

Toolooa State High School

Executive Summary





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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Toolooa State High School** from **20** to **23 July 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.

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

1.1 Review team

Alan Smith	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Tony Kennedy	Peer reviewer
Robyn Kent	Peer reviewer
Tony McGruther	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Philip Street, South Gladstone	
Education region:	Central Queensland Region	
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12	
Enrolment:	1085	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	12 per cent	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	8 per cent
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	24.9 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	973	
Year principal appointed:	June 2018	



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, four deputy principals, two guidance officers, nine Heads of Department (HOD), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Business Manager (BM), 55 teachers, 51 students, nine inclusion assistants, two administrative assistants, schools officer – grounds, schools officer – facilities, School Based Youth Health Nurse (SBYHN), Youth Support Coordinator (YSC), youth worker, Community Education Counsellor (CEC), school-based chaplain, information technology assistant, president, secretary and operation manager of Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and 19 parents.

Community and business groups:

- Representative of Education Queensland and Industry Partnership (EQIP), representative of Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy (QMEA), representative of CQUniversity (CQUni) and representative from Rotary Club of South Gladstone.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of Kin Kora State School, principal of Gladstone South State School, principal of Gladstone State High School and principal of Tannum Sands State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Mayor of Gladstone Regional Council, ARD and Lead Principal.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2020	Strategic Plan 2017-2020
Investing for Success 2020	School Data Profile (Semester 1 2020)
Headline Indicators (May 2020 release)	School budget overview
OneSchool	Curriculum planning documents
Professional learning overview 2020	School newsletters and website
School 'flip book'	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
School data analysis and collection plan	School Opinion Survey



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Staff members and students demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to the importance of developing positive and caring relationships within the school community.

Students articulate a sense that they are cared for and supported at the school, and feel safe, individually known, and happy to attend school. Parents are appreciative of the attention provided by staff members to support students to be successful learners and future leaders in the community. They indicate the extensive range of learning pathways and attention to each student's wellbeing continues to strengthen connections with families. Staff speak positively of the school and of the school's leadership team.

School leaders have identified the building of an expert teaching team as a key element of school improvement.

School staff members express a commitment to understanding the importance of the continuous improvement of their teaching practice. Leaders and teaching staff have undertaken significant professional learning, including involvement in networks and clusters, to build their expertise in planning, teaching, assessing and reporting on learning associated with the introduction of the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) and associated assessment and certification processes. Teachers describe high levels of confidence in teaching in their fields. The school has introduced 'Period 5' this year, as a means of providing teachers with dedicated time for intentional collaboration. Teachers speak highly of these formal opportunities to work together across year levels and within faculties to drive school improvement in curriculum alignment with the Australian Curriculum (AC), and a consistent whole-of-school approach to curriculum and assessment planning and teaching.

School leaders and staff members are united in their desire to improve student outcomes.

The principal articulates high expectations for student attendance, engagement, behaviour and academic outcomes. The school's core values of *'respect, responsibility and achievement'* are visible throughout the campus, and are regularly referenced by staff members and well known to students. The principal identifies the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) as quality-assured curriculum, wellbeing, and effective teaching. Staff members' knowledge and understanding of the EIA vary.

Teachers are committed to the continual refinement of their teaching practice.

School leaders articulate that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning throughout the school. They are actively supporting staff to develop a consistent approach to teaching and learning. As part of the school's approach to consistent pedagogical practices, all teachers are expected to clearly identify for students each lesson what they will be learning; why they are learning it; the skills involved; and the success criteria for the lesson. This is known locally as WWSS. Teachers and students identify



WWSS as an embedded practice across the school. A systematic process for school leaders to quality assure the implementation of the pedagogical framework and to provide ongoing feedback to all teachers is yet to be embedded in practice.

School leaders articulate a strong commitment to the growth of each learner.

Staff members express their support for this direction, and participate genuinely in the processes of identification of need and consequent differentiation. The pursuit of student progress is embedded in the cycle of staff discussions and curriculum planning. Staff articulate that the impact of the 'Know Your Class' collection of data, the analysis of elements of assessment and the analysis of a range of diagnostic data provide evidence for informed professional discussions. The school has established a number of structural differentiation systems including extension classes for Years 8 and 9 mathematics and English, and Year 10 science. In addition, the Junior Support Program (JSP) has been recently established to re-engage students with schooling, and 'Flexi' provides special learning provisions and a flexible curriculum for students in Year 10 who are at risk of disengaging from school. Students in Years 7 and 8 with high-end needs are grouped within 'Toolooa House' to receive highly focused teaching. The school's enactment of inclusion, its delivery of differentiated teaching, and alignment to core values and beliefs are yet to be collaboratively determined.

The school's leadership has established a clear agenda to develop assessment-literate teachers and students driven by data competent teachers and leaders.

Faculties and teams are supported to define explicitly the assessable elements of units of work. A regular and rigorous process is conducted by the Curriculum Excellence Team (CET) to build consistency and continuous improvement in the assessment of progress and achievement. Writing samples are collected twice per term and analysed by leaders, with results being presented to staff for discussion and analysis. Focused Correction Areas (FCA) are identified from this data. Teachers indicate that they are seeking greater knowledge of the diagnostic tools being applied for reading and writing to assist them to determine the appropriate focus and quality of their response.

The school has developed processes for targeted differentiation based on diagnostic evidence collected through the school's data strategy.

Teaching staff members express their commitment to delivering differentiated teaching and learning. FCAs are identified for action by faculties and teams in service of the reading and writing improvement agenda particularly within junior secondary school. The 'Student Success Journal' additionally invites students across all phases of learning to identify their own FCAs for action over time. Some teachers refer to the challenge of assessment whereby students are unable to demonstrate their full learning within elective subjects due to their deficits in literacy. Some teaching staff describe their challenge in designing units and lessons that cater to the range of needs in their classes. Teachers and leaders identify the need for additional focused professional learning in the planning and pedagogical processes for authentic differentiation.

**The school is well regarded by the wider community.**

Parents and community members speak positively of teachers and their work in encouraging students to succeed. School leaders are held in high regard and are respected across the Gladstone community. Leaders of the school recognise the value of nurturing partnerships with families, businesses and community organisations. The intentional and strategic growth of partnerships has provided students and staff members with access to additional learning opportunities, services and resources enhancing engagement and student outcomes. They express the commitment from business, industry and community partners adds value to the school curriculum program and supports student wellbeing.

The school applies its resources in a targeted manner to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all students.

Teaching spaces are well presented and effectively used. The school presents as a neat, welcoming and professionally maintained environment. A major infrastructure project has recently been completed at the school, with students and staff expressing high levels of satisfaction with the state-of-the-art 'T' block. Leaders place priority on identifying, attracting, recruiting, developing and retaining the best possible school leaders and teachers.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Refine the focus of, and clearly communicate, the EIA and associated targets to promote increased clarity and sustainability of practice.

Enact a systematic approach to quality assure the implementation of the school's pedagogical approaches, through lesson observation and feedback to teachers, by school leaders.

Confirm the school's beliefs regarding the nature of inclusion and differentiation, and design the processes that align with these beliefs at the school.

Provide further professional learning focused on the useful analysis of diagnostic and tracking tools in current and emerging use to inform teachers regarding their implications for planning, teaching and assessment.

Conduct focused professional learning to support the design of differentiated units, assessment and lessons.