

Mount Alford State School

Executive Summary



School
Improvement
Unit



Queensland
Government



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	8



1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Mount Alford State School** from **7 to 8 March 2017**.

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 consider in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies which prioritise future directions for improvement.

The 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 about the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Garry Lacey

Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Cheryl Harvey

Peer reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Reckumpilla Street, Mount Alford
Education region:	South East Region
Year opened:	1888
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	49
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	8.2 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	12.2 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	984
Year principal appointed:	2015 (acting)
Full-time equivalent staff:	3
Significant partner schools:	Boonah State School, Boonah State High School, Kalbar State School, Maroon State School, Aratula State School
Significant community partnerships:	Boonah Show Society, Maroon Outdoor Education Centre (OEC)
Significant school programs:	Bicycle/scooter riding program, student-led garden and art clubs, Indigenous garden



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, two classroom teachers, specialist teachers in Languages Other Than English (LOTE) - German and music, guidance officer, Students with Disability (SWD) teacher, four teacher aides, administration officer, ancillary staff member, garden club representatives, 20 students, four Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) representatives and four parents.

Community and business groups:

- Secretary, Boonah Show Society.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Deputy principal of Boonah State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2017	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2017
Investing for Success 2017	Strategic Plan 2014-2017
Headline Indicators (2016 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2016)
OneSchool	School budget overview
School improvement targets	School newsletters and website
School pedagogical framework	School Opinion Survey
School data plan	Responsible Behaviour Plan



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Staff members in the school speak highly of each other with a supportive team approach apparent across the school.

The school has a team of enthusiastic and dedicated teachers and teacher aides who share responsibility for student learning and success. Staff members work collaboratively to deliver curriculum programs in all classrooms with teacher aides working alongside their teacher colleagues to support the learning of students.

School staff members value the establishment of classroom environments that are conducive to learning and supportive of students.

Students report they value the positive relationships they have with school staff members and the ongoing support and encouragement they receive during the learning process. Students state their teachers provide them with challenging learning experiences and offer them the support they need to enhance their learning.

The school is held in high regard by the community.

Parents comment positively on all aspects of life at the school. Parents particularly value the small school environment which they believe enables a more personalised journey for students through the school. The school is the host of a range of community celebrations.

School staff members are committed to school improvement and to every student's success.

The school has identified a range of priority areas for its 2017 Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). School staff members are prioritising reading, numeracy, Upper Two Bands (U2B) performance in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and positive school culture as central elements of the school's current improvement agenda. Staff members also identify implementation of Explicit Instruction (EI), data collection and monitoring processes and curriculum development as additional priority areas for their work in the school. This complex range of expectations is creating a broad focus for teachers.

Data is used in building a culture of self-evaluation and reflection across the school.

The school identifies and demonstrates that it is using a range of assessment tools and testing procedures to monitor school-wide achievement and student progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Conversations where the teaching team meets regularly to discuss student data and the implications of this for teaching are yet to occur on a regular basis.

The principal views the development of staff members into an expert teaching team as central to improving outcomes for students.



The principal commits annual funding to supporting the Professional Development (PD) of staff members to attend external PD programs and networking experiences. A PD plan, which details a broad range of learning experiences, that has clear alignment to the school's improvement agenda and identified areas for personal development is yet to be documented to support the ongoing learning of school staff members.

School staff members are committed to implementing curriculum programs related to the learning areas of the Australian Curriculum (AC).

The school has adopted the Curriculum to the Classroom (C2C) resource materials as the main planning focus for implementing the AC. Ten weekly cycles are recently implemented across the school for the learning area of English. School staff members acknowledge the need to develop a whole-school curriculum plan aligned to the AC that is locally relevant, provides an overview of the units of work to be taught and accommodates the needs of the school's multi-age setting.

All staff members demonstrate a strong conviction to effective teaching.

There is a belief that effective teaching is the key to improvement in student learning outcomes. Classroom teachers use Archer's¹ EI as a key pedagogy within the school. A pedagogical framework is developed at the school which is based on the Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (DoTL). The principal and classroom teachers report this framework requires reviewing and little reference is made to this document when planning curriculum units.

The Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) is active in engaging with strategic planning and fundraising to enhance school's facilities and resources.

Significant contributions from the P&C support collaboratively identified school programs. An initiative is providing funds to enable all students to attend swimming lessons, school camps and excursions. The P&C is involved in writing grant applications to fund school projects. Parents value the opportunity to contribute positively to the life of the school.

The tone of the school reflects a school-wide commitment to purposeful and successful learning.

The school celebrates student and school achievements at regular assemblies, through media releases, school newsletters, Facebook and other community functions. The school presents as calm and orderly and classrooms are focused on learning. Students, staff members and parents speak well of the school and value its friendly and professional culture. The physical environment of the school is attractive with well-maintained buildings and grounds. All staff members take pride in presenting the school in a positive manner.

¹ Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. Guilford Press



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Narrow and sharpen the focus of the school's improvement agenda to enable classroom teachers the opportunity to embed collaboratively agreed strategies and teaching practices.

Provide further time for the teaching team to have in-depth discussions to interrogate systemic and school-based achievement data and generate strategies for continuous improvement of student outcomes.

Develop a professional learning plan, which details a broad range of learning opportunities for staff members, to support the implementation of local and systemic priorities.

Develop a whole-school curriculum plan and associated learning area plans, aligned to the AC, which makes clear what teachers should teach and students should learn.

Refine the school's pedagogical framework to ensure all teachers have a clear understanding of agreed high-yield strategies for consistent implementation in all classrooms.