

Southport Special School

Executive Summary





Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Review team.....	3
1.2 School context.....	4
1.3 Contributing stakeholders	5
2. Executive summary.....	6
2.1 Key findings.....	6
2.2 Key improvement strategies	9



1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Southport Special School** from **13 to 16 June 2022**.

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.

An action plan will be developed and submitted to the EIB and region within six weeks of the school receiving the report.

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

1.1 Review team

Bradley Clark	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Leah Mullane	Internal reviewer, EIB
Kim Kelly	Peer reviewer
Laurelle Allen	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Indigenous land name:	Yugambah
Location:	Corner of Kumbari Avenue and Smith Street, Southport
Education region:	South East Region
Year levels:	Prep to Year 12
Enrolment:	232
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	8 per cent
Students with disability percentage:	100 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1020
Year principal appointed:	August 2018



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, four deputy principals, Head of Department– Curriculum (HOD-C), Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Lead Teacher (LT), human resources manager, 48 teachers, 31 teacher aides, four administration officers, executive support marketing officer, Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) consultant, guidance officer, chaplain, three cleaners, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and treasurer, three therapists, 12 parents and 18 students.

Community and business groups:

- Music Mates tutor, Endeavour Foundation manager, Delta Dogs handler, iDesign Information Technology (IT) technician, St John's Ambulance and Aruma.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Literacy consultant, Broadwater Early Years Network facilitator and principal of Currumbin Community Special School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- State Member for Bonney and ARD.



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Staff consistently share a belief that there has been positive gains regarding school priorities.

Staff outline a belief that improvement has been made in the areas of behaviour, student academic outcomes, writing and staff wellbeing since the start of the school year. Staff consistently express a desire to see this improvement sustained. Staff discuss an understanding of the school priorities and describe the key actions that have been implemented across the year. A comprehensive suite of resources, materials, plans and overviews have been developed, providing a detailed outline of priorities and how they will be enacted. A range of committees have been established to support the implementation of Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) priorities. A recent shift in some whole-school approaches reflect the principal's recognition of the importance of driving an EIA that addresses staff wellbeing.

Staff, students and parents speak of the school with pride and a sense of belonging.

Staff express a deep commitment and outline a strong moral imperative to provide all students with learning success with authentic consideration for student wellbeing. It is apparent that teachers value strong positive relationships with students and are united in their efforts to ensure all students are engaged in learning. Staff discuss a positive shift in staff morale and wellbeing over the last six months. Staff members express a passion for supporting each student to feel happy, included, and successful at school.

School leaders articulate dedication to staff capability development to create consistency of practice across the school.

The school has collaboratively developed a collegial engagement framework. This document details the range of differentiated collegial engagement within the school for universal, targeted and intensive capability building for staff. Leaders are committed to creating a collaborative learning environment for staff members. They organise teams to support the development of collegiality and professional sharing. Teachers describe the caring nature of their colleagues in professional conversations. School leaders indicate an intention to enact collegial engagement practices within the year.

Leaders recognise that establishing measures of student outcomes and progress is essential to school improvement.

The school is prioritising data-informed teaching and decision-making. School leaders are introducing a process of data discussions. Leaders meet with teachers individually to discuss the literacy data of two students. Teachers express enthusiasm for this process, indicating appreciation for the clarity provided by using data to identify the most appropriate teaching strategies from the instructional playbooks. Leaders acknowledge that this process is in the early stages of implementation with some teachers yet to be provided with the opportunity. Teachers express a desire to engage in further data conversations to inform the next steps.



in teaching and learning. Some teachers suggest that data discussions may include opportunities for teachers to collaboratively problem solve and share responsibility for improving student outcomes.

Priority is given to providing teachers with clear and consistent expectations for curriculum delivery, including the monitoring of student learning.

The Head of Department – Curriculum (HOD-C) is leading the development, documentation, and implementation of curriculum processes. Curriculum planning for Prep to Year 10 is guided by the school-developed Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework (CARF). Adaptation of unit plans is completed individually by teachers. Teachers express appreciation for the expert advice of the HOD-C and acknowledge that they feel a level of dependence on this support. They express a desire for facilitated collaborative curriculum discussion and planning opportunities to support their capability to create units of work and assessment tasks tailored to student needs and interests.

Staff members are committed to supporting senior students to transition to meaningful engagement in post-school life.

Many teachers comment that work experience and transition to post-school options are limited and express a desire to increase their knowledge of and engagement with post-school opportunities for students. School leadership articulate that work experience opportunities and investigation of community organisations are a high priority and have developed a plan for the employment of an industry liaison officer to support students to access meaningful post school pathways.

The leadership team acknowledges the importance of ensuring a whole-school approach to enact a sharp EIA that is focused on improving student learning and wellbeing outcomes.

It is apparent that the school priorities and actions are aligned to improving student literacy levels with a strong focus on writing and student engagement in the Australian Curriculum (AC). Accountabilities of the leadership team are centred on the EIA, and staff discuss having a clear understanding of leaders' portfolios. Some teachers discuss an interest in having the leadership team explicitly articulate how school priorities complement and interact at a classroom level. Staff discuss receiving regular communication regarding the school priorities. Some staff articulate a desire for this information and the EIA to be consolidated to allow for a deeper understanding of how the priorities may complement each other in a practical application.

The school has a strong focus on improving students' literacy outcomes.

School leaders identify the implementation of evidence-based, consistent pedagogical approaches as a school priority. The school is currently focusing on implementation of Comprehensive Literacy, particularly the writing element. They express commitment to supporting the capability of teachers to administer, analyse and interpret curriculum assessment and test data to inform their practice, particularly in the implementation of



Comprehensive Literacy. Parents articulate appreciation for the individualised support that has had an increasing focus on improving their child's literacy skills.

The provision of a range of comprehensive systems of communication to support students' access to all aspects of life and learning is viewed as a priority across the school.

An Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) action plan guides the work of the AAC Lead Teacher (LT) and provides a systematic approach to AAC implementation. The school's AAC LT provides half-hour workshops each week to enhance understanding of how to use AAC within the classroom and support students in using their voice. Timetables for AAC capability development are scheduled for the term with specific topics outlined for each week. Leaders celebrate the use of Roadmap of Communicative Competence (ROCC) data to inform individual student communication goals and the new communication focus in Individual Curriculum Plan (ICP) parent meetings. Leaders observe that the 'wearing' of AAC by staff members is increasing in frequency.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Enact and embed the agreed collegial engagement practices to develop teacher capability and quality assure consistency of practice across the school.

Systematically embed data discussion processes to build teacher data literacy, inform the next steps in teaching and learning, and foster shared accountability for student outcomes.

Facilitate cycles of collaborative planning that build teachers' capability to create differentiated units of work aligned to the AC and support implementation with Quality Assurance (QA) processes.

Develop a systematic approach that supports tailored transitions to meaningful post-school pathways supported by an aligned senior school curriculum and strong community partnerships.

Collaboratively create a clear, precise strategy outlining how the school priorities align, interact and are enacted in the classroom at a practical level.