School Improvement Unit
Report

Goodwood State School

1. Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Goodwood State School from 21 to 22 July, 2015. 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:	Goodwood Road, Goodwood
Education region:	North Coast Region
The school opened in:	1900
Year levels:	Prep to Year Six
Current school enrolment:	62
Indigenous enrolments:	11 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	3 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	959
Year principal appointed:	2012
Number of teachers:	3 classroom teachers
Nearby schools:	Childers State School, Isis District State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Woodgate Returned and Services League (RSL), Woodgate Readers
Unique school programs:	After school sport, the Arts

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, students, parents and community representatives, including:

    o Principal

    o Six teachers – classroom, relief and specialist

    o Three teacher aides

    o Administrative Officer

    o 23 Students

    o Two members of the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) executive

    o Two parents

    o Two community partners

    o Local primary and high school leaders

1.4 Review team

Michelle D'Netto   Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Christopher McMillan   Peer reviewer

1.5 Reading the Report

The executive summary outlines key findings of the review of this school. The key improvement strategies prioritise future direction for improvement. The executive summary should be read along with the findings and improvement strategies outlined in the nine domains which provide a strategic view for improvement.

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school promotes a positive culture for student learning and wellbeing.

  Staff throughout the school demonstrate an understanding of the importance of positive and caring relationships to enhance learning. Staff uphold a strong commitment to the whole child. The school is held in high esteem within the broader school community.

- The principal has identified an agenda for improvement and has communicated it to the school community.

  The school agenda is extensive. The main priorities are reading, writing and numeracy with the development of staff capacity as an underlying focus. The principal recognises that further clarity around strategic direction for school-wide improvement is required.

- The teaching of reading has been a focus this year.

  A school-wide reading framework has been introduced and is supported by regional *Success Schools* funding and local resources. Explicit teaching strategies are being implemented across the school for the teaching of reading. The reading framework is yet to be documented.

- The school is developing consistent pedagogical practices.

  Teachers have become knowledgeable in a number of evidence-based teaching practices with the explicit instruction and gradual release of responsibility model evident throughout the school. The principal devotes one day each week towards developing effective teaching practices across the school and is implementing a profiling approach to support reflections on teaching practices. This approach is linked to explicit instruction and informed by the guiding questions within the Art and Science of Teaching (ASoT).

- Some data collection processes are in place.

  There are documented school overviews for the annual and semester collection of data. This is accompanied by associated targets for reading for the end of the year. Short-term targets and timelines have not been established. A culture for using data to inform practice is being developed.

- Exemplar partnerships have been developed with the local community.

  The school has established valued partnerships with a number of community based groups. The partnerships with Woodgate Readers and Woodgate Returned and Services League (RSL) are valued and widely considered to benefit the school and community. The school was a significant partner with the local RSL, New Zealand

Returned Services' Association (RSA) and a sister school in New Zealand for the Centenary of ANZAC commemoration that has received wide-spread commendation. This is an on-going partnership.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Narrow and sharpen the explicit improvement agenda with agreed timelines and targets for improvement.

- Make explicit a priority set of improvement goals that are measurable and time-referenced to drive further learning for all students.

- Use available school resources to continue to embed the reading agenda commenced under the *Success Schools* funding.

- Build on the existing practice of classroom observation and feedback regarding the explicit instruction model to develop consistency in pedagogy and enhance teaching practices.

3. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains

3.1 An explicit improvement agenda

Findings

The school expects all students to learn successfully and has high expectations for student attendance, wellbeing, engagement and outcomes.

The principal has identified an agenda for improvement and has communicated it to the school community through staff meetings, newsletters and Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) meetings. This agenda has been documented in broad and general terms and is embedded in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) 2015.

The school agenda is extensive. The main priorities are: reading, writing and numeracy with the development of staff capacity as an underlying focus. The principal recognises that further clarity around strategic direction is required.

Analysis of the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) has informed some aspects of the school's improvement agenda and plays a role in the decision making process. Reading is the focus with a school-wide reading framework introduced and supported by regional *Success Schools* funding and local resources.

There is evidence of a school-wide commitment to improve student learning, with artefacts and some meta-language associated with the improvement agenda visible in all classrooms.

