approach across all key learning areas by developing exemplars.

Collaborate with regional and central office facilities officers to develop a Master Property Plan to meet community expectations and the diverse learning needs of students.

3. Snapshot of previous school review

The last review carried out at the school was conducted from **31 August** to **2 September 2015**. At the time of the 2015 review the school enrolment was 145 with an Indigenous enrolment of 1 per cent.

The key improvement strategies recommended in the review are listed below.

- Refine the improvement agenda to provide a sharp and narrow focus on core learning priorities, including key strategies, accompanying timelines and targets. Review the roles and responsibilities of school leaders to promote distributed leadership and a sustainable focus in driving the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA).

- Review the existing model of school-wide professional learning to ensure cohesion and a balance between collegial and targeted approaches aligned to the school's EIA.

- Refine the school's approach to communication and literacy development to outline explicit teaching expectations. Communicate and clarify the purpose and systematic implementation of the Four Blocks literacy program.

- Clarify the purpose and leadership of the new senior schooling direction to inform program development.

4. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains

4.1 An explicit improvement agenda

Findings

The principal is reflective of the four-year journey of the school to implement the school's strategic plan, including yearly AIPs and school-developed priorities. An evaluation process has been undertaken to look back on the school's journey and reflect on success, progress, challenges and celebrations. A visual learning wall is developed as an artefact of this work. The enactment of the four years of work is apparent across the school.

School leaders and staff take pride in the journey of improvement in the school and are keen to share with others and learn from research and schools to strive for further improvement.

The principal, supported by school leaders is driving an EIA. All staff are clear regarding their core objective to improve learning outcomes in the school. A culture of high expectations for staff and students is apparent.

The school collects a range of data to inform the improvement agenda. Data sets over time are developing in the school. Diagnostic and achievement data is collected and recorded in OneSchool. School-developed spreadsheets are used in case management meetings, Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and data conversations. Student portfolios are developed for all students. Data is used to track academic achievement and areas of personal growth. School leaders are proactive in searching for assessments to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

The 2019 AIP has three school improvement areas identified as Social Emotional Wellbeing for Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), Pedagogical Framework: Playlist of High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) and Model Feedback for Students and Staff. The AIP provides the guiding questions for instructional leaders to use to obtain a line of sight into classrooms and includes the PLCs and induction and coaching that will be used to support staff to achieve school priorities.

Roles and responsibilities are documented for the executive leadership team, team leaders and all school staff. This document clearly outlines responsibilities of leaders and displays a distributive model of leadership. Staff are able to articulate their line management and know the roles of leaders associated to school priorities and school operations.

Teachers know and understand how the improvement agenda is being addressed across the school and are able to articulate examples of the impact of the agenda in their classroom. They discuss the professional collaboration and support processes used in the school to build the expected teaching practices aligned to the improvement agenda.

Each priority area has an action playbook that aligns the priority to domains of the National School Improvement Tool (NSIT). The playbook scaffolds a strategy from the awareness phase to the behaviour change sought from current practice through to an embedded strategy. Each action playbook has success criteria. Current leadership structure including

executive team meetings, PLCs, team meetings and case management are used to discuss and monitor the implementation of the improvement agenda.

School staff speak with pride and passion about their school and the commitment they have to improve their teaching practice and the educational and life outcomes of students. Staff regularly collaborate to identify problems of practice and obstacles to improvement. Action plans and strategies are identified to address areas of concern or prioritised for future action.

The school is participating in Leading Learning Lyn Sharratt[1] regional Professional Development (PD). Two teachers are engaged in this learning project alongside school leaders. As part of this project a 'watermark' is being developed to brand the school. A process of consultation is underway with school staff, parents and the wider community.

Individualised planning and learning is a priority. Students requiring additional supports for behaviour and engagement are identified. School-wide strategies are established to support and manage behaviour and wellbeing needs including social emotional, specialised health and mobility plans.

The school communicates to staff, family and community the high expectations that are held in the school. To this end the school is held in high regard by staff, students, parents and the community.

