



School Improvement Unit Report

Miles State School





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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 **Miles State School** from **15 to 17 November 2016**.

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 which prioritise future directions for improvement.

The 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 about the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Garry Lacey	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Judith White	Peer reviewer
Matthew Glen	External reviewer

1.2 School context

Location:	Constance Street, Miles
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region
Year opened:	1880
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	230
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	16.1 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	4.3 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	952
Year principal appointed:	2016
Full-time equivalent staff:	12
Significant partner schools:	Columboola State School, Condamine State School, Drillham State School, Dulacca State School, Grosmont State School, Guluguba State School, Miles State High School, Taroom State School, Wandoan State School
Significant community partnerships:	Miles & District Show Society, Beef, Bells and Bottle Tree Festival
Significant school programs:	Spelling Mastery, Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI), Speech Sound Pics (SSP)



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, Head of Curriculum (HOC), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), two Support Teachers – Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), nine classroom teachers, six teacher aides, music teacher, Health and Physical Education (HPE) teacher, Advisory Visiting Teacher (AVT) – gifted and talented education, program representatives, literacy committee, numeracy committee, E-Speech, school chaplain, two administration officers, school's officer, tuckshop convenor, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, school council chair, school council - patron, two school council representatives, 12 parents and 65 students.

Community and business groups:

- Indigenous Elder, three community representatives and National Rugby League (NRL) development officer.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of local high school and director of local kindergarten.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Community nurse and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2016	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016
Investing for Success 2016	Strategic Plan 2013-2016
Headline Indicators (2016 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2016)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Mathematics overview	Miles SS reading framework
School improvement targets	Differentiation surfboards
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
School data plan	School newsletters and website
Responsible Behaviour Plan	School Opinion Survey
Curriculum planning documents	Writing, speaking and listening framework



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The school is highly regarded by parents, students and members of the local community.

This is demonstrated by the range of positive and encouraging comments regarding the school from parents, partner schools and community members. The school is considered an important and valued member of the local community with a significant history of community connection.

The school has established partnerships with the community.

Links to local businesses and volunteer groups, genuine engagement with the P&C and the involvement in a range of community events enhance the sense of community and opportunities to enhance the learning for students. The school has strong links to the local community through activities including the annual Miles & District Show, Christmas and Spring Carnivals, ANZAC Day parade, Country Women's Association (CWA) international day and the biennial Beef, Bells and Bottle Tree festival. Many of these partnerships are long term, and celebrated as part of the culture of the school.

Parents and members of the school community express great confidence in the staff members of the school and comment favourably on their dedication to their work.

The professionalism of staff members at the school is apparent with teachers and teacher aides demonstrating great commitment to implementing teaching and learning programs that will enhance the learning of their students. Relationships between staff members and students are positive and respectful in classrooms and the playground.

The principal and staff members are committed to the success of all students.

A collegial culture of mutual trust and support is apparent amongst school staff. Staff members speak positively regarding the support provided by colleagues and the school's leadership team. Communication between all staff members is professionally respectful.

The school's motto '*Strive to achieve*' is the mantra on which the actions of the leadership team and school staff are built.

The school is in the final year of its current strategic plan. There is an opportunity with the recent appointment of a new principal to undertake a strategic planning process to confirm a collaborative vision and preferred strategic direction for the school. The school council and staff members will be key stakeholder groups in this collaborative planning process.



The school leadership team recognise the importance of providing a comprehensive curriculum plan for teachers.

Most teachers report they use the A1 planner to guide their initial planning of classroom units for English, mathematics and science aligned to the content descriptions of the Australian Curriculum (AC). Efforts have been made to consider alignment of the planned and enacted curriculum. Quality assurance processes for ensuring that horizontal or vertical alignment of the curriculum from Prep to Year 6 is yet to occur.

School staff members express a desire to see effective teaching occurring throughout the school.

