

Mountain Creek State High School

Executive summary

1. Introduction

This report is a product of a school review carried out by the School and Region Reviews (SRR) branch at **Mountain Creek State High School** from **31 July to 3 August 2023**.

The report presents an evaluation of the school's performance against the 9 domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#). From this, the school identified affirmations – the achievements, successes and celebrations over the previous 4 years – and improvement strategies: the next steps for improvement, to inform the school's next 4-year strategic planning cycle. For more information regarding the SRR and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SRR [website](#).

1.1 Timelines and next steps

School reviews play an important role in each school's planning and improvement cycle. They inform and complement the work of the school in leading continuous improvement and ensuring quality learning outcomes for children and young people in Queensland.

Findings from the school review can be used to inform school planning processes. The [School Performance](#) policy and resources provide further information regarding the development of strategic and annual implementation plans.

Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within 2 weeks of the school receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their School Supervisor to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies, and discuss next steps in planning for continuous improvement.

1.2 Review team

Alan Smith	Internal Reviewer, SRR (review chair)
Louise Wilkinson	Internal Reviewer, SRR
Michael Hansen	Peer Reviewer
Dan Marrone	Peer Reviewer
Valerie Hadgelias	External Reviewer

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

Consultation



Total of 278 interviews



15 community members
and stakeholders



143 school staff



106 students



14 parents and carers

1.4 School context

Indigenous land name:	Gubbi Gubbi We acknowledge the shared lands of the Gubbi Gubbi nation and the Gubbi Gubbi people of the Gubbi Gubbi language region.
Education region:	North Coast Region
Year levels:	Years 7 to 12
Enrolment:	2138
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolment percentage:	3.9%
Students with disability (NCCD) percentage:	14.4%
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1044

1.5 Snapshot of previous school review

The last review carried out at the school was conducted from **29 July to 1 August 2019**. The school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) at the time of the 2019 review was identified as 1039 and the school enrolment was 2142 with an Indigenous enrolment of 3.1% and a student with disability enrolment of 3.7%.

The key improvement strategies recommended in the review are listed below.

- Build greater clarity for teachers in relation to the student outcomes being sought and how they are to enact school priorities that contribute to the school's improvement agenda. (Domain 1)
- Implement a school-wide strategy to measure, at a classroom level, the impact upon student learning of the teaching practices that align to the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). (Domain 2)
- Strengthen teacher understanding of the Australian Curriculum (AC), with a particular emphasis on the general capabilities that will assist in further increasing the performance of high-performing students. (Domain 6)
- Support teachers to identify, precisely, the next steps for learning for each student, how to respond and how to monitor progression. (Domain 7)
- Provide opportunities for coaches to further broaden and deepen their impact upon teacher practice and student learning progression. (Domain 5)

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key affirmations

Staff and community members proudly articulate that the school is well known for its dynamic and positive learning culture.

High expectations for student learning, engagement, presentation and behaviour are established and regularly communicated in newsletters, through social media, and at school assemblies. In conjunction with the school council and the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C), leaders have established a clear agenda for improvement. Staff members identify a school-wide commitment to enhancing student learning and wellbeing outcomes. Parents express appreciation for the opportunities provided by the school, and the dedication of staff members. Community members articulate that the school has a strong reputation in the local area.

A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships.

Staff describe a strong collegial culture based on trust, and professional and personal support. Leaders articulate a focus on maintaining a teaching and learning environment that is safe, respectful, tolerant and inclusive. Students are friendly and polite. They speak highly of their teachers, describe feeling supported, and openly state that this is a good school. A high priority is placed on building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students, and parents. The school is seen as a school of choice by students, parents, staff and the community.

Leaders recognise the importance of all teachers becoming skilled practitioners.

Staff identify that leaders are committed to the development of a culture of improvement and support teachers to continuously enhance their professional practice. Leaders describe their work with external consultants in building the expertise of the leadership team. Teachers identify the efforts of leaders to keep informed of current research and to explore future strategic directions. Staff possess considerable experience and a range of expertise in the fields in which they teach. Teacher aides and ancillary staff are described by teachers and leaders as valued members of the team

Staff articulate a commitment to providing students with a quality secondary education and accreditation that prepares them for future pathways.

Executive leaders have published a whole-school curriculum framework, which they describe as providing a 'living, workable model of curriculum delivery'. A strong focus on engaging students with learning underpins the school's approach to curriculum, teaching and learning. Students articulate appreciation for the wide array of subjects and programs on offer, and speak positively of the range of co- and extracurricular activities that support the development of sporting, cultural, and leadership skills.

Leaders identify the importance of a consistent, evidence-informed approach to teaching and learning to maximise student outcomes.

Quality teaching is prioritised in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP). Leaders take a strong leadership role in encouraging the use of agreed teaching practices in all learning areas. The New Art and Science of Teaching (NASOT)¹ was adopted as the pedagogical approach several years ago and work to embed this framework across the school has been ongoing. Leaders note the value of developing a common language to underpin teachers' work within and across faculties.

¹ Marzano, R. J. (2017). *The new art and science of teaching*. Hawker Brownlow Education.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Domain 1: An explicit improvement agenda

Clarify the EIA for staff, communicating specific improvements being sought and strategies to achieve them, to establish shared understanding and provide lines of sight for progressing the agenda.

Domain 5: An expert teaching team

Strengthen the instructional leadership capability of all members of the Management Team (MT) to develop greater consistency and precision of practice in driving the school's improvement agenda.

Domain 2: Analysis and discussion of data

Strengthen the capability of teachers to routinely and intentionally use a range of student data tools, including the differentiation surfboard and formative assessment, to inform and shape appropriate approaches to pedagogy and adjustments to assessment.

Domain 6: Systematic curriculum delivery

Prioritise opportunities for teachers and leaders to engage in rigorous discussion at the planning stage, to support systematic alignment of pedagogy and assessment to the AC.

Domain 7: Differentiated teaching and learning

Sustain current approaches to co- and team teaching to increase staff capability to effectively differentiate for engagement and equitable learning outcomes for all students.