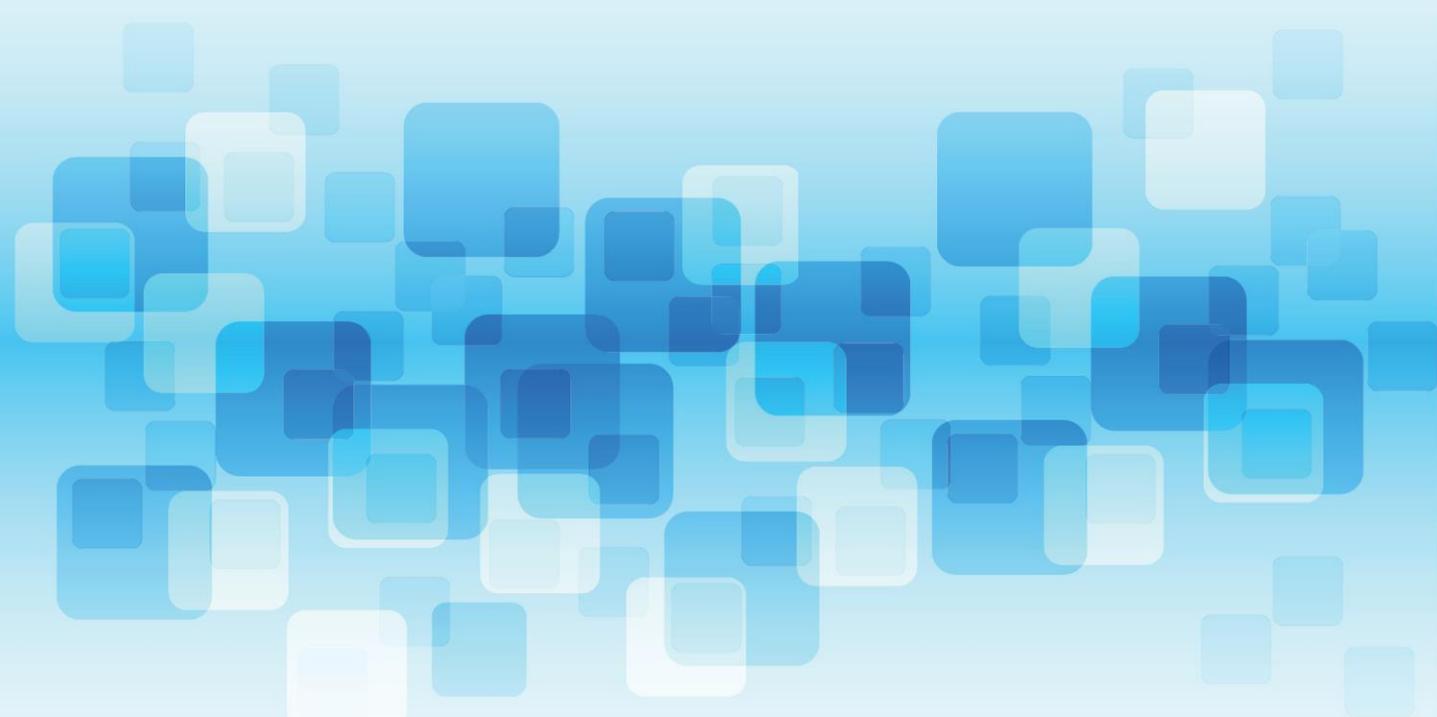




School Improvement Unit Report

Calliope State School





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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Calliope State School from 22 to 24 March 2016. 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:	Stirrat Street, Calliope
Education region:	Central Region
The school opened in:	1872
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	597
Indigenous enrolments:	7 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	5 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	977
Year principal appointed:	Semester 2, 2015
Number of teachers:	42 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Benaraby State School, Tannum Sands State School, Gladstone Central State School, Yarwun State School, Boyne Island State School, Ambrose State School, Clinton state School, Nagoorin State School, Gladstone West State School, Ubobo State School, Gladstone South State School
Significant community partnerships:	Moderation Cluster – Tannum Sands State School, Boyne Island State School. Benevolent Society – Mobile Playgroup/Kindy, Calliope Swimming Pool, Calliope Kindergarten
Unique school programs:	123 Magic



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, deputy principal, Head of Curriculum (HOC), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), master teacher, Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy(STLaN), and two pedagogical coaches
 - Business Services Manager (BSM)
 - Guidance officer
 - 32 teachers
 - Four teacher aides, Indigenous teacher aide and two administration staff members
 - 24 students
 - Chaplain
 - Tuckshop convenor
 - School facilities officer
 - Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and 15 parents
 - Community partners

1.4 Review team

Michael Gordon	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Sandra Perrett	Peer reviewer
John Wessel	External reviewer

1.5 Reading the report

The executive summary outlines key findings from the review. The key improvement strategies prioritise future direction for improvement. The executive summary should be read along with the findings and improvement strategies outlined in the nine domains which provide a strategic view for improvement.