Teaching staff indicate that the Explicit Instruction (EI) model is the key pedagogical strategy used in their classroom practice. All classrooms display artefacts with relevant terminology such as '*We are learning to*' (WALT), '*What I'm looking for*' (WILF) and '*This is because*' (TIB). Teaching staff are aware of the need for consistent application of the explicit teaching lesson structure especially when covering new content. A broader repertoire of high-yield strategies to ensure students are engaged, challenged and supported in the learning process is yet to be developed.

The Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS) outlines the school's commitment to nurturing behaviour that supports a culture for care and support for all students.

The school's expectations for behaviour – '*be safe, be respectful, be responsible and be a learner*' are known by students. Whole-school processes for managing behaviour to enable a consistency of approach in maintaining the school's culture for learning and engagement is yet to be embedded.

School leaders and teaching staff have access to a wide range of student achievement and wellbeing data.

The school has an assessment schedule that outlines the administration of a wide range of assessment tools in English, mathematics and science from Prep to Year 6. A comprehensive array of student achievement data is collected at designated times. The analysis and interpretation of the extensive amount of available student data to inform changes in teaching practices is considered an area for further clarification and consolidation.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Engage the school community in developing a cohesive vision for the school, underpinned by collaboratively developed values and agreed processes and practices which are consistently implemented.

Conduct a review of the school curriculum plan to ensure consistent and systematic approaches to planning, implementation, evaluation and quality assurance of the AC occurs in all mandated learning areas.

Review the school's pedagogical framework to develop collaborative and consistent approaches that drive effective teaching and learning in all classrooms.

Review the school's approach to behaviour to ensure strategies relating to a whole-school approach are embedded across the school.

Ensure data collection processes are purposeful and student outcome data is analysed and interpreted to inform teaching and learning.



3. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains

3.1 An explicit improvement agenda

Findings

The school's motto '*Strive to achieve*' is the mantra on which the actions of the leadership team and school staff are built.

In 2016, the leadership team and staff members are committed to implementing an Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) which has two priorities – implementing a school-based writing program and having a focus in mathematics on the teaching of problem solving and investigations.

The leadership team describe improving student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy, building teacher capacity to deliver high quality programs and developing school-wide programs which detail agreed practices as key outcomes to be achieved from the implementation of the EIA.

A school writing overview is drafted which details the sequence of genres to be taught across the school year. This program aligns achievement standards and content descriptions of the AC with the school-developed '*I can*' statements. Teachers are using these statements as a checklist to guide assessment of student writing ability.

Teaching staff describe a broad range of strategies they are implementing to engage students in daily writing activities. These include explicit teaching of key genre, using the Seven Steps to Writing Success as a framework for improving student engagement in writing, using the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model - modelled, guided, shared and independent writing, focus writing groups and speed writing activities. All teachers are genuinely engaging students in daily writing activities. Collaboratively agreed practices for the teaching of writing across the school are not yet developed.

The future development of a framework, to ensure greater consistency of practice across the school, which details agreed strategies for all teaching staff to implement in their classroom is yet to occur. Closer monitoring of implementation processes by the leadership team to benefit teacher practice and student outcomes is yet to be established.

It is reported that the school's work with problem solving and investigations is postponed due to challenges with accessing regionally offered Professional Development (PD). The principal indicates the school is committed to implementing this agenda in 2017.

Teaching staff participate in the implementation of the school's improvement agenda. Teachers are working to improve student learning outcomes in writing with many able to relate instances of success from their work with students.

Targets to measure the effectiveness of implementation of the improvement agenda are yet to be established. High expectations for every student's success, with ambitious targets being set to measure the success of implementation strategies, are yet to occur.



The school is in the final year of its current strategic plan. There is an opportunity with the recent appointment of a new principal to undertake a strategic planning process to confirm a collaborative vision and preferred strategic direction for the school. The school council and staff members will be key stakeholder groups in this collaborative planning process.

A statement of the roles and responsibilities for members of the leadership team is documented. This statement details strategic and operational aspects of each leaders work in the school. The development of more detailed role statements and accountabilities to be undertaken with agreed strategies and timelines for implementation to enhance the work of leaders in the school is yet to occur.

