



School Improvement Unit Report

Mackenzie State Special School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at **Mackenzie State Special School** from **15 to 17 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

Location:	Vivaldi Place, Mackenzie
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
The school opened in:	2013
Year levels:	Prep to Year 12
Current school enrolment:	105
Indigenous enrolments:	0.95 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	100 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	n/a
Year principal appointed:	2001 at previous site Mt Gravatt Special School
Number of teachers:	24.1 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Mackenzie State Primary School
Significant community partnerships:	Best Life Respite, Gateway Baptist Thrift Shop, Mini Mates, Mackenzie State Primary School, Loretto College, St Laurence's College, AEIOU Foundation, AssistiveWare, Help Industries
Significant school programs:	Independent Living Centre Program, Thrift Shop Program, Industrial Laundry Program, Home / School Literacy Program, Coffee Shop Program



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 Principal Supervisor
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal, deputy principal and Head of Curriculum (HOC)
 - Three sector coordinators and 21 teachers
 - Advisory Visiting Teacher (AVT) Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
 - 20 teacher aides
 - Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist (OT) and two Speech Language Pathologists
 - Chaplain / community liaison officer, Business Services Manager (BSM) and administration officer
 - Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, eight parents and 10 students
 - State Member for Mansfield
 - Outside School Hours Care coordinator

1.4 Review team

Jenny Hart	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Kate Russ	Peer reviewer
Bob Cole	External reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school has developed in collaboration with the school community a shared vision statement.

The school is committed to providing highly individualised curriculum, collecting and analysing data that tracks individual achievement, valuing each student as an individual and providing a safe and secure learning environment. A clear, narrow Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) aligned to actions, timelines and monitoring strategies is yet to be developed and communicated to the whole school community.

- The school has developed a teaching and learning framework to guide teacher planning and processes in curriculum.

The school has a strong emphasis on individualised learning and programs. Staff members are familiar with the school curriculum expectations and work within this framework. A sequenced plan for curriculum delivery aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC) across all mandated learning areas is yet to be developed and enacted.

- Teachers express that they value feedback. School leaders are providing feedback in coaching sessions that occur external to the classroom.

Teachers seek feedback and support from their peers, mentor and sector coordinators. Teachers state they would appreciate direct observation and feedback from the leadership team. An instructional leadership program including classroom modelling, coaching and feedback is yet to be embedded in the school.

- Sector coordinators lead teams of teachers to plan units of work once per term. Teachers have, as yet, limited opportunities to collaborate and share practice.

Collaborative processes for teachers to share practice and visit each other's classrooms are yet to be developed.

- The school's responsible behaviour plan uses choice theory as an overarching behavioural approach.

Some staff members report that they are largely responsible for devising their own behaviour management systems for their students and classrooms. Staff members state they would appreciate hands-on, practical strategies to deal with the growing and changing student population, particularly in the junior school.

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- The leadership team views reliable and timely data as essential to the effective leadership of the school.

Teacher and school developed checklists are in place to support program delivery and student achievement. Teachers demonstrate the utilisation of a range of diagnostic assessments to inform starting points for learning and to monitor student learning. A regular schedule of professional learning to develop teachers' skills in the analysis and use of data is yet to be developed.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Collaboratively develop and communicate the new school strategic plan to drive school improvement and include targets, timelines and monitoring strategies.
- Develop a whole of school curriculum plan aligned to the delivery of the mandated AC to enable the development and tracking of units, align assessment and moderation processes and enable resource sharing.
- Develop and implement school-wide systems for all school leaders to provide teachers with regular detailed feedback on their pedagogical practices aligned to the school's improvement agenda.
- Build a culture of collaborative practice including regular opportunities for teachers to meet to develop curriculum and share pedagogical practice.
- Collaboratively review the school's responsible behaviour plan to ensure that it is supporting staff members to meet the needs of the changing student population.
- Schedule regular professional learning opportunities for teachers to develop data literacy skills.