Improvement strategies

Utilise networks and key educational leaders including academics, universities and schools nationally and internationally to further share school-developed expertise and maintain a forward focus on school improvement.

Develop and embed the school watermark into the school brand in all school documentation, publications, artefacts and media.

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[1] Sharratt, L. (2019). Sharratt Educational Services (SEG Inc.). Retrieved from https://www.lynsharratt.com/

4.2 Analysis and discussion of data

Findings

The school executive team articulates the belief that the collection of reliable, authentic and meaningful data to provide a detailed, holistic profile for individual students is crucial to inform future student learning and to reflect distance travelled. There are clear expectations that teachers analyse and utilise the data to understand their learners. The executive team and staff continue to focus on improving the literacy data through the school's engagement in the Lyn Sharratt Leading Learning collaborative project.

The school data plan, that is known as the Balanced Scorecard, features a range of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment tools used to assess students' learning in the classroom. The Balanced Scorecard clarifies expectations regarding the collection of evidence and purpose, and how to make informed and consistent judgements to improve students' results. The document clarifies for teachers what to collect and when.

The school has an electronic data wall that is utilised to display individual learning expectations in literacy for all students. A case management process is used to determine the next step for every student in their educational journey. Student data, from Brigance, Communication Matrix, Mobility Opportunities Via Education (MOVE), First Steps English and mathematics is integral when completing Student at a Glance (SAAG) forms for all students.

School leaders regularly work with teachers and teacher aides to review diagnostic and summative data. There are ongoing data discussions at PLC meetings, team meetings and teacher meetings. Data conversations enable staff to identify gaps in student learning and use HITS to improve student outcomes.

Teachers collect and monitor a range of student data, including literacy, numeracy, English, mathematics, science, social emotional development and physical health and development each term. Teachers articulate that they recognise the value of this process and how it assists in the explicit teaching of a balanced literacy and the AC. Some teachers are requiring support to further build their capability in the analysis of data in all expected diagnostic assessments.

The school systematically monitors other performance data, School Disciplinary Absences (SDAs), behavioural data, school completion, student destinations and stakeholder perceptions and engagement. School leaders monitor whole-school student performance data and diagnostic assessments. The SAAG tool maps the results of every student and enables staff to identify and analyse data trends across the year.

The PBL committee tracks behaviour data through OneSchool. The team has created the school-wide management plan to identify students in Tier 2 and Tier 3. Students in Tier 3 have behaviour support plans and students in Tier 2 have an anxiety scale and behaviour checklist. The school-wide management plan identifies students with emergency health plans and students with additional needs. Individual risk management plans and anxiety cycle behaviour documentation are developed to support students with complex behaviour

needs. Staff comment that there is a need to develop social emotional datasets to inform individual student behaviour support plans.

School processes including PLCs and case management are assisting the school to develop a culture of continuous self-evaluation and reflection.

Improvement strategies

Strengthen teacher data literacy skills in the range of school data tools to analyse and identify the next steps of learning and align to the Individual Curriculum Plan (ICP) and curriculum delivery.

Refine school-wide processes for the collection of Tier 3 student behaviour and social emotional data to strengthen individual behaviour plans.

4.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

The tone of the school reflects its commitment towards educating and caring for students, embodied in the school's vision. The school strives to create a safe environment and caring, supportive community that provides positive meaningful outcomes for all, reinforcing the vision '*Happiness through achievement'.* This happiness is demonstrated through positive relationships between staff members, students and parents.

School leaders, teachers and teacher aides have high expectations of themselves and the students with whom they interact. Teachers describe a strong collegial culture that is transparent and supportive.

Staff demonstrate an understanding of the importance of building positive and mutually respectful relationships with their colleagues, students and parents. The school considers parents as integral members of the community and partners in student learning. Parents articulate they feel valued as part of their child's educational team, and express that they have the utmost respect and trust in the staff members of the school.

An obvious sense of belonging is apparent in the school as staff members speak positively regarding the school and students. Staff celebrate student and school success regularly.