There are long term targets for improvement.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee, Strategic Plan 2012-2015, school curriculum overview, pedagogical framework, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, School Opinion Survey, school improvement targets, professional development program 2015, school website, newsletters, budget overview, school data schedule overviews, interviews with the leadership team, staff, students and community members.

Improvement strategies

Narrow and sharpen the explicit improvement agenda, including agreed timelines and targets for improvement.

Document, monitor progress and regularly articulate this agenda to the whole school community to fully embed it.

3.2 Analysis and discussion of data

Findings

The principal encourages the systematic collection of data and its analysis to inform teaching and learning. There are documented school overviews for the annual and semester collection of data. The reading overview is accompanied by associated targets for reading for the end of the year. Short-term targets and timelines have not been established.

Data sets collected include PM Benchmark, PROBE and Progressive Achievement Tests in reading, maths, spelling, and vocabulary. This is collected twice a year. There is some evidence that time is set aside for the discussion and analysis of this data.

Some teachers are using data to group students and inform their teaching and learning plans. Standardised data sets are not entered on to OneSchool but entered and collated on the school's G drive.

Data is collected on attendance. A teacher aide collects, enters and analyses data on student learning and behaviour. Newly created data walls have been established for the tracking of reading and numeracy for every student.

NAPLAN Mean Scale Score (MSS) for achievement indicates that the school is close to or above Similar Queensland State Schools (SQSS) for all ten strands. Student relative gain for Years 3 to 5 (2012-2014) is below SQSS for three of the five strands but similar in two. National Minimum Standards (NMS) results in all strands for Year 3 have shown strong upward trend. The data also indicates that nine of ten strands in the Upper Two Bands (U2B) are above SQSS. Cohort numbers are small.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee, Strategic Plan 2012-2015, school curriculum overview, pedagogical framework, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, School Opinion Survey, school data schedule overviews, interviews with the leadership team, staff and students.

Improvement strategies

Develop the data literacy skills of all staff.

Collaboratively develop short term targets with associated timelines and use the data wall for the tracking of these targets.

Use short term data cycles to inform future planning and teaching.

3.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

Staff throughout the school demonstrate an understanding of the importance of positive and caring relationships to enhance learning. Staff uphold a strong commitment to the whole child. The school is held in high esteem within the broader school community.

The school promotes an environment reflective of its high expectations that students will learn successfully. There exists a commitment to and some steps towards further learning success for all students.

The school is widely considered as a calm place where interactions between staff, students and families are supportive and respectful. The school reaches out to parents and families as key members of the school community and partners in student learning. The school's reading focus and after-school extra-curricular activities involve families on a daily basis as joint partners in student learning.

The school places a high priority on student and staff wellbeing which is widely valued by members of the extended school community.

The school has implemented strategies within the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) approach to promote appropriate student behaviour. There is a widely held belief that the students demonstrate polite, respectful and cooperative behaviour, and any minor infringements are managed well.

The entire school community and all staff and students work together to create and constantly maintain an attractive, clean and orderly school environment. There is much evidence of steady improvement to benefit students. The school parent body is currently working on wireless internet infrastructure to enhance the use of Information communications technology at the school.

Student attendance at the time of the review is 92.9 per cent.

School Opinion Survey data indicates that staff and students see this as a good school. Parents were generally satisfied with the school.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee, Strategic Plan 2012-2015, school curriculum overview, pedagogical framework, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, School Opinion Survey, school data schedule overviews, interviews with the leadership team, staff, students and parents.

Improvement strategies

Consider further steps to improve school attendance for identified students.

Continue steps towards a culture where staff observe the practice of others and provide feedback to assist with further improvement of teaching practice.

3.4 Targeted use of school resources

Findings

The school has applied its resources to support student learning and wellbeing.

Great Results Guarantee (GRG) funds have been used to increase the capacity of teachers by funding an in-school pedagogical coach for 0.2 full-time equivalent allocation.

Teacher aides are skilled and undertake several of the teaching duties in the classrooms, including reading groups and supporting Students with Disability (SWD). A teacher aide is skilled in data entry and analysis.

Volunteers and the chaplain are used to support student learning in the classrooms in the teaching of reading.

The school accesses regional support for curriculum advice and pedagogical support in the teaching of reading. Success Schools funding has been accessed and been purposefully implemented with evidence of success. All teachers see the support received as valuable.