All staff members are working hard to improve learning outcomes for their students in the priority areas. Many parents and members of the wider community express the view that the professionalism and dedication of staff is strongly valued within the community.

Improvement strategies

Engage the school community in developing a cohesive vision for the school underpinned by collaboratively developed values, and agreed processes and practices which are consistently implemented.

Monitor the implementation of the school's improvement agenda, through data analysis and regular classroom visits.

Establish clear, aspirational targets for student performance in areas aligned to the EIA and monitor progress towards these targets.

Develop a specific statement of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for all school leaders that details key actions and implementation timelines.



3.2 Analysis and discussion of data

Findings

The school has an assessment schedule that outlines the administration of a wide range of assessment tools in English, mathematics and science from Prep to Year 6. A comprehensive array of student achievement data is collected at designated times including PM Benchmarks - Prep to Year 3, Fountas & Pinnell¹ - Years 4 to 6, PAT-R, PAT-SPG, PAT-M and PAT-S.

The results of the student assessment schedule are displayed on a large data wall on which every student's progress is visually displayed. The school has recently introduced an online testing regime using a number of the Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) tools from ACER. The principal identified the need to revise the data wall so that the concept of 'distance travelled' could be demonstrated visually for class teachers and students to celebrate learning progress.


Teaching staff are expected to compile student achievement data in English, mathematics and science from the administration of formative and summative assessment tools. These data are uploaded to the school's G drive. Teachers are using reading and spelling data, from testing processes, as starting points for learning, including forming reading groups and identifying students for individual support. Data collection on students' writing performance and the collaborative analyses of this data to inform future teaching and learning experiences is yet to be fully developed.

Currently teachers predominantly analyse data individually. A case management process has recently been introduced to provide opportunities for teachers to collaboratively analyse student data and identify starting points for learning.

Collaborative decisions regarding setting targets, benchmarks and standards for student achievement are still in a developing phase. A document *entitled 'tools, standards and targets framework'* provides an outline for data collection and analysis associated with targets and timelines. Few staff members are aware of this document and its use. This is yet to be fully achieved.

Attention is given to gathering and recording student behaviour and attendance data that is linked to the school-wide system of monitoring and improving student outcomes.

¹ Pinnell, G. S., & Fountas, I. C. (2007). *The Continuum of Literacy Learning, Grades K-8: Behaviors and Understandings to Notice, Teach, and Support.* Heinemann.



National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data at Year 3 and 5 is used for identifying areas for further intervention. Detailed analysis of the 2016 data is yet to occur. The analysis and interpretation of the extensive amount of available student data to inform changes in teaching practices is considered an area for further clarification and consolidation.

School leaders acknowledge that data literacy skills are variable amongst teachers. The extent to which teachers are involved in regular data discussions with school leaders is an area for future consideration.

The 2016 NAPLAN data indicates that 89.5 per cent of Year 3 students and 96.2 per cent of Year 5 students participated in this year's testing process.

Student performance against the National Minimum Standard (NMS) when compared to other Queensland State Schools (QSS) shows a positive threshold result at Year 3 level. The Year 5 performance showed a significant decline with 80 per cent of students achieving the NMS in reading and 72 per cent in numeracy.

The school's performance in the Upper Two Bands (U2B) indicates that all areas in Year 5 are above Similar Queensland State Schools (SQSS) and in Year 3 are above in numeracy, similar to SQSS in reading, spelling and grammar and punctuation, and below in writing.

The Mean Scale Score (MSS) performance when compared to SQSS shows that student results are similar for all strands, with the exception of Year 5 spelling, and grammar and punctuation which are above SQSS.

School performance in relative gain at the Year 3 and 5 for the 2014 to 2016 cohort is above SQSS in all strands.

Improvement strategies

Provide continuing PD for all staff members to ensure their data literacy skills enable deeper understandings of data and the implications for learning.

