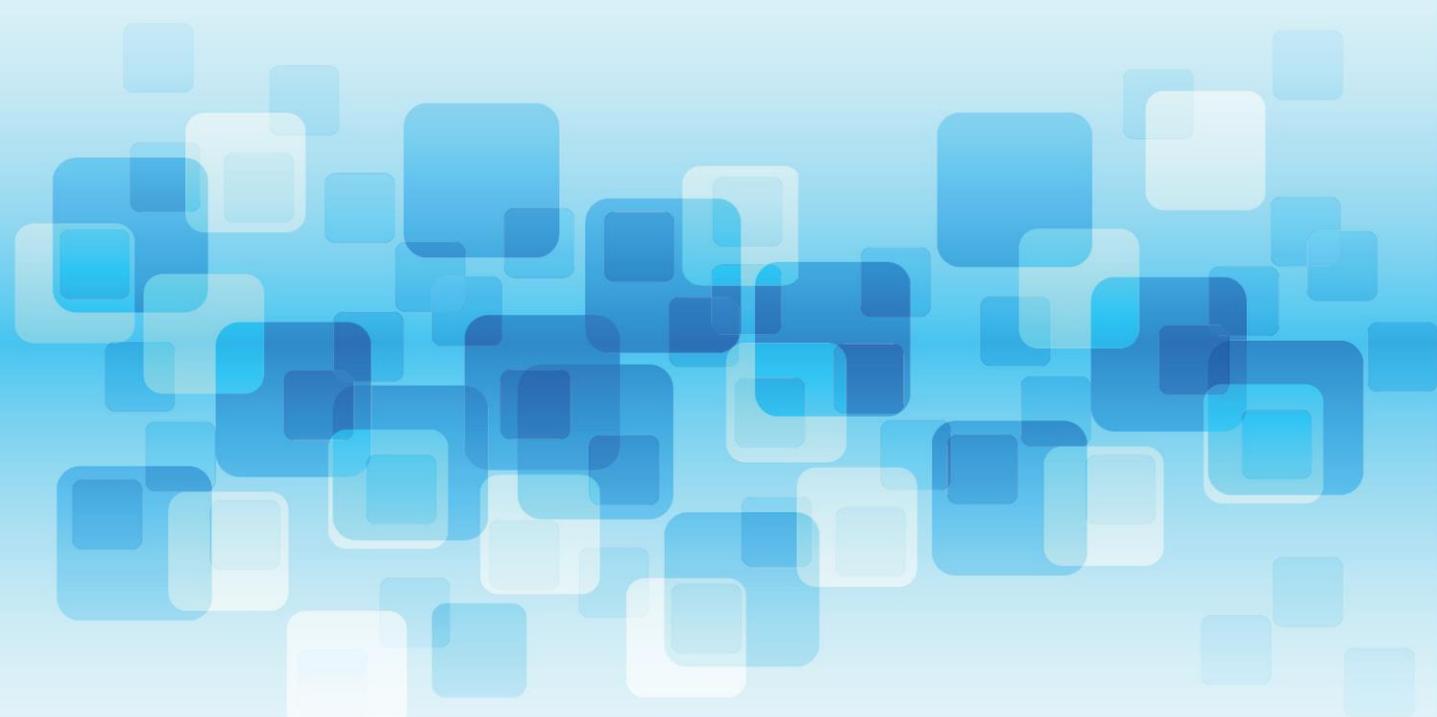




School Improvement Unit Report

Ravenswood State School





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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Ravenswood from 28 to 29 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

Location:	School Street, Ravenswood
Education region:	North Queensland
The school opened in:	1873
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	14
Indigenous enrolments:	7 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	0 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	966
Year principal appointed:	Semester 2, 2014 (acting)
Number of teachers:	1
Nearby schools:	Nearest schools are located in Charters Towers: Charters Towers Central State School, Millchester State School, Richmond Hill State School, Charters Towers State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Dalrymple Alliance of Schools Carpentaria Gold Pty Ltd
Unique school programs:	



1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of two reviewers.

