



School Improvement Unit Report

Biddeston State School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Biddeston State School from 16 to 17 May 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:	2425 Cecil Plains Road, Biddeston
Education region:	Darling Downs South West region
The school opened in:	1919
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	55
Indigenous enrolments:	9 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1000
Year principal appointed:	2011
Number of teachers:	3.4 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Oakey State School, Oakey State High School, Mount Tyson State School, Pittsworth State School, Pittsworth State High School, Southbrook Central State School.
Significant community partnerships:	Oakey Creche and Kindergarten(C&K), Oakey Country Women's Association (CWA) House, Rossvale cluster – Mount Tyson State School, Southbrook Central State School, Brookstead State School.
Significant school programs:	School-based playgroup, Options program



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:
 - Principal
 - Two classroom teachers
 - Three teacher aides
 - Reading intervention teacher
 - Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN)
 - School cleaner
 - Administration officer
 - 25 students from Prep to Year 6
 - 17 parents and community members
 - Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and secretary
 - Six playgroup parents
 - Member for Condamine, Mr Pat Weir
 - Deputy principal of Pittsworth State High School
 - Deputy principal of Oakey State High School

1.4 Review team

Stephen Bobby	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Jacquelyn Guiney	Peer reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The principal, staff members and parents are committed to improved learning outcomes for all students.

The school staff are enthusiastic regarding the way they can pursue opportunities to enhance the education of all students. Staff members can articulate the improvements they wish to view in individual student academic outcomes.

- The school is the hub of the community.

Community members are valued and are viewed as integral to the running, success and progression of the school. A culture of belonging, community, partnerships and trust is established across the school. Education is valued within the school and community.

- There is a culture of collegiality and teamwork within the school.

Staff morale is high. Staff report that they feel valued and respected. Classroom observations, curriculum discussions and feedback are established and are viewed as positive reflections to enhance professional growth.

- The school has developed a broad, school improvement agenda.

The Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) has three priorities: to strengthen pedagogical practices across the school, literacy development in the early years and improving student achievement in numeracy. All teaching staff members demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the EIA. Understanding of the EIA by teacher aides and parents is as yet unclear.

- The school has a whole-school curriculum plan that forms the basis for collaboration and overall program direction.

The plan uses C2C multi-age resource units to assist teaching staff with their planning and curriculum delivery. Some teaching staff reference the Australian Curriculum (AC) and backward map the achievement standards to ensure alignment.

- Classroom teaching staff complete a weekly report which is shared with parents.

The data sheets outline student achievements in priority areas; such as literacy and numeracy. Students demonstrate an awareness of their weekly reports, but are less clear of its purpose in informing their learning progress.



- There is differentiated curriculum planning to meet the needs of individual students.

Teaching staff develop Personal Learning Plans (PLP) and Evidence-Based Plans (EBP) to identify and document specific learning needs for individual students. These are used as planning and teaching tools to provide clarity, expectations and standards to scaffold student learning.

- Students have varying degrees of knowledge about their learning progress over time.

Students demonstrated an awareness of their weekly reports, but were less clear of its purpose in informing their learning progress. Some students spoke of having learning goals. The staff acknowledge that a consistent practice of student goal setting is yet to be established. The degree of student ownership of their learning goals is developing.

- The school leadership team are explicit in their desire to view effective teaching practice across the school.

The school has a charter of expectations which outlines the expected approaches to teaching and learning to ensure staff practices are consistent across the school environment.

- Community connections with families, local businesses and community organisations are nurtured to improve school resources and provide learning opportunities for students.

The Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) are active and supportive members of the school. They work closely with the principal to align their actions to the school agenda.

- The school has assumed responsibility for the coordination of the local community playgroup.

Parents and students meet each week at the school to engage in a range of activities. School staff members work with these parents and their child to provide skills in readiness for Prep.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Review and refine the school's explicit improvement agenda to ensure a narrow and sharp focus. Accompany this agenda with timelines, targets, appropriate resourcing and professional development for all school personnel.
- Empower students to become accountable for their learning and become assessment literate learners.
- Implement Professional Development (PD) to develop a deep and thorough understanding of the Australian Curriculum (AC).
- Develop a process for the consistent implementation of student learning goals in all classrooms.
- Continue to strengthen the formal coaching and feedback model through targeted classroom observation and feedback to provide all staff members with support to drive improved teaching practices that align to school's pedagogical framework.