

Gladstone South 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 **Gladstone South State School** from **26 to 28 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 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

John Bosward	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Liam Smith	Internal reviewer, SIU
Lynne Foley	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Toolooa Street, South Gladstone
Education region:	Central Queensland Region
Year opened:	1898
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	339
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	22 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	8.5 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	943
Year principal appointed:	2018
Full-time equivalent staff:	21.6
Significant partner schools:	Toolooa State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Basketball Queensland
Significant school programs:	Speech Sounds Pics (SSP), social skilling, chaplaincy



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, Head of Curriculum (HOC), Head of Inclusion, Business Manager (BM), two administration officers, schools officer, four cleaners, 20 students, 19 teachers, Special Education Program (SEP) teacher, eight parents, Support Teacher – Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), seven teacher aides and chaplain.

Community and business groups:

- Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Acting principal Toolooa State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2018	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2018
Investing for Success 2018	Strategic Plan 2015-2018
Achievement and improvement plans	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2017)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Responsible Behaviour Plan	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	Student support flowchart
School pedagogical framework	School Opinion Survey
Headline Indicators (Semester 2, 2017 release)	School newsletters and website



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The school endeavours to build positive and caring relationships between staff members, students and parents.

Staff members articulate the importance of teacher-student relationships in motivating students to learn and work hard to build positive, respectful and caring relationships between all stakeholders.

The school has developed and implemented a model for guided reading across the school.

The implementation of a consistent whole-school guided reading framework is providing a school-wide pedagogical approach to facilitate improved student reading outcomes. Teachers are able to confidently articulate how they regularly engage their students in guided reading activities. School leaders work alongside classroom teachers in supporting the delivery of guided reading pedagogy.

The leadership team articulates a commitment to continued improvement in student learning.

A narrow Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) is developed and focuses on improving students' reading skills and student engagement through the provision of a safe and supportive school environment. High expectations for student attendance remain a priority. Achievement and Improvement plans have been developed for all 'family groups'.

The principal expresses a commitment to implementing curriculum relating to learning areas aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC).

The Head of Curriculum (HOC) is working with class teachers to build curriculum knowledge. Teachers speak positively about the year level planning time and the ongoing support in planning quality curriculum units. The development of a documented whole-school curriculum, assessment and reporting framework as described in the department's *P-12 curriculum assessment and reporting framework (P-12 CARF)* is emerging.

The leadership team recognises that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning.

Archer and Hughes¹ Explicit Instruction (EI) is the expected pedagogical practice referenced in the school's pedagogical framework. Artefacts to support EI are displayed in some classrooms. Some staff members acknowledge that the philosophy and strategies outlined in the framework are yet to be fully understood and embedded in daily teaching practice.

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



The principal views the provision of timely and accurate student assessment data as a key tool to inform the school's improvement agenda.

The school's Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) details the expectation that teaching staff are to engage in data meetings with members of the leadership team. The intent of these meetings is to provide a forum for teachers and school leaders to discuss student diagnostic data and observable reading behaviours. These meetings are yet to commence.

The school's leadership team is committed to building a professional team of teachers and support staff members who operate across all areas of the school.

Teachers and teacher aides demonstrate enthusiasm to improve their skills in order to effectively support students and improve learning outcomes. Discussions with teachers and the leadership team indicate that regular observation and feedback regarding teaching practices and coaching and mentoring opportunities related to the EIA are yet to be developed and implemented.

Parents are supportive of the school and value the teaching team and the quality programs offered.

Students and some parents express appreciation of the level of support provided to all students according to their individual needs. Parents identify a need to rebuild the place of the school within the community, developing a sense of belonging, and pride in the school.

The weekly playgroup is a signature program in the school and is strongly supported and highly valued by the community and the school.

Led by a teacher aide, this program provides social and learning activities for younger children and opportunities for parents to make new connections. The playgroup has developed key partnerships with Gladstone Gymnastics, Gladstone Men's Shed Association and a range of other playgroups within the city. In 2018, a large proportion of children who attended playgroup transitioned to Prep at the school.

Staff members demonstrate a strong commitment to effective teaching and articulate the belief that this is critical to maintaining and enhancing student engagement.

Teaching staff work hard to provide a supportive learning environment for students and focus on building student belief in their own capabilities and on rewarding effort and success. Teacher aides are valued members of the teaching team. They are provided with Professional Development (PD) opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge, enabling them to support teachers in providing differentiated learning experiences in their classrooms.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Sustain the narrow and sharp focus of the current EIA to embed a school-wide understanding of, and commitment to, the identified priorities and targets.

Develop a coherent, sequenced whole-school curriculum plan and overviews to guide curriculum delivery.

Review the school's pedagogical framework to provide clarity regarding the expectations associated with the pedagogical framework and classroom implementation.

Provide opportunities for all teachers to be involved in regular observation and feedback to enhance teacher practice aligned to the EIA.

Implement a systematic and regular process of student achievement data discussions between teachers and members of the leadership team to reflect on the effectiveness of teaching practice and the utility of the assessment tools and tasks.

Collaboratively develop strategies to enhance the school's culture so that it is reflective of school and community values and instils a sense of pride and belonging.