Ensure data collection processes are purposeful and student outcome data is analysed and interpreted to inform teaching and learning.



3.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

The school staff demonstrate an understanding of the importance of positive and caring relationships to successful learning and work to build mutually respectful relationships across the school community.

The school presents as calm and orderly and classrooms are focused on learning. A positive tone is apparent across the school and classrooms are inviting and welcoming. Students, parents, community and staff members speak highly of the school and value its welcoming and professional culture.

The RBPS outlines the school's commitment to nurturing behaviour that supports a culture for care and support for all students. The school's expectations for behaviour '*be safe, be respectful, be responsible and be a learner*' are known by students. Teachers engage students in classroom activities relating to the five keys to success from Program Achieve.

A school-wide reward system is established with *gotchas* and individual class awards evident. Students are regularly recognised on assemblies for positive behaviour.

There is a whole-school process for recording behavioural incidents within the school. This data is shared with staff members. Positive behaviours are yet to be regularly recorded across the school.

Staff and parents report there is a changing demographic within the school which is impacting on the school's culture. Increasing numbers of students are presenting with complex and challenging behaviours. This is reflected in the School Opinion Survey (SOS) with 62.5 per cent of parents believing student behaviour is well managed. There is a need to ensure the whole-school processes for managing behaviour are embedded to ensure a consistency of approach in maintaining a safe, supportive and disciplined learning environment.

A collegial culture of mutual trust and support is demonstrated amongst school staff. Staff members speak positively regarding the support provided by colleagues and the school's leadership team. Communication between all staff members is professionally respectful.

Improvement in attendance is a predominant focus of the school and this is articulated by all school staff. The year-to-date average attendance is 91.2 per cent. The percentage of students attending less than 85 per cent is currently 9.1 per cent. Student attendance is closely monitored and procedures are developed to respond to student absences. The principal engages with the families of students with high absenteeism.

The 2016 SOS indicates that 100 per cent of staff enjoyed working at the school. 100 per cent of staff, 95.5 per cent of students and 88.2 per cent of parents were satisfied that 'this is a good school'.



Parents, staff and students interact positively and relationships are mutually respectful and caring. Parents are encouraged and welcomed as partners in their child's learning.

Improvement strategies

Review the school's approach to effectively managing behaviour to ensure strategies relating to a whole-school approach are embedded across the school.



3.4 Targeted use of school resources

Findings

School resources are targeted to address the range of student learning needs with the school budget aligning to local and system priorities. Budgetary processes and decisions are made by the principal, in consultation with the administration officer.

The current bank balance is \$422 338. The budget overview report indicates that cost centre expenditure relating to teaching and learning needs closer monitoring to ensure that the full range of planned initiatives are actioned in a timely manner.

The school's Investing for Success (I4S) funds are strategically allocated to support the learning needs of students across the school. In 2016, the school received \$90 275. The plan indicates that priority is given to employing a part-time Head of Curriculum (HOC), providing teacher aide time for learning intervention and purchasing resources to enhance the teaching and learning process.

The principal has established a leadership team which includes the HOC, Head of Special Education Services (HOSES) and Support Teachers – Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN). These school leaders work alongside teaching staff to support the implementation of curriculum, teaching and learning across the school


The school has a Special Education Program (SEP) which is led by the HOSES and provides support to Students with Disability (SWD). Three STLaNs work across the school for various fractional allocations each week. A combination of in-class and withdrawal programs are provided to support the learning and social/emotional development of students identified for access to these programs.

Trained teacher aides conduct the Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI) support program and SSP program across the school.

The facilities of the school are well maintained with work continually being undertaken to upgrade existing facilities. Recently, a recreational and performance area has been completed to provide an aesthetically pleasing and functional space for use by students and staff members.

The school's P&C is active. The P&C works with the school principal to identify collaboratively agreed projects for completion, including the recreational and performance area. This year the P&C will provide in excess of \$30 000 to support this project.

The school employs teachers in Health and Physical Education (HPE), music and a teacher librarian. These teachers work for various fractional allocations each week providing students with learning experiences in their specialist areas.



