Blenheim 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 **Blenheim State School** from **4** to **5 June 2019.**

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 SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU website.

1.1 Review team

Stephen Bobby   Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Megan Rauchle   Peer reviewer

1.2 School context

Location:	Blenheim Road, Blenheim
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region
Year opened:	1879
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	67
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	4 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	3 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	955
Year principal appointed:	July 2009
Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):	4.81
Significant partner schools:	Laidley State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Laidley Cattle Sales
Significant school programs:	Breakfast club, Rock and Water

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, small schools Business Manager (BM), Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN)/students with disability teacher, three classroom teachers, three teacher aides, 16 parents and 30 students.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Free Range Kids Laidley 2 – director and Laidley State High School – principal.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Lockyer Valley Regional Councillor, State Member for Lockyer and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2019	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2019
Investing for Success 2019	Strategic Plan 2016-2019
OneSchool	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2019)
Professional learning plan 2019	School budget overview
School improvement targets	Curriculum planning documents
School pedagogical framework	School newsletters and website
School data plan	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
School Opinion Survey	Headline Indicators (April 2019 release)
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The school projects a caring and friendly environment that is acknowledged by parents, staff and students.

All staff members promote a positive school culture with the desire to realise a caring and orderly learning environment, with respectful relationships between staff members, students and community members. Staff members interact with students in an inclusive and respectful manner. They build positive and caring relationships with students. Interactions between staff and students are respectful. Parents express that the sincerity of the principal and staff, and the welcoming, open environment of the school are greatly appreciated within the school community.

A strong collegial culture is established across all members of staff.

Teachers in the school are highly competent in the fields in which they teach and are well regarded by students and parents alike. They are committed to the continuous improvement of their own teaching and participate willingly in professional learning, informal sharing of practice and resources and moderation of student work. The teaching staff comprises experienced and early career teachers. School staff members indicate that they feel highly supported by all staff.

The principal and staff members articulate a shared commitment to realising learning outcomes for all students.

The principal emphasises a collaborative approach to enacting the school's improvement agenda. This way of working is well received by all staff who express enthusiasm in working towards the school's future direction. The principal is strategic in utilising the skills and talents of school staff members to support the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). Some staff articulate clarity regarding each member's role in advancing the EIA would be welcomed. The roles and responsibilities for staff that outline key actions, accountabilities and implementation timelines for priority strategic activities are yet to be documented.

The principal places a priority on the school-wide collection of data regarding student academic outcomes.

Class teachers primarily use student achievement data to inform structural differentiation of reading groups and determine access to intervention support. The ability of class teachers to understand student achievement data to inform teaching and learning practice and respond to the implications for differentiation varies across the school. Class teachers articulate varying degrees of confidence and expertise in analysing and responding to the range of student data collected.

The whole-school curriculum framework is based on units from the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resource.

Curriculum planning is conducted by teachers individually to cater for the range of students in their class. There is an expectation that in Week 2 of each term teachers meet with the principal to present and discuss their planning for the upcoming term. Some teachers articulate the desire to participate in curriculum planning with colleagues, prior to these meetings, to enhance their knowledge of the expectations of the Australian Curriculum (AC) content descriptors and year level achievement standards. Teachers endeavour to make the curriculum accessible, engaging and challenging for most students. Some students indicate the need for further challenge in their learning. This belief regarding greater challenge is articulated by some teachers who express the desire to increase the academic expectations for all students.

The school has commenced the use of learning walls.

The principal indicates that the use of learning walls is early in its development and is yet to be fully explored as a tool to assist students in becoming assessment literate learners. The development of learning intentions and success criteria statements and the subsequent sharing of these with students through the creation of classroom learning walls to assist students in their understanding of attaining the year level standard is an emerging practice. Some teachers describe using student work samples as exemplars to promote further understanding of the achievement standards. Some students can articulate what they need to do to achieve against the Guide to Making Judgements (GTMJ) and make further learning progress.

The positive student behaviours frequently demonstrated at the school are highly valued by staff, students and parents.

The Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS) provides staff and students with a framework for maintaining a safe and supportive school environment. The school expectations regarding positive relationships, positive language, positive actions and positive place guide students' daily interactions. These expectations are well known by the whole school community. Student positive behaviour is recognised in a range of way each week.

The principal emphasises a collaborative approach to enacting the school's improvement agenda.

Conversations with the principal and staff clearly outline the school's EIA is reading. The school has a comprehensive documented set of expectations for the teaching of reading. The strategy outlines the components of the classroom reading programs to be enacted by teachers. These programs are to include modelled, shared, guided and independent reading. Explicit teaching of specific reading strategies according the whole-school plan will include decoding and comprehension strategies. There is an expectation that teachers explicitly teach phonemic awareness and phonics, vocabulary, comprehension and fluency as part of their classroom balanced reading program.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Develop a statement of roles and responsibilities that includes accountabilities, key actions and implementation timelines for all school leaders and ensure these are effectively communicated to, and understood by, all staff.

Facilitate the deeper discussions of student achievement data, through case management, to strengthen teachers' data literacy to identify starting points for teaching and to inform differentiated teaching practices.

Build on the school planning practices within and beyond the school, to enable staff to participate in rigorous and ongoing conversations regarding the best ways to maximise and challenge student learning.

Investigate ways to build teacher knowledge and understanding of the use of learning walls to allow students to become assessment literate learners.