Technology is an issue at the school with connectivity a concern which sometimes impedes the delivery of curriculum. The P&C have allocated $20 000 for the upgrade of the wireless system. The school accesses technical assistance once a fortnight.

The budget stands at $37 723 inclusive of GRG funds. There are funds allocated to asset replacement.

The school has accessed funds through submissions to support the after-school sporting and music programs. Parents and students are very positive about these initiatives.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee, Strategic Plan 2012-2015, school curriculum overview, pedagogical framework, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, School Opinion Survey, budget overview report, interviews with the leadership team, staff, students and community members.

Improvement strategies

Continue to resource the reading agenda and the successes experienced to date over a sustained period.

3.5 An expert teaching team

Findings

The teachers at the school have a commitment to the school and regularly engage in professional learning and the sharing of practice. Teachers consider the recently provided support known as *Success Schools* as making a difference to their teaching.

Teachers are using a teacher profiling process to reflect on teaching practice. This is linked to Explicit Instruction and is referenced against the guiding questions within the Art and Science of Teaching (ASoT).

The school has taken action to simplify the Australian Institute of School Leadership (AITSL) teaching standards and teachers engage in professional conversations using this tool. The Developing Performance Framework is being implemented at the school.

All staff members have a professional learning plan that is shared. This plan reflects a focus on the school's AIP. Teachers are involved in professional development as a part of a regional and district focus. The recent *Success School* project enabled teachers to engage with a specialist teacher who provided literacy coaching.

The school has recognised the value of collegial observation and feedback for teachers. This is being progressively implemented.

The principal models a strong and productive commitment to his role through Queensland Association of State School Principals (QASSP) on a state level and through an established network of small-school principals.

All teachers and teacher-aides meet regularly to discuss and share aspects relating to teaching practice. This is valued as a forum where issues can be resolved.

Teachers have had opportunities to meet with colleagues teaching similar year levels at other local schools. At this stage there are no plans to conduct cluster moderation with other small schools.

The school has used GRG funding to create a pedagogy coach role within the school for one day each week. This role is seen as key to building capacity across the school.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee, Strategic Plan 2012-2015, school curriculum overview, pedagogical framework, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, School Opinion Survey, school data schedule overviews, interviews with the leadership team, staff and students, school performance plan documents, staff performance plans.

Improvement strategies

Consider ways to further support teachers to visit the classrooms of colleagues to discuss and share practice.

Formalise the established practice of classroom observation and feedback for the purpose of developing consistency in pedagogy and enhancing practice.

3.6 Systematic curriculum delivery

Findings

Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) forms the basis of the curriculum used in the school. C2C assessments are adopted but the lessons are adapted to suit the multi-age classroom context. There is evidence of a simple curriculum overview aligned to C2C.

The school has recently developed a cohesive and sequential document aligned to the Australian Curriculum content descriptors for the purpose of tracking and maintaining horizontal and vertical alignment of the curriculum.

Teacher curriculum planning is systematic and meets the Australian Curriculum requirements.

Reading has been the focus for the first semester of the year and significant work has been implemented in developing clear classroom structures for the teaching of reading and the documentation of a reading program. The Sheena Cameron[1] strategies for the teaching of comprehension are used consistently across the school.

The teaching of writing in most classrooms is evidence based and student data informs practice. Students have criteria for success and receive regular feedback.

Individual Curriculum Plans (ICPs) have been established for some students requiring additional support.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee, Strategic Plan 2012-2015, school curriculum overview, school tracking documents, teacher planning, pedagogical framework, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, school data schedule overviews, interviews with the leadership team, staff and students, teacher curriculum plans.

Improvement strategies

Embed the practice of using the newly developed continua for maths and English to provide all teachers clear direction and alignment of the vertical curriculum.

Complete the documentation of the reading program with explicit shared and agreed strategies and structures for the teaching of reading.

Ensure the reading program makes explicit what and when teachers should teach and students should learn.

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[1] Cameron, Sheena 2009, *Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies: A Practical Classroom Guide*, Pearson, New Zealand.

3.7 Differentiated teaching and learning

Findings

All classes at Goodwood State School are composite classes with students from different year levels and significantly different learning needs in the same class group. The importance of differentiated teaching strategies is embedded in some classrooms.

Teaching practices across the school reflect the belief that, although students are at different stages in their learning and may be progressing at different rates, all are capable of learning successfully if motivated and given appropriate learning opportunities and necessary support.