Teachers and students have access to a computer lab on a timetabled basis. Teaching staff report they have access to a limited number of digital devices in their classrooms, with some reporting the devices they have are not working. There is a need to review the number and range of digital devices available to support the teaching and learning process in the school.

The principal reports that it is increasingly difficult to attract and maintain high quality teachers at the school. The development of a workforce plan, in consultation with regional human resources personnel, detailing current and future staffing needs for the school is yet to be developed.

Improvement strategies

Create a workforce plan, in consultation with regional human resource personnel, to ensure staffing needs of the school are met.

Monitor cost centre expenditure to ensure the full range of planned initiatives are actioned in a timely manner.

Review the technology replacement schedule to ensure appropriate levels of teacher and student access to digital devices to support teaching and learning.



3.5 An expert teaching team

Findings

The school leadership team demonstrates a strong focus on improving teaching and learning. Teachers exhibit individual and collective commitment to improving student learning and wellbeing.

The school is held in high regard within the community. Parents and members of the school community express confidence in the staff members of the school and comment favourably on their dedication to their work.

The professionalism of staff members at the school is apparent with teachers and teacher aides demonstrating commitment to implementing teaching and learning programs that will enhance the learning of all students in an inclusive culture.

Throughout 2016, teaching staff report they have participated in a number of PD opportunities at the school and in learning environments beyond the school. Most teaching staff express satisfaction with the opportunities provided for PD, a number of staff members report these could be improved. A PD plan is yet to be developed for the school which details the range of learning opportunities available to staff members across the year.


The school has engaged with the regional curriculum, pedagogy and learning team who offer professional learning programs to schools across the region. Programs are offered in reading, EI, writing, mathematics and the literacy continuum.

School leaders conduct walkthroughs of classrooms and provide teachers with some informal feedback on their classroom performance. The formalisation of this practice by informing staff members of the purpose and outcomes of these walkthroughs, to further consolidate curriculum priorities, and provide teaching staff with feedback on their classroom performance is yet to be developed.

The STLaN leads a process to engage teachers in collegial coaching and mentoring opportunities. Most teachers report they have availed themselves of this professional learning opportunity during this year. Recently classroom teachers were involved in a '*warm fuzzies*' process with colleagues invited into their classroom to provide informal feedback. Further opportunities to be involved in this valuable professional learning process to assist the school to develop consistent teaching practices in identified areas, is yet to occur.

All teachers have completed their Annual Performance Development Plan (APDP) and are able to describe how they have engaged in progressing their learning with their personal goals.

APDP for teacher aides are yet to be completed. Teacher aides report a strong desire for more in-school, professional learning opportunities and feedback on their performance.



The school promotes collaboration and teamwork through meetings of staff. Collegial conversations are held in these meetings relating to curriculum planning, assessment, moderation and reporting processes. Teaching staff express they value the opportunity to discuss teaching and learning with colleagues.

Collaborative curriculum planning is a process that previously occurred through cohort meetings. Teaching staff report they would value the opportunity to reintroduce these meetings to plan collaboratively in their cohort teams with the support of school leaders.

The school's leadership team act as instructional leaders in the school and are assisting teachers to grow their skills in identified focus areas. Members of this team are at different stages in their leadership journey. Ongoing support to further develop the skills to lead teaching and learning in the team members designated areas is yet to be established.

The school provides opportunities for teaching staff to take on leadership roles outside of the classroom. Experienced senior teachers have designated roles across the school and other classroom teachers are offered opportunities to contribute to a school committee structure. Regular opportunities to meet, plan and action agreed priorities to reinvigorate the committee structure of the school is yet to occur.

Induction programs are developed for new staff members at the beginning of each year. Beginning teachers are mentored by a senior member of staff. Beginning teachers report that the support provided by their mentor is valued in assisting them to develop their professional skills and understand how the school works.

In 2016, the development of staff members is supported through a dedicated PD budget of \$9 500.

