Gladstone South State School

School Review Report

Education Improvement Branch

Queensland Government

Contents

1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Gladstone South State School** from **16** to **19 May 2022**.

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 implement 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.

For more information regarding the EIB and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the EIB website.

1.1 Review team

Bradley Clark	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Ken Peacock	Peer reviewer
Valerie Hadgelias	External reviewer

1.2 School context

Indigenous land name:	Goreng Goreng
Location:	Toolooa Street, South Gladstone
Education region:	Central Queensland Region
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	410
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	28.1 per cent
Students with disability percentage:	18.9 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	895
Year principal appointed:	2018

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, deputy principal, Head of Department (HOD) – social justice, Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), curriculum coordinator, Business Manager (BM), 17 teachers, two administration officers, 15 teacher aides, tuckshop convenor, guidance officer, chaplain, two Information Technology (IT) support staff, three Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) members, 16 parents and 84 students.

Community and business groups:

- Rotary Club of Gladstone.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Executive mentor / former principal of Toolooa State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Regional HOD – early years Central Queensland and ARD.

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The school is committed to building an inclusive culture to ensure that students are able to access and fully participate in learning along with their peers.

Highly skilled and dedicated educators work collaboratively to address the specific needs of all learners. Over several years, there has been a collaborative process centred on developing a school-wide vision for inclusion. The school takes great pride in embracing a diverse range of learners; this is reflected in how parents and the broader school community describe the school. Parents express appreciation for the way the school welcomes all students and explores ways to identify and celebrate the individual strengths of all learners. Staff members outline high levels of confidence in their ability to assist students with diverse needs.

Students' learning, wellbeing and engagement outcomes have continued to improve for a number of years.

The School Online Reporting Dashboard (SORD) indicates sustained improvements in English, mathematics, and science Level of Achievement (LOA) data from 2018 to 2021. Teachers reflect that they have seen a faster-than-expected improvement in the standard of student writing since the beginning of the year when the writing priority was introduced. Staff recognise and take ownership of improvement in this data and express pride in this achievement. School Disciplinary Absences (SDAs) data shows a decrease from 2018 to 2021 (SORD). Attendance data shows a gradual improvement from 2018. The school has grown in enrolment from 339 students in 2018 to 410 students this year. Students, staff and parents express a perception that during this time, student behaviour has improved.

The emerging priority of writing is welcomed by teachers.

Writing is identified as a new priority for the 2022 school year. The leadership team has supported and promoted the importance of teachers providing high quality feedback to students, with a strong focus on writing. It is apparent that teachers afford great consideration and time towards undertaking this effectively. Students express appreciation for the feedback they receive and are able to articulate how this supports them to improve their writing. Teachers and teacher aides express an interest in continuing to clarify and refine a whole-school approach to writing.

Strategic analysis and practical use of school data is apparent throughout the school.

Teachers and school leaders explain that Professional Learning Communities (PLC) are opportunities for leaders and teachers to regularly and collaboratively review student achievement data. Teachers articulate appreciation for PLC meetings to analyse student achievement data. Leaders and some teachers articulate the belief that further opportunities for in-depth analysis of achievement data will assist teachers to deepen their data literacy skills and knowledge.

Strategic decisions are made to direct resources to address school priorities and initiatives.

The principal prioritises understanding the learning and wellbeing needs of students. Leaders acknowledge the substantial investment of school funds in human resources to support the range of programs, intervention and behaviour management. Teachers express satisfaction at resourcing levels provided in classrooms and specialist teaching spaces to facilitate curriculum delivery and student learning. Some review processes to ascertain the success of these programs are in place. The principal acknowledges that rigorous processes to systematically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of all resource allocations to ensure they are achieving the planned outcomes and are appropriately responsive to the identified needs of staff and students, are yet to be developed.

The leadership team is committed to providing a learning culture that is engaging and relevant for all learners.

Staff articulate the belief that every student is capable of successful learning. Valuing of diversity is apparent across the school. School leaders acknowledge the importance of, and need to, investigate the use of culturally safe practices to maximise the engagement in learning of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students. The school works in collaboration with a staff member from the local high school to support this agenda and is actively seeking a stronger connection to local traditional owners to further embed Indigenous perspectives, and culturally supportive and inclusive practices into all elements of the school.

A priority is placed on identifying and addressing the individual learning and wellbeing needs of all students.

Staff members express a belief that students will learn at different rates and be at different stages in their learning. Staff members acknowledge the importance of engaging and challenging all students. Some students indicate that they seek further opportunities to engage in challenging work. Leaders acknowledge that the school's moral purpose focuses first on students who require ongoing support in their learning. A school-wide focus on high achieving students is yet to be prioritised. Some staff members express a desire to build greater awareness of the learning needs, levels of readiness, interests, and aspirations of high achieving students, and to strengthen teacher capabilities in supporting their learning.

The school's motto of *'Our best always'* reflects staff belief in high expectations and continuous improvement.

Staff share a united effort to ensure all students have the best possible learning opportunities. The principal outlines a belief that this is central to improving student outcomes. A school expectation exists that all staff are committed to the continuous improvement of their skills. There is a shared belief that ongoing professional learning strengthens staff capability and the refinement of teaching practices. Teachers describe the strong support they receive from leaders and the generous collaboration from colleagues who share understanding of curriculum, teaching strategies, knowledge of students and student learning. They describe a supportive and positive working environment. Staff outline

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a belief that that a key part of the school's success is attributed to the way all staff share the workload and support each other. Staff express strong appreciation for the way they are valued, appreciated, and recognised by their colleagues.

The school has a strong reputation within the local community for being a welcoming and supportive learning environment.

Staff, students and parents speak positively of the school culture and learning environment. High importance is placed on fostering positive relationships with staff, parents and students. The leadership team places emphasis on building relationships with parents and students. Staff explain that there is an embedded culture of support and a team approach to helping every student. Staff discuss that the principal and deputy principal are strong instructional leaders with high credibility. They articulate a belief that the leadership team is proactive, supportive and focused on the core business of teaching and learning. Leaders are highly visible within the school and the welfare of students and staff is valued.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Refine, communicate and support an evidenced-based, whole-school approach to the teaching of writing.

Deepen teachers' data literacy skills and build their precision in identifying specific learning trends, tracking student progress, and highlighting the next steps in their teaching.

Build rigorous school-wide processes to measure the effectiveness of the allocation of school resources in promoting enhanced student learning outcomes.

Support the development of culturally safe practices to maximise learning engagement for the full range of students, including Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students, so they may see their identities and cultures reflected in the school curriculum.

Identify opportunities to build a school-wide approach to ensure that high achieving students are appropriately engaged, challenged, and extended in their learning.