

Esk State School

School review report



Acknowledgment of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands from across Queensland. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia's cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.



1. Introduction

This report is a product of a school review carried out by the School and Region Reviews (SRR) branch at **Esk State School** from **20 to 22 February 2023**.

The report presents an evaluation of the school's performance against the nine domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#).

The report also provides improvement strategies for the school to implement in consultation with its school community and regional office. Key improvement strategies are identified that prioritise future directions for improvement. For more information regarding the SRR and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SRR [website](#).

1.1 Timelines and next steps

School reviews play an important role in each school's planning and improvement cycle. They inform and complement the work of the school in leading continuous improvement and ensuring quality learning outcomes for children and young people in Queensland.

Findings from the school review can be used to inform school planning processes. The [School Performance](#) policy and resources provide further information regarding the development of strategic and annual implementation plans.

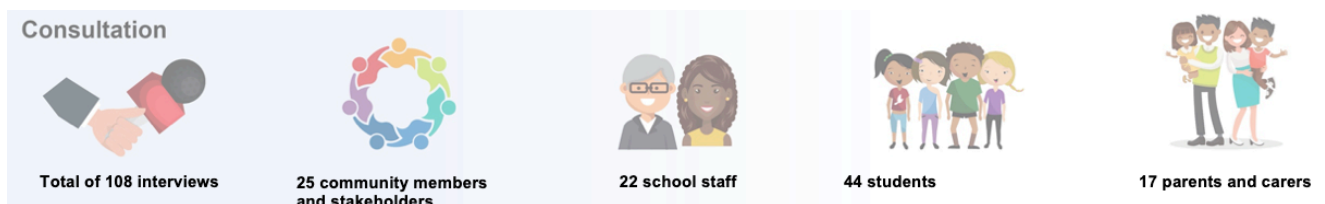
Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of the school receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies, and discuss next steps in planning for continuous improvement.

1.2 Review team

Darren Sengstock	Internal reviewer, SRR (review chair)
Keith Graham	Internal reviewer
Leslie Vogan	External reviewer

1.3 Contributing stakeholders



1.4 School context

Indigenous land name:	Yuggera and Jinibara Nations											
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region											
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6											
Enrolment:	123											
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	9.7%											
Students with disability percentage:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>QDTP</th> <th>Supplementary</th> <th>Substantial</th> <th>Extensive</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>9.00</td> <td>5.00</td> <td>5.00</td> <td>1.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				QDTP	Supplementary	Substantial	Extensive	9.00	5.00	5.00	1.00
QDTP	Supplementary	Substantial	Extensive									
9.00	5.00	5.00	1.00									
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	981											

1.5 Snapshot of previous school review

The last review carried out at the school was conducted from **27 to 29 November 2019**. The school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) at the time of the 2019 review was identified as 963 and the school enrolment was 162 with an Indigenous enrolment of 8 per cent and a student with disability enrolment of 3.7 per cent.

The key improvement strategies recommended in the review are listed below.

- Continue to develop and adapt curriculum units aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC) that are locally contextualised and quality assured for balance and coverage against content descriptions and achievement standards. (Domain 6)
- Strengthen the culture of self-evaluation and reflection that enables deeper discussions of data, generates strategies for continuous improvement and monitors progress over time, including opportunities for case management. (Domain 2)
- Provide further time and continued support for teachers to develop precision in the implementation of collaboratively agreed approaches relating to the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) and monitor implementation to promote consistency of practice across the school. (Domain 1)
- Build the capacity of teachers to engage their students as assessment literate learners through the effective implementation of 'Bump it up' walls, goal setting and feedback processes. (Domain 8)

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key affirmations

Staff have taken authentic steps to create genuine connections to local land, history and stories.

School leaders and staff are proud of their work with local Indigenous histories and speak of their commitment to valuing Indigenous perspectives. Key school staff have engaged with First Nations students, families and communities to co-design initiatives. Teachers are endeavouring to transfer their new understanding of Indigenous perspectives into their classrooms.

Student behaviour and conduct are viewed as positive aspects of the school.