Improvement strategies

Develop a professional learning plan, aligned to the school's priority areas and APDP, which provides a broad range of learning opportunities for all staff members.

Provide opportunities for all teachers to be involved in regular, timetabled peer coaching and mentoring processes within and beyond the school.

Provide opportunities for all staff members to plan, action and review APDP.

Provide opportunities for members of the leadership team to further develop their capacity and abilities as instructional leaders in the school.



3.6 Systematic curriculum delivery

Findings

The school leadership team recognises the importance of providing a comprehensive curriculum plan for teaching staff and have invested resources over a number of years into developing an organisational tool, the '*A1 Curriculum Planner*'. This planner provides a structure for listing explicit outcome criteria, or '*I can*' statements, for English, mathematics and science aligned to the content descriptions and achievements standards of the AC.

Most teachers noted that they use the '*A1 Curriculum Planner*' to guide their initial planning of classroom units, and that it gave them some guidance on what needed to be covered in their curriculum units. Some teaching staff express uncertainty regarding whether the tool was delivering on its original purpose because of ongoing technical challenges with its implementation. This has resulted with inconsistency in its application across the designated curriculum areas.


Teaching staff are provided with a unit overview template to assist in organising content in key learning areas. Previously, teachers found cohort meetings valuable opportunities to discuss their curriculum planning with colleagues. Teaching staff report they would value the re-introduction of these meetings on a regular basis to enable collaborative planning of curriculum units with colleagues on similar year levels.

Some teachers noted that they used the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) as a resource to assist with the planning of lessons to deliver the content of the curriculum. A number of teachers indicated they designed their own unit content material from other sources including a range of commercial programs in reading comprehension, vocabulary development, writing, spelling and science. There is inconsistent evidence of whole-school approaches aligned to the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the school.

Teaching staff report that they do not teach history or geography as separate subjects within the current school curriculum. The school principal has acknowledged that this situation is under review to ensure that the school fulfils its commitment to the delivery of all mandated curriculum subjects. The incorporation of aspects of the cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities into the curriculum programs is yet to be developed.

Teaching staff are using an essential assessments program as a guide to assist their knowledge of student learning attainment in English and mathematics.

All teaching staff participate in cluster-based moderation activities in writing, during Terms 1 and 4, which assists to build confidence in making balanced assessment judgements. Some teachers reported they take the opportunity to informally moderate work samples and assessment tasks with fellow teachers at other times. Formal opportunities for teaching staff to formally moderate student work with colleagues to ensure there is a consistency of judgement for A-E ratings across the range of learning areas is yet to be fully developed.



Beginning teachers report they would value further guidance with the quality of their assessment and planning decision-making.

Efforts are made to consider alignment of the planned and enacted curriculum. A quality assurance process for ensuring the horizontal or vertical alignment of the curriculum from Prep to Year 6 is yet to be developed.

Improvement strategies

Conduct a review of the school curriculum plan to ensure consistent and systematic approaches to planning, implementation, evaluation and quality assurance of the enacted curriculum.

Ensure that appropriate time allocations for mandated curriculum learning areas are implemented by all teaching staff and monitored by the school leaders.

Expand the use of formal moderation processes within the school to build consistency and confidence in teacher judgement across all learning areas.



3.7 Differentiated teaching and learning

Findings

The principal and staff members are committed to the success of all students. This was demonstrated through conversations with staff members who clearly identified a widely held belief that while students may be at different stages and rates of learning, they are all capable of success.

The school has processes developed to identify student learning needs and target resources to improve learning outcomes by implementing individual and group teaching practices. There is a school-wide process established for the management of student referrals and determination of the appropriate intervention strategies and responses. This process is supported by the HOSES, STLaN, Advisory Visiting Teacher (AVT) and guidance officer to provide a strong foundation for differentiated learning for identified students.

The school is supported by a number of regionally-based, support staff. Face-to-face cluster meetings involving AVT are held once a month. The AVT – speech language impairment visits three times a term to assess students and provide advice on support programs.

