School Improvement Unit
Report

Yarraman State School

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Yarraman State School from 1 to 3 September 2015. It provides 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 review and report were completed by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU). For more information about the SIU and the new reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the Department of Education and Training (DET) website.

1.2 School context

Location:	John Street, Yarraman
Education region:	South West
The school opened in:	1901
Year levels:	Prep to Year 9
Current school enrolment:	196
Indigenous enrolments:	12.8 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	8.7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	892
Year principal appointed:	2015
Number of teachers:	17
Nearby schools:	Blackbutt State School, Benarkin State School, Cooyar State School
Significant community partnerships:	Cows Create Careers, Vivo Behaviour Rewards, Friends of Yarraman Creek, Over 50s club, Returned and Services League, Community Radio, Blue Light Disco
Unique school programs:	Rising STARS Playgroup

1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of three reviewers.

The review consisted of:

- a pre-review audit of the school's performance data and other school information

- consultation with the school's Assistant Regional Director

- a school visit of three days

- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:

    - Principal and Deputy Principal

    - Guidance Officer

    - 15 teachers

    - 60 students

    - Seven teacher aides and support staff

    - Five administration officers

    - Information and communications technology (ICT) technician

    - Groundsman, four cleaners and bus driver

    - 14 parents

    - Three community representatives and two police officers

1.4 Review team

Mark Blackshaw	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Norm Hunter	External reviewer
Brian O'Neill	Peer reviewer

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school has developed an agenda for improvement in partnership with teachers, support staff, parents and the community.

  There is evidence of a school-wide commitment to every student's success, and staff and community tell a story of school improvement and better outcomes for students. A wide-ranging set of strategies has been developed for improving levels of student achievement and wellbeing. The extensive range of strategies has at times led to an inconsistent implementation of the improvement priorities.

- Curriculum planning and delivery is designed to meet the needs of the range of students within each year level including students with disabilities and other needs.

  Teachers make adjustments for learning needs of students. These are mostly documented in OneSchool or on the standard unit planning template. The school provides planning time across the year for staff to assist in curriculum design. A Yarraman State School Curriculum, Teaching, Assessment and Reporting Plan 2011-2015 exists. The routine access by staff to these documents to inform planning and/or the sequencing of planning across the school is not strongly evident.

- There is evidence that school leaders and staff view reliable student data as an essential component of their leadership of the school.

  The school has appointed a data coach to develop teacher capacity in the analysis of data to inform teaching practices. School leaders use a range of data sources to analyse academic progress and assign support. Data collection in the form of pre and post-testing occurs throughout the school in mathematics and the practice is commencing in English. The development and implementation of a whole-school data plan is yet to be fully enacted.

- School leaders communicate a strong focus on quality learning and student wellbeing. The tone of the school reflects a school-wide commitment to this.

  High levels of trust and respect are apparent within the school community. Positive relationships exist between students and staff and there is an obvious focus on student care and wellbeing. There is a perception within the school and community that classroom behaviour and the general tone of the school have improved significantly. Classrooms are generally orderly, some more so than others.

- The school has a strong commitment to inclusive practices.

  The school has developed a differentiation guide, and there is evidence that these differentiation strategies are beginning to be embedded across the school.

- The school expects all teachers to be highly committed to the continuous improvement of their teaching skills, and to focus on ways to meet the varied learning needs and wellbeing of their students.

  School leaders and teachers are working to embed a collaborative teaching culture in the school. There is evidence that this is occurring, with the principal and deputy principal working in classrooms, and being welcomed by teachers. A commitment to the coaching and feedback process is emerging across the school.

- School leaders and teachers show commitment to continuing improvement in their teaching methods.

  There is a focus on evidence-based strategies such as explicit instruction and coaching and feedback. The use of, *'We Are Learning To'* (WALT), *'What I'm Looking For'* (WILF) and *'This Is Because'* (TIB), is consistently applied across the school, predominantly in the teaching of new skills and content.

- The school applies its financial, human and physical resources to target identified learning and wellbeing needs of students.

  Staff are deployed in ways that address the school's stated priorities, and maximise available staff expertise, interests and talents. School-wide processes are in place to support these priorities. The school budget aligns with school and system priorities.

- The school leaders and teachers see the value of strong links with parents, community organisations and industry.

  School and community relationships have strengthened and are playing an important role in supporting student achievement and engagement.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Narrow and sharpen the focus of the school improvement agenda to enhance school-wide understanding of and commitment to identified priorities and targets.

- Develop a school-wide explicit, coherent and sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that clearly identifies consistent teaching and learning expectations, horizontal and vertical alignment of curriculum offerings, clear practices for monitoring learning across the year levels and the alignment of assessment.

- Create a whole-school data plan and continue to build the capacity of teachers to analyse data to inform teaching practices.

- Engage the school community in a review of the data driven Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) framework. Sharpen the analysis and use of behaviour data to inform and build consistent practice regarding PB4L strategies, particularly continuing to target classroom behaviour.

- Provide ongoing professional development to support teachers in developing their skills and confidence in the analysis and application of data in order to differentiate in the classroom.

- Continue to seek strong alignment of professional development programs with the explicit improvement agenda. Ensure all teachers are committed to and participating in the coaching and feedback process.