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school leadership team and school staff are united and committed to an explicit improvement agenda with strong links to student learning.

The school principal and the leadership team are dynamically driving a focused and powerful improvement agenda that is clearly concentrated on improving learning outcomes for students. The school's instructional leadership capacity has been strengthened and will bring high levels of energy, commitment and expertise to their roles and apply these strategically to drive the school's explicit improvement agenda.

- The school has developed a comprehensive assessment schedule and data collection plan.

The documented plan includes multiple assessment tools for literacy and numeracy. This plan outlines goals, targets and timelines for students in each year level from Prep to Year 6. Benchmarks within the plan reflect school and regional expectations. Teachers report a variety of methods and approaches to analysing student achievement data. Data literacy skills and capability varies across the staff.

- Positive and productive relationships are evident though the school community.

The school is held in high regard by parents and the wider community. Many parents, staff and community representatives comment positively regarding the caring and supportive environment at the school.

- Developing the school curriculum plan in 2016 is a priority.

The development of the whole-school curriculum plan based on the Australian Curriculum (AC) will enable teachers to clearly identify consistent teaching and learning expectations and expected curriculum planning requirements.

- A range of professional structures and systems are in place to develop effective pedagogy and expert teaching teams.

The school is working towards the redevelopment of their pedagogical framework which identifies its signature practice of Explicit Instruction (EI). In 2016, the school appointed two pedagogical coaches and a Head of Curriculum (HOC). Elements of the school's signature pedagogical practice and EI are referred to by a number of teachers to support differentiation.

- Rapid enrolment growth and high staff turnover presents significant challenges.

Rapid enrolment growth in recent years continues to impact regarding resource management at the school. A significant turnover of staff in the past two years and a rapid growth in school enrolments are identified as factors that may have influenced cultural change.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Review and clarify existing roles and responsibilities of the school leadership team and communicate this to all staff.
- Develop and implement a whole-school curriculum plan reflecting the school's pedagogical framework and aligned to the AC. Identify consistent teaching and learning expectations and planning requirements.
- Conduct rigorous data discussions that inform teaching practice.
- Develop a whole-school set of consistent expectations for differentiation, including how and where this information is recorded and what is expected in the classroom.
- Develop a systematic plan that ensures the redevelopment of the school's pedagogical framework aligns to the school improvement priorities.
- Develop a sustainable, systematic model of coaching and mentoring which aligns classroom practice with the school's explicit improvement agenda.
- Develop systematic processes to ensure the school prioritises the enhancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure and resources to provide engaging and innovative teaching and learning environments.



3. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains

3.1 An explicit improvement agenda

Findings

The school leadership team and school staff are united and committed to an explicit improvement agenda with strong links to student learning.

The school's improvement agenda as identified in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) 2016 includes wellbeing, curriculum with a specific focus on reading and numeracy and pedagogy. The priorities are accompanied by a range of explicit targets and performance measures.

Most teaching staff indicate an understanding of and commitment to the explicit improvement agenda. The identified targets and performance measures are perceived as aspirational. Some staff feel challenged by the increase in expectations.

There is a range of targeted strategies focusing on a learning and wellbeing framework, student behaviour, student attendance and the development of a curriculum plan. This focus includes: staff data literacy, a pedagogical framework, professional learning and signature practices. The curriculum focus is on reading and numeracy with a continuing focus on writing for 2016.

The improvement agenda has been communicated in various forums, including staff meetings, the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) meetings, the school's newsletter and website.

It appears that parents have not yet been involved in the development of the school's explicit improvement agenda. Some parents indicate an awareness of the explicit school improvement agenda. All parents are very supportive of the staff's efforts.

The school has experienced significant change in leadership and teaching staff throughout the last two years in a climate of rapid enrolment growth. This has had an impact on the school.