The positive school culture for learners is underpinned by a strong Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework. This supports student wellbeing and has been adapted to be proactive as opposed to reactive. Students and staff are committed to this framework and students speak enthusiastically of the rewards they gain for following school expectations. Students are described by staff, parents and community members as well behaved.

The school has an experienced and confident teaching and support team.

Staff describe a strong commitment to their students, the school and the community, and an openness to the continued improvement of their practice. Opportunity for professional learning and collaborative networks are built into staff development days, staff meeting agendas and the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP). Teachers and teacher aides work collaboratively within classrooms to enhance student learning outcomes.

Data processes support individual students and their learning journey.

Leaders and teachers articulate that the routines and strategies utilised within reading and mathematics rotations are embedded within school practice and have contributed to improved student reading results and National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) performance. Years 3 and 5 reading Mean Scale Scores (MSS) have risen significantly since 2018 and are now above state and regional averages, and are comparable to the national average.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Domain 3: A culture that promotes learning

Collaboratively build and deepen a school culture that is conducive to open, respectful and professional communication to encourage staff voice and input into key school initiatives.

Domain 6: Systematic curriculum delivery

Enhance Quality Assurance (QA) processes through observation, feedback and moderation to ensure the intended curriculum is the enacted curriculum.

Strengthen moderation processes across learning areas and at multiple junctures to deepen teacher knowledge of the Australian Curriculum (AC) and enable greater consistency when determining student Levels of Achievement (LOA).

Domain 8: Effective pedagogical practices

Implement the agreed pedagogical practices to provide a consistent whole-school approach to pedagogy.

Further build teacher capability through an instructional leadership model to provide opportunities for observation and feedback and coaching/mentoring.

2.3 Improvement strategies summary

<p><i>Domain 1: An explicit improvement agenda</i></p> <p>Further develop strategies to provide staff with clarity and ownership of the priorities to foster a united approach to the school's improvement agenda.</p> <p>Collaboratively develop specific student outcome targets, including LOAs against to the AC, to regularly measure the impact of the EIA.</p>
<p><i>Domain 2: Analysis and discussion of data</i></p> <p>Develop measurable student targets, aligned to the EIA, to enable teachers to regularly monitor the impact of prioritised strategies on lifting student achievement and engagement.</p> <p>Build the data literacy of staff to use data in the initial phase of the learning cycle to inform curriculum, teaching and learning.</p>
<p><i>Domain 3: A culture that promotes learning</i></p> <p>Collaboratively build and deepen a school culture that is conducive to open, respectful and professional communication to encourage staff voice and input into key school initiatives.</p>
<p><i>Domain 4: Targeted use of school resources</i></p> <p>Create systems and processes to support the delegation of decision making beyond the leadership team to enable shared decision making and ownership of school processes.</p>
<p><i>Domain 5: An expert teaching team</i></p> <p>Utilise staff input and feedback to further align the High Performance Teams (HPT) cycle with school priorities and teacher professional learning needs to enhance teacher capability.</p>
<p><i>Domain 6: Systematic curriculum delivery</i></p> <p>Enhance QA processes through observation, feedback and moderation to ensure the intended curriculum is the enacted curriculum.</p> <p>Strengthen moderation processes across learning areas and at multiple junctures to deepen teacher knowledge of the AC and enable greater consistency when determining student LOAs.</p>
<p><i>Domain 7: Differentiated teaching and learning</i></p> <p>Further develop staff awareness and understanding of the school's inclusion framework to embed agreed inclusive practices consistently across the school.</p> <p>Enhance teacher capability to differentiate the AC for all students, with a focus on high-performing students, to increase 'A' or 'B' LOAs in English.</p>
<p><i>Domain 8: Effective pedagogical practices</i></p> <p>Implement the agreed pedagogical practices to provide a consistent whole-school approach to pedagogy.</p> <p>Further build teacher capability through an instructional leadership model to provide opportunities for observation and feedback and coaching/mentoring.</p>
<p><i>Domain 9: School-community partnerships</i></p> <p>Develop specific strategies to connect and engage community members to form partnerships which positively impact on student outcomes.</p> <p>Extend and embed key First Nations initiatives to ensure their future sustainability and improved learning outcomes of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students.</p>

3. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains

3.1 An explicit improvement agenda

Findings

The school motto, *'Ever Seeking Knowledge'*, underpins the ethos of the school and the strong belief that every child can be the best they can be. Staff and parents describe their long association and deep connection with the school and the positive experiences they have enjoyed. The principal and staff are united in a commitment to achieving a balance between academic progress and overall wellbeing for students. Parents admire the dedication, professionalism and care the principal and staff display on a daily basis towards their child.

