School Improvement Unit
Report

Burpengary State School
1. Contents

1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 3
   1.1 Background .................................................................................................................................... 3
   1.2 School context ............................................................................................................................... 3
   1.3 Review methodology ..................................................................................................................... 4
   1.4 Review team .................................................................................................................................... 4
   1.5 Reading the report ............................................................................................................................ 5

2. Executive summary .............................................................................................................................. 6
   2.1 Key findings ..................................................................................................................................... 6
   2.2 Key improvement strategies ........................................................................................................... 8

3. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains ................................................................. 9
   3.1 An explicit improvement agenda .................................................................................................... 9
   3.2 Analysis and discussion of data ...................................................................................................... 11
   3.3 A culture that promotes learning .................................................................................................. 13
   3.4 Targeted use of school resources ................................................................................................ 15
   3.5 An expert teaching team .............................................................................................................. 17
   3.6 Systematic curriculum delivery .................................................................................................... 19
   3.7 Differentiated teaching and learning ............................................................................................. 21
   3.8 Effective pedagogical practices .................................................................................................... 23
   3.9 School and community partnerships ............................................................................................. 24

4. Follow-up timelines .............................................................................................................................. 25
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Burpengary State School from 11 to 15 February 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>35 Station Road, Burpengary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education region:</td>
<td>North Coast Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school opened in:</td>
<td>1876</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year levels:</td>
<td>Prep to Year 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current school enrolment:</td>
<td>957</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous enrolments:</td>
<td>6.6 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students with disability enrolments:</td>
<td>3.5 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</td>
<td>991</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year principal appointed:</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of teachers:</td>
<td>58.1 (full-time equivalent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Significant community partnerships:</td>
<td>Burpengary/Narangba Coalition of Schools, Chaplaincy Program, Early Years Learning Strategy, Hope Community Church, Helping Hands Network, Queensland University of Technology (QUT), Caboolture Basketball Inc, Academically Talented extension programs – Narangba Valley State High School (Science Maths Academy) and Burpengary State Secondary College (PULSE program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique school programs:</td>
<td>Accredited International School, Kitchen and Garden Program, Pre-Prep Program, Gross Motor Program, Science Project (Burrengary State Secondary College), Learning Engagement Program, Goombuckar Program</td>
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1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of four 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 three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Principal, three deputy principals, Head of Curriculum (HOC), Head of Curriculum (Learning Engagement), master teacher, Head of Special Education Services (HOSES)
  - 49 class teachers, Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), and guidance officer
  - Business Services Manager (BSM) and two administration staff members
  - 14 teacher aides
  - 15 parents
  - Four school leaders and 17 students
  - School Council Chair and Parents and Citizens’ Association (P&C) president
  - State Member of Parliament
  - School chaplain
  - Nine community representatives

1.4 Review team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michael Gordon</td>
<td>Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bert Barbe</td>
<td>Internal reviewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Whitfield</td>
<td>Internal reviewer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Nash</td>
<td>Internal reviewer</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1.5 Reading the report

The executive summary outlines key findings from the review. 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

- Students, staff, parents, and community members have a strong sense of pride and belonging in the school.

Students, staff, parents and community members indicate that the school is held in high esteem. There is a strong collegial culture of mutual trust and support among teachers and school leaders. The school works to maintain a learning environment that is safe, respectful, tolerant, and inclusive.

- The school has an explicit improvement agenda.

The explicit improvement agenda outlines the school's priorities including reading, numeracy and increasing the percentage of students in the Upper Two Bands (U2B). The annual implementation plan provides clear direction, goals and targets to continue the school's progress towards improved student learning outcomes.

- Inclusion is viewed as the core business of teaching staff and the school leadership team.

There are well established practices that assist the school in meeting the needs of the full range of learners. Data collection and analysis informs these practices.

- Data is used effectively to guide whole-school, year level and class planning.

There is a documented plan for the annual collection of student achievement data in literacy and numeracy. Comprehensive whole-school and year-level analysis and discussion of data informs differentiation.

- A systematic process for the monitoring of the intended curriculum is emerging.

