

Blackwater State High School

Executive Summary





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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 **Blackwater State High School** from **11 to 13 June 2019**.

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 implement in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

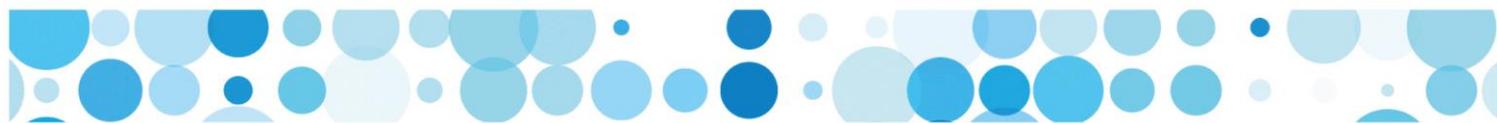
Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

1.1 Review team

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|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| Peter Grant | Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair) |
| Brian O'Neill | Peer reviewer |
| Christine Tom | External reviewer |



1.2 School context

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|--|--|
| Location: | Elm St, Blackwater |
| Education region: | Central Queensland Region |
| Year opened: | 1973 |
| Year levels: | Year 7 to Year 12 |
| Enrolment: | 357 |
| Indigenous enrolment percentage: | 21 per cent |
| Students with disability enrolment percentage: | 8.4 per cent |
| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value: | 918 |
| Year principal appointed: | 2019 |
| Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE): | 34.22 |
| Significant partner schools: | Blackwater State School, Blackwater North State School |
| Significant community partnerships: | BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA), Coronado Curragh Pty Ltd, Queensland Minerals Energy Academy (QMEA) |
| Significant school programs: | Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) club supported by BMA and Coronado Curragh Pty Ltd, BMA READ Partnership, NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) Space Camp – every two years, annual Art exhibition and competition, after school tutoring, science night |



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, deputy principal, four Heads of Department (HOD), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Business Manager (BM), 22 classroom teachers, four cleaners, two schools officers, three administration officers, Youth Support Coordinator (YSC), seven teacher aides, Community Education Counsellor (CEC), Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and representative, 11 parents and 83 students.

Community and business groups:

- BMA, Coronado Curragh Pty Ltd, QMEA and Queensland Police Service (QPS) Adopt-a-Cop.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

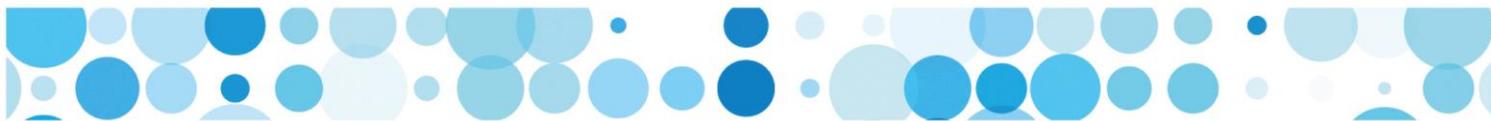
- Blackwater State School and Blackwater North State School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Federal Member for Flynn, Central Highlands Regional Council Youth Development Officer and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

| | |
|--|---|
| Annual Implementation Plan 2019 | Strategic Plan 2015-2018 |
| Investing for Success 2019 | School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2019) |
| Headline Indicators (April 2019 release) | School budget overview |
| OneSchool | Curriculum planning documents |
| Professional learning plan 2019 | Professional development plans |
| School improvement targets | School newsletters, social media and website |
| School pedagogical framework | Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students |
| School data plan | School Opinion Survey |
| School based Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework 2019 | School Performance Development Planning, Resource Booklet |



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The leadership team clearly articulates a strong improvement agenda for the school.

There is a strong united belief in the school's vision to *'create excellent educational opportunities in an environment of success that inspires and supports all students to achieve their full potential'*. School leaders and staff members articulate a belief and expectation that all students are able to learn successfully. They recognise that success looks different for each individual. High expectations for student attendance, engagement, learning and outcomes are established.

School leaders and staff have a deep belief that the foundations to successful learning for every student is the development and maintenance of positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents.

Teachers speak of strong collegial support for each other. Students comment that teachers care about them and have an expectation that 'they will do their best' in every subject. Staff and students express a strong sense of belonging to the school. Interactions between staff and parents are productive, caring and polite. Parents express they feel welcome and are confident they are able to approach school leaders and teachers to discuss any concern they may have. They indicate that the school is responsive to any expressed concerns.

The school works at promoting a learning environment that is respectful, healthy, supportive and disciplined.

The maintenance of this environment is acknowledged by school leaders as an ongoing challenge. The school's Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS) is underpinned by Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) strategies and includes expectations based around the four core values of safety, respect, effort and responsibility. The PBL team and most teachers, students and parents indicate that the implementation of expected responses in relation to appropriate and unacceptable behaviours varies across the school.

The Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) has three priorities articulated by the leadership team and staff as writing, attainment and attendance.

The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) documents clear measurable targets for each priority and outlines strategies and associated actions, timelines and responsible officers for leading each action. The targets have been communicated to staff and made available on the school's computer network. Targets are yet to be widely communicated to parents, students and the broader community. Clarity of the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of all school leaders, subject area coordinators and key staff in relation to the implementation of the EIA is yet to be developed.



School leaders clearly articulate their belief that an analysis of authentic and reliable student data is crucial to planning to improve student learning outcomes.

Student achievement data is utilised by teachers to inform planning. This data is sourced and collated by the Head of Department (HOD) – junior secondary and provided to teachers. Teaching staff members indicate that they are aware that the relevant data is available through OneSchool class dashboard. Most teachers express a desire for further Professional Development (PD) in accessing data in OneSchool and in the use of the data to inform practice to maximise student learning and outcomes.

The school actively seeks ways to enhance student learning through fostering productive community relationships.

Established partnerships with local businesses and community organisations including BHP Mitsubishi Alliance (BMA), Coronado Curragh Mine Pty Ltd, Queensland Minerals Energy Academy (QMEA), provide support and access to resources and services that enhance learning opportunities for all students. Mechanisms for formally reviewing the impact of these partnerships on student learning, evaluating the success of these and reporting findings to the relevant partners on the outcomes of their commitment to the school and planning for future sustainability are developing.

There is a shared belief in the school that all students can learn and achieve success.

Staff members recognise that students are at different stages in their learning and of differing abilities. The implementation of structural differentiated teaching across the school is effective in targeting ability groupings of students. These groupings allow for focused teaching of a differentiated curriculum that includes setting learning goals and higher order thinking activities that encourage students to work at their optimal level. The school leadership team has developed a comprehensive approach to social and emotional wellbeing for students and staff. Social and emotional wellbeing is identified as an ongoing priority for the school. The deputy principal, together with external agencies and the chaplain, provides a range of interactive strategies and programs to support this priority.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Collaboratively review, refine, document and communicate widely the RPBS and associated PBL strategies to clarify school-wide expectations and consistency of implementation.

Collaboratively review, develop and document roles responsibilities and accountabilities of all members of the leadership team, subject area coordinators and other key staff members.

Provide further opportunities for staff to build individual capacity in the analysis and use of data to inform teaching practice to maximise learning and outcomes for all students.

Collaboratively develop a mechanism that includes the enhancement and strengthening of partnerships through regular reviews of the effectiveness and sustainability of partnerships to improve student engagement and outcomes over time.