Mount Murchison State School

Executive Summary

School Improvement Unit

Queensland Government

Acknowledgment of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands from across Queensland. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia's cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.

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Contents

1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Mount Murchison State School** from **8** to **9 October 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

Stephen Bobby   Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Heather Castle   Peer reviewer

1.2 School context

Location:	Dawson Highway, Mount Murchison
Education region:	Central Queensland Region
Year opened:	1935
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	35
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	12 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	3 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	933
Year principal appointed:	2014
Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):	3
Significant partner schools:	Biloela State High School, Biloela State School, Thangool State School, Jambin State School, Prospect Creek State School, Goovigen State School, Wowan State School, Moura State School, Theodore State School
Significant community partnerships:	Biloela Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC), Banana Shire Council Community Resource Centre
Significant school programs:	Biloela PCYC Small Schools Health and Wellbeing Program, Chaplaincy support program

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, small schools Business Manager (BM), guidance officer, Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), two classroom teachers, two teacher aides, chaplain, nine parents and 28 students.

Community and business groups:

- Two Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) representatives, Banana Shire Council Community Resource Centre coordinator and PCYC officer-in-charge.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principals of Biloela State High School, Biloela State School and Prospect Creek State School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Acting Regional Director and acting ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2019	School data plan
Investing for Success 2019	School budget overview
School Opinion Survey	Curriculum planning documents
OneSchool	School differentiation documentation
Professional learning plan 2019	School newsletters and website
School pedagogical framework	School Data Profile (Semester 1 2019)
Headline Indicators (April 2019 release)	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	Report card and NAPLAN update Semester 1 2019

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

A genuinely supportive and collegial environment is clearly apparent.

The principal places a high priority on building and maintaining positive, genuine and trusting relationships between staff members, students and parents. Student wellbeing, collegiality and care are prioritised and form the basis for the school's success and reputation in the local community. All staff members are valued for the contribution they make towards student learning and the endeavours of the school. Teaching staff and teacher aides describe the high levels of support they receive from the principal.

Community members, parents, staff members and students display enormous pride in the school that is identified as the hub of the community.

It is a school in which generations of connectedness exist. The 2018 School Opinion Survey (SOS) data reflects the value and strong partnerships of the school with 100.0 per cent of parents agreeing with the statement 'This school has a strong sense of community'. A common phrase used by all members of the school community is that we are all part of the 'Mt Murchie Family'.

The principal has established and is driving a narrow Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA).

This was recommended in the previous school review. The explicit focus areas for the school are improving the reading and writing skills of all students. All staff are familiar with the EIA and express a commitment to the anticipated improvements of student learning outcomes in the focus areas. Staff indicate that the journey in the reading improvement agenda is further progressed than the writing focus area. They are able to identify success stories for individual students in reading. The principal articulates that external blockers have impacted on the pace of the implementation of the writing improvement agenda and further time is required to advance all elements of the agenda to embeddedness.

The principal models classroom and school leadership in the implementation of school programs and operations.

The principal articulates the importance of building the instructional leadership capabilities of school and staff leaders to ensure clarity of expectations, direction within the roles and to grow their appropriate skills to lead school initiatives. Plans that detail key actions, implementation timelines and specific accountabilities for school and teacher leaders relating to priority programs are yet to be developed.

The principal understands that the development of staff expertise in priority areas is central to improving student learning outcomes.

The principal recognises their responsibility to facilitate formal and informal opportunities for teachers to share effective practice and to build teaching and learning knowledge and skills, through effective coaching and modelling processes. Some staff are able to articulate instances of modelling and coaching that have occurred over time. Staff speak of multiple opportunities to provide informal feedback to each other through proximity of classrooms and the shared student population. Teachers identify the desire to expand their pedagogical knowledge and articulate that opportunities to learn from each other through modelling and coaching would be welcomed. The principal acknowledges that observation, feedback, modelling and coaching are important aspects of the teaching pedagogy and outlines the intent to implement these processes in a more formalised and regular way.

The school has a documented pedagogical framework.

The principal keeps informed of current research regarding effective teaching practices and sets high expectations for teachers to deliver effective pedagogical experiences. The pedagogical framework describes five dimensions of learning curriculum intent, assessment, sequencing teaching and learning, making judgements and feedback. The principal articulates the desire to review the school's pedagogical framework. A major feature of this review will be staff establishing clear expectations regarding the use of effective teaching strategies throughout the school.

The principal believes strongly in building strong and productive alliances with schools in the local area.

The principal effectively models a commitment to professional learning by participating in opportunities to learn alongside colleagues, teachers and students. The principal has developed a documented moderation plan that has been shared across the cluster. The principal has actively worked within the cluster to develop a team of leadership staff to enact the moderation. This work is highly valued by all staff within the Callide Valley Schools Cluster as an important process to build staff understanding and consistency of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum (AC) and associated assessment practices. Cluster principals acknowledge that the principal has driven the development of a strong cluster moderation process.

The principal and staff members speak assuredly of the shared commitment to providing quality education to all students.

A coherent whole-school curriculum plan that outlines how the school addresses curriculum delivery from Prep to Year 6 has been developed by the school. This plan makes clear what teachers should teach and students should learn. This aims to ensure that all students are exposed to all the required elements of the AC and that student engagement is maximised through recognition of the need for students in multi-age class groups. A strong reading and writing focus is apparent within the school and are identified as focus learning areas. Teaching staff are provided with curriculum planning time, working with the principal. Comprehensive curriculum planning processes are utilised as a basis for ongoing staff

discussions regarding the best ways to maximise student academic achievement, behaviour and wellbeing.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Maintain the focus on emerging elements of the EIA and collaboratively identify potential next steps and current areas for greater precision.

Develop roles and responsibilities statements aligned to the EIA, that include accountabilities, key actions and implementation timelines for all staff and ensure these are effectively communicated to, and understood by, all staff.

Collaboratively develop a formal and agreed approach for all staff to participate in classroom-based learning that includes modelling, coaching and mentoring opportunities, within and beyond the school.

Review and enhance the school's documented pedagogical framework to align with staff members' deepened understanding and shared ownership.