Staff articulate there are clearly identified whole-school strategies for improving student outcomes in reading, writing and literacy. The school's overall improvement in NAPLAN results has been recognised by the region.

The current AIP identifies the two priorities of collaboration and assessment-literate learners. Internal monitoring processes are established to track student reading achievement through the use of PM Benchmarks and Lexile. The AIP targets are listed in relation to teacher actions. An improvement agenda expressed in terms of specific measurable student outcomes is yet to be developed.

Most staff identify collaboration and assessment-literate learners as the key improvement priorities. Staff articulate a range of responses regarding the significance of these priorities. Some staff describe a desire for greater clarity and further opportunities to contribute to the actioning of the agenda to facilitate collective ownership and understanding to move the school forward.

Staff describe that collaborating, building relationships and trust are key to a cohesive workforce and a place where staff and students want to be. They articulate the importance of leaders understanding individual contributions and seeking feedback from staff, identifying that this will help develop a strong relational culture throughout the school.

Parents express appreciation for the efforts of the principal and staff in supporting their child. Staff interactions between students, parents and families are described by community members as warm, caring and inclusive. Parents describe staff as professionals who care about each and every student.

Improvement strategies

Further develop strategies to provide staff with clarity and ownership of the priorities to foster a united approach to the school's improvement agenda.

Collaboratively develop specific student outcome targets, including LOAs against to the AC, to regularly measure the impact of the EIA.

3.2 Analysis and discussion of data

Findings

School leaders articulate the important role data plays in informing school decision making and the teaching and learning process. They place a high priority on effective analysis and discussion of the data collected. Through this analysis, student performance at individual and group levels are used to reflect on the impact of initiatives in relation to improving student outcomes.

The school's improvement agenda is tracked by leaders through systemic data such as LOAs and reading benchmarks. Teachers are aware of the school improvement agenda and some teachers speak of the link between initiatives and improving student outcomes. Some teachers explain that specific student targets in literacy and numeracy at a class level, linked to the improvement agenda, are yet to be embedded.

Teachers speak of the value they place on the data they collect. A clear school schedule is published to outline for teachers the year level data expectations and collection schedule. Teachers share how they utilise class data to assist teaching and learning processes, particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers explain that data use is primarily at the end process of teaching, including informing student progress and allocating LOAs. Some data is used at the commencement of learning units to inform ability grouping. The principal relays the need to support teachers to continue to build their data literacy and use data to determine starting points for learning and to inform their curriculum choices to maximise student outcomes.

School leaders and teachers have a deep understanding of students' individual stories and circumstances. Staff know the data behind their students and share their knowledge of students to a disaggregated, individual level. Staff feel that this deep understanding helps them provide better care and education for their students. Teachers speak appreciatively of the time provided to them to work with colleagues and discuss and analyse student data. Several teachers speak of welcoming further collaborative time to facilitate deeper data conversations, and discussions to foster greater understanding of students to support learning and their teaching practice.

The learning needs of early years' learners are supported by the use of transition statements. These statements are provided to the school and help inform support and classroom programs. The statements provide teachers a starting point for learning and are supported by the school's internal data process to maximise the learning opportunities for all students.

The school's data processes support teacher understanding of individual students and their learning journey. The principal accredits improvement in NAPLAN results to these processes. The School Online Reporting Dashboard (SORD) indicates that Years 3 and 5 reading Mean Scale Scores (MSS) have risen significantly since 2018 and are now above state and regional averages and are comparable to the national average.

Improvement strategies

Develop measurable student targets, aligned to the EIA, to enable teachers to regularly monitor the impact of prioritised strategies on lifting student achievement and engagement.

Build the data literacy of staff to use data in the initial phase of the learning cycle to inform curriculum, teaching and learning.