The school currently provides additional resourcing to support the intervention of students, specifically for reading, spelling and mathematics. Most intervention programs are delivered to small groups of students by the HOSES, STLaNs and teacher aides.

36 students currently have documented Individual Curriculum Plans (ICP). These are collaboratively developed by specialist support staff, classroom teachers and parents and are regularly reviewed.

The school has implemented an E-Speech Tele Health Program. University students under the leadership of speech therapists deliver online speech assessment to identified students. The program provides individual student reports for use by the visiting AVT-speech language impairment, student support team, teachers and teacher aides.

The school has invested in developing early literacy skills for students through the SSP program, aligned to the AC in Prep.

A LLI intervention program is delivered to identified students in Years 3 to 6. Students receive two, 40 minute sessions each week for 10 weeks to support the development of skills in reading and writing. PD is provided to teacher aides involved in the delivery of this program. Students indicate that they felt more confident in their reading ability as a result of being involved in this program.

There is concerted effort from teaching staff to understand all students' current knowledge, skills and learning difficulties to identify appropriate starting points for learning. Differentiated learning experiences are planned in English and mathematics through the use of a differentiation '*surfboard*' planner.



In some year levels, teaching staff have begun to introduce the use of personalised learning goals for students. A school-wide approach for establishing learning goals in order to build student capacity to monitor their own learning and set goals for future learning is in a developmental phase.

Opportunities are provided each year for high achieving students to apply to be accepted into regionally organised enrichment camps. This year, six students attended either a mathematics/science or English extension camp. The school acknowledges further work is required to develop staff capacity in curriculum planning to support the learning of high achieving students.

Parents express satisfaction with how the school is supporting the learning of their child. Many parents indicate their child regularly tells them about what they are learning in their classrooms and that they are eager to come to school.

Improvement strategies

Maintain the whole-school approach to ensure differentiation is an ongoing school priority and is a feature of every teacher's planning and practice.

Further support classroom teachers for planning and delivery of differentiated learning experiences for high achieving students.

Implement a consistent school-wide process for the development of student learning goals which are regularly monitored and reviewed.



3.8 Effective pedagogical practices

Findings

All staff members at the school demonstrate a strong conviction to effective teaching. There is a belief that this is the key to improved student learning. All staff members accept personal responsibility for driving improvements in teaching and learning throughout the school.

School staff value the establishment of environments that are conducive to learning, are supportive of students and value risk-taking and mistakes as natural parts of the learning journey for each student. Students report they value the positive relationships they have with school staff, and the ongoing support and encouragement they receive during the learning process.

The school has a published pedagogical framework that is based on the Darling Downs South West Region's Lead Model for EI. The Fleming² Effective Teaching Model, the Archer and Hughes³ Principles of Effective Instruction as well as DoTL are identified in supporting the schools approach to pedagogy.

Discussions with teaching staff indicate that the EI model informs their classroom practice and all classrooms display artefacts with relevant terminology, such as WALT, WILF and TIB. Teaching staff are aware of the need for consistent application of the explicit teaching lesson structure especially when covering new content. Some teachers explained how they identified gaps in student learning, using various assessment tasks, and then built follow-up activities into their warm-ups and lesson plans.

New and beginning teachers on staff noted that they had received useful classroom management support from either a mentor teacher or a member of the school leadership team. These teaching staff members indicate that many of the methods and evidence-based strategies associated with the pedagogical framework are new for them, and they are anxious to receive regular observation and feedback on improving their teaching practice.

School leaders express a desire to see effective teaching occurring throughout the school. A broader repertoire of high-yield strategies to ensure students are engaged, challenged and supported in the learning process is yet to be developed.

² Fleming, J., & Kleinhenz, E. (2007). *Towards a moving school: Developing a professional learning and performance culture* (No. 1). Aust Council for Ed Research.

³ Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. Guilford Press.