The school places a high priority on student and staff wellbeing and has processes established to provide academic and non-academic support to address individual needs. This progression is clearly explained through a case management process to implement ICPs.

The staff wellbeing team consists of the principal, chaplain, representative from MyTime, Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and guidance officer. The team has implemented actions and strategies to support families and staff members at risk of requiring wellbeing support. The team is proactive within the school and outside of the school depending on the circumstances and stakeholders involved.

The PBL committee consists of teachers and members of the leadership team.

They meet twice each term and analyse data to inform next directions and to ensure appropriate support is offered to staff members and students. The school supports students through the PBL tier system. Strategies to support students with complex and challenging needs are formally aligned to Tier 2 and Tier 3 processes. Tier 3 students have an individual behaviour plan and Tier 2 students have an anxiety scale, and behaviour checklist. Each group is regularly monitored and tracked during learning and play.

The University of Queensland (UQ) is working with the school and attends the social emotional PLC to understand student needs and current strategies the school is utilising. The aim is to provide advice and support for the school in developing a social emotional wellbeing program for students.

The school has clear strategies to promote appropriate behaviour, including agreed responses and consequences for inappropriate student behaviour. School leaders provide support for teachers to implement these policies. Minor and major behaviours are clearly explained and are documented in their Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS).

There are two students on a formalised flexible arrangement and four students on SDAs since the beginning of 2019.

Staff members are supportive of the PBL approaches and are aware of whole-school behaviour values and expectations – 'I am honest, I am caring and I am respectful'. The whole-school values and expectations are apparent across the school. The school Gotcha awards are a means of supporting students to understand their capacity to demonstrate self-control over their personal behaviour. It additionally recognises the individual contribution students make to their school community.

A whole-school approach to positive reinforcement is implemented in the form of students receiving Gotchas and classroom Dojo points for positive behaviour. Students receive a school wristband for positive behaviour demonstrated in and outside the classroom linked to the school expectations. Staff members report that students relate to this process well and that it is having a positive impact on student engagement and behaviour.

The school celebrates and acknowledges student learning on school assembly. Additionally individual classrooms celebrate success in behaviour and learning through personalised reward systems.

The school's facilities and appearance are well maintained and inviting to staff, parents and students. Classrooms are vibrant learning spaces with examples of student work displayed across the school.

Student attendance data indicates a decline at the school. Current student attendance is 79.4 per cent with 40.6 per cent of students attending less than 85 per cent of school days. This data compares with end of Semester 1 data of 83.6 per cent attendance with 35.8 per cent of students attending less than 85 per cent. The 2019 Semester 1 School Data Profile indicates a Semester 1 2018 attendance rate of 84.7 per cent with 28.8 per cent of students attending less than 85 per cent. Semester 2 shows 83.5 per cent attendance with 31.7 per cent of students attending less than 85 per cent.

2018 School Opinion Survey (SOS) data indicates 100.0 per cent of teaching staff members agree with the statement 'I feel that students receive a good education at my school'. This compares to 96.5 per cent for State Special Schools.

SOS 2018 data indicates that 100.0 per cent of parents, 95.8 per cent of staff agree with the statement 'This is a good school'. These rates of satisfaction are above the State Special School rates for staff and parents.

Improvement strategies

Implement a regular rigorous process to interrogate attendance data and work collaboratively with parents/carers to improve attendance data.

Collaboratively develop a social emotional program in conjunction with UQ to meet the diverse needs of all students.

4.4 Targeted use of school resources

Findings

The school has targeted its resources in a manner to meet identified school priorities to improve teacher capability and student learning outcomes.

The school has well established budgetary and human resource allocation practices that are known and understood by staff. School grants and Independent Public School (IPS) funds are distributed through the budget and aligned to school and system priorities.

School staff are appreciative of the budget allocations provided to teams and the choice that they have in the expenditure of this money. Team leaders work with staff to create an action plan that suits the needs of the cohort, budget funds are aligned to the delivery of this plan. Action plans include budgets to enhance curriculum, technology resources and create and upgrade outdoor learning areas and gardening spaces linked to learning programs.

