School Improvement Unit
Report

Pine Rivers Special School
Executive Summary
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Pine Rivers Special School from 22 to 25 August 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><strong>Location:</strong></th>
<th>Lawnton Pocket Road, Lawnton</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education region:</strong></td>
<td>North Coast Region</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The school opened in:</strong></td>
<td>1986</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Year levels:</strong></td>
<td>Pre-Prep to Year 12</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Current school enrolment:</strong></td>
<td>174</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indigenous enrolments:</strong></td>
<td>8.6 per cent</td>
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<td><strong>Students with disability enrolments:</strong></td>
<td>100 per cent</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>Year principal appointed:</strong></td>
<td>July 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Number of teachers:</strong></td>
<td>36.8 (full-time equivalent)</td>
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<td><strong>Nearby schools:</strong></td>
<td>Lawnton State School, Strathpine West State School, Bray Park State School, Pine Rivers State High School, Bray Park State High School, Petrie State School, Kallangur State School, Dakabin State School</td>
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<td><strong>Significant community partnerships:</strong></td>
<td>OzHarvest, Bunnings, Pinewoods Nursing Home, Coles</td>
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<td><strong>Significant school programs:</strong></td>
<td>Getting Out There: Community and Homeless Assistance (GOTCHA)</td>
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1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of three 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 four days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Principal, three deputy principals, Head of Curriculum (HOC), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES) Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP), master teacher/pedagogical coach/beginning teacher mentor and guidance officer
  - 32 teachers and 25 teacher aides
  - Business Services Manager (BSM) and administration officer
  - Two Speech language pathologists (SLP), two occupational therapists and two physiotherapists
  - Chaplain
  - President and three office bearers of the Parents and Citizens’ Association (P&C).
  - Seven parents
  - 20 students

1.4 Review team

Jenny Hart            Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Susan Christensen     Peer reviewer
Daryl Hanly           External reviewer
2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- There is a positive, caring relationship between staff members and students.

  This is demonstrated by the manner in which staff members, students and parents interrelate across the school. The school maintains an environment reflective of its expectations that all students will learn successfully.

- School leaders articulate a shared commitment to improvement. The school leadership team has undergone some recent personnel changes. This led to a review of school priorities and associated roles and responsibilities.

  The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) for 2016 has three areas of improvement. School Priorities 2016 identifies five improvement areas. A roles and responsibilities document for members of the leadership team is developed. Some alignment is apparent between these three documents. Most staff members recognise positive behaviour support and curriculum implementation as priorities. A clear, narrow and sharp improvement agenda capturing targets, timelines, monitoring strategies and responsible officers is yet to be developed.

- The chaplain provides support to staff members who comment that they are well supported by their colleagues. Limited opportunities exist as yet to enhance whole staff wellbeing.

  A number of staff members comment on the low staff member morale including limited opportunities, as yet, to have a voice in decision-making processes, determining school priorities and resolving operational needs within the school.

- Teachers are highly committed to improving their teaching practices to maximise learning outcomes for all students.

  Staff members have participated in a range of professional learning activities. The school facilitates several professional learning communities. A professional learning plan aligned with the school’s improvement priorities is yet to be developed.

- The leadership team has developed a pedagogical framework that incorporates the school’s signature pedagogy, The Art and Science of Teaching (ASoT), and which also identifies other pedagogies.

  A collaborative coaching plan for supporting the implementation of ASoT across the school is established. Teachers comment that they would like the opportunity to improve their pedagogical practice through a formalised observation and feedback process.
A document is developed to guide teachers regarding when a range of student achievement data is due.

Some professional development (PD) has been provided to teachers to understand assessment tools. The collection of data varies across the school. Some informal data conversations occur between staff members with regular scheduled student-focused data conversations yet to occur. Systematic processes to monitor and ensure the collection of student achievement data are yet to be developed.

The school, through the establishment of a finance committee, is developing a budgeting process which will streamline the identification of, and response to, student needs through the allocation of staff members and resources.

A number of staff members comment on the lack of curriculum, classroom and playground resources, indicating that in some cases they pay for their own, particularly consumables.

The school has established and developed some beneficial partnerships with local businesses, community organisations and individuals to improve opportunities and learning outcomes for students.

The school has established a Parent and Community Engagement Professional Learning Community to set and monitor the effectiveness of community engagement strategies. The school encourages parent engagement and seeks to connect through a range of sources and events. The chaplain coordinates a range of proactive activities to support students, staff members and families.
2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Develop and communicate a sharp and narrow focused school improvement agenda, including clear targets, timelines and monitoring strategies.

- Establish processes which enable staff members to participate in collaborative decision-making.

- Develop and implement a professional learning plan aligned to the improvement agenda to support the capability development of teachers and teacher aides.

- Develop a model of observation and feedback aligned to key pedagogical practices.

- Schedule professional learning opportunities including data conversations with teachers to develop data literacy skills.

- Develop a strategy to identify required resources to suit student needs and budget for their provision.