Staff members are provided with professional development to align the Australian Curriculum (AC) with the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resource. Annual, term and weekly overviews and unit plans detailing content and lesson sequencing are provided to assist teachers to deliver quality programs to students. Progression towards vertical and horizontal alignment of the curriculum is yet to be realised.

- School leaders provide feedback to teachers on agreed teaching practices in priority areas.

School leaders recognise that quality teaching practice is central to school improvement. The Professional Learning Framework provides a research based structure for the development of teacher knowledge and understanding. Feedback to teachers through coaching and modelling has commenced. Teacher capability development is supported by an internal network of professional sharing of teaching expertise.
Classroom communication processes to parents varies across the school.

Teachers employ a variety of communication strategies to enable parents to be informed about student and class progress, achievement and activities. School leaders and the community are exploring ways to improve classroom communication with parents.
2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Continue the professional development of staff to support the implementation of the AC. Further develop the curriculum plan to develop vertical and horizontal alignment of the intended curriculum.

- Develop a systematic process for monitoring the implementation of the intended curriculum including all subject areas.

- Embed the *Professional Learning Framework* and agreed teaching practices to ensure consistency of quality practice across the school.

- Collaboratively develop school-wide processes to provide teachers with rigorous, ongoing and timely structured feedback on agreed teaching practices in priority areas.

- Review, refine and enhance the range of strategies teachers utilise to regularly keep parents informed of their student’s progress.
3. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains

3.1 An explicit improvement agenda

Findings

The school has articulated an explicit improvement agenda which includes reading, numeracy and the Upper Two Bands (U2B). The agenda outlines clear targets and timelines in line with regional expectations.

Clear communication of this improvement agenda to staff members, parents and the wider community has yet to be actioned.

School leaders are committed to student improvement and are explicit about their desire to improve the learning outcomes for all students across the school. This includes the routine monitoring of whole-school data sets to understand current achievement levels and measure improvement.

The school has embraced Marzano’s ¹ *The Art and Science of Teaching* as the research base for school improvement. Expectations for the teaching of reading and numeracy are consistent across the school.

School leaders and staff members monitor the learning of all students in the school including those with a disability, students facing disadvantage and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

School leaders and staff demonstrate a commitment to the continual improvement of teaching and learning across the school. Teachers are open to modelling and coaching opportunities.

School staff members are united in their commitment to improving learning outcomes for all students.

Writing has been identified as a successful whole-school priority area for the school based on analysis of school-wide data trends.

School leaders identify the need to develop and embed strategies for maintaining current consistent processes in reading and numeracy prior to the implementation of writing as the subsequent explicit improvement focus.

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**Supporting data**

Strategic Plan 2013-2016, Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016, Investing for Success 2016, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, school improvement targets, professional learning plan 2016, pedagogical framework, curriculum, assessment and reporting framework, budget overview, school professional development days, professional development plans, school website, school newsletters, staff, student, and leadership team interviews.

**Improvement strategies**

Collaboratively develop systems for monitoring agreed whole-school programs and initiatives.

Develop and implement a whole-school writing strategy that identifies common language and processes to improve student achievement.

Communicate the school’s explicit improvement agenda with all stakeholders.
3.2 Analysis and discussion of data

Findings
School leaders articulate their belief that the collection and analysis of reliable student data is crucial to informing and guiding the implementation of the school’s explicit improvement agenda. There is a documented plan for the annual collection of student achievement in literacy and numeracy.

The school utilises a range of assessment data including standardised tests and classroom assessments. School leaders have reviewed the range of data collected and introduced PM Benchmarking, PROBE and PAT assessments. The purpose of collecting this range of data has been clarified with staff members.

There is evidence that school leaders timetable whole-school discussions and analysis of data. Year level teams routinely review class data with school leaders. The principal meets annually with individual teachers to review student outcome data.

There is a school data team which monitors all aspects of data collection and analysis, including the display of the reading data wall. Year level coordinators have received additional professional development in data analysis and lead teams in data conversations.

Teachers enter class data in OneSchool and use it to inform changes to class groupings, identify skill gaps, monitor learning growth and reflect on teaching practice. Teachers are beginning to share data with students and parents.