Staff are satisfied with the resources they have and articulate that they are able to request resources through purchasing processes and that their requests when linked to student programs and outcomes are favourably received.

The school received $82 544 under the Investing for Success (I4S) initiative. The funding expenditure plan has clear links to the school priorities of developing a social and emotional framework for students, building staff capability in the use of HITS, developing feedback processes for staff and students, and implementing certificate courses for senior students.

The current bank balance is $384 134. The principal and Business Manager (BM) work together to monitor cost centres and make budget adjustments as required.

A number of case management processes in the school support the allocation of resources including behaviour support, students in Out-of-Home Care (OOHC) and achievement data driven discussions. Case management meetings support human, physical and financial allocations.

The school has developed expertise in staff across teaching and learning areas in addition to behaviour and emotional supports. Staff are deployed to best meet the individual and cohort needs of students. Additional teacher aide time is allocated to classrooms that have a number of students with high support needs in hygiene, mobility, and behaviour.

A number of school-wide programs and approaches are available in the school. These include MOVE, choir, art extension and music therapy.

Teachers in sector cohorts work together to stream students into ability groupings to better address the individual learning needs of students. This occurs in the middle and junior secondary sectors. Senior students have a range of flexible curriculum delivery aligned to their Personal Future Action Plans (PFAP).

The school is effectively using its physical environment and available facilities to maximise learning. Flexible spaces are used for art, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), library and senior schooling programs.

The school is constrained by land space and the layout of existing buildings. Staff recognise that there is a need to enhance school facilities to meet community expectations and the diverse learning needs of students particularly those in the senior school. School leaders have commenced discussions with the regional and central offices requesting the development of a Master Property Plan.

Improvement strategies

Collaborate with regional and central office facilities officers to develop a Master Property Plan to meet community expectations and the diverse learning needs of students.

4.5 An expert teaching team

Findings

The school leadership team is committed to building a team of highly capable teachers and support staff. They lead a culture of continuous PD that includes classroom-based learning, mentoring and coaching. School leaders highly value the development of all staff members into an expert teaching team.

The school has a comprehensive professional learning plan that outlines professional learning opportunities clearly aligned to the school's EIA in addition to supporting the school's broader agenda of building teachers' capabilities across a range of appropriate pedagogy, curriculum and student-centred teaching and learning approaches. The professional learning program is clearly documented and includes a weekly calendar of learning events.

To support the implementation of the professional learning plan, a professional learning model outlines whole-school expectations in relation to collaborative planning, PLCs, instructional walkthroughs, and targeted programs such as classroom profiling, case management, collegial coaching, video of practice, lesson study, and targeted coaching in writing and Augmented Assisted Communication (ACC).

Staff indicate they are encouraged and supported to pursue areas of personal interest, particularly where it supports the EIA. Most staff indicate they have attended a range of internal and external PD in recent years and value the processes developed by the leadership team to support and encourage such activities.

The school commits significant time and resources to support ongoing collaborative planning. Six teachers form the teacher release team that delivers Non-Contact Time (NCT) and releases classroom teachers for half-day planning sessions six to eight times per term. As a result, sector teams are highly collaborative and are functioning effectively to implement the school's curriculum consistently and meet the needs of individual students. Teachers articulate they value the opportunity to share resources, practice, expertise and experiences to support the implementation of the school curriculum and EIA.

Five PLCs have been established in the areas of Literacy Progressions, Age-appropriate pedagogies (AAP), Social Emotional, STEM and Abecedarian Training – for teacher aides. PLCs meet once every three weeks and follow formalised processes and protocols to ensure the sessions are productive and are an opportunity to build staff capability in the professional area being studied. Teachers and teacher aides report they highly value the process and recognise the commitment the school leadership team has to building an expert teaching team at the school.

School leaders, including the principal spend time working with teachers, and staff indicate they value the support provided by the leadership team. Observation and feedback is provided to all teachers through leadership team instructional walks and formal observations. The school supports a Watching Others Work (WOW) program of peer observation and

teachers at the school value the opportunities the program offers to improve their pedagogical skills and practices.

