

Weir State School

Executive Summary





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.





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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 **Weir State School** from **26 to 28 February 2020**.

The report presents an evaluation of the school's performance against the nine domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#). It also recommends improvement strategies for the school to implement in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

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

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

An action plan will be developed and submitted to SIU and region within six weeks of the school receiving the report.

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Laurelle Allen	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
John Collins	Internal reviewer
Valerie Hadgelias	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Ross River Road, Thuringowa	
Education region:	North Queensland Region	
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6	
Enrolment:	701	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	43 per cent	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	5.9 per cent
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	24.3 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	858	
Year principal appointed:	Final week of 2019	
Significant partner schools:	Rasmussen State School, Kelso State School, The Willows State School, Thuringowa State High School, Kirwan State High School	
Significant community partnerships:	North Queensland Cowboys, The Salvation Army, local church groups, Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS), Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC), North Queensland Cowboys Try for 5!, Blackhawks Sky's the Limit program, Willows Presbyterian Church religious instruction, Coles Thuringowa – breakfast, lunch, Woolworths, Prep Transition program – ELC, CrossFit Townsville – wellbeing donations, Childcare and Kindergarten (C&K) Buddy Reading program, Police Liaison Officers (PLO), Wulgurukaba Walkabouts Dancers, Struddys Sports – student awards, The Smith Family Year 6 Getting Ready for High School, Act for Kids, Lowes Menswear, James Cook University (JCU) preservice teachers, National Rugby League (NRL), Sunbus, Campbells Wholesale, referrals to support agencies, Centacare, UnitingCare Australia, Catalyst, Relationships Australia, Shine, Yumba-Meta Housing Ltd, Life Without Barriers, Evolve	



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, two deputy principals, Head of Special Education (HOSES), Head of Curriculum (HOC), inclusion coach, literacy coach, two wellbeing leaders, guidance officer, chaplain, 24 teachers, 11 teacher aides, administration officer, schools officer, cleaner, 34 parents and 55 students.

Community and business groups:

- President of Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and two community volunteers.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Director C&K, principal Kirwan State High School, deputy principal Rasmussen State School and deputy principal of Thuringowa State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- State Member for Thuringowa and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Explicit Improvement Agenda 2020	Annual Implementation Plan 2020 (Draft)
Investing for Success 2020	Strategic Plan 2017-2020
OneSchool	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2019)
Sample Individual Curriculum Plans	School budget overview
Sample Reports	Learning Progression Tool
School pedagogical framework	Level Of Achievement Tracker
School Opinion Survey	2020 Term 1 Meeting Schedule
KLA Overview Prep – Year 6	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
Data Walls	Assessment Literacy Tool
Line Management Structure	4 Lesson Sequence Planning Book
Headline Indicators (October 2019 release)	Curriculum Overview and Assessment Framework
School newsletters, website, School Bag Application	Report card and NAPLAN update Semester 1 2019
Positive Behaviour for Learning support materials and signage	School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework
School data plan	



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The school is driven by a deep belief that every student should feel confident in their ability to learn successfully.

The school is driving a cultural transformation that embraces high expectations for behaviour and engagement in learning. The newly adopted values '*Strong, Smart, Connected*', provide the school community with a mantra that supports the belief that every student is capable of learning. The school is working to create a learning environment that is safe, physically inviting, and promotes learning.

Staff and community members acknowledge the significant improvement in student behaviour resulting from explicit expectations and consistent rewards and consequences.

The Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) expectations of '*be safe, respectful and responsible*', are displayed prominently around the school with pictures of Poss, the school mascot. Large behaviour expectation matrices are prominently positioned and describe expected behaviours in each setting within the school. Students express a clear understanding of behaviour expectations, rewards, and consequences. Parents and staff members attribute significant improvement in behaviour to improved consistency in practices and the work of leaders.

The principal and other school leaders are united, committed, and explicit in their core objective to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for all students.

Staff members identify that significant change has occurred over a short time period. Many express a desire to more fully participate in decision-making processes to gain deeper understanding of the reasons behind decisions, and ways in which they are able to contribute to the success of the school. Some staff members express the belief that communication and collaboration regarding decision-making processes that impact upon their work and wellbeing could be enhanced.

The newly formed leadership team includes members recently appointed to leadership roles who are committed to finding ways to improve systems and processes across the school.

Members of the leadership team are developing ways to collaborate effectively with each other to strengthen the delivery of the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). The principal expresses a desire to foster the further development of members of the leadership team as instructional leaders to support the implementation of the EIA. This leadership capability building process is in the initial stages.



The school places a high priority on ensuring that classroom teachers identify and address the learning and wellbeing needs of students on a day-to-day basis.

The school is promoting an inclusive approach that advocates for differentiated strategies implemented in classrooms to support students with additional needs to learn, alongside their similar aged peers. Teachers indicate that numerous strategies are utilised across the school with varied levels of consistency. Leaders acknowledge that a whole-school inclusion strategy that explicitly identifies expectations is yet to be developed.

School leaders recognise that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning and engagement throughout the school.

Staff members are committed to the continual refinement of their teaching practice. Marzano's¹ whole-school approach to teaching and learning was introduced a number of years ago. In 2019 a review of the implementation of the pedagogical framework indicated that it was not embedded in the school. School leaders recognise the need to review the pedagogical framework and develop signature practices for the school that embody quality teaching.

The leadership team recognises the importance of developing staff members into an expert teaching team.

School leaders acknowledge that ongoing professional reflection on teaching practice is central to improving student outcomes. Teachers new to the profession are supported through a coaching and mentoring model. This process is yet to be systematically implemented across the school for the benefit of all teachers. Teaching staff express a desire to engage with leaders in cycles of observation and feedback to strengthen their teaching practice.

There is a school-wide commitment to utilising relevant data to enhance learning outcomes for all students.

School leaders and teaching staff prioritise the collection, analysis, discussion and use of data to inform planning and teaching practices across the school. The principal indicates that time is allocated each term to collaboratively discuss data in staff meetings. School leaders and teaching staff routinely use data to monitor student progress, identify starting points for improvement and inform intervention responses for identified students.

The school pays due respect and acknowledges the rich culture and history of the local community.

The school is developing a shared belief regarding the school's purpose and values. The principal has embraced the importance of building positive relationships with the Bindal and Walgurukala communities who are the traditional owners of the land on which the school is built. Connections with local Elders are being strengthened. New signage, including rainbow

¹ Marzano, R. J. (2007). *The art and science of teaching: A comprehensive framework for effective instruction*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).



serpents and *'Weir Strong'* is displayed on buildings throughout the school. Each staff member has been provided with a shirt that promotes the new school values. Some parents attribute feeling a stronger sense of belonging with the school as a result of the deepening cultural focus.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Collaboratively review decision-making processes to ensure that the views of all key stakeholders are taken into consideration in the development of strategic and operational plans and practices across the school.

Build the capability of all members of the leadership team to enhance communication and cohesion across the school and strengthen the delivery of the EIA.

Collaboratively develop an inclusion framework that details agreed processes to enhance engagement, learning and wellbeing for all students, and rigorously monitor its school-wide implementation.

Collaboratively review the existing pedagogical framework to develop an agreed repertoire of high-yield practices and ensure teachers build a deep understanding of these expected ways of teaching.

Develop a systematic process of observation and feedback by school leaders to quality assure the implementation of the agreed curriculum and pedagogical practices in all classrooms.