Some progress is evident in the systematic monitoring of the effectiveness of improvement initiatives and school programs.

Supporting data

Strategic Plan 2013-2016, Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016, Investing for Success 2016, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, school improvement targets, pedagogical framework, School Performance Plan 2016, Assessment Schedule: Expectations and Processes, budget overview, school website, school and class newsletters, staff members, student and leadership team interviews.



Improvement strategies

Progress the school's explicit improvement agenda with appropriate resourcing and professional development for all school staff.

Invoke a range of communication strategies to engage parents and the school community in the school's explicit improvement agenda.



3.2 Analysis and discussion of data

Findings

The school has developed a comprehensive assessment schedule and data collection plan. The documented plan includes multiple assessment tools for literacy and numeracy. This plan outlines goals, targets and timelines for students in each year level from Prep to Year 6. Benchmarks within the plan reflect school and regional expectations.

Student achievement data is collected and stored by teachers through OneSchool and a regional data collection software program, Central Queensland Student Support System (CQ3S). A member of the school leadership team is responsible for coordinating the collections of data across the school.

Teaching staff report a variety of methods and approaches to analysing student achievement data.

Data literacy skills and capability of staff members vary.

Most teaching staff report a level of common usage for OneSchool dashboard data.

Most class teachers are using data as a starting point for improvement strategies. The links between use of data and appropriate curriculum and pedagogy by teachers are not clear in some classrooms.

The close monitoring of student attendance data has enabled the school to improve student attendance levels at the time of writing the review.

Writing and numeracy are two improvement priorities in the 2015 AIP for the school.

In National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) 2015 data the Mean Scale Score (MSS) for Year 3 and Year 5 in writing and numeracy are similar to Similar Queensland State Schools (SQSS).

Students performed similar to the nation in National Minimum Standards (NMS) in writing in Year 3 and 5, similar to the nation in Year 3 numeracy, and above the nation in Year 5 numeracy.

In 2015, Upper Two Bands (U2B) results were below SQSS in both writing and numeracy strands for Years 3 and 5.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016, Investing for Success 2016, School Performance 2016, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, school improvement targets, pedagogical framework, Assessment Schedule: Expectations and Processes, budget overview, OneSchool, staff members, student, parent and leadership team interviews.



Improvement strategies

Develop and implement data literacy opportunities to build staff capability.

Conduct rigorous data discussions that inform teaching practice.



3.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

The tone of the school presents as positive, caring and happy.

Positive and productive relationships are evident through the school community. The school provides a respectful and productive environment as evident by the School Opinion Survey (SOS) data and interview responses from staff, parents and students. The school is perceived as a welcoming place for teachers to teach, students to learn and parents to participate in school activities.

The school currently operates a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) program (referred to as School Wide Positive Behaviour System (SWPBS) in school documents) to support student behaviour. Parents and staff report a favourable positive change in behaviour in recent months.

The school is inclusive in its practices and appropriately recognises Indigenous culture within the school community. The Special Education Program (SEP) operates with an inclusive philosophical approach. There is strong evidence that the SEP staff work cooperatively with students and class teachers. The Head of Special Education Services (HOSES) operates a model of leadership and management across a cluster of several neighbouring schools.

One of the three core strategic priorities for 2016 is student wellbeing as identified in the school's AIP. A set of strategies and actions to support the implementation of the wellbeing initiative are outlined in the plan.

Within the context of school improvement, the school leadership team has identified a drive for growing the culture of high expectations for students and staff. The improvement that is outlined in school targets and benchmarks demonstrates the commitment to this cultural change. A significant turnover of staff in the past two years, and a rapid growth in school enrolments are identified as factors that may have influenced cultural change.

In 2015, the student attendance level was 92.9 per cent. 12.3 per cent of students attended school for less than 85 per cent of the school year. In the first five weeks of 2016, the attendance level was 96 per cent.

In terms of student behaviour within the 2015 SOS, 81.5 per cent of parents and 73.6 per cent of students indicate that student behaviour is well managed.

The 2015 SOS data indicates that 94.1 per cent of staff members, 100 per cent of parents and 85.6 per cent of students indicate that Calliope State School is a good school.



Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016, Investing for Success 2016, Assessment Schedule: Expectations and Processes, Headline Indicators, budget overview, school website, school newsletters, School Opinion Survey, staff members, student, parent and leadership team interviews.