The review consisted of:

- a pre-review audit of the school's performance data and other school information
- consultation with the school's Principal Supervisor
- a school visit of two days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal - teaching
 - Teacher – district relieving
 - Two teacher-aides and grounds person
 - School Chaplain
 - Parents and Citizens' (P&C) association president and seven parents
 - Nine students
 - Local police officer
 - Community Relations Officer, Carpentaria Gold Pty Ltd

1.4 Review team

Judy Dale	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Peter James	Peer reviewer

1.5 Reading the report

The executive summary outlines key findings from the review. The key improvement strategies prioritise future direction for improvement. The executive summary should be read along with the findings and improvement strategies outlined in the nine domains which provide a strategic view for improvement.



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school provides a welcoming and positive learning environment characterised by the clear expectation that all students will be successful in their learning.

The tone of the school is a friendly, calm, organised and happy one. Relationships between staff, students and parents are respectful, positive and productive. Parents and families are encouraged to take a genuine and close interest in the work of the school and are welcomed as partners in their children's learning. There are high levels of parent and student satisfaction with the school and quality of education offered.

- The principal and school team are united and committed to improving learning outcomes for all students in the school.

The school's student achievement target of 100 per cent of students achieving at a 'C' or above in all key learning areas has provided a focus for explicit teaching and student engagement in learning. There is a shared understanding by staff, parents and students that reading is a priority area. Writing has been identified as a future priority area.

- Reliable and timely data is being used by the teaching principal.

There is clear evidence of ongoing monitoring and systemic assessment of student achievement to identify learning gaps, starting points for teaching and personalise learning. In the classroom data and learning walls are used by students, staff and parents to understand curriculum demands and monitor and celebrate student progress. Students are guided in maintaining individual data profiles which are used in reading to effectively monitor and record progress, to establish individual student goals and guide future learning. Tracking of student achievement levels in mathematics is yet to achieve the same levels of sophistication as tracking of reading.

- The principal has fostered a school-wide, shared responsibility for student learning and success, supported by a culture of self-reflection focused on improved teaching and learning practices.

Staff demonstrate a commitment to improvement in teaching and are open to sharing their teaching practices. Developing performance plans have been developed for all staff. Roles of all school staff are documented and understood by all team members. Teacher-aides and volunteers are timetabled effectively to best support student learning. Staff are provided with professional development opportunities. There are no formal, regular feedback strategies currently in place for teacher-aides.



- The school has a comprehensive, well-documented curriculum plan which provides a solid foundation for the consistent, sequenced delivery of the Australian Curriculum in the small school multi-age setting.

The curriculum plan includes the school's pedagogical framework for the delivery of explicit teaching practice and clarifies what should be taught and what students should learn. Curriculum intent and achievement standards are explicitly deconstructed with students and shared with parents. Students and their parents indicated that the teaching and learning experiences provided are matched to the students' learning levels, are engaging and challenging and progress the students' learning.

- Differentiated teaching and personalised learning for students is central to day-to-day teaching and learning.

The school team is committed to assessing, identifying and catering to the needs of all students including high-achieving students. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their own learning. A diverse range of strategies and programs including the use of digital resources, is used to ensure that every student is engaged and learning successfully.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Embed the school's reading improvement strategy with a plan to extend this strategy to other identified priority areas.
- Develop a greater level of sophistication in the tracking of achievement in mathematics.
- Expand the use of explicit student learning goals to other priority areas to further promote student ownership of and engagement in learning.
- Investigate models of reflective practice and feedback for staff.



3. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains

3.1 An explicit improvement agenda

Findings

The teaching principal and school team are united and committed to improving learning outcomes for all students in the school.

Differentiated teaching and learning is implicit in classroom practice.

There is a shared understanding by staff, parents and students that reading is a priority area.

Regional targets in reading are being used as a basis for tracking student progress. Students are actively involved in improving their reading. They are able to articulate their reading levels and goals and describe the skills they need to work on to improve.

