

Darra State School

Executive Summary



School
Improvement
Unit



Queensland
Government



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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Darra State School** from **7 to 9 March 2018**.

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 consider 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 Lead Principal to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

An action plan will be developed and submitted to the SIU and region within six weeks of the school receiving the report.

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Lesley Vogan	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
John Collins	Internal reviewer
Judi Hanke	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Winslow Street, Darra
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
Year opened:	1916
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	188
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	10 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	909
Year principal appointed:	Term 4, 2017 (acting)
Full-time equivalent staff:	12.27
Significant partner schools:	Centenary State High School, Enoggera State School, Corinda State High School, CLASS – Cluster schools
Significant community partnerships:	Truong Vuong Vietnamese Language School, Kummara Association Inc. – Briks (Building Resilience in Indigenous Kids for School) , homework club, family support, playgroup, Woolworths (Monier Village), Barney Walk Award – Rotary Club, Adopt-a-Cop
Significant school programs:	Early phase of reading, inclusion, Year 5/6 camp, Sporting Schools, peer support



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, two Heads of Curriculum (HOC), Business Manager (BM), 12 teachers, two inclusion teachers, eight teacher aides, 17 students, cleaner, grounds officer, administration officer and 24 parents.

Community and business groups:

- Two Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) executive members.

Government and departmental representatives:

- State Member for Mount Ommaney and Lead Principal.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2018	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2018
Investing for Success 2018	Strategic Plan 2016-2019
Headline Indicators (2017 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2017)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning plan 2018	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	Professional development plans
School data plan	School newsletters and website
Responsible Behaviour Plan	School Opinion Survey
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

An inclusive culture is pervasive across the school and positive and caring relationships are apparent in classrooms and in the playground.

The school publication to celebrate its centenary in 2016, *'Darra State School Remembers 1916-2016'* notes that 'Many of the school's past and present students have a language background other than English, and may speak no English at all before arriving at school. Darra's teaching community has always been strong in implementing programs that develop English proficiency and are sensitive and responsive to the culturally diverse needs of students and their families.'

The school promotes and is building an environment reflective of the high expectation that all students will learn successfully.

The school appreciates and values students' varying cultural backgrounds and endeavours to build the cultural competence of school staff through the employment of teaching support staff with relevant cultural backgrounds. First languages and cultures are valued and respected while competence in English and the ability to think critically and creatively are fostered to maximise life opportunities.

The school's staff members express enthusiasm about their work in classrooms.

School leaders place a high priority on the ongoing professional learning for all staff. The school expects all teachers to be highly committed to the continuous improvement of their own teaching and to be focused on the development of knowledge and skills required to improve student learning.

The school's Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) outlines a narrow and sharp focus on the quality teaching of reading and Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL).

All staff members are able to identify and are committed to the priority areas. The Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) is in the beginning phase with the AIP as a key driver for school improvement to occur. Staff members speak of their commitment to continuous improvement and they identify the need to further refine their practices and build consistent and effective teaching and learning strategies throughout the school.

The school leadership team is considered by staff members to be supportive of their day-to-day practice and learning.

Weekly research and development meetings are conducted in year level cluster groups with the focus on the teaching of reading. Planning days centred around unit planning based on the Australian Curriculum (AC) are conducted each term for classroom and specialist teachers. The leadership team is refining processes to encourage further collaboration across year levels to enable the sharing and showcasing of best practice.



The school promotes and is building an environment reflective of the high expectation that all students will learn successfully.

Members of the leadership team are visible in classrooms and teachers take advantage of additional Professional Development (PD) sessions on a voluntary basis. The school has undergone significant change in the membership of the leadership and teaching teams. The principal acknowledges the necessity to build a culture of trust and further understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all staff members in progressing the school's EIA.

Teaching practices across the school reflect the belief that while students may be progressing at different rates, all students are capable of learning if provided with appropriate learning opportunities.

Clearly articulated processes and protocols for the identification of students for intervention and timely communication with parents are emerging practices. A whole-school inclusion model for the delivery of support and interventions including the development of Individual Curriculum Plans (ICP) is yet to be fully implemented.

The school strives to enhance student learning and wellbeing by building strong partnerships with parents, families, local businesses and community organisations.

School leaders are committed to developing a Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE) framework to strengthen communication and partnerships with parents, external agencies and the wider community.

Teachers work to ensure that all students are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended.

Teachers design classroom activities to meet students' learning needs, levels of readiness, interests, aspirations and motivations. Student council members agree that they are appropriately challenged by their teachers and that the 'learning is fun'. Other students interviewed in the middle years comment that the work is 'just right'.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Systematically implement the strategies and actions stated in the 2018 AIP that will progress the school's EIA to improve student learning outcomes.

Further develop collaborative processes across year levels to enable the sharing and showcasing of best practice.

Continue to collaboratively develop, implement and monitor strategies to enhance the professional culture of the school, improve staff morale, and promote wellbeing.

Develop a whole-school inclusion model for the delivery of support and interventions for the full range of students.