Some teachers reported they appreciated the opportunity to observe good practice in other colleagues' classrooms. Currently an informal observation, coaching and feedback practice is in operation in the school. School staff members recognise that building a collaborative and collegial coaching approach across the school is an important priority.

Overall, classrooms are well organised and there are good examples of student engagement with learning tasks in most curriculum areas. There was some evidence of student work on display in classrooms and all classrooms provided visible artefacts or prompts to support engaged learning.

Improvement strategies

Review the school's pedagogical framework to ensure that all teachers are consulted in developing collaborative and consistent practices.

Establish an observation and feedback model where leaders and senior teachers work alongside all teachers to develop high quality teaching consistent with agreed, school-wide approaches to pedagogy.



3.9 School-community partnerships

Findings

The school is highly regarded by parents, students and members of the local community. This is apparent by the range of positive and encouraging comments regarding the school from parents, partner schools and other community members. The school is considered an important and valued part of the local community with a significant history of community connection.

Links to local businesses and volunteer groups, genuine engagement with the P&C, and involvement in a range of community events enhance the sense of community and opportunities to nurture the environment for students. Many of these partnerships are long term, and celebrated as part of the culture of the school.

The school has strong links to the local community through activities including the Miles & District Show which allows students from each year level to exhibit a class display and choirs to perform. The annual Christmas Carnival, Spring Carnival, ANZAC Day parade and CWA international day engage students and staff members with the community.

The biennial Beef, Bells and Bottle Tree Festival is a ten-day community event in which the school is heavily involved. The school displays student work in the art show and enters a float into the street parade.


The chaplain acts as a friend to the school community and works alongside the school's guidance officer in supporting student social and emotional development, and wellbeing. The chaplain supports identified families who are experiencing challenges. This service to the community is greatly valued by students and their families.

The community Indigenous Elder identified that cultural awareness programs were previously offered at the school. The principal is aware the cross-curricular celebrations would establish more positive relationships with the school and embrace the Indigenous culture.

The school has commenced its journey as an Independent Public School (IPS). The school council works collaboratively with the principal to strategically plan the future for the school. The building of partnerships with schools on similar education journeys, including other IPS, to benefit to the learning of students and the professional practice of staff members is yet to occur.

There local cluster of schools is and involves the local high school, Wondoan State School, Taroom State School and five other small schools. This cluster offers professional networking and learning opportunities for staff members within these schools.

The high school has established a Miles and District Youth Action Forum with the purpose of having a focused approach to engaging young people and leadership. The school's principal is a contributing member of this forum.



The transition processes of Year 6 students to junior secondary are continually being developed. The schools currently share Book Week activities. The high school principal indicates that she would value working collaboratively with the primary school on Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) for a more consistent approach to behaviour. Further collaboration will occur into the future with more opportunities for successful transitions, sharing of facilities, extension learning opportunities for students and professional networking options being explored.

The school has established relationships with local pre-Prep providers. Positive partnerships with these early childhood providers is established with students attending two visits per term as part of the transition process to the school. An early childhood network is established to support professional networking and provide parent education programs.

The local community centre which is federally funded offers Outside Hours School Care (OHSC) to students from the primary school.

A National Rugby League junior development officer is based at the school and runs several community programs across the school, and in collaboration with other schools, promoting the benefits for students to be engaged in sporting activities.

The school uses the passions, interests and expertise of volunteer teachers and parents to provide a range of co-curricular programs for students in cultural pursuits. The school offers an annual Spring Concert which provides students with opportunities to showcase their instrumental and choral performances. Every second year, the music teacher organises a school musical. The school offers choral experiences for all boys in Year 4. Music camp and eisteddfod performances are additional opportunities for students to perform.

The P&C is active and supportive within the school. Contributions from the P&C and successful grant submission have seen the upgrade of an area of the school with an outdoor stage, seating and gardens.

Improvement Strategies

Develop broad, professional networks to bring benefits to the learning of students and the professional practice of staff members.

Deepen networks and partnerships with early childhood providers and the local secondary school to ensure successful transitions.