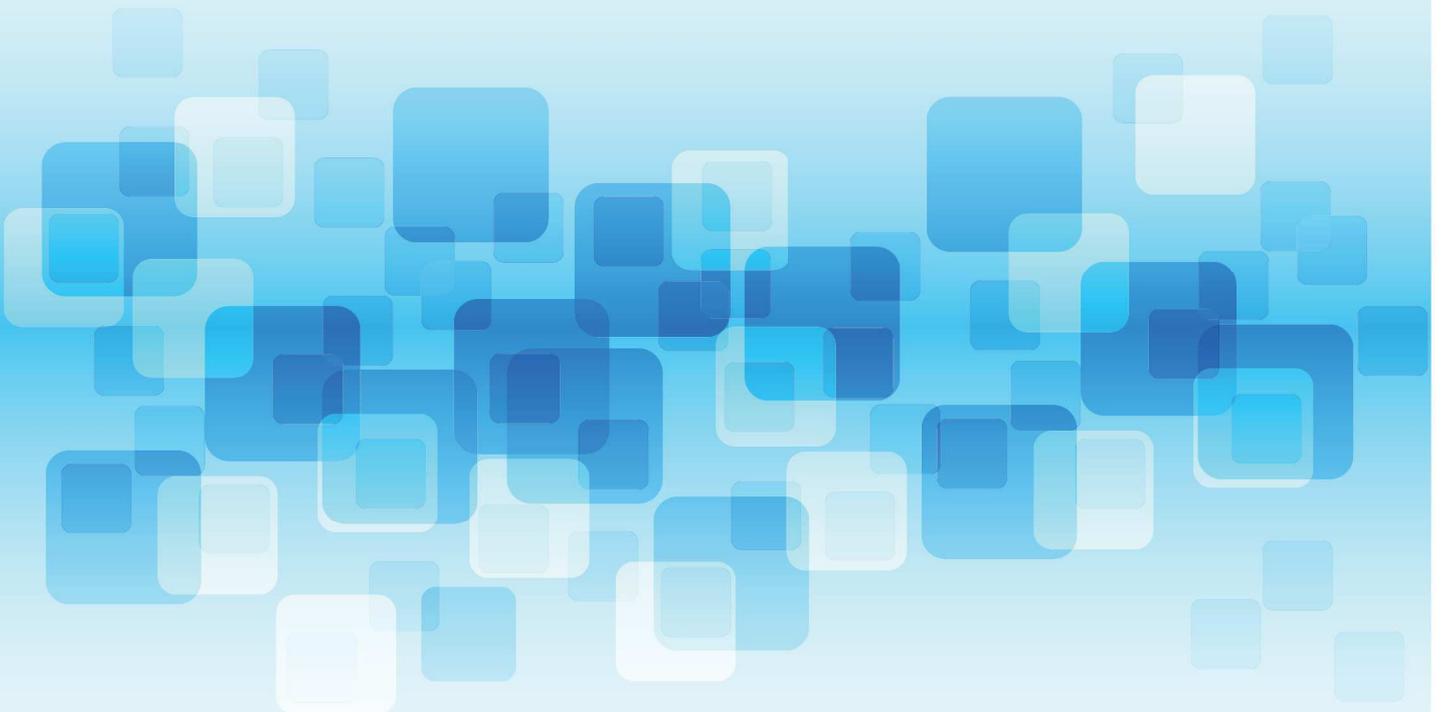




School Improvement Unit Report

Mirriwinni State School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Mirriwinni State School from 14 to 15 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:	3 Whitman Street, Mirriwinni
Education region:	Far North region
The school opened in:	1916
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	62
Indigenous enrolments:	23 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	Nil
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	958
Year principal appointed:	2001
Number of teachers:	3 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Babinda State School, Bartle Frere State School, Goondi State School, Bellenden Ker State School, Innisfail East State School
Significant community partnerships:	Landcare Terrain - Innisfail, James Cook University, Babinda Harvest Festival, Reef Guardian Schools, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) links with local sporting and community events
Unique school programs:	SPEED (Student-led Physical Exercise Program) Mathletics, GRIP Student Leadership, Readers' Cup