Improvement strategies

Monitor cultural change processes as applied to the implementation of various school and systemic curriculum and teaching and learning initiatives.

Monitor student absenteeism with a focus on those students with less than 85 per cent attendance.



3.4 Targeted use of school resources

Findings

A number of key instructional leadership resources have been recently added to the school's existing leadership base including: Head of Curriculum (HOC), master teacher, and pedagogical coaches. Funds from Great Results Guarantee (GRG) and Investing for Success (I4S) have been allocated to provide these additional resources.

Additional ongoing regional professional support to assist these new roles is also evident.

The school budget is developed collaboratively with staff members led by the principal. Staff members are consulted in the budget process to ensure resources are aligned to strategic priorities. The current bank balance at the school is \$444 047.

Rapid enrolment growth in recent years continues to impact on resource management at the school. A vacancy for a permanent Business Service Manager (BSM) has not been filled for five years.

The school endeavours to build staff capability as a key driver for school improvement. Most staff report the value of professional learning that was undertaken in 2015 around the teaching of writing. Some staff indicate improved outcomes in student writing as well. A two-day program to train staff in the use of Teaching Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Skills (THRASS) as a whole-school phonics program is highlighted.

School facilities and school grounds are well maintained, and parents acknowledge recent improvements. Staff members and parents acknowledge the development of a new administration and teaching block that will commence construction in the immediate future.

The current Information and Communication Technology (ICT) resources including: limited internet connectivity, wireless access, limited technical support and appropriate staff training are significant issues for the school. This is identified as a factor in the delivery of teaching and learning using digital technology in classrooms

The role that teacher aides play in classrooms is valued. The school prioritises the allocation of general teacher aide time to support early years' classrooms. The teacher aides indicate they are valued as staff members, although further opportunities to participate in staff professional learning would enhance their capabilities to support teaching and learning in the classroom.

Predicted continued enrolment growth at the school may present new challenges in terms of future resource allocative models used by the school.



Supporting data

Strategic Plan 2013-2016, Annual Implementation Plan 2016, School Performance Plan 2016, Investing for Success 2016, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, pedagogical framework, Assessment Schedule: Expectations and Processes, budget overview, school website, school newsletters, OneSchool, staff members, student, parent and leadership team interviews.

Improvement strategies

Develop systematic processes to ensure the school prioritises the enhancement of ICT infrastructure and resources to provide engaging and innovative teaching and learning environments.

Develop a strategic plan for professional development that aligns with key priorities within the school.

Ensure alignment of key instructional leadership resources with school improvement agenda.



3.5 An expert teaching team

Findings

The school leaders recognise the development of staff into an expert and coherent school-wide teaching team as central to the improvement of learning outcomes for all students.

There is a statement regarding roles and responsibilities of school leaders. There is limited evidence that these are being enacted to ensure the successful alignment of classroom practice with the school's explicit improvement agenda.

Over recent years there has been a high turnover of teaching staff which has impacted negatively regarding the development of an expert teaching team and the drive for a culture of high expectations. There is strong evidence that most teachers are confident and eager to expand their knowledge and abilities to improve student learning outcomes.

Teachers share and capitalise on their knowledge and expertise through staff and cohort meetings, and targeted professional development. These collaborative and consultative meetings provide opportunities for horizontal sharing of information, including planning, assessment and moderation activities. Limited vertical alignment, including the sharing of student information and relevant data takes place at these meetings.

Teaching staff report the presence of an induction program and the initiation of a formalised beginning and new teachers mentoring program to meet staff members' needs. This proactively assists with the development of the school's explicit improvement agenda.

There is no school-wide professional learning plan in place. Teaching staff develop their annual performance development plans. The implementation and development of a plan for the completion and action of annual performance development plans is a focus of the school's explicit improvement agenda.

School leaders engage in class visitations, modelling and mentoring of staff, particularly with the significant number of new and beginning teachers. The development and implementation of a formalised coaching and mentoring model is a focus of the school's explicit improvement agenda.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2016, School Performance Plan 2016, Investing for Success 2016, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, pedagogical framework, Assessment Schedule: Expectations and Processes, budget overview, school professional development days, annual performance development plans, staff and leadership team interviews.



Improvement strategies

Review and clarify existing roles and responsibilities of the school leadership team and communicate this to all staff.

