School Improvement Unit
Report

Gympie West State School
Executive Summary
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Gympie West State School from 20 to 22 May, 2015. It provides 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 review and report were completed by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU). For more information about the SIU and the new reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the Department of Education and Training (DET) website.

1.2 School context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>41 Cartwright Road, Gympie</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education region:</td>
<td>North Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school opened in:</td>
<td>1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year levels:</td>
<td>Prep to Year 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current school enrolment:</td>
<td>499</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous enrolments:</td>
<td>9 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students with disability enrolments:</td>
<td>11 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</td>
<td>967</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year principal appointed:</td>
<td>2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of teachers:</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nearby schools:</td>
<td>Jones Hill State School, Gympie South State School, One Mile State School, James Nash State High School, Gympie State High School, Gympie Central State School.</td>
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<td>Significant community partnerships:</td>
<td>Nil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unique school programs:</td>
<td>Reading Intervention Program</td>
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1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of three reviewers.

The review consisted of:

- a pre-review audit of the school’s performance data and other school information
- consultation with the school’s Assistant Regional Director
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Principal, Deputy Principal, Head of Special Education (HOSES)
  - Head of Curriculum (HOC), Master Teacher
  - Business Services Manager (BSM)
  - Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), Guidance Officer, Chaplain
  - 25 classroom teachers, 20 teacher aides, three specialist teachers
  - Advisory visiting teacher- Behaviour, Responsible Thinking Classroom teacher
  - Tuckshop convenor, crossing supervisor
  - Janitor groundsman and three cleaners
  - 12 student leaders,
  - 22 parents, community members
  - High school principal, childcare director

1.4 Review team

Esta Thiris  Internal reviewer SIU (review chair)
Brad Francis  External reviewer
Stacie Hansel  Peer reviewer
2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school has developed an improvement agenda; however there is limited evidence that this agenda is wholly driving daily school practice.

The school’s priorities for 2015 include reading, writing, numeracy, teacher quality and U2B. There is some evidence of targeted strategies, targets for improvement with accompanying timelines and monitoring aligned to these priorities.

- There is a positive feeling across the school community.

The belief is that the school will continue to improve and staff feel very positive as the school journeys forward.

- Leadership staff are yet to develop clear roles and responsibilities statements that directly influence day to day practices.

The leadership team comprises of an acting Deputy Principal, acting Head of Curriculum, and Head of Special Education along with the new Principal. The principal has indicated that he is in the process of establishing the school’s leadership protocols.

- Staff expressed a desire for more effective channels of communication for the successful operation of the school.

There was some evidence that staff were aware of the school’s priorities and how they were significantly influencing teacher daily practice. Staff have expressed a need for greater clarity around the school improvement agenda.

- The school has had a Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC) for many years. The intent of this structure has been to support students with their behaviour.

The school has allocated a teacher from the general school allocation of 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE) to support this program. Some staff questioned the necessity to retain the RTC in its current model particularly as it draws a significant allocation of the school’s overall staffing allocation.

- The school has a curriculum plan along with a number of overarching school-based curriculum programs and frameworks.

The school utilises Curriculum into the Classroom as the significant resource to deliver the Australian Curriculum. There is little evidence that the school’s curriculum plan, school-based programs and frameworks consistently influence classroom practice.

- Formal process of teacher observation and feedback are under development and formal mentoring and coaching practices are yet to be established at this time.
Currently staff do not observe practice in each other’s classrooms or in other schools. Teachers consistently indicated that they are open to receiving feedback on their teaching through a formal school-wide process.
2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Ensure that a clearly articulated whole school improvement agenda is narrow and sharp and is accompanied by targets, timelines, appropriate resourcing and professional development for all school personnel.

- Review and document the roles and responsibilities of school leaders and support team to ensure all members are instructional leaders. These roles and responsibilities should be clearly communicated to all staff.

- Strengthen the school’s communication strategies to ensure that staff and parents have a clear understanding of the direction of the school and are able to influence the school’s priorities and overall direction.

- Continue to build a systematic whole school approach to building teacher capacity. This includes high quality professional development, linked to the school’s improvement plan, coaching, mentoring, feedback and supervision processes to embed evidence-based teaching and build consistency of delivery of teaching practices across the school.

- Collaboratively review the school’s curriculum plan and overarching curriculum documents and frameworks to ensure alignment to the Australian Curriculum. Ensure that the curriculum plan includes a developmental scope and sequence document for Prep to Year Six. These documents should be the reference against which flexible delivery is designed, implemented and monitored.

- Review the school’s Responsible Behaviour Plan and Responsible Thinking Classroom for currency and effectiveness to determine its fit for purpose in 2015.