



School Improvement Unit Report

Helidon State School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Helidon State School from 30 May to 1 June. 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:	16 School Street, Helidon
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region
The school opened in:	1874
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	144
Indigenous enrolments:	13 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	4 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	920
Year principal appointed:	2004
Number of teachers:	7.85 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Gatton State School, Flagstone Creek State School, Grantham State School, Withcott State School, Murphy's Creek State School, Lockyer State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Kate's Place, Helidon Progress Association and Orica
Significant school programs:	



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
 - Nine teachers
 - Five teacher aides
 - Six parents
 - Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, secretary and treasurer
 - 40 students
 - Chaplain
 - Guidance officer
 - Head of Special Education Services (HOSES)
 - Three community members
 - Two cleaners
 - Administration officer

1.4 Review team

Lesley Vogan	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Cliff Powys	Peer reviewer
Fred Hardman	External reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- There is a strong culture of mutual trust and collegial support among the school staff.

All students and staff members have an obvious sense of belonging. Parents are welcomed and speak of open communication with staff.

- The principal has developed an agenda to improve learning outcomes for students in spelling, English, writing and numeracy.

There are some accompanying targets for student improvements. Accompanying timelines for actions are yet to be fully developed.

- The school has a professional team of highly capable staff. The principal is identifying teacher's strengths and provides opportunities for lead roles.

Some planned and purposeful visits to classrooms by the principal exist. There is some targeted feedback provided by peers and the principal. Staff members indicate that they value the feedback and are open for further opportunities for observation. Mentoring and coaching is not yet part of the school culture of continuous professional improvement.

- There is a whole-school curriculum plan based on the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resources which are used selectively across year levels.

Informal collaborative planning of curriculum planning and evaluation occurs regularly across the school. Staff members are involved in curriculum discussion at staff meetings.

- There is a focus on improved teaching strategies on spelling and writing. Professional learning activities are focused on building teacher and teacher aide understandings in these areas.

Teaching staff report that informal moderation is common practice and that there is open communication between classes to provide adequate feedback on work sample quality.

- The school tone is positive and the staff members are held in high regard by families.

Teaching staff actively seek ways to enhance student learning and wellbeing by partnering with parents and families.



- Teaching staff provide students, including higher achieving students, with some challenging classroom activities that meet levels of readiness, interests, aspirations and motivations.

Data shows students require higher level challenges. The curriculum provides mostly standard level tasks, and efforts at multiple representation are not yet embedded.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Narrow and sharpen the school Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). Develop timelines and targets for implementation.
- Develop systematic and collaborative curriculum planning. Provide regular professional learning opportunities for staff members to ensure they have detailed knowledge of and confidence in implementing all learning areas of the Australian Curriculum (AC).
- Consolidate and refine the schedule of moderation across all year levels to ensure there is a consistency of teacher judgement regarding levels of student learning and expand these over time across all learning areas.
- Build on the culture of feedback and reflective practice across the school.
- Develop the coaching capabilities of the principal and teaching staff to drive quality instruction and leadership that aligns to the school improvement agenda and implementation of the AC.
- Build on teaching staff expertise to plan classroom learning experiences to ensure all students are appropriately engaged, challenged and extended.