Develop a sustainable, systematic and differentiated model of coaching and mentoring which aligns classroom practice with the school's explicit improvement agenda.

Develop a school professional learning plan that includes the actioning of staff members annual performance development plans.



3.6 Systematic curriculum delivery

Findings

Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) has been adopted as the curriculum for all year levels from Prep to Year 6. Late in 2015 the school received regional support from the Principal Education Advisor: Australian Curriculum (PEA-AC) to learn to front-end the assessment and adapt the C2C units to effectively meet student needs.

At the beginning of 2016, a HOC was appointed to the school. The role of the HOC is to develop a whole-school curriculum plan, based on the AC. Individual Curriculum Plans (ICPs) are based on the AC. There is limited evidence of the school using the AC.

The school's signature pedagogical practices as cited by the leadership team, class teachers and in the school-wide pedagogical framework is Explicit Instruction (EI). A priority is given to applying the principles of EI when teaching new concepts

In 2015, the explicit school improvement priority was writing. This involved the introduction of the *7 Steps to Writing* across the school. CQ3S was used to collate and analyse writing data. This provides significant information about student improvements in writing to the class teachers and the master teacher. A draft writing framework has been developed and is not yet published.

The consistent approach to the teaching of reading is identified as an action in the Annual Implementation Plan 2016. Reading groups are a common practice in many classrooms, particularly in Years 1 and 2. Teachers draw from a range of data sources, including Early Start, and identify school reading strategies to plan and implement appropriate learning experiences, including having a clear lesson focus.

Teachers plan collaboratively within year levels. There is little evidence of vertical alignment. Some teachers express an interest in working with teachers from year levels above or below them to better understand the transition from one year level to the next.

Staff members are provided with planning time to work with the PEA-AC when they develop their English unit plans.

The curriculum box contains a wide range of information including, but not limited to, information about curriculum, planning, pedagogy, literacy, numeracy, behaviour, thinking strategies and smart moves. Not all of the resources in the curriculum box appear to be current.

The Assessment Schedule: Expectations and Processes is a comprehensive document outlining the diagnostic and summative assessments that are expected across the school. This document is highly detailed and teachers appear to complete all required assessments. Results are expected to be recorded on OneSchool or the CQ3S.



Moderation of assessment tasks is evident, both internally between teachers within the school, and with other schools in the Gladstone Region. Reporting processes are aligned with C2C. They are designed to provide parents and families with information about the achievement of curriculum intentions and suggestions for ways for the individual student to further improve.

Supporting data

Strategic Plan 2013-2016, Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Assessment Schedule: Expectations and Processes, pedagogical framework, Curriculum Boxes 2016 including the 2013 Whole-School Curriculum Overview, draft Writing Framework, 2015 Student Report samples and school newsletters, staff, student and leadership team interviews.

Improvement strategies

Develop and implement a whole-school curriculum plan reflecting the school's pedagogical framework and aligned to the AC. Identify consistent teaching and learning expectations and planning requirements

Provide additional staff professional development for the implementation of the AC, utilising C2C as a resource, front-ending the assessments and creating 'know and do' tables.

Review the effectiveness of the unit planning templates and expectations.



3.7 Differentiated teaching and learning

Findings

The school motto is '*Everyday, in every classroom, every student is learning and achieving*'. There are many visual reminders of this around the school.

The school has a clear process of student referral to the student services committee. A case management process is established, and relevant resources are included. This is then reviewed at a later date. Information related to inclusive practices is shared at weekly staff briefings.

Teaching staff report a variety of approaches to differentiation. The most formalised form of differentiation is in the ICPs. The determination of who requires an ICP is not clear. The HOSES has commenced a process for teachers to examine the AC and identify where adjustments to the curriculum are required.

Most teachers are able to articulate, at some level, the way that they differentiate their teaching. Some teachers identify three main groups in their class: below year level, at year level and working above. They plan for these three groups. In a small number of classes, this involves activities being adapted to the students' learning styles. In some classes, there is evidence that the student work is adjusted. Teachers from Prep to Year 2 effectively articulate how they differentiate their teaching.

Elements of the school's signature pedagogical practice are referred to by a number of teachers to support differentiation. The EI phases of *We Do* and *You Do* are specifically referred to when discussing approaches to differentiate the teaching and learning.

There is limited evidence that teachers consistently identify ways of differentiating the teaching and learning in their daily planning. Some teachers record differentiation strategies in their unit planning.