Professional development has been provided in the administration and analysis of standardised assessments and the North Coast Region Mathematics Diagnostic Test.

The 2015 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) identifies that school performance in the Upper Two Bands (U2B) for reading and numeracy is similar to Similar Queensland State Schools (SQSS) in Year 3 and Year 5.

Relative gain data (2013-15) identifies reading as similar to SQSS. In the school’s priority area of numeracy, relative gain (2013-2015) is statistically below SQSS.

Data indicates that this school is performing at or above National Minimum Standard (NMS) when compared to Queensland State Schools (QSS) in all areas except Year 5 writing which is below QSS.

Supporting data
Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016, Investing for Success 2016, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, school improvement targets, professional learning plan 2016, pedagogical framework, curriculum, assessment and reporting framework, budget overview, OneSchool, school data plan, staff, student, parent and leadership team interviews.
Improvement strategies

Strengthen the data literacy of teachers.

Develop a school-wide systematic approach to providing students and parents with feedback on learning and future improvement strategies.
3.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

School staff articulate that positive and caring relationships are essential for achieving positive outcomes.

Students, staff, parents and the wider community have a strong sense of pride in the school. All stakeholders have an obvious sense of belonging to the school.

There is a strong collegial culture of mutual trust and support among teachers and school leaders.

Students success is recognised and celebrated proactively through a variety of means for academic progress, positive behaviour and reinforcing school expectations and values.

The school works to maintain a learning environment that is safe, respectful, tolerant, and inclusive.

Teachers are aware that the Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS) outlines school expectations for student behaviour. Consistent implementation of the RBPS is yet to be embedded across the school.

The principal and other school leaders have positive relational skills. This has improved the culture of the school.

The school actively promotes the need for students to attend school regularly. Some teachers play a proactive role in managing attendance. Parents are kept informed about school expectations for student attendance via the newsletter.

Some parents express a desire for additional communication regarding classroom teaching and learning programs.

The 2015 student attendance rate was 94 per cent with 8.3 per cent of students attending less than 85 per cent of the school year. The number of Indigenous students attending less than 85 per cent of the school year in 2015 was 15.2 per cent. The school has introduced a range of positive strategies to increase attendance. Current attendance at the time of the review was 94.4 per cent.

The 2015 School Opinion Survey (SOS) indicates that 91.2 per cent of parents, 98.6 per cent of staff and 92.2 per cent of students believe this is a good school.

Supporting data

Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Investing for Success 2016, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, professional learning plan 2016, budget overview, school website, school newsletters, School Opinion Survey, staff, student, parent and leadership team interviews.
**Improvement strategies**

Ensure behaviour expectations are consistently applied across the school to maximise purposeful learning time for all students.

Develop a parent engagement protocol to build an enhanced capacity for parents to engage as partners in learning.

Collaboratively review the school’s attendance strategy and implement a consistent whole-school process for monitoring and following up student attendance.
3.4 Targeted use of school resources

Findings

School leaders have given priority to understanding and addressing the learning needs of every student in the school. There is clear evidence of the use of systematic testing to identify student needs and the development of creative school-wide processes to address them.

There is evidence that the leadership team attracts teachers with specific skills to augment existing staff skills.

School records of individual, class and whole-school achievement are held in OneSchool and utilised across all year levels.

School leaders respond to identified student needs through strategic allocation of available staff expertise and resources. This includes flexible use of school leaders, allocation of an additional teacher and teacher aide time based on data.

Every year level has an Academically Talented class.

An additional teacher has reduced Year 4 class sizes to support the range of learners identified in the cohort.

A learning engagement team of teachers and teacher aides supports reading groups across the school.

The current school bank balance is $572 328 which includes $158 726 for 2016-17 asset replacement and a non-current provision of $95 000 towards upgrading of the school hall. The school budget directly aligns with local and systemic priorities.

The school has strategically amalgamated two libraries into one to provide the hub space for technology and innovation. The school utilises a range of digital devices for learning. Teachers report that connectivity can be an issue across the school.

Physical learning spaces are used effectively for whole group and small group work.