The school is in the process of implementing a case management approach to coaching and mentoring. All teachers are encouraged to identify one student with specific needs and develop targeted strategies to support that student. Peer mentors and coaches provide ongoing support and direction to guide the teacher and help identify appropriate pedagogical and curriculum support for the student. Teachers indicate that the collegial support provided through the process is deepening their skills and capabilities, particularly in the area of differentiation.

A number of leaders and teachers have been trained in Essential Skills for Classroom Management (ESCM). The school has begun the process of implementing classroom profiling and most teachers comment they appreciate the support the program provides in relation to building capability in classroom management.

Over a number of years the school has built a culture of collaborative professional learning that has resulted in a highly skilled and capable workforce. The breadth and depth of professional learning and expertise across the school are apparent in the day-to-day teaching practice of school leaders, teachers and teacher aides.

All teachers, teacher aides and support staff undertake a rigorous Annual Performance Review (APR) process that highlights the linkages of individual staff skills across the school and how they relate to the school's EIA.

The school has a number of new, beginning or early career teachers. A formal induction program is established to support these teachers to quickly and effectively participate in the school's teaching and learning priorities. An induction planner has additionally been developed to support teacher aides new to the school. Teachers and teacher aides report they value the comprehensiveness of the induction and mentoring provided by the school to support them quickly and easily to assimilate into the ethos of the school.

Teacher aides are viewed as an integral part of the teaching team by teachers and school leaders. Teacher aides are supported with a range of PD opportunities including their own PLC to support the implementation of the Abecedarian Approach. Teacher aides meet regularly to plan and share resources and expertise.

Improvement strategies

Explore opportunities for staff to share their instructional leadership and expertise in a range of educational contexts, including conferences and events within and outside of the special education context.

4.6 Systematic curriculum delivery

Findings

The school has a comprehensive and sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that supports consistent teaching and learning expectations and provides a reference for monitoring learning across the year levels.

There is a collaborative approach to curriculum planning across the school that ensures that the curriculum is aligned to the AC, whilst at the same time being adapted to meet the learning needs of the students and of the local school context. A whole-school learning and assessment plan has been developed and includes unit scope and sequences, essential and supporting content descriptions, achievement standards and Guide to Making Judgements (GTMJ), all of which are systematically aligned to the AC.

The school is organised into five sectors – junior, lower middle, upper middle, junior secondary and senior secondary. Each is led by a curriculum team leader and two Heads of Curriculum (HOC) who drive a rigorous curriculum review cycle. Teams meet regularly to monitor ongoing curriculum delivery and at least once per semester to review the current unit and plan for next semester through a comprehensive calibration process.

HOCs lead a rigorous, school-wide Quality Assurance (QA) process to monitor the implementation of the school's curriculum plan to ensure that all students are consistently and effectively provided with opportunities to demonstrate their learning against the AC achievement standards aligned to their ICPs. Teachers indicate they highly value the support of the HOCs in the ongoing implementation of the curriculum plans. Teachers highly value the commitment school leaders have shown to allocate significant time and resources to support their collaborative approach to curriculum planning.

The school undertakes internal moderation in the pre-foundation level general capabilities and Prep–Year 2 levels. The moderation process has been collaboratively developed by curriculum leaders at the school and sets clear guidelines for teachers to effectively participate in the process. Teachers identify that the process is developing their understanding of the AC achievement standards, their skills at making consistent judgements regarding student work and informing ongoing curriculum planning.

All students have an ICP collaboratively developed by the classroom teacher and HOC. Teachers use the moderation process, in addition to Brigance and Communication Matrix data, to make judgements about students' ICP levels and curriculum focus.

The school is in the process of introducing the new digital technologies curriculum and has incorporated content and standards from the new curriculum into a series of STEM learning activities. A purpose-built STEMosphere has been designed to engage students in STEM activities, including coding, and robotics. Teachers acknowledge that students are excited about the program and look forward to more deeply engaging with the new content.

