Dysart State School

Executive Summary

School Improvement Unit

Queensland Government

Contents

1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Dysart State School** from **14** to **16 November, 2017**.

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 Assistant Regional Director (ARD) 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

Garry Lacey	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Bert Barbe	Internal reviewer
Ian Hall	External reviewer

1.2 School context

Location:	Garnham Drive, Dysart
Education region:	Central Queensland Region
Year opened:	1973
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	361
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	10.0 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	1.1 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	963
Year principal appointed:	2016
Full-time equivalent staff:	18
Significant partner schools:	Dysart State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA), Thiess, Isaac Regional Council, Dysart State High School, Dysart Kindergarten
Significant school programs:	Teaching Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Skills (THRASS), Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), First Steps Reading, Explicit Instruction (EI), student leadership

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, deputy principal, Head of Curriculum (HOC), cluster Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), guidance officer, 16 classroom teachers, specialist teachers in Health and Physical Education (HPE) and Japanese language, students with disability teacher, two Support Teachers – Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), nine teacher aides, Business Manager (BM), administration officer, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, vice president, secretary and treasurer, tuckshop convenor, two crossing supervisors, three ancillary staff members, 31 parents and 93 students.

Community and business groups:

- Local pool proprietor and local dance school proprietor.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Local feeder high school principal and local kindergarten director.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2017	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2017
Investing for Success 2017	Strategic Plan 2015-2018
Headline Indicators (2017 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2017)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning plan 2017	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	Planning for Learning cycle
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
School data plan	School newsletters and website
Responsible Behaviour Plan	School Opinion Survey 2017
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	Investing for Success progress report
Individual Support Plans (ISP) and Individual Curriculum Plans (ICP) expectations	Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) meeting agenda

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Staff members present as professionally dedicated with a high level of commitment to the school and to their students.

Staff members report they are keen to develop professionally, engage with the school's agenda and benefit from support and feedback from school leaders. Many members of staff indicate that strong collegial support is apparent across the school from peers and year level colleagues. Parents indicate that the dedication of staff members is appreciated in the community.

All teachers are able to speak confidently about their work in implementing the whole-school approach to the teaching of reading.

Key aspects for implementation in all classrooms is a focus on Teaching Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Skills (THRASS) and the First Steps Reading framework. Teachers are able to describe how they are using the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model. The establishment of Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Timely (SMART) goals for reading is being used to focus teacher work in differentiating learning experiences for students. Teachers develop Individual Support Plans (ISP) for all students reading below benchmark. Teacher aides support the implementation of these programs and work alongside teachers during reading sessions.

Archer and Hughes'[1] Explicit Instruction (EI) is described as the signature pedagogy for use in all classrooms.

A model for a high impact EI lesson is developed to guide lesson implementation. The use of lesson warm-ups, the *'I do*, W*e do, You do'* phases for teaching and learning and lesson ploughbacks are commonplace in teachers' repertoires of practice. Learning intentions and success criteria for lessons are introduced through the use of '*We are learning to*' (WALT) and *'What I'm looking for'* (WILF). Most teachers are able to confidently describe how they implement the key aspects of this model in their daily practice.

The school has a commitment to establishing a culture that promotes student learning.

All staff members are working hard with behaviour. The results from student, parent and staff School Opinion Surveys (SOS) in 2017 indicate a decline in the item relating to behaviour management. Staff members are aware of, and are actively implementing, the Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS) based on the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework. The school has a PBL committee that monitors data, provides updates to staff and identifies behaviours to be targeted. Conversations with many parents and staff members indicate inconsistency in the school's application of appropriate, agreed

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[1] Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. Guilford Press.

consequences and timely responses to behaviour incidents. The principal acknowledges this situation and is committed to working with staff members and the community to urgently address this issue.

The school has a commitment to establishing a culture that promotes student learning.

Staff members indicate there is a need to enhance the professional culture of the school. The 2017 SOS responses for staff members are significantly below that of the Like Schools Group (LSG) in many survey items. Interviews with staff members identify a number of factors that impact on this result. Staff members report many of these issues are ongoing and require further work to be resolved. The principal articulates awareness of these issues and expresses commitment to exploring strategies to improve morale, address behaviour management concerns and maintain high levels of staff wellbeing.

The principal is implementing strategies to provide avenues for increased staff voice in the school.

Parents and staff members indicate a need for more opportunities to have a greater voice in the school. The SOS for 2017 indicates low levels of satisfaction with communication, input opportunities and opinions being heard. At the start of 2017, the principal developed a Community of Practice (CoP) and a cohort leader position to provide avenues for increased staff voice in the school. This will continue to be implemented in 2018. Further opportunities for improved communication and responses to concerns from parents and the community are yet to be fully developed.

The school's leadership team is committed to continually enhancing their capacity and skills as educational leaders.

The leadership team models the importance of learning by attending regional Professional Development (PD) including the principal cluster meetings, learning lounge and identified conferences that are relevant to progressing the school's priorities. The principal has identified a coach that they will engage with in 2018. An enhanced leadership structure is implemented including cohort leaders and beginning teacher mentors. The principal acknowledges the need to continually develop the skills of all educational leaders in the school.

The school team is committed to improving learning outcomes for all students.

Staff turnover is high at the school with many teachers in the early phase of their career. Induction processes for new staff members require review to ensure staff members are provided with the necessary information and support to effectively engage with the school's agenda in curriculum, teaching and learning. The leadership team recognises the need to more regularly and closely monitor the implementation of school programs and practices to ensure relevant support processes are provided to identified teachers and a consistency of practice is promoted across the school. Quality Assurance (QA) processes to ensure the rigour and intent of the AC, the effective implementation of the

Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) and monitoring of progress towards established improvement targets are yet to be implemented.

All staff members have developing performance plans and are committed to enhancing their professional capability.

Teachers meet once a term to discuss goals and progress with the principal. The principal identifies staff with relevant interests and/or expertise to progress school priorities. PD opportunities are regularly provided to support staff in their capability development. Teacher aides report assistance with actioning their developing performance plan.

The development of a CoP occurred at the commencement of 2017.

This group includes cohort leaders and key personnel with the focus to involve staff members in problem solving identified issues at the school. Members believe that this is an affirmative practice to increase teacher understanding and leadership density across the school. The effectiveness of this practice and the use of teacher voice in this process is still developing.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Review the school's PBL strategy to ensure it is providing effective systems for managing student behaviour and enhances the school's safe, supportive and disciplined learning environment.

Collaboratively develop, implement and monitor strategies to enhance the professional culture of the school, maintain high levels of staff morale and promote wellbeing.

Review communication practices with staff, parents and the wider community to ensure effective consultation and clarifying conversations are common practice in school decision-making processes.

Continue to provide opportunities for members of the leadership team and teacher leaders to further develop their capacity and abilities as educational leaders.

Develop QA processes and practices relating to curriculum, teaching and learning to ensure strong levels of consistent practice are maintained across the school.