Supporting data

Improvement strategies
Monitor connectivity across the school to improve the use of digital technology.
3.5 An expert teaching team

Findings

The school places a priority on attracting, retaining and developing the teaching staff.

The leadership team has strategies in place to assist teachers to develop understandings of how students learn.

The school expects all teachers to be committed to the continuous improvement of their own teaching. Feedback to teachers through coaching and modelling has commenced.

Teacher capability development is supported by an internal network of professional sharing of teaching expertise.

Teachers in the school are eager and open to expanding their knowledge on how to improve personal pedagogy to support the school’s improvement agenda.

Teachers meet with key curriculum leaders to analyse data and collaboratively discuss curriculum planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment in English and mathematics.

School leaders model and engage in the professional learning in the school and ensure that opportunities are created for teachers to work together and to learn from each other’s practice.

There is a well-defined, research-based Professional Learning Framework that drives professional learning with an associated budget to support local and systemic priorities.

Beginning and returning teachers report that the school provides an induction pack supported by regular planned meetings.

The school uses agreed formal processes to manage unsatisfactory performance as required.

Supporting data

Improvement strategies

Collaboratively develop school-wide processes to provide teachers with rigorous, ongoing and timely structured feedback on the agreed teaching practices in priority areas.

Develop consistency of teaching practices by implementing rigorous coaching and mentoring processes.

Investigate processes that ensure the continuity of collaboration and teamwork within and across cohorts.
3.6 Systematic curriculum delivery

Findings

The school has an evolving documented curriculum plan aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC), using Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) and regional documentation as resources.

Annual, term and weekly overviews and unit plans detailing content and lesson sequencing are provided to assist teachers to deliver quality programs to students.

Progression towards vertical and horizontal alignment of the curriculum is yet to be realised.

School leaders regularly visit classrooms to monitor curriculum implementation. A systematic approach to curriculum delivery is yet to be embedded for all subject areas.

Cohort and individual teacher meetings are held regularly to collaboratively discuss and share curriculum planning, implementation, monitoring and assessment in English and mathematics.

Teachers are regularly released to work with key curriculum leaders to analyse data, collaboratively plan units of work and moderate assessment tasks providing opportunities to share and explore effective practice.

The intended curriculum is shared with parents at information sessions, teacher meetings, in newsletters and on the school website.

There is strong evidence that data is being effectively utilised to focus teaching and to determine differentiation of tracking for students. Individual Curriculum Plans (ICPs) are developed for students pursuant to departmental guidelines.

The school has effectively allocated funding provided through Investing for Success (I4S) to provide additional teaching assistance and resources to enhance curriculum delivery and student learning outcomes.

Supporting data

Improvement strategies

Continue professional development of staff to support the implementation of the AC.

Further develop the curriculum plan to develop vertical and horizontal alignment of the intended curriculum.

Develop a systematic process for monitoring the implementation of the intended curriculum including all subject areas.

Establish clear roles and responsibilities for school leaders in collaborative curriculum planning.
3.7 Differentiated teaching and learning

Findings

School leaders actively promote and resource whole-school differentiation practices. The school leadership team is united and committed to developing the capacity of staff members to provide inclusive classroom teaching practices which cater for students requiring additional support.

The Professional Learning Framework provides a cohesive whole-school direction for the differentiation of teaching and learning.

Differentiation is informed by the analysis of assessment data to establish starting points for teaching and identified skill gaps. Some teachers identify that their current data literacy levels impact on differentiated planning for teaching.

The curriculum and leadership team has an expectation that all teachers plan and document differentiation strategies informed by data. School based planning documents have been developed to record how teachers differentiate for the full range of learners. Teachers are able to articulate an understanding of this concept. Evidence of differentiation planning and implementation varies throughout the school.

Teachers work in year level groups with year level coordinators and school leaders to develop an understanding of student learning needs. Regular year level moderation of assessment provides direction and support for this process.

There is a broadly held belief that all students can be successful learners when offered learning experiences that are both challenging and promote success.

Academically Talented classes are offered to meet the learning needs of high performing students.