The previous school review challenged the school to clarify the purpose and leadership of the new senior schooling direction to inform program development. The school has

undertaken a comprehensive review of the senior school curriculum in recent years. All students in Year 10 undertake a 'Taster' program whereby they can try out their VET options for the senior years. Students undertake one term each in Volunteering, Agri-Foods, Hospitality and Access to Vocational Pathways Certificate I courses. All students continue the Volunteering Certificate in Years 11 and 12 and select one from the other three to complete.

The new structure for senior secondary is highly valued by teachers and community members. They believe the changes are focusing student learning at the school and building stronger, clearer and more purposeful pathways for students when they leave the school.

All students complete a Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA) and the school participates in the external moderation of student work for this qualification. A number of students successfully complete one or more certificates and the school and community celebrate these occasions. Some staff are challenged to incorporate all of the QCIA elements within the certificate courses and would value further support to successfully integrate and align learning across the senior years of schooling.

The school is a lead partner in the Special Education Training Alliance (SETA) and all senior teachers have been supported to complete their Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. The school's Trade Training Centre (TTC) is a valued resource and well utilised throughout the school. Staff indicate they are encouraged by the school to establish and maintain partnerships with local organisations, industry and businesses to provide the maximum opportunities for students to engage in skills development.

Funds have been raised through the Mazda Foundation and the Everyone Deserves Music Organisation to support the school to engage a part-time music therapist. Many students, particularly those with limited mobility, participate in a highly regarded music therapy program that provides valuable therapeutic support for students and additionally supports teachers' implementation of the school's arts curriculum.

Curriculum information is shared with parents through ICPs, communication books, school newsletters and informal communication. Most teachers regularly communicate curriculum intentions and expectations with parents who value the open communication regarding their child's progress.

Students are issued with formal report cards regarding their progress each semester and formal parent teacher interviews occur twice per year. Parents report being welcomed to discuss their child's progress at other times.

Improvement strategies

Provide support and direction for staff to effectively integrate and align the reportable elements of the QCIA across the certificate courses and skills programs offered in the senior years of schooling.

4.7 Differentiated teaching and learning

Findings

There is a strong belief in the school that, although students are of different abilities and at various stages in their learning, all students can learn and achieve success when they are provided with appropriate and relevant teaching, a variety of learning opportunities, time and the required support.

Teachers use a range of diagnostic assessment tools, including Brigance, First Steps Reading, Writing and Mathematics and PM to identify areas of improvement in literacy and numeracy. Diagnostic data is used to differentiate units of work to ensure that all students are engaged and are learning.

Teachers explain that differentiation is apparent through 'knowing your student' and the importance of considering the aspects of content, process, product and environment. A range of resources is apparent to assist student learning. These include the deployment of teaching staff and the use of Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Displays (PODD), alphabetic flip charts, Proloquo2Go, predictable writing charts, iPad and laptops.

Hearing impaired students are supported by trained teacher aides who are Auslan Language Models (TA:ALM). These teacher aides support students to learn Auslan and bridge language support in the classroom. Staff are appreciative of this support as it builds their capacity to learn Auslan.

Classroom teachers work at understanding where students are in their learning, including their current knowledge, skills, learning difficulties and misunderstandings to identify starting points for teaching. This knowledge supports differentiated planning and teaching.

Teachers work with parents to develop ICPs and individual learning plans. Teachers and parents work in continuous consultation to ensure that the adjustments made meet the learning needs of each student. Learning plans are individualised with clearly stated goals. The goals address academic and social needs. The academic goals are visible in the three contexts of data walls, ICPs and student desktops.

Teachers in the senior school work with parents to develop PFAPs. Staff closely monitor these plans as students progress in their learning.

Student learning goals are on display in all classrooms. The diverse range of student ability and understanding impacts on student ability to fully understand their learning goals and what they need to demonstrate to achieve them.

Teacher aides are highly valued in the school for the work they do to enable students to participate in learning and achieve their goals.