3.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

School leaders and staff convey a passionate belief that every student is capable of successful learning. Staff actively work to create and sustain a learning environment that is safe, respectful and inclusive for students. Students speak positively of their teachers and teacher aides and of the care these staff afford them.

The positive culture for learners is underpinned by a strong PBL framework. The principal explains how PBL supports student wellbeing, and how the framework has been adapted to be proactive as opposed to reactive. Students and staff are committed to this framework, and students speak enthusiastically of the rewards they gain for following school expectations. Students are described by staff, parents and community members as well behaved. Student behaviour and conduct are viewed by many staff as positive aspects of the school.

Leaders and staff express a commitment to the students, school and community. The school is viewed by many as playing a key role within the small town, and a number of staff and families have generational connections with the school. Staff share a feeling of great pride in their school and some speak favourably of the forums that contribute to the school's direction and decision-making processes. Many staff articulate feeling that the current school culture is not always conducive to open, respectful and professional communication. Many staff speak of a desire for greater opportunities for authentic consultation and collaboration to share their voice, work with school leaders and offer feedback regarding school initiatives.

This year, the principal has introduced HPT¹ as a vehicle for delivering some of the key intentions for the year and uniting the school vision. Leaders discuss their understanding of the overall school plan and how these initiatives come together to support the school's improvement agenda. Many teachers speak supportively of each initiative and explain that many have only recently been introduced. They speak of a desire for further clarity regarding the school vision and this new work. The principal recognises that some staff may not have had time to fully understand and embrace these changes. The principal identifies the need to collaboratively work with staff to consolidate new school initiatives and foster a united staff team that is committed and supportive of the vision to maximise the impact of the school direction on student outcomes.

School staff have purposely worked with local First Nations representatives to embed culturally safe practices within the school and curriculum to maximise Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students' engagement in learning. Practices encompass both embedding Indigenous perspectives in the classroom curriculum and the co-construction of significant outdoor areas.

Staff speak of the united teams they work with and of the professional and personal support they receive from their colleagues within these teams. Teacher aides are seen by teachers as appreciated para-professionals and both are valued by the community for the work they do. Staff speak of strong camaraderie within their teams, and parents praise teachers and teacher aides for doing 'whatever it takes' to support their child.

Improvement strategy

Collaboratively build and deepen a school culture that is conducive to open, respectful and professional communication to encourage staff voice and input into key school initiatives.

¹ Stebbins, P. (2020). *Dr Pete Stebbins PhD – Leadership | Teams | Transformation*.
<https://www.drpetestebbins.com>

3.4 Targeted use of school resources

Findings

Staff indicate the school is well resourced with appropriate learning materials for the range of students. The principal utilises flexible allocation of staff members to enable some targeted responses to meet the needs of individual students. Teacher aides are deployed in classrooms and play an important part in supporting student learning outcomes.

Resources and learning spaces are allocated to meet the needs of Prep students. These learning areas are adjacent to the main classroom to encourage appropriate participation of younger learners. Parents and community members value the range of facilities and the opportunities they offer children to enhance their experiences.

The principal strategically applies resources to ensure the professional growth of staff. They deploy human resources within the school that focus on the learning needs of students. Staff members are dedicated in their approach to enhancing learning opportunities and most indicate they have the resources required to do their job effectively.

Two part-time Business Manager (BM) positions exist with different focuses. The budget is primarily developed and overseen by the principal and is based on local priorities. Staff explain that throughout the year, expenditure requires principal approval. The principal articulates an intention to delegate some decision making to staff members to enable shared decision making and co-ownership of school processes.

School funds are used to employ teacher aides to help support students, and for staff Professional Development (PD). Programming for teacher aides is targeted to assist teachers to deliver the AC. Teacher aides support literacy blocks, intervention programs, speech language programs and wellbeing for targeted students. Funds are utilised to purchase additional Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) time to help support staff in meeting the literacy needs of students.

Community members express appreciation for the time and effort the principal and staff have dedicated to maintaining the school grounds which include landscape gardens, refurbished playgrounds and artefacts relating to school's vision and values. The principal articulates a goal to have an interactive learning space that is inviting, flourishing and consistently presented to an excellent standard.