At the beginning of 2016, special education staff members provided classroom teachers with a one-page profile regarding the students with a disability who were in their classes. The profile provides generic information about the disability, appropriate teaching strategies and specific information about the individual child.

There is evidence that some teachers analyse student data to identify future areas for teaching. This is not consistent across the school. Teaching staff utilise pre-assessment tools. There is an expectation that this information is then used to inform the next step in the teaching and learning cycle.

Student reports include statements in English, mathematics and science identifying what is needed for the child to progress.



Supporting data

Assessment Schedule: Expectations and Processes, Student with a Disability: Student Profile, student report samples, school unit plan templates, Individual Curriculum Planning, OneSchool, staff members, student, parent and leadership team interviews.

Improvement strategies

Develop a whole-school set of consistent expectations for differentiation, including how and where this information is recorded and what is expected in the classroom.

Review staff understanding of differentiation in classroom pedagogy, including relevant professional development for all staff.

Review processes for identification and selection of students regarding an ICP and develop ICPs collaboratively.



3.8 Effective pedagogical practices

Findings

School leaders articulate EI as the research-based pedagogical practice across the school.

Pedagogy is one of the three key elements of the AIP 2016. The three key strategies include the redevelopment of the school's pedagogical framework, professional learning and signature practices. A pedagogy team has been established with teachers from every year level on the team.

The pedagogical framework is well written, explicit and comprehensive and has EI as its signature practice. The document and the EI strategies are well known by all staff members. Many staff members have received assistance and guidance from the regional pedagogical coach and walk-throughs occurred in 2015. This is to monitor and support teachers in implementing the important elements of EI. An EI sheet is included in the pedagogical framework.

In 2016, two pedagogical coaches were appointed to the school and formal EI lesson observations have commenced this year. Both coaches are classroom teachers. The school leadership team has ensured that teachers are able to access a pedagogical coach. They either observe them teaching or do demonstration lessons. This support is received favourably by most teachers, particularly the staff who are new to the school.

Most teachers are able to articulate their understanding and implementation of EI. The pedagogical coaches provide written feedback to teachers.

Teaching staff are encouraged to provide feedback to students regarding ways they can improve students' responses to assessment tasks. This is to further improve the students' levels of achievement. There is limited evidence of written feedback in students' workbooks.

There is limited evidence of goal setting with students in classrooms.

A range of relevant and current EI resources are included in the Curriculum Boxes.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2016, pedagogical framework, Curriculum Boxes 2016 and staff, student and leadership team interviews.

Improvement strategies

Develop a systematic plan that ensures the redevelopment of the school pedagogical framework to align to the school improvement priorities. Incorporate key elements of EI including a schedule of lesson observations and feedback with specific attention given to the significant number of beginning teachers.



3.9 School and community partnerships

Findings

Parents and the wider community hold the school in high regard. Many parents, staff members and community representatives comment positively regarding the caring and supportive environment at the school.

Students indicate that they are very proud of their school. The 2015 SOS data, indicates high levels of satisfaction from staff, parents and students that this is a good school.

The school's P&C is focused on the enhancement of student learning outcomes. They are financially supporting the school's improvements of the educational and physical resources, as well as the school's environment.

Strong relationships have been developed by the school with community groups, including Rotary, Queensland Police Service, the Gladstone City Council and local Indigenous leaders. This provides mutually beneficial outcomes for all groups.

The school communicates with the wider community through a variety of mechanisms including school newsletters and the school website. Teachers communicate class information, student learning experiences and programs to parents through class newsletters.

A strong relationship exists with Gladstone State High School. This has produced transition programs, student and teachers visitations, and a number of mutually planned special events that support student transition.

The school has a productive relationship with the local early childhood provider. This has resulted in a high degree of professional sharing and development of the transition to Prep for local students.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, school website, school newsletters, staff members, student, parent, community and leadership team interviews.

Improvement strategies

Broaden the engagement of key community members and partners in a meaningful manner when creating key strategic documents.

Build on current partnerships with early childhood providers to strengthen the transition of students into the prep year.

Enhance the professional learning community with neighbouring schools by sharing professional practice and building teacher capability.



4. Follow-up timelines

- School to publish the executive summary on their website within two weeks.
- School to meet with Assistant Regional Director to discuss review findings and improvement strategies.