1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of two 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 two days
- interviews with staff members, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal
 - Three classroom teachers and two teacher aides
 - Administration officer
 - 24 students from Year 4 to Year 6
 - Four parent representatives of Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C)
 - Community representatives
 - Principal, Babinda State School

1.4 Review team

Alan Whitfield

Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Catharina Patterson

Peer reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The principal and staff members demonstrate a commitment to the success of every student and school improvement.

The school improvement agenda focuses on three broad priorities – successful learners, local decision making and school performance. Improved spelling and the use of data to inform teaching practice are stated as explicit improvement strategies. The enthusiastic staff work together as a team to find opportunities that enhance the learning of all students. Clarity in regards to whole-schooling strategies, timelines and targets is developing.

- There is a strong sense of community evident in the school and a high priority is placed on building positive and respectful relationships between staff members, students and parents.

Staff members demonstrate high expectations for learning and behaviour and articulate their belief that all students are capable of achieving. Parents and community members share a belief that the school welcomes them as partners in learning and view the teaching team as hard working and passionate about ensuring that all students are successful learners.

- The school places a high priority on retaining the best possible teaching staff within their small school setting.

Teaching staff are confident and committed to refining their teaching skills and practice. Teachers and teacher aides appear open to constructive feedback that develops further understanding of the teaching and learning process. Some modelling of high-yield teaching strategies, observation and feedback occurs. Classroom observation and feedback processes have been discussed and are yet to be developed.

- Priority is given to constructing learning experiences that are accessible and engaging for students.

Attention is focused on priority curriculum areas, particularly spelling and mental computation strategies, to ensure students are proficient in the basics of literacy and numeracy. Teaching staff articulate a high level of commitment to the importance of providing engaging learning experiences.



- The school has developed a curriculum tracking tool that backward maps units taught in each class over time.

A scope and sequence mapping coverage of the content descriptors, mandated by the Australian Curriculum (AC), is evident, but not yet fully enacted. The use of Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units in the classroom are used as resourcing to inform teaching and assessment. Teachers also develop locally relevant curriculum units, aligned to the AC.

- The school has expectations regarding the use of effective teaching strategies throughout the school.

The school has a pedagogical framework and the principal recognises the need to reflect on current research about effective teaching practices to inform a review of the framework. There is some evidence of the *Gradual Release of Responsibility* model in action. These are not consistent and are yet to be embedded in classroom practice.

- The school collects a wide range of data to inform classroom differentiation.

Teaching staff support students at their learning level and track individual data to adjust to the needs of individual students in the classroom. Teaching staff are at different stages of data literacy and appreciate the support of ongoing data conversations led by the principal.

- Formal processes for observations and feedback are acknowledged as the next stage in building staff members' capability.

There is evidence that teachers reflect on their classroom practice. Opportunities are available for teachers to de-privatise practice through classroom observations, within the school context. This is yet to be embedded in practice. Informal feedback processes have been undertaken, by the principal, to build staff members' capacity in the delivery of high-yield teaching strategies.

- The school clearly has a positive reputation in the broader community.

The Parents & Citizens' Association (P&C) and community members are highly supportive of the school agenda. Members of the school staff and P&C are involved in preparations for the School Centenary being held in October of this year. Parents see the staff members as being approachable and express appreciation with the level of communication received through the school newsletter and other digital media.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Refine the whole-school curriculum plan to ensure alignment between the intended and enacted curriculums, unit plans, assessment tasks and the AC.
- Collaboratively refine the school's pedagogical framework.
- Embed a culture of observation and feedback linked to the school's improvement agenda.
- Develop and embed a culture of collaboration to share high-yield teaching practices.