

Newtown State School

Executive Summary





Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Review team.....	3
1.2 School context.....	4
1.3 Contributing stakeholders	5
1.4 Supporting documentary evidence.....	5
2. Executive summary.....	6
2.1 Key findings.....	6
2.2 Key improvement strategies	9



1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Newtown State School** from **11 to 13 June 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

Mike Ennis	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Lisa Morrison	Peer reviewer
Pam Hall	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Albert Street, Newtown
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region
Year opened:	1924
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	398
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	27 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	904
Year principal appointed:	2017
Day 8 teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):	21.3
Significant partner schools:	All schools in the Southern Vale Cluster
Significant community partnerships:	Toowoomba Base Hospital, Carbal Medical Services, Essilor Vision Foundation, Lifeline, Bupa Optical & Hearing, United Care Community, Newtown Playgroup, The Smith Family, City Women Bella Girls Program and the Men of the City Boys Program.
Significant school programs:	Learning Sprints, Comprehension, Accuracy, Fluency and Expand (CAFÉ) Reading, Trauma Informed Practice



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, deputy principal, Head of Student Support Services (HoSSS), guidance officer, pedagogy coach, teacher librarian/Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) coach, Business Manager (BM), chaplain, 23 teachers, 20 non-teaching staff, three Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) executive and members, 17 parents and 45 students.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Transition Officer Kulila Kindergarten Association, director Newtown Outside School Hours Care (OSHC), principal Wilsonton State High School and principal Harristown State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Coordinator Child Development Service Toowoomba Hospital, Deputy Mayor of Toowoomba, State Member for Toowoomba and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2019	P&C Strategic Plan 2018- 2021
Investing for Success 2019	Strategic Plan 2016-2019
Headline Indicators (April 2019 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 1 2019)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning plan 2019	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	School Support and ICP flowchart
School pedagogical framework	Annual Professional Development Plans
School Data Plan 2019	School newsletters and website
School Opinion Survey	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	Parent and Community Engagement framework



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

School leaders have developed a number of key documents outlining school improvement priorities.

The priorities for 2019 are ‘all students will make progress in their ability to read’ and ‘positively engage all students’, and are supported by a range of strategies, targets, timelines and an identified responsible officer. All staff can identify the key priorities and targets and are supportive of the school direction. Parents interviewed are able to identify that the school focuses on student attendance, behaviour and reading. Parents identify the consistent promotion of these priority areas through school newsletters and parades.

The pedagogy coach and deputy principal meet with year level teaching teams to discuss student data as part of the ‘Learning Sprints’¹.

The Learning Sprints are informed by analysis of the school reading data boards for all students in each year level that identify students’ performance. Many teachers state that the data analysis and professional discussions in Learning Sprint meetings have enabled them to establish starting points for student learning, identify effective strategies, monitor student gain and reflect on future learnings. Significant school resourcing underpins the implementation of the Learning Sprints.

The school places a high priority on student wellbeing, positive engagement and learning.

Staff members have established a range of processes and programs to support students’ academic and wellbeing outcomes. Most parents, students and teachers describe the relationship between members of the school community as positive and respectful. The culture of the school inspires staff members to exhibit high levels of professional energy for the work they do. Staff members articulate great pride in the school and go the extra mile to support their colleagues and students.

The leadership and teaching team express a commitment to implementing curriculum relating to learning areas aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC).

The school leadership team and year level teacher teams guide the implementation of the English and mathematics curriculum areas. These teams have developed a whole-school curriculum plan to guide their work in the school and meet to review progress and plan future actions. The leadership team has plans to finalise the implementation of all eight AC learning areas in 2020.

¹ Breakspear, Simon. (2018). Learning sprints. Retrieved from <http://simonbreakspear.com/learning-sprints/>



Data is used to monitor progress against the school priorities.

The school 'Data Plan – Assessment and Reporting 2019' includes diagnostic, formative and summative assessments, timelines, and guidelines for undertaking assessments and reporting. Teachers have a range of understanding regarding the data plan and assessment tools. Leadership team members are committed to continuing to develop teacher capacity to analyse and reflect on their teaching practices using data.

The leadership team and school staff are driving improvements in pedagogy, with a strong belief that improvements in teaching lead to improvements in student learning.

The leadership team has high expectations for teachers to deliver effective pedagogical practices. They have collaboratively developed a pedagogical framework based on Explicit Instruction (EI)² incorporating the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) Model³. The framework aims to provide teachers with a guide to support their curriculum planning processes. Teachers report varying levels of understanding and application of this framework in their classroom teaching.

A whole-school curriculum plan is developed and describes expectations for teaching and learning at the school.

Plans in most of the learning areas of the AC make clear the scope and sequence across all years of schooling. After full implementation of all eight learning areas, the leadership team recognises that the next step in curriculum alignment to the AC is to focus on the cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities.

The school has an endorsed collegial engagement framework.

Teachers have the opportunity to engage in observation and feedback with peers or members of the leadership team. This process focuses on the school improvement priorities, the enactment of the curriculum and signature pedagogical practices. Most teachers indicate their support of this process as it is beneficial to their capability development. Many staff note the scheduled observation and feedback sessions are yet to occur on a regular basis.

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) is embedded across the school.

Staff members support the school PBL framework and are able to clearly articulate PBL language, strategies and processes. The leadership team and staff acknowledge and value the range of cultural, economic and social backgrounds of students and work together to support all students in a positive environment. Some PBL support programs are written into health units from Years 1 to 6. Students speak positively of the impact of the program on behaviour. Communication of PBL to parents is well received.

² Archer, A. L. (2014). *Golden principles of explicit instruction* [DVD]. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

³ Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2013). *Better learning through structured teaching: A framework for the gradual release of responsibility*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (ASCD)



The school values the significant support provided through the expertise of teacher aides.

Teacher aides are trained in the school intervention programs and processes. Teacher aides work alongside teachers in all classrooms supporting students' learning and wellbeing. Additional 'agile' teacher aides are deployed to work on targeted reading intervention with small groups of students or one-to-one student support allowing them to respond to emergent needs.

The principal and school staff have established an extensive range of partnerships.

School staff have actively explored ways to support students' academic progress and wellbeing through strategic partnerships that provide resources not available within the school. The Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) is active and committed to the school. Some parents have a multigenerational connection to the school. A documented Parent and Community Engagement Framework (PaCE) lists the groups, organisations, events and activities that strengthen the learning outcomes for students through effective partnerships.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Build all teachers knowledge of the AC by further unpacking year level content descriptors and standards, and fully implement all eight learning areas by the end of 2020.

Build all teachers' capacity in data literacy to increase ownership of class data.

Establish school procedures to ensure teacher practice in all classrooms is closely aligned to the school pedagogical framework.

Develop the whole-school curriculum plan to include the AC cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities.

Fully implement the school collegial engagement framework to quality assure the curriculum and signature pedagogical practices in all classrooms.