Staff, students and parents speak positively of student progress in reading. This is supported by positive individual and whole school reading data.

The school's student achievement target of 100 per cent of students achieving at a "C" or above in all key learning areas has provided a focus for explicit teaching and student engagement in learning.

A range of high yield explicit teaching strategies are used consistently in every lesson.

There is strong evidence that students are beginning to take responsibility for their own learning and are engaged as active learners.

There are a comprehensive range of school plans in place which provide clear direction in curriculum, assessment and reporting and pedagogical practices.

Supporting data

Strategic Plan 2012-2015, Annual Implementation Plan 2105, Great Results Guarantee 2015, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, school improvement targets, numeracy plan, reading program, professional development program 2015, school website, school newsletters, budget overview, pedagogical framework, assessment and reporting framework, staff, student and parent interviews

Improvement strategies

Embed the school's reading improvement strategy with a plan to extend the strategy to other identified priority areas.



3.2 Analysis and discussion of data

Findings

Reliable and timely data is being used by the teaching principal to inform school planning, to identify starting points for improvement, monitor progress over time and personalise learning for students.

The principal works collaboratively with colleagues from cluster schools and personnel from regional office to build capacity in analysing and interpreting data.

The school has developed and implemented a plan for the regular collection of student achievement, behaviour and attendance data. Assessment tools include PM Benchmark, PROBE, PAT-R, PAT-M, South Australian Spelling, Spelling Mastery and unit assessment tasks using a Guide to Making Judgements.

Individual student data and school data, including behaviour and attendance, is shared regularly with parents through parent-teacher discussions, student communication books, newsletters, school assembly and P&C association meetings.

Individual student data profiles are developed and are regularly updated. These are used effectively to track and record student progress and to provide quality feedback to students and their parents.

Student data is stored centrally in OneSchool. It is also displayed creatively on data walls and class displays for easy reference by staff, parents and students. Students readily refer to their personal data and use it to reflect on their learning and determine future learning goals and actions.

A case management approach based on student achievement data is used to inform planning and programming for individual students.

There is currently no formal screening process for Prep students to establish baseline data.

Due to the small school enrolment, the school National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) reports are of limited value in tracking school performance trends. However, NAPLAN relative gain data clearly indicates significant improvement for the one student tested, 2012-2014.

Supporting data

Strategic Plan 2012 – 2015, Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee 2015, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, school improvement targets, assessment and reporting framework, staff, student and leadership team interviews, student data profiles, communication books, work samples, classroom data and learning walls, school newsletters, parade agendas



Improvement strategies

Develop a greater level of sophistication in the tracking of achievement in mathematics.

Build staff data literacy skills through targeted professional development.

Investigate standardised assessment tools to establish baseline data Prep students.



3.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

The school provides a welcoming and positive learning environment characterised by the clear expectation that all students will be successful in their learning.

The tone of the school is a friendly, calm, organised and happy one.

Relationships between staff, students and parents are respectful, positive and productive.

Parents and families are encouraged to take a genuine and close interest in the work of the school and are welcomed as partners in their children's learning.

Extensive information describing individual student's learning is provided through home-school communication books which include Specific Measurable Achievable and Timely (SMART) goals, student achievements and feeling journals. Parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the feedback they receive regarding their children's progress at school.

Parents, staff and students speak highly of the school. There is a high level of parent satisfaction with the school and quality of education offered.

The schools grounds and learning areas are attractively presented and reflect school community pride in the school.

There are established systems in place to encourage positive student behaviour and attendance. In Term 1, 2015 there were 140 behaviour incidents recorded, of these 137 were positive. Attendance for Term 1, 2015 was 98 per cent.

The school explicitly teaches positive behaviour through an explicit social skills program and through a fortnightly focus on a targeted behaviour aligned to the school's Charter of Expectations.

There is a collegial culture of trust and mutual support amongst staff members. Staff morale is high.

Staff are open to sharing and demonstrate a commitment to improvement in teaching. Developing performance plans have been developed for all staff however no formal, regular feedback strategies are in place for teacher-aides.