Teachers employ a variety of communication strategies to enable parents to be informed about student and class progress, achievement and activities.

Strategies to cater for high achieving students within all classes are not consistently utilised. Some students indicate a desire for more challenges in their learning.

The Learning Engagement Centre (LEC) provides targeted support and intervention for students to achieve NMS and increase U2B performance.

There is a school expectation that all students have individual learning goals in reading. Most students are able to articulate their specific learning goals in reading.

There is evidence that ICPs are in place for students who are achieving significantly below their age cohort. ICPs for those students working significantly above their age level cohort are yet to be developed. Parental involvement in the ICP development currently occurs at the final stage in the process. Documentation is recorded in OneSchool.
Some teachers report that they require assistance to front-end adjustments to assessment tasks for identified students. Members of the extended leadership team provide assistance as required.

There is strong evidence of early and sustained intervention programs for identified students in the early years.

**Supporting data**

Strategic Plan 2013-2016, Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Investing For Success 2016, pedagogical framework, assessment and reporting framework, differentiation ladders for reading, writing and mathematics, staff, student and leadership team interviews, school professional development days.

**Improvement strategies**

Further develop the capacity of teaching staff to analyse class data to inform timely adjustments to teaching and assessment tasks for the full range of learners.

Provide opportunities for greater parental engagement in the ICP processes.
3.8 Effective pedagogical practices

Findings

School leaders have accepted personal responsibility for driving improvements in teaching. Expected teaching practices are documented and well known. There is limited evidence of preferred pedagogical practices being consistently applied throughout the entire school.

The principal and school leaders recognise that quality teaching practice is central to school improvement. Developing the capacity of staff members is seen as a priority, features prominently in the improvement agenda and is appropriately resourced.

School leaders are active in classrooms, providing support, feedback and modelling of teaching practices.

The school-developed *Learning Engagement Framework* outlines a consistent approach to teaching required for student success.

The school has recently collaboratively developed mathematics handbooks which outline expectations for agreed teaching practices. Consistent classroom practice is developing. The introduction of warm ups in mathematics has been strategically supported by the master teacher.

Professional learning activities are provided to build teacher understanding of effective teaching practice with regards to reading comprehension.

There is evidence that explicit instruction is used in classrooms.

Teachers provide regular and timely feedback to students on their learning. Greater consistency within and between year levels is developing.

School leaders spend time with teachers to improve teaching practices. A process of observation and feedback with regards to explicit teaching is used to inform annual professional development plans. The school’s *Developing Performance Planning* process provides opportunities for staff members to develop capability in line with school and personal goals.

Supporting data


Improvement strategies

Ensure school leaders provide rigorous, ongoing and timely structured feedback to teachers on agreed teaching practices in priority areas.

Embed the *Professional Learning Framework* and agreed teaching practices to ensure consistency of quality practice across the school.
3.9 School and community partnerships

Findings
The school has successfully established a range of quality partnerships with local community organisations, universities, schools and parents aimed at enhancing student learning outcomes.

Local state high schools and community organisations strongly indicate that they value the established partnerships and acknowledge the proactive nature of the work of the principal and staff members in pursuing and building these partnerships.

School leaders play an active role in guiding the strategic direction of the local coalition of state schools.

Parents are recognised as integral members of the school community and value being involved in school events. Parents volunteer in a variety of support roles within the school.

The school has developed quality, meaningful relationships with local early childhood providers resulting in a high degree professional sharing and development relating to curriculum alignment and the transition of local students into Prep.

Teachers employ a variety of communication strategies to enable parents to be informed about student and class progress, achievements and activities.

Supporting data
Annual Implementation Plan 2016, Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, school website, school newsletters, staff, student, parent, community and leadership team interviews.

Improvement strategies
Review, refine and enhance the range of strategies teachers utilise to regularly keep parents informed of their student’s progress.

Maintain the proactive development of current and developing partnerships to enhance student learning outcomes and the profile of the school in the local community.
4. Follow-up timelines

- School to publish the executive summary on their website within two weeks.
- School to meet with Assistant Regional Director to discuss review findings and improvement strategies.