Improvement strategy

Create systems and processes to support the delegation of decision making beyond the leadership team to enable shared decision making and ownership of school processes.

3.5 An expert teaching team

Findings

The school has an experienced and confident teaching and support team. Staff describe a strong commitment to students, the school and the community and an openness to the continued improvement of their practice. Opportunity for professional learning and collaborative networks are built into staff development days, staff meeting agendas and the AIP. Teachers and teacher aides work collaboratively within classrooms to enhance student learning outcomes.

A PD plan clearly outlines available professional learning opportunities and expectations for staff. The principal accesses the support of experts and knowledgeable others to progress school improvement agendas and staff capability. This year PD aligns with the EIA and includes workshop support from the regional Principal Advisor Teaching and Learning (PATL) on HPT and a whole-school approach to pedagogy. The school subscribes to the work of Dr Caroline Blackley² that includes 4D classroom observations of teacher practice. Frequency and time of observations are negotiated with the provider each year. This year will see each teacher receive an observation and feedback session in Term 2. Book studies and professional readings are a feature of teacher PD expectations. Teachers are currently exploring Teach Like a Champion³.

Members of the leadership team spend time in classrooms during reading rotations and as requested by teachers. A collegial engagement plan includes fortnightly one-to-one conversations with the principal, which inform staff APDPs. Some teachers recount coaching sessions provided when the school had an internal HOD-C and from regional PATLs. The current collegial engagement arrangements are incorporated within the HPT Activity Cycle. Teachers articulate working formally and informally with colleagues to develop curriculum and moderate student work.

The school is embarking on a new structure for collaboration and collegial engagement incorporated within the HPT Activity Cycle. Many teachers express they appreciate the time to work with their colleagues and are yet to see the benefits of HPT on their practice, in meeting their professional learning needs, or in supporting curriculum development and moderation.

Staff work within the Brisbane Valley cluster sharing professional learning on staff development days and an annual moderation session. Teachers appreciate the opportunity to learn and work with others outside the school. Collaboration with the regional Indigenous Education Officer has resulted in the school undertaking PD with a local Elder on 'Iridescence: Finding your colours and living your story'⁴.

Improvement strategy

Utilise staff input and feedback to further align the HPT cycle with school priorities and teacher professional learning needs to enhance teacher capability.

² Four Dimensions (2021). *Caroline Blackley – Four Dimensions*. <https://caroline-mccarty.com/>

³ Lemov, D. (2014). *Teach like a champion 2.0: 62 techniques that put students on the path to college*. Jossey-Bass.

⁴ Callaghan, P. & Gordon, P. (2014). *Iridescence: finding your colours and living your story*. MoshPit Publishing.

3.6 Systematic curriculum delivery

Findings

The principal and staff articulate they are focused on ensuring all students are provided with a quality education aligned to the AC. A comprehensive whole-school, assessment and reporting plan details curriculum units to be taught across all learning areas. Curriculum information is shared with parents digitally.

Three levels of planning are apparent and year level plans are developed for all learning areas of the AC. A wide range of curriculum support documentation is available, clearly detailing expectations for teaching across each learning area. Leaders are committed to supporting teachers to plan sequenced and coherent units aligned to the AC.

Ongoing monitoring of the intended planned units of work accessed by all students across all learning areas is yet to be developed. Leaders acknowledge that observation, feedback and moderation are QA processes that may be further utilised to ensure the intended curriculum is enacted in classrooms and support teacher capability.

Leaders express valuing the role moderation plays in aligning school units to the AC. The 'before' juncture of English moderation occurs each term. The principal acknowledges the need to strengthen the moderation process and identifies the first 'after' juncture as the next step for development. They acknowledge the importance of a rigorous moderation process to ensure greater consistency of teacher judgement with students' LOAs. Some teachers express a desire to further moderate with other schools for QA.

Teachers develop their curriculum units and agreed assessment tasks in consultation with leaders and colleagues. Release time is provided each term to undertake this task. A curriculum unit template has been implemented to ensure consistency of practice in the development of these units across year levels.