Supporting data

School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students, School Opinion Survey data, attendance and behaviour data, school website, school newsletters, staff, student, community member interviews, student communication books, classroom observations



Improvement strategies

Investigate models of reflective practice and feedback for staff.

Expand use of explicit student learning goals to other priority areas to further promote student ownership of and engagement in learning.



3.4 Targeted use of school resources

Findings

The principal has implemented a range of strategies for identifying individual student learning needs and works collaboratively with support staff to ensure responsive programs are in place to respond to these needs.

Roles of all school staff are documented and understood by all staff. Developing performance plans have been developed for all staff.

A staff induction program and district relieving teacher plans are in place. Staff are confident in their roles and are provided with clear direction by the school principal, school staff structure and role statements. Teacher-aides are timetabled effectively to best support student learning.

The school's current bank balance is \$59 000 which includes \$5000 Great Results Guarantee (GRG) funds with allocations of \$8060 for professional development of staff, \$4700 towards literacy and numeracy priority areas and \$10 275 for curriculum initiatives.

Levelled Literacy Intervention has been resourced and implemented to supplement and scaffold development of early literacy skills with students in Prep to Year 2

Physical spaces, learning resources and digital devices are used effectively to maximise student engagement in learning. Staff use classroom spaces creatively for whole school, small group and individual work.

The school has established effective partnerships with local businesses and community organisations to provide substantial additional resources to support students learning and wellbeing.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee 2015, Budget Overview Report, professional development program 2015, classroom observations, timetables, interviews with staff, role statements, developing performance plans

Improvement strategies

Refine and consolidate case management processes and responsive programming to maximise student outcomes with further consideration given to high-achieving students.



3.5 An expert teaching team

Findings

The principal is actively networking with the Dalrymple Alliance cluster principal group to support consistent and effective teaching practice, leadership development and collegial support.

There is strong evidence that the principal has fostered a school-wide shared responsibility for student learning and success.

The principal and staff place a high priority on continuity of professional learning and the development of an ongoing self-reflective culture focused on improved teaching and learning practices.

The school has experienced some difficulty in filling the required teaching allocation and is continuing to liaise with regional staffing officers to overcome this.

The school team has strategies in place to continue to develop and share deep understandings of how students learn including pre-requisite skills and knowledge, learning difficulties and effective interventions.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, professional development program 2015, staff interviews, pedagogical framework, classroom observations, observation and feedback notes, staff meeting minutes

Improvement strategies

Further develop the school culture of self-reflective professional learning and continuous improvement through continued collegial collaboration with cluster schools, regional support networks, on-line learning, feedback and coaching.



3.6 Systematic curriculum delivery

Findings

The school has a comprehensive, well-documented curriculum plan which provides a solid foundation for the consistent, sequenced delivery of the Australian Curriculum in the small school multi-age setting.

School curriculum development is undertaken through the collegial planning of the Dalrymple Alliance which has contributed significantly to the quality and alignment of school curriculum programs across all curriculum areas.

The curriculum plan includes the school's pedagogical framework for the delivery of explicit teaching practice and clearly outlines what should be taught and what students should learn.

There is strong evidence that staff focus on priority curriculum areas to ensure that students are proficient in fundamental literacy and numeracy.

Students and their parents indicated that the teaching and learning experiences provided are matched to the students' learning levels, are engaging and challenging and progress the students' learning.

Curriculum plans and achievement standards are explicitly shared with students and parents through a variety of ways including Know and Able To Do charts, learning walls, communication books and school newsletters.

Reporting processes are aligned with the curriculum and provide parents and students with information about the achievement of curriculum intentions and progress over time.

Supporting data

School curriculum planning documents, assessment and reporting framework, teacher planning, Know and Able To Do charts, learning walls, classroom observations, interviews with staff, parents and students

Improvement strategies

Consolidate implementation of curriculum delivery through the Creating Assessment Literate Learners strategy.



3.7 Differentiated teaching and learning

Findings

There is clear evidence that differentiated teaching and personalised learning for students is central to day-to-day teaching and learning.

