Stanthorpe State School

Executive Summary

School Improvement Unit

Queensland Government

Contents

1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Stanthorpe State School** from **26** to **28 June 2018**.

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.

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU website.

1.1 Review team

Stephen Bobby	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Alana Scott	Peer reviewer
Garth Hunt	External reviewer

1.2 School context

Location:	Marsh Street, Stanthorpe
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region
Year opened:	1874
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	283
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	11 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	8 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	954
Year principal appointed:	2012
Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):	15.05
Significant partner schools:	Stanthorpe State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Granite Belt Support Services Inc., Queensland Health – Stanthorpe Hospital
Significant school programs:	SCORE (Skim and Scan, Connect and Question, Organise your thinking, Read and Reflect, be the Expert), The Arts, Granite Belt competitions, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Friday afternoon activities

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, Head of Curriculum (HOC), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Business Manager (BM), administration officers, reading support teacher, guidance officer, chaplain, 16 classroom teachers and specialist teachers, 14 teacher aides, Information Technology (IT) technician, grounds officer, 41 parents and 56 students.

Community and business groups:

- Three Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) representatives, Country Kids Early Learning Centre – educator, Rainbow Kids Early Learning – educator, Granite Belt Support Services Inc. – therapy manager and occupational therapist and BUSHkids – director.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Stanthorpe State High School – acting principal, Greenlands State School – principal, Glen Aplin State School – principal, Severnlea State School – principal and Thulimbah State School – principal.

Government and departmental representatives:

- State Member for Southern Downs, Southern Downs Regional Council Councillor and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2019	Strategic Plan 2016-2019
Investing for Success 2019	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2019)
Headline Indicators (April 2019 release)	School budget overview
OneSchool	Professional learning plan 2019
Curriculum planning documents	School improvement targets
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
School data plan	School newsletters and website
School Opinion Survey	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	AEDC School Profile 2018

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The principal, staff, students and parents express a sense of belonging and pride in the school.

The leadership team is committed to improving learning outcomes and providing a positive learning environment for all students. The vast majority of parents consistently articulate that staff members are welcoming, approachable and supportive, exhibiting great care and concern for all students. Students articulate that they value the positive relationships they have with school staff members and the ongoing support and encouragement they receive during the learning process. Students value the care afforded them by the entire school staff.

Many parents comment on the strong sense of inclusion for all students and families.

Positive, inclusive and caring relationships between students, staff and parents embody this school's environment. Diversity is embraced and accepted. Staff members promote and maintain an environment reflective of the expectation that all students, regardless of the diversity of their backgrounds, can learn and belong within an inclusive school and classroom.

Whole school community members speak openly of the positive impact the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) practices have had on student behaviour.

Staff members indicate that significant work has been undertaken to implement PBL as the consistent way of recognising student behaviour. The school's PBL program is well established with staff, students and parents speaking of the positive impact it has delivered. Positive behaviour is regularly acknowledged through the school reward system of Gotchas. Students speak with a great deal of fondness regarding the Gotcha rewards. Many parent conversations reveal that students frequently comment positively in regards to their receipt of Gotchas during their day at school.

The leadership team is committed to improving learning outcomes and providing a positive learning environment for all students.

All staff are familiar with the school priority areas and express a commitment to the anticipated improvements of student learning outcomes. They are able to identify some specific success stories for individual students, particularly in reading. Teachers are at different stages in their ability to implement the writing improvement agenda in their classrooms. The leadership team is committed to supporting teachers to embed agreed strategies relating to the improvement priorities and to continue monitoring implementation to enable appropriate levels of support for identified teachers.

The school leadership team clearly articulates a belief that reliable and timely data regarding student outcomes is crucial to the school's improvement agenda and to classroom planning for effective learning.

The school's data collection schedule outlines the collection of a range of diagnostic formative, summative and systemic assessments for each year level. The deep analysis of school data to inform teaching is the responsibility of key support staff. The data literacy skills of teachers vary across the school. Teacher ownership and responsibility for classroom actioning of any collected or analysed data is a developing practice.

The school's signature pedagogical approach is grounded in Anita Archer's[1] Explicit Instruction (EI) model incorporating the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR).

All staff articulate the school's commitment to the implementation of the EI method. Teachers express a commitment to the process and articulate that their personal confidence continues to grow. They are supportive of further developing their pedagogical practice using this approach. The leadership team articulates that the enhancement of the current feedback and observation practices to a process more aligned to coaching by both school leaders and teaching colleagues will increase pedagogical skills.

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

The implementation of the classroom teaching practices across the school, and lesson design and delivery, are predominantly at the discretion and expertise of individual teachers. Some teachers informally discuss professional learnings and share best practice. Some staff identify that formal opportunities created for teachers to collaborate in their planning and/or to share high-yield strategies would be welcomed. The depth and quality of this planning vary across the school. Class teachers speak positively regarding having consistent and supportive processes for curriculum direction, discussion and development.

Teaching staff members are encouraged to support and monitor the progress of individuals within their class.

Conversations with teachers identify they work to build student belief in their ability to be successful learners, including the direct relationship between effort and success. Students are able to articulate feedback from staff that focused on effort and success and some students can discuss feedback provided through the use of the success criteria that informed their next learning steps. Teachers identify that the giving and receiving of descriptive feedback to students is developing.

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[1] Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching.* New York, NY: Guilford Press.

The school has an active Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) that provides valuable services and funds through fundraising activities each year.

The P&C manages the school's tuckshop that is available to students each Wednesday and Friday. The tuckshop is conducted solely by volunteers who organise donations and baking rosters to provide this valuable service for families. The main P&C fundraising event is the Spring Stampede which is hoped will become an annual event.

The principal believes strongly in building strong and productive alliances with schools in the local area.

A strong Granite Belt Community of State Schools (GBCoSS) is established with a focus on networking with 13 other local schools. The principal monitors the wellbeing of principal colleagues across the cluster. The principal is leading a cluster project that has a focus on reading and is supported by the reading centre. Cluster principals acknowledge the strong personal support they receive from the principal. The principal is acknowledged by peers for the way that the school's human and physical resources are made available to support the work of the cluster.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Work with teachers to embed the agreed non-negotiable practices relating to the improvement priorities, what this looks like in their classrooms and monitor implementation to ensure consistency of practice.

Intentionally develop formal opportunities for teachers to develop their data literacy skills to support teacher ownership of student achievement data.

Build upon the observation, coaching and feedback culture, involving all staff, to provide timely support and advice on classroom pedagogical practices to ensure consistent application of the signature pedagogy to all teaching.

Build teacher capability to implement effective and appropriate differentiation strategies and adjustments when collaboratively planning and constructing learning experiences that are accessible, engaging and challenging for all students.

Collaboratively develop a whole-school student feedback model with clear expectations in providing effective, regular and timely feedback to students, to make clear what actions individuals can take to further learning progress.