

The Gap State School

Executive Summary



School
Improvement
Unit





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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 **The Gap State School** from **26 to 28 April 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)
Anthony Ryan	Peer reviewer
Kelly Jeppesen	Peer reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Corner Waterworks and Settlement Roads, The Gap
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
Year opened:	1912
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	558
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	1 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	3 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1133
Year principal appointed:	2016
Full-time equivalent staff:	31
Significant partner schools:	Hilder Road State School, Payne Road State School, Ashgrove State School, The Gap State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Ashgrove/The Gap Lions, Rotary Club
Significant school programs:	Music program, sporting program, extension and enrichment program, transition to Prep program.



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, deputy principal, Head of Curriculum (HOC)/master teacher, Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), guidance officer, school chaplain, two Support Teachers Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), literacy coach, gifted and talented mentor, Gifted Education Mentor (GEM), Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), 27 classroom teachers, two Special Education Program (SEP) teachers, specialist teachers in Health and Physical Education (HPE) and music, teacher librarian/e-learning mentor, 12 teacher aides, enrichment support teacher aide, Business Services Manager (BSM), two administration officers, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and vice-president, school council chair, tuckshop convenor, 12 student leaders, 40 students, 10 classroom parent representatives and 34 parents.

Community and business groups:

- Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) co-ordinator, Adopt-a-cop, community Indigenous leader.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal The Gap State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Local Councillor of Brisbane City Council and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2017	Responsible Behaviour Plan
Investing for Success 2017	Strategic Plan 2016-2019
Headline Indicators (2016 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2016)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning plan 2017	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	Writing Project Document
School pedagogical framework	School newsletters and website
School data plan	School Opinion Survey



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

A clear vision is established for the school that is expressed and enacted through the school's motto '*Striving for success*'.

The principal and staff members are committed to implementing an improvement agenda that focuses on enhancing student learning in writing. There is good staff support for the school's improvement agenda and staff members work hard to meet school expectations regarding the implementation process.

The tone of the school is positive and reflects a school-wide commitment to quality relationships between students, staff members and parents.

The school provides a safe and caring learning environment for the students. Students report they value the relationships they have with their teachers. Parents state that school staff members are committed to maintaining a supportive culture. Many parents and members of the wider community express the view that the professionalism and dedication of staff members are strongly valued within the community.

The school has developed itself as a hub for the local community.

Strong partnerships are developed with parents, community organisations and local businesses that bring benefit to the school. It is apparent that many of the school's partnerships are long term and have become an accepted part of the culture of the school community. The Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and school council are well aligned to the direction of the school and are viewed by staff members as supportive of school activities and programs.

A curriculum placemat is planned each term and provides teachers with details of collaboratively agreed units for implementation in their year levels for all learning areas.

Planning for curriculum units in mathematics, science, history and geography varies across the school. Some teachers report they refer to the achievement standards and content descriptions of the Australian Curriculum (AC) and other teachers make sole reference to Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resource materials. A more consistent approach to the planning of curriculum across the school is yet to be developed to ensure alignment of the enacted curriculum within year levels.



School leaders and staff are explicit regarding a desire to see effective teaching throughout the school.

The school uses a blend of the Art and Science of Teaching (ASoT), Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR), explicit teaching and Sharratt's¹ 14 parameters for learning to inform pedagogical practices used in classrooms. Teachers report they have a range of other pedagogical practices in their repertoires of practice. Clarification regarding how the school's pedagogical practices align to build a consistent understanding of teaching and learning that is enacted in all classrooms is yet to be fully established.

School staff members are united in their commitment to improve the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.

Professional learning opportunities are offered to all members of staff throughout the year. These include regular Professional Development (PD) sessions at staff meetings, school professional development day programs, master classes in collaboration through the Mount Coot-tha cluster and collegial planning and sharing at staff meetings. Planning for a broader range of opportunities to support ongoing professional learning through the development of Annual Performance Development Plans (APDPs), coaching and mentoring support and models of feedback aligned to the school's priority areas is yet to be fully developed.

The principal has led a strong focus on the critical role that data plays in teaching and learning.

The school has developed a documented diagnostic and standardised assessment schedule that is used by teachers in the collection of student data. A process for how this data is used to inform teaching and learning is being established through informal discussions between classroom teachers. Further opportunities for teams of teachers to engage in in-depth data analysis and discussions on the development of strategies for continuous improvement of student learning are yet to be provided.

There is a high level of commitment from staff to improving student learning outcomes.

A statement of roles and responsibilities has been developed for members of the school's leadership team. This statement details a list of operational and curriculum related activities each member of this team will lead or supervise. A more detailed statement of roles and responsibilities that includes key actions, accountabilities and implementation timelines for priority strategic activities to ensure these are appropriately planned, actioned and reviewed is yet to be developed.

¹ Sharratt, L., & Fullan, M. (2012). *Putting faces on the data: What great leaders do!*. Corwin Press.



Students are provided with a broad range of learning experiences that enables them to develop their skills in areas of enthusiasm or interest.

A number of playtime clubs operate across the year including robotics, gardening, lego, playground buddies and an annual talent show. An outdoor education program is offered to all students across the school that includes camping experiences. Inter-school sport, instrumental music and choral programs are accessed by large numbers of students. Students report they value these learning experiences and the time school staff take to support them.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Provide more opportunities for teams of teachers to collaboratively develop and regularly review curriculum units, with the support of the Head of Curriculum (HOC) and school leaders, to ensure strong alignment with the rigour and intent of the AC.

Collaboratively develop and embed a set of agreed high-yield teaching strategies through targeted PD and continual coaching, modelling and feedback.

Develop a collegial engagement framework which documents professional capacity development for school staff including APDPs, coaching and mentoring support, establishing collegial teams and models of feedback.

Provide time for teams for teachers to have in-depth discussions with colleagues, including members of the leadership team, to interrogate systemic and school-based achievement data and generate strategies for continuous improvement of student outcomes.

Develop a specific statement of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for all school leaders that details key actions, accountabilities and implementation timelines.