Staff articulate the principal and Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN) work with them in developing their capability in understanding and applying the AC across the learning areas. Teachers express appreciation for the opportunity to work with the leaders in developing their AC capability. They articulate that further opportunities to enhance their knowledge and understanding would be greatly valued.

Expectations for curriculum planning and delivery are included on the school's SharePoint. Teachers indicate that they have previously utilised Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) as the method for planning and delivering the AC. This has evolved into using C2C as a resource to complement units developed by themselves and leaders.

Improvement strategies

Enhance QA processes through observation, feedback and moderation to ensure the intended curriculum is the enacted curriculum.

Strengthen moderation processes across learning areas and at multiple junctures to deepen teacher knowledge of the AC and enable greater consistency when determining student LOAs.

3.7 Differentiated teaching and learning

Findings

Teachers are focused on providing differentiated learning experiences to meet students' needs. Strategies and structures, including reading and mathematics rotations, targeted intervention and school-preferred teaching practices support teachers in their endeavours to tailor learning to students' level of readiness and understanding. School culture is characterised by staff willingness to embrace all students and the evolving conversations regarding what constitutes inclusive practice within the school.

Teachers confidently use data to determine student understanding and develop targeted groupings for literacy and numeracy support and enhancement. The principal identifies a future focus for the school as building teacher capability to further utilise data gained from the moderation process and standardised testing to tailor curriculum decisions for the class, groups and individual students.

Staff discuss meeting the needs of high-achieving students within reading and mathematics rotations through the IMPACT programs and the multi-age structure of classrooms. Differentiation within classroom curriculum units to challenge and engage high-achieving students is yet to be apparent across all classrooms.

Data walls support the leadership team and staff to disaggregate data to monitor the academic and attendance progress of groups of students, including Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students. Targeted interventions are implemented to improve student literacy and numeracy outcomes for identified groups and individual students.

The school has a special needs committee comprising the principal, STLaN, guidance officer and, when available, the SLP. A case management approach for students with complex learning, behaviour, social and emotional needs is developed and includes collaboration with parents and carers. When required, the school accesses the services of regional PATLs, the Autism Hub and external agencies to support the unique needs of individual students.

'Promoting Literacy Development'⁵ (PLD) is a recent addition to the strategies the school has introduced to provide targeted support for reading development. Teachers and teacher aides speak optimistically of the impact PLD is having on student reading and spelling improvement.

A framework for inclusion has been recently developed and encompasses the 6Ls of Lore, Love, Look, Listen, Learn and Lead. In the early stages of implementation, this framework is viewed by members of the leadership team as a starting point for awareness building, discussion and action for enhancing school inclusive practices.

Across the school, students are tracked on the literacy and numeracy continuum, with teachers utilising student-friendly language to inform where they are at with their learning and what they can do to improve.

Improvement strategies

Further develop staff awareness and understanding of the school's inclusion framework to embed agreed inclusive practices consistently across the school.

Enhance teacher capability to differentiate the AC for all students, with a focus on high-performing students, to increase 'A' or 'B' LOAs in English.

⁵ Antonacci, P.A. & O'Callaghan, C.M. (2011). *Developing content area literacy: 40 strategies for middle and secondary classrooms*. SAGE Publications Inc.

3.8 Effective pedagogical practices

Findings

The school's commitment to providing highly effective teaching is apparent in the emphasis placed on staff PD aligned to research-based best practice pedagogies. Through professional readings, teachers have explored Explicit Direct Instruction⁶ (EDI), and are now engaging with Teach Like a Champion. Teachers express confidence in their practice and a willingness to continuously improve.

Leaders and teachers outline that the routines and strategies utilised within reading and mathematics rotations are embedded within school practice and have contributed to improved student reading results and NAPLAN performance. Teachers identify guided, modelled, shared and independent reading strategies are incorporated within the focused reading rotation and throughout the week. Mathematics rotations are continuing to consolidate, with teachers utilising a gradual release of responsibility throughout the three rotations. Teachers routinely utilise the Rapid Recall technique at the start of a lesson, and a bank of mathematics activities is available on 'G' drive for teacher use.