ICPs have been developed for some students with disabilities and significant learning needs. The special education teacher develops these plans and supports students with a disability in a withdrawal and an inclusive model.

A school-based identification and referral process has been recently developed. Cluster based staff are available on a needs basis to support student learning and wellbeing.

Learning goals are used in classrooms. In some classrooms, student profiles are developed and students are encouraged to reflect on their learning. Older students receive regular feedback from their teachers during student conferences.

Teacher-aides assist in the support of students and in the modification of the curriculum delivery. There is some evidence of assessment requirements being modified to suit the needs of students.

There is no documented school-wide differentiated policy.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee, Strategic Plan 2012-2015, school curriculum overview, teacher planning, pedagogical framework, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, School Opinion Survey, school data schedule overviews, interviews with the leadership team, staff, students and parents.

Improvement strategies

Develop staff capacity to differentiate the curriculum and deliver the modified curriculum to suit the needs of students.

Implement the newly developed referral process with a view to review and refine it if necessary.

Establish mechanisms to extend high achieving students so that they are challenged in their learning and develop higher order thinking skills.

Introduce a template for differentiation for use in teachers' planning.

3.8 Effective pedagogical practices

Findings

Teachers at the school have become knowledgeable in a number of evidence-based teaching practices with explicit instruction and the gradual release of responsibility model evident throughout the school.

A number of current evidence-based teaching practices are documented for the school. A clear focused approach regarding agreed teaching practices is not yet embedded.

The principal devotes one day each week towards developing pedagogical practice across the school and is implementing a profiling approach. This is structured around explicit instruction and cross referenced to ASoT design questions.

Teachers across the school have adopted evidence-based strategies to support the school-wide focus on reading, writing and numeracy. The use of Sheena Cameron comprehension, decoding characters and sight words is considered to be making a real and positive difference in reading. *Sound Waves* is used across the school for the teaching of phonics.

There is some evidence of students being able to set and monitor learning goals and receive feedback on their learning. Steps are taken to track and date students' achievement of core learning.

Explicit instruction and the gradual release of responsibility sequence are evident across the school. The school's focus on effective pedagogical practice is shared with the broader school community, for example, through the school newsletter.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee, Strategic Plan 2012-2015, school curriculum overview, pedagogical framework, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, School Opinion Survey, data and assessment schedule, interviews with the leadership team, staff and students.

Improvement strategies

Consider a small number of shared and agreed priority pedagogical practices to be developed over a sustained period of time and ways to determine effectiveness through evidence.

Continue to carefully develop a sense of shared accountability and rigour in the continual improvement of teaching practice through modelling, evaluating and providing constructive feedback on teaching practice.

3.9 School and community partnerships

Findings

The school has established valued partnerships with a number of community based groups. The partnerships with Woodgate Readers and Woodgate Returned and Services League are valued and widely considered to benefit the school and community. The school was a significant partner with the local RSL, New Zealand Returned Services' Association (RSA) and a sister school in New Zealand for the Centenary of ANZAC commemoration that has received wide-spread commendation.

The P&C provides avenues for parent involvement in the school including through input into school improvement. The committee is taking creative steps to include parents when they come into the school to collect their children and during the after-school activities program.

The school and community work together on a comprehensive and diverse range of extra-curricular and after school programs in areas such as sport, music, maths challenge and chess.

The school community and P&C are provided with the opportunity for input into the continued development and improvement of school facilities.

The school values school community communication such as the regular and highly informative school newsletter, known as the *Goodwood Gazette*.

The school has developed and maintains fruit break and oral hygiene routines as part of a strong commitment to the whole child.

The school has developed connections with pre-Prep students through early reading support and access to readers.

The school works in partnership with a local feeder secondary school to ensure a smooth transition for post Year 6 students.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Great Results Guarantee, Strategic Plan 2012-2015, school curriculum overview, pedagogical framework, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, School Opinion Survey, data and assessment schedule, interviews with the leadership team, staff and students, community members and local cluster schools.

Improvement strategies

Develop partnerships with early year providers and directly with the families of pre-Prep students as part of an Early Years strategy.

4. Follow-up timelines

- School to publish this report on their website within two weeks.

- School to meet with the Assistant Regional Director to discuss review findings and improvement strategies.