

Blackwater State 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 School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Blackwater State School** from **30 April** to **2 May 2019**.

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)
Jim Tiernan	Peer reviewer
Garth Hunt	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Wey Street, Blackwater
Education region:	Central Queensland Region
Year opened:	1877
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	195
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	27 per cent – 2018 data
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	20 per cent – 2018 data
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	868
Year principal appointed:	2019
Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):	15.38
Significant partner schools:	Blackwater North State School, Blackwater State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Anglicare Central Queensland, Central Highlands Regional Council, BUSHkids, Queensland Cricket, Blackwater North State School, Blackwater State High School, Crèche and Kindergarten (C&K) Blackwater Kindergarten, BMA (BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance), Coronado Curragh Pty Ltd, Dyno Nobel, Central Queensland Indigenous Development (CQID)
Significant school programs:	Anglicare programs, breakfast club, ukulele club, guitar club, Make it Space, Head of Department (HOD) – literacy in conjunction with BMA Australia, Blackwater State High School and Blackwater North State School



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, acting Head of Curriculum (HOC) – student services, Head of Department (HOD) – literacy, cluster Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), small schools Business Manager (BM), administration officer, guidance officer, workplace health and safety officer, 10 classroom and specialist teachers, five teacher aides, tuckshop convenor, 28 parents and 37 students.

Community and business groups:

- Two Parents and Citizen's Association (P&C) representatives, Youth Development Officer – Central Highlands Regional Council, CQID Family Officer, Community Partner Officer – Dyno Nobel and Queensland Cricket Participation Officer.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of Blackwater State High School and principal of Blackwater North State School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2019	Strategic Plan 2017-2020
Investing for Success 2019	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2018)
Headline Indicators (Semester 2, 2018)	School budget overview
OneSchool	School newsletters and website
School pedagogical framework	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
School Opinion Survey	Blackwater State School Curriculum Overview



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Staff members frequently speak of the ongoing and embedded sense of care for the students of the school and their families.

Staff recognise the importance of parents and families as partners in their child's learning and are approachable and proactive. Interactions between staff members, parents and students are polite. Staff members and community members identify that even though there are recurrent changes to the teaching staff engaged at that school, the sense of family endures.

The school has established a Student Support Team (SST) with a unified vision for student learning and teacher practice throughout the school.

This team meets regularly, works effectively together and addresses a wide range of areas affecting student learning including school processes, external support agencies and student behaviour. The SST has introduced meetings with all class teachers early in 2019 to determine where students were in their learning journey, which students required additional learning support and which students would benefit from extension activities. Staff members identify this as a valuable practice and express a desire to build their ability to analyse their students' data.

The school's newly formed leadership team is united and committed to improving learning outcomes for all students.

The principal has mapped potential school improvement priorities and recognises a need to prioritise these with the support and guidance of regional personnel. The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) details strategies for the school priority agendas. Most teaching staff are able to identify that writing and reading are key curriculum focus areas for the school. A range of teaching practices is utilised to engage students in writing and reading learning experiences. Teachers articulate that a whole-school approach that outlines the expected teaching and learning strategies for advancing these priorities is yet to be formulated or implemented.

The school works to maintain a learning environment that is safe, respectful and inclusive.

The school has a documented Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS) that is designed to guide teacher implementation of school behaviour management practices. The RBPS clearly documents processes for addressing student behaviour that are detailed in the school's behaviour matrix and flow chart. Staff members express a level of frustration regarding the consistency of student behaviour management and application of the RBPS processes, within and outside the classroom.



School leaders acknowledge the need to closely monitor the implementation of an Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA).

Staff members express a commitment to improve student learning outcomes. A number of staff members identify the need for further communication and clarification of the specific expectations of the EIA in relation to their teaching and the impact on student learning. Specific roles and responsibilities for the principal and all staff members to lead the implementation of the EIA across the school are yet to be documented and communicated.

The school has a documented plan for curriculum delivery across Prep to Year 6.

This curriculum plan is referenced to the Australian Curriculum (AC) and delivered through the Curriculum to the Classroom (C2C) resources. Individual teacher lesson planning and preparation of curriculum resources are apparent. Planning processes vary across the school. Quality Assurance (QA) processes to ensure all content descriptions are embedded in planning and implementation are yet to be developed. Staff members express the need to collaboratively develop and embed a consistent approach to planning and unpacking the AC.

The school's leadership team recognises the need for consistent whole-school approaches to teaching and learning.

School leaders articulate a desire to see effective teaching occurring throughout the school. The current school pedagogical framework identifies Explicit Instruction (EI) as the signature pedagogy. A placemat has been developed to support teachers in implementing the framework. The use of EI to inform lesson planning or other artefacts typical of this pedagogy is not visible in classrooms.

The school is a valued community member and enjoys a reputation of being a significant partner in the local community.

The school actively seeks ways to enhance student learning and wellbeing by partnering with parents, families, other education institutions, local businesses and community organisations. Close and productive partnerships with a range of community organisations and businesses are successfully established to improve opportunities and outcomes for students.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

With the support of regional personnel, develop an EIA that defines the actions and timelines for the implementation of the identified school strategies, initiatives and programs in the teaching of writing and reading.

Ensure high expectations for student behaviour are maintained and that all roles and responsibilities for the consistent application of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) practices are well known, enacted and monitored.

Develop clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, with accompanying aspirational targets of success for key staff driving the agreed agendas.

Develop an agreed school collaborative planning process to support staff-designed classroom curriculum that is aligned to the AC, and include school expected literacy demands and strategies to engage the full range of students.

Clarify the school's signature pedagogy and its role in progressing the EIA.