The last strategic planning cycle saw a focus on Visible Learning, including key strategies of utilising learning intentions, success criteria and 'Bump it up' walls for students to identify their next steps for improvement and receive feedback on their practice. The use of learning walls is an emerging practice. Students articulate variance in teachers' use of Bump it up walls to provide feedback on how to improve their work. Teacher confidence and expertise in utilising identified key strategies is continuing to evolve.

The principal is leading the development of a whole-school approach to pedagogy, identifying key strategies and techniques to inform teacher practice to provide the next lift in student achievement. Visible Learning and Teach Like a Champion inform the selection of effective teaching practices aligned to the school's context and improvement agenda. Coaching, mentoring, and observation and feedback to build teacher capability to effectively deliver the AC is evolving as the school adjusts to staffing changes and moves into a HPT construct.

Teachers and teacher aides work collaboratively to provide classroom environments where all students are encouraged, challenged and engaged in their learning. Students identify teachers care about them and help them to improve through feedback.

Improvement strategies

Implement the agreed pedagogical practices to provide a consistent whole-school approach to pedagogy.

Further build teacher capability through an instructional leadership model to provide opportunities for observation and feedback and coaching/mentoring.

⁶Hollingsworth, J. R., & Ybarra, S. E. (2009). *Explicit direct instruction (EDI): The power of the well-crafted, well-taught lesson*. Corwin Press.

3.9 School-community partnerships

Findings

Leaders understand the position of prominence the school holds within the local, rural community. They seek to enhance learning opportunities for students by partnering with parents, families and community organisations.

The school is supported by an enthusiastic Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) who supports school initiatives, provides families with key services, and runs the tuckshop and the uniform shop. Funds raised by the P&C add to the school's grounds and facilities and provide learning materials for students. The P&C values the services they provide families and the community, and operate their fundraising independently from these. Staff and community members speak of the changing demographics of the community and the difficulty experienced in attracting volunteers. The principal explains the importance of developing specific strategies to connect and engage community members to form partnerships that positively impact on student outcomes.

The school's location in a small rural town allows for strong links with the local Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) centre. School staff work with kindergarten staff to support transitions of students into Prep and to provide seamless education to families within the community.

The family culture of the school means younger pre-school-age siblings are often onsite and familiar with school routines and staff before they commence Prep. Conversely, school staff are familiar with many incoming students. Through these connections, staff work with families well before a child commences school, and offer whatever support they can as early as possible. Teachers affirm that face-to-face interactions with parents and children prior to them arriving in Prep, are valuable and assists their transition.

The vast majority of Year 6 students traditionally attend a state high school located in a nearby town. The high school services a number of small primary schools within the Brisbane Valley. The high school organises traditional orientation, information exchanges and open days as part of its transition. It also offers sporting opportunities for older primary students in surrounding schools to meet and connect, easing their transition into high school. The high school principal speaks of an interest in connecting at curriculum and moderation levels with the primary school, and is hopeful of forming deeper relations with the school.

Key school staff have engaged with First Nations students, families and communities to co-design initiatives that aim to increase outcomes for Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students. They have taken authentic steps to create genuine connections to local land, history and stories.

The principal re-invigorated the local Dirran Yani (meeting place) within the school. The Dirran Yani was established by the Toowoomba Pipeline Alliance in association with Yuggera Cultural Services representing the Yuggera people. This area highlights local history and plants with information accessible through QR codes strategically placed within the area.

A newly constructed inclusive philosophy framework has been co-developed with a recognised Elder. This framework identifies six underlying principles which have been showcased in a newly developed school garden and supports the school's existing inclusive philosophy. Student understanding of the new framework is yet to be embedded.

The principal is aware that these initiatives are not yet entrenched within the school fabric. They are led by the principal who places importance on extending and embedding these initiatives to ensure future sustainability and their continued support of learning outcomes for Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students.

School leaders and staff are proud of their work with local Indigenous histories and speak of their commitment to valuing Indigenous perspectives. Staff have engaged with local consultants, and teachers are endeavouring to transfer their new understandings of Indigenous perspectives into their classrooms.

Improvement strategies

Develop specific strategies to connect and engage community members to form partnerships which positively impact on student outcomes.

Extend and embed key First Nations initiatives to ensure their future sustainability and improved learning outcomes of Aboriginal students and Torres Strait Islander students.