Parents have the opportunity to visit and support students in the classroom. Parents speak positively regarding students' learning, social and behaviour growth that has occurred due to the close monitoring of their child's learning.

The school communicates to parents regularly. Parents receive two formal reports throughout the year. Teachers continue to keep parents informed regarding their child's learning, and the progress that students have made over time, and what they can do to further support their child's learning. There is a strong sense of belonging and happiness through achievement apparent across Prep to Year 12 demonstrated by staff and the executive team.

Students that require additional support such as behaviour interventions are supported by additional staff, the chaplain, CLO, guidance officer and additional teacher aides.

Improvement strategies

Develop a range of differentiated strategies to assist teachers to scaffold learning goals to enable students to understand and demonstrate their learning goals.

4.8 Effective pedagogical practices

Findings

School leaders are committed to improving the pedagogical practices of all staff. School leaders have a strong moral purpose for driving improvements in teaching to improve student learning outcomes.

A range of evidence-based teaching practices are identified as expected practice in the school. Staff are provided with a range of professional learning models to build and support their teaching.

All school leaders, including the principal, spend time with staff to provide collaborative professional learning, including coaching and modelling to build teacher understanding in the use of highly effective teaching strategies.

A pedagogical framework is developed based on the Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (DoTL) and using core systemic principles aligned to curriculum planning and delivery. A strong emphasis is placed on knowing the learner including high expectations of learning for all students. A rationale is provided to support differentiated instruction referencing the work of Tomlinson[2].

A current focus of the pedagogical framework is the use of a documented range of HITS strategies. Teachers are able to describe the HITS they are using in their classroom and how PLCs and professional learning including coaching and modelling are being used and accessed to build expected practice.

The school has established and communicated clear expected teaching practices. Staff members are able to choose from a suite of coaching options to assist in building their practice. Walkthroughs and observation and feedback processes provide teachers with feedback and next steps for learning.

The use of Balanced Literacy is an expected pedagogical practice and has been supported over past years with professional learning and resources. School leaders set weekly expectations in relation to classroom and teacher practice. Observations in classrooms and discussions with teachers indicate that this pedagogical approach to teaching literacy is utilised in all classrooms and embedded in teacher practice. Some teachers are yet to integrate this pedagogical approach within English lessons and other key learning areas.

Some PLCs are aligned to pedagogical practices such as AAP for teachers and the Abecedarian Approach for teacher aides. Teachers in the AAP PLC build their knowledge in this pedagogical approach, look at student data and then design AAP focus lessons within existing curriculum delivery. Teachers share, learn and reflect upon practice within this PLC. A teacher aide leads the Abecedarian PLC. Teacher aides share ideas and strategies in this approach reflecting on their use within classroom and playground activities. The lead teacher aide is developing resources and videos to build staff capability in this approach.

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[2] Tomlinson, C. A. (2000). Differentiation of Instruction in the Elementary Grades. ERIC Digest.

The use of learning intentions and success criteria including the use of 'We are learning to' (WALT) and 'What I'm looking for' (WILF) are apparent in most classrooms. Teachers are able to discuss the use of explicit teaching as part of their day-to-day classroom practice.

A range of specialised pedagogical practices are apparent in the school to support the differentiated needs of students. These include various communication pedagogies such as PODD and the MOVE program for students with physical impairments. Teachers are supported by Speech Language Pathologists (SLP), physiotherapists and teachers with expertise in these learning approaches.

All staff are able to discuss expected practice and are developing their capability in the effective use of a range of strategies and approaches supported by the school. School leaders are aware of the differentiated professional learning needs of staff.

The provision of feedback to students is a focus area for the school. Conversations with staff confirm that this is an emerging practice and requires further support to explore the full range of feedback strategies that can be used to support the differentiated needs of all students.

Improvement strategies

Build teacher capability to use the Balanced Literacy pedagogical approach across all key learning areas by developing exemplars.

Ensure that teachers are providing frequent student feedback in ways that are purposeful and meaningful to suit the diverse learning needs of all students.

