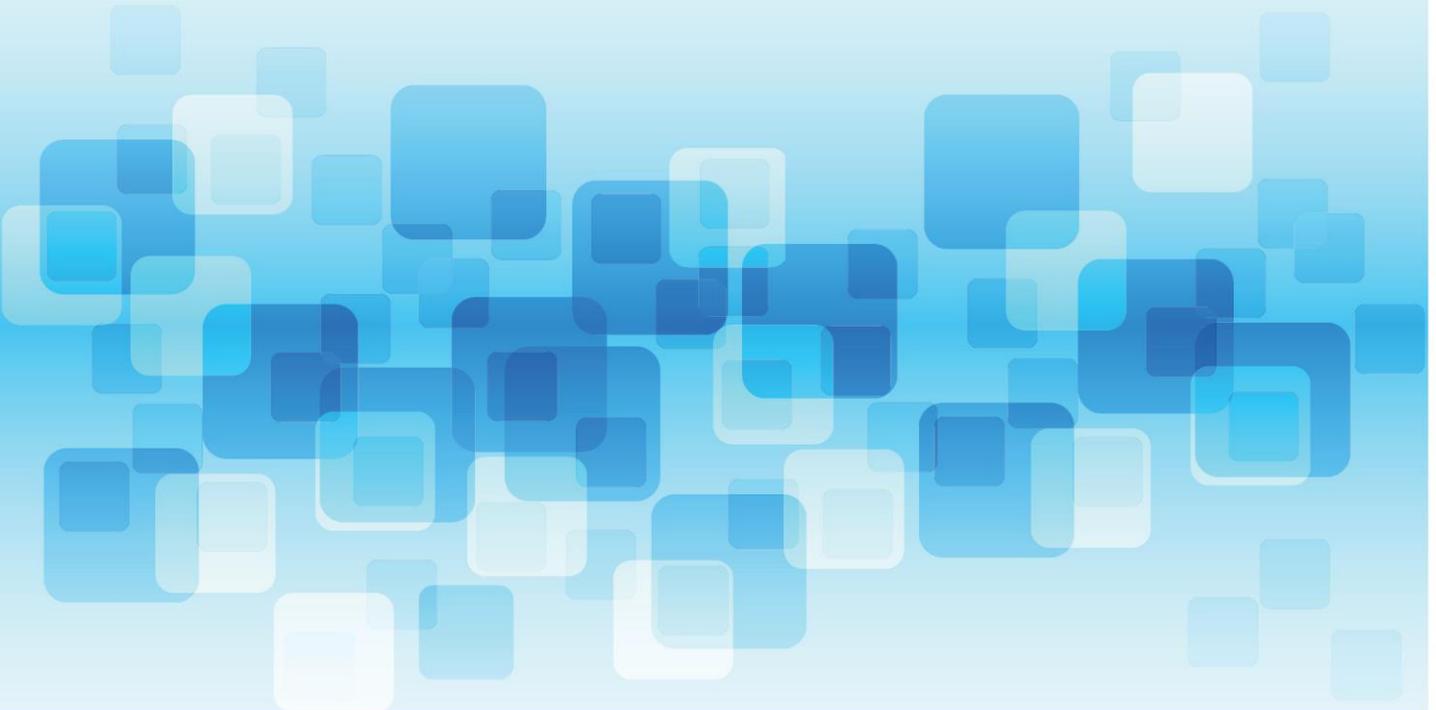




School Improvement Unit Report

Weir State School Executive Summary





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 **6 to 8 September 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.

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

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

1.1 School context

Location:	Ross River Road, Kirwan Thuringowa
Education region:	North Queensland Region
Year opened:	1881
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	760
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	27.6 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	9.7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	891
Year principal appointed:	2005
Full-time equivalent staff:	54
Significant partner schools:	Kirwan State High School, Thuringowa State High School



Significant community partnerships:	Carlyle Gardens (RSL) & Retirement Home, Upper Ross Community Centre, Thuringowa Salvation Army, Psylutions and Headspace, Save the Children Fund Playgroup, Police Citizen’s Youth Club (PCYC), Townsville City Council Tony Ireland Stadium
Significant school programs:	Wakakirri, Deadly Dukes, Wellbeing Support Programs, Global Tropics Future Project, Student Leadership Program, Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) Project with James Cook University (JCU)

1.2 Review team

Garry Lacey	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Peter Doyle	Internal reviewer, SIU
Judy Dale	Internal reviewer, SIU
Rob Lee	External Reviewer

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, three deputy principals, Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Head of Curriculum (HOC), master teacher, four support teachers, guidance officer, behaviour management teacher, Business Services Manager (BSM), four office staff, 20 classroom teachers, 12 teacher aides, student leaders, 40 students

Community and business groups:

- Two community Elders, school chaplain, Parents and Citizens’ Association (P&C) executive, tuckshop convenor, Outside Hours School Care (OHSC) co-ordinator, Salvation Army representative

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Director, Creche and Kindergarten (C&K), homework club organiser

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD



1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2016	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016
Investing for Success 2016	Strategic Plan 2014-2017
Headline Indicators (2015 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2016)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning plan 2016	School Opinion Survey (2015)
School improvement targets	Professional development plans
School pedagogical framework	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
School data plan	School newsletters and website
Curriculum planning documents	Curriculum, assessment and reporting framework

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The school is working hard to position itself as a community hub.