The school team is committed to assessing, identifying and catering to the needs of all students including high-achieving students.

A comprehensive assessment schedule informs school and classroom practice to respond to individual needs.

Small group and individual instruction in reading and spelling is provided across the school utilising assessment data with homework provided to meet individual learning needs.

Students are guided in maintaining individual data booklets where achievements in standardised assessments and Curriculum into the Classroom unit assessment tasks are recorded and used to establish individual student SMART goals and guide future learning.

The school utilises a range of digital learning programs including Mathletics, Reading Eggs, Literacy Planet, and Impact Writing, an online extension program through the Brisbane School of Distance Education. These programs provide individualised instruction and challenge to cater for student needs.

All parents and students interviewed indicated that the learning programs provided were engaging and relevant to student learning needs.

Reports to parents are comprehensive and provide summative assessment information which leads on to their child's next learning.

Supporting data

School curriculum plans, assessment and reporting framework, pedagogical framework, student work samples, data and learning walls, classroom observations, class displays, student data profiles, student goals, interviews with school staff, students and parents

Improvement strategies

Monitor and review the effectiveness of programs for the full range of learners with a focus on extending students achieving at or above targets.

Embed and expand current differentiation strategies including the use of digital technology to personalise learning.



3.8 Effective pedagogical practices

Findings

Clear expectations of agreed effective teaching strategies are outlined in the school's curriculum framework. An explicit instruction model underpins classroom practice.

The principal takes personal responsibility for continuous improvement in teaching practice in the school. Reflective professional conversations by staff focusing on improving student outcomes are a regular occurrence in the daily operations of the school.

There is a particular focus on improving teaching practices through the use of learning walls, know and able to do charts, levels of achievement criteria, setting individual student goals, and effective use of feedback.

Once per term moderation of student assessment in English has occurred across the Dalrymple Alliance Cluster schools using edStudio and iConnect digital technology.

The iPad video of teaching has been utilised to provide feedback to the principal and for a shared professional learning experience with the Dalrymple Alliance cluster principals. This process, which will continue at each term's cluster Professional Learning Community (PLC) meeting, was shared with colleagues at the regional band 5 and band 6 Principals' Forum.

Supporting data

School curriculum plans, assessment and reporting framework, pedagogical framework, student work samples, data and learning walls, classroom observations, class displays, student data profiles, student goals, interviews with school staff, students and parents

Improvement strategies

Expand moderation process to include other curriculum areas.

Build further capacity of all staff through planned, regular, agreed observation and feedback cycles.



3.9 School and community partnerships

Findings

Parents and community members speak very highly of the school and school staff. Parents, staff and students show a commendable pride in the school.

The principal is actively involved in the Dalrymple Alliance Cluster and the combined schools' activities include professional learning and development, sports carnivals, camps and excursions.

Evidence of community partnerships aligned to the school's priorities include sponsorship from the local Carpentaria Gold Pty Ltd for end of term activity days such as tree planting, visiting experts, mine excursions and also for a swimming instruction program. Carpentaria Gold Pty Ltd also assists with provision of funding for specific resources to enhance student learning such as Flying Start to Literacy resources.

The local police officer also assists with weekly sports coaching on a Tuesday afternoon and fortnightly Adopt-a-Cop visits and discussions. Additionally the school has a chaplain one day a week provided by the Charters Towers Chaplaincy Committee. The chaplain also conducts a weekly homework club and provides voluntary classroom assistance one day per week.

The school's P&C association committee cater for cluster sports days and conduct community fundraising activities such as the very successful 2014 Boar Busters Weigh In Competition.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, interviews with staff, parents, community members and partners, School Opinion Survey, P&C association minutes, school newsletter, photo displays

Improvement strategies

Continue to explore local and broader community opportunities to support student learning and the school's improvement agenda.



4. Follow-up timelines

- School to publish the executive summary on their website within two weeks.
- School to meet with Principal Supervisor to discuss review findings and improvement strategies.