4.9 School-community partnerships

Findings

The school recognises that parents and families are integral members of the school community and partners in their child's education. Staff, parents and community members describe positive school community relationships, mutually supportive interactions and shared support for the wellbeing of students.

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in day-to-day school activities. The school places a high priority on communicating with parents and all teachers maintain communication books to update parents regarding student progress and to ensure they keep informed in relation to significant incidents or activities. The books are widely used across the school to inform parents about curriculum focuses and activities throughout the term and to keep parents apprised of class and school priorities. Parents comment that communication on their child's progress is timely and effective.

The school has developed and maintains a large number of partnerships with outside agencies and organisations including, UQ Social Emotional, Montrose Therapy & Respite Services, Choice Passion Life (CPL), Centacare, Specialcise and Sentis. In addition, the school established strong relationships with its Partnership Alliance members, including A Gentle Touch Funerals, The Australian Foundation for Disability (Afford), The Wine Barrel Restaurant, National Disability Support Partners (NDSP), AON, Woodchoppers Inn, Endeavour Foundation, atWork Australia, Aruma and Volunteering Services Australia. The school works closely with the local Coles and Woolworths supermarkets and the Bunnings hardware store resulting in a range of skills development opportunities and resources provided by these organisations.

The school places significant value in supporting and maintaining external relationships with community organisations. A community partners' breakfast is organised every term and is well attended by local organisations, businesses, industry partners and politicians. Community members interviewed report they highly value the effort the school and the principal put into building and maintaining relationships in the broader community and promoting the positive aspects of the school.

The school maintains close relationships with local Early Childhood Development Programs (ECDP) including staff visits and parent information sessions. The programs provide the school with comprehensive transition information and data regarding each student's readiness for learning.

The school is part of the SETA that includes twenty special schools across the state. The school delivers four VET courses to students and uses its skills development initiative to support young people in the workplace undertaking VET certificates. Teachers and community partners agree that an opportunity exists to further develop students' enterprise and entrepreneurial skills and capabilities through the delivery of the VET courses and the skills development program.

Parents, teachers and school leaders report that students completing Year 12, or the additional transition year, are well supported in the transition to post-school life. Staff and parents interviewed highlight the priority the school places on supporting students' transition to post-school pathways.

The school has an active and well attended Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) that focuses on providing support for improving educational and physical resources. The P&C has raised significant funds for the school and has actively sought a range of grants funding from different government and philanthropic sources. Since 2013 the school has received $543 610 in grant funding through these efforts.

The P&C works closely with the school to organise a range of fundraising activities, including Mother's Day and Father's Day sales and celebratory events. The activities undertaken by the P&C are highly regarded and supported by the broader school community.

The move to IPS status means the school is in the process of establishing a new school council and school charter. Most parents and staff agree this is a positive step for the school. The P&C hopes to maintain a significant role once the council is established.

The school maintains close relations with Robina State High School, Merrimac State High School, Nerang State High School and is an active participant in the Greenheart Cluster Schools. Because of the school's wide-ranging community partnerships and comprehensive professional learning program, staff believe that the school is ideally positioned to take a lead role in sharing expertise and practice across the cluster and region.

In addition, the school has close working relationships with a number of private schools in the area including Somerset College, All Saints Anglican School, St Michael's College and Emmanuel College. Students from these schools regularly visit the school to assist with reading programs and other classroom activities. Teachers and teacher aides highly value the partnership and believe each party benefits considerably from the relationship.

Parents are supported at the school through a range of activities and programs organised by the MyTime organisation. A parent liaison officer, guest speakers and special events are funded through MyTime Parenting Research and the Federal Government to include parents in activities at the school.

The chaplaincy program operates within the school to support students' social and emotional needs.

The school and community organise a range of extracurricular activities and events that are keenly anticipated by the students including Burleigh Fun Walk, community sports day, biennial school concert and photographic art show. These events are actively supported by local politicians and community members.

Improvement strategies

Explore opportunities for students to further develop enterprise and entrepreneurial skills and capabilities through the delivery of the VET courses and school skills development programs.