School Improvement Unit
Report

Ipswich Central State School

Executive Summary

Queensland Government

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Ipswich Central State School from 8 to 11 September 2015. 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:	Griffith Road, Ipswich Central
Education region:	Metropolitan
The school opened in:	1861
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	695
Indigenous enrolments:	7 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	18 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	978
Year principal appointed:	Term 2, 2015 (Acting)
Number of teachers:	48.1 FTE
Nearby schools:	Silkstone State School, Raceview State School, Ipswich East State School, Amberley District State School, Churchill State School, Ipswich North State School, Ipswich East State School, Ipswich Special School, Claremont Special School
Significant community partnerships:	Police-Citizens' Youth Club (PCYC)
Unique school programs:	Bilingual Program – Auslan, Early Childhood Disability Program (ECDP)

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:

    o Principal and six members of the leadership team

    o 31 classroom and specialist teachers

    o Guidance officer

    o 15 teacher aides and four non-teaching staff

    o Chaplain and Indigenous support worker

    o Two student leaders and over 100 students

    o Tuckshop convenor

    o Three members of the Parent & Citizens' Association (P&C) executive

    o 18 parents and grandparents

    o Local primary school principals

    o Paul Pisale, Mayor Ipswich City Council

    o Andrew AntonIolli, Local Councillor

1.4 Review team

Michelle D'Netto	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
David Curran	External reviewer
Peter Tanzer	Internal reviewer, SIU

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The leadership team have identified four priorities for school improvement.

  The priorities for school improvement are reading, data literacy, adult professional learning agenda and Information and communications technology (ICTs). Reading and understanding student data were most commonly referenced by staff. Documented targets, milestones and timelines were not evident for the improvement priorities.

- The staff display a strong belief that all students are capable of successful learning.

  The school presents as a safe, respectful, tolerant and inclusive school environment. The school staff demonstrate an understanding of the importance of positive and caring relationships to successful learning and work to build mutually respectful relationships across the school.

- The tone of the school reflects a school-wide commitment to successful learning.

  Interactions across the school are focused on the learning and wellbeing of students and on continually improving the school's ability to meet the needs of all students. The school presents as calm and positive and classes are orderly. Students, staff and parents speak well of the school and value its positive and caring culture.

- School leadership has seen frequent changes in personnel and structure.

  Over the last four years, there has been significant change of leadership in terms of people and structure. This instability of leadership roles has contributed to lack of continuity in school priorities, improvement strategies and communication processes.

- The school leaders have identified staff data literacy as a priority.

  The leadership team has adjusted the school meeting cycles to incorporate year level data conversations. The school's assessment and reporting plan has been incorporated into the school's curriculum planning documents and outlines the time and type of assessment being used for each year level. Student performance from reading assessment tasks is being collected and analysed by teachers.

- The school site houses a Special Education Program and Early Childhood Disability Program.

  A significant staffing allocation supports the school's Special Education Program (SEP) and the Early Childhood Disability Program (ECDP). The strategic vision for the program, its direction and operating principles are yet to be developed through a consultative process. Parents generally report satisfaction with the program being delivered.

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- The school has identified the teaching of reading as a priority.

  A reading reference group has been created to investigate a school-wide strategy for the teaching of reading.

- Staff and parents identify communication as an area that could be improved.

  Some parents and staff identify issues with communication, sharing of information and understanding relating to strategic and operational issues as impacting on their daily routines. A number of suggestions to improve communication were provided.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Develop collaboratively a revised improvement agenda, which is focused, with agreed targets and timelines for each priority area.

- Review the distribution of leadership roles to ensure sharing of responsibilities and develop a sustainable, systematic coaching, modelling and mentoring program.

- Develop with regional assistance a sustainable workforce plan and clarify and communicate lines of supervision and responsibilities.

- Develop a clear vision and operating system for the special education program that is locally responsive and aligned to departmental requirements.

- Review current school data sets to assist in the development and understanding of the school's improvement priorities.

- Continue the work of the reference group to engage teachers in the designing of a school-based reading program and implementation plan, ensuring that there is consistency across the school.

- Improve communication processes with the whole school community to enable timely and responsive information relating to operational outcomes and strategic direction.