



School Improvement Unit Report

Walkerston State School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Walkerston State School from 22 to 24 February 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:	Dutton Street, Walkerston
Education region:	Central Region
The school opened in:	1874
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	356
Indigenous enrolments:	6 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	3.6 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	984
Year principal appointed:	2015
Number of teachers:	15 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	St John's Catholic Primary School, Homebush State School
Significant community partnerships:	ANZAC and Remembrance Day commemorations, Walkerston Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL), Safety Circus, breakfast club supported by Woolworths and Walkerston Bakery, Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC).
Unique school programs:	School Musical, Chess Club, Chappy's reading and games groups, Pioneer Valley Public Speaking Competition, book fairs, Write for Fun competition, Unify, Project 600, Strength 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 Assistant Regional Director
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal
 - Deputy principal
 - Head of Curriculum (HOC)
 - Master teacher
 - Specialist teachers – Music, HPE, Languages other than English (LOTE), Special Education Program (SEP) teacher and guidance officer
 - 14 classroom teachers and 35 students
 - Seven teacher-aides
 - Parent and Citizens' (P&C) Association president
 - School chaplain
 - Three local principal colleagues
 - 25 parents and community members

1.4 Review team

Garry Lacey	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Peter Cooper	Internal reviewer, SIU
Glynnis Gartside	External reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- A clear vision is established for the school. This vision is expressed through the school's mantra '*Putting learning first. Every child, every day.*'

The school leadership team is committed to implementing an improvement agenda for the school which focuses on building teacher capability. Specific strategies within this agenda target assessment for learning in writing and reading, peer coaching, observation and feedback. These strategies are the teaching staffs' focus.

- The school presents as calm and positive and classes are orderly and purposeful.

Students, staff and parents speak well of the school and value its friendly school culture. Parents, students, staff members and the wider community express the view that the school is highly valued within the community.

- The school is seen as a hub in the community and is held in high regard by parents and the wider community.

School celebrations including fetes, discos and other annual events are well supported. The school contributes to important community events including ANZAC and Remembrance Day commemorations.

- A collegial culture is evident amongst teaching staff who provide professional and personal support for each other.

The teaching team's confidence is growing regarding their own teaching abilities to deliver a systematic and coherent curriculum to meet the needs of students and improve learning. The school leadership team places a high priority regarding building teacher capacity. The development of improved teaching practice is seen as central to improved student learning outcomes.

- Teaching staff are appreciative of release time for cooperative planning with the Head of Curriculum (HOC) and master teacher.

With support from the senior leadership team, the school has implemented a process for teaching staff to provide a differentiated curriculum for their students in the key priority areas of mathematics, writing and reading. This process is evident in planning documents and in classroom lessons.

- The school has developed a plan for curriculum delivery from Prep to Year 6 for all learning areas aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC).

It is evident that curriculum, assessment and reporting documentation and practices across the school require reviewing. This provides alignment with current school priorities and ensures consistency within and across year levels.



- The leadership team is closely working with teachers to develop their data literacy skills.

This process is valued by staff. Teaching staff have improved their capacity to analyse data to inform their teaching. Some teaching staff members have become highly skilled in this area. There is evidence that teaching members are at different stages of development in this journey.

- A school pedagogical framework identifies six organisers for effective pedagogical practice across the school and aligns closely to the Australian professional standards for teachers.

This framework has recently been reviewed and provides extensive detail on expected pedagogical practices across the school. It is evident that the strategies contained in this framework are yet to be fully understood and implemented by teachers.

- Behaviour incident data is captured in OneSchool by teachers and members of the leadership team.

The school is yet to establish processes to regularly monitor and analyse this data to identify trends for misbehaviour and establish an action plan to address identified issues.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Review school curriculum documentation to provide alignment with current school priorities and to assist with consistency of implementation within and across year levels.
- Develop an assessment and reporting framework aligned to the whole-school curriculum framework.
- Continue to work with teachers on the development of their data literacy skills using both formative and summative assessment to gather, analyse and report on data relating to student performance.
- Provide further professional learning opportunities for teachers to better understand and fully implement expectations in the school's pedagogical framework.
- Develop a school team to monitor, analyse and report on trends in student behaviour data. Communicate identified issues to school staff, parents and students and implement agreed strategies to address these issues.