Strong links are established with a broad range of community organisations and the school holds a significant number of events throughout the year to engage with the community.

The tone of the school reflects a school-wide commitment to purposeful and successful learning.

Staff members demonstrate an understanding of the backgrounds students come from and recognise the importance of positive and caring relationships to successful learning. Staff members work hard to maintain a classroom environment that is learning focused and inclusive of all students.

School leaders and staff work proactively to establish a strong culture of belonging, school pride and connectedness through a range of strategies including the school mascot, whole-school community events and school pride days.

The school places a high priority on student wellbeing as demonstrated by the range of supportive school programs including KidsMatter initiatives, lunchtime clubs, breakfast club, chaplaincy program and partnering with community organisations to provide additional support for students and their families.



There is a strong focus on collaboration and teamwork across the school with a high level of commitment from staff members to improving the learning outcomes of students.

The school has established Professional Learning Communities (PLC) aligned to their year level teams and key school priorities. These provide high levels of professional and collegial support for teachers. Year level teaching teams meet regularly to co-operatively plan curriculum units and interrogate data. Teachers readily engage in these activities and are committed to improving their professional practice.

The school has identified a range of priority areas and strategies as central to its improvement agenda.

The school leadership team and staff members readily identify attendance, reading comprehension and sentence structure in writing as central to the school's current improvement agenda. Staff members identify student wellbeing, behaviour, school connectedness, effective teaching, data collection and monitoring, curriculum development, learning walls, student folios and developing assessment literate learners as additional priority areas.

The school's curriculum plans draw on the content descriptions of the Australian Curriculum (AC) and Curriculum to the Classroom (C2C) assessment tasks and associated Guides to Making Judgements (GTMJ).

The school utilises a unit planning template to guide teachers in the collaborative development of locally relevant units. This process is designed to support the capacity building of teachers and ensure a consistent and coherent approach to curriculum planning and delivery. This newly adopted process is an emerging practice across the school.

The school has recently embarked on the implementation of the Art and Science of Teaching (ASoT) as a pedagogical framework.

The school's Professional Development Plan (PDP) for 2016 has strong alignment to the pedagogical framework. The current focus for implementation is on developing an understanding of elements relating to Design Question 2. Teachers are working towards using these practices in their classrooms. It is recognised that time needs to be given to developing a common understanding to enable consistent implementation of this new approach to pedagogy in the school.

Significant efforts are made to understand student achievement levels, and to identify areas for individual student and school improvement through the collection and analysis of a range of data.

The school has established targets for A-E levels of achievement. Strengthening the alignment between National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) achievement, school-wide assessment data and Levels of Achievement (LOA) A-E ratings for students is yet to be undertaken.



The leadership team makes strategic and operational decisions relating to the curriculum, teaching and learning to ensure that appropriate allocations are provided to key cost centres, human resources are distributed to support learning, and physical resources are maintained appropriately.

In 2016, the school is investing significant funds into locally funded positions. Key elements of these purchases include the employment of a wellbeing team, additional teacher aide time and additional members of the leadership team. The school is yet to conduct a review of the effectiveness of these targeted human resource allocations on student attendance, wellbeing and learning outcomes.

Staff members demonstrate a strong sense of ownership and pride in the school.

Staff speak positively of collegial support and efforts made by fellow staff members to ensure staff wellbeing. Some staff members report on the increased workload involved in their commitment to a variety of improvement strategies. The School Opinion Survey (SOS) for staff indicates a decline in staff wellbeing. The leadership team is aware of this trend and articulates a commitment to exploring strategies to improve morale, address workload challenges and staff wellbeing.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Narrow and sharpen the school's explicit improvement agenda.

Embed the collaborative curriculum planning process to support the development of a locally informed relevant curriculum aligned to the AC.

Embed the school's pedagogical framework to ensure all teachers have a clear understanding of agreed high-yield strategies for consistent implementation in all classrooms.

Investigate the relationship between LOA (A-E), NAPLAN data and other data collected by the school with regard to quality assuring reporting of student achievement to parents and students.

Collaboratively review the effectiveness of targeted human resource allocations, aligned to the school's learning and wellbeing agenda, to ensure they are maximising learning outcomes for students.

Collaboratively develop, implement and monitor strategies to maintain high levels of staff wellbeing.