



School Improvement Unit Report

Runcorn Heights State School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Runcorn Heights State School from 23 to 25 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:	200 Nemies Road, Runcorn
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
The school opened in:	1975
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	658
Indigenous enrolments:	3 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	3 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1026
Year principal appointed:	2014, Semester Two
Number of teachers:	41 (including specialists and part time teachers)
Nearby schools:	Runcorn State School, Kuraby State School, Runcorn State High School, Stretton State College, Sunnybank Hills State School, Warrigal Road State School, Algester State School, Calamvale Community College
Significant community partnerships:	Korean Pre-service Teacher Hosting through EQI, Stretton State College Karawatha Extension Programs, Councillor Kim Marx, State Member Duncan Pegg, University of Queensland Pre-service Teacher hosting
Unique school programs:	Lunch time clubs, Student Leadership Program, Years 4 to 6 personal growth and development camps, Japanese Study Tours



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, two Heads of Curriculum/Master Teacher, Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN)
 - 21 classroom teachers and specialists
 - 12 teacher aides
 - Business Service Manager (BSM)
 - Guidance Officer
 - Five non-teaching staff
 - 11 student leaders
 - 15 parents
 - Local state school principals
 - Four community members
 - Three members of the Parent and Citizens' (P&C) Association

1.4 Review team

Michelle D'Netto	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
John Wessel	External reviewer
Ruth Miller	Peer reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- Positive, inclusive and productive relationships are clearly evident across the school.

The school provides a caring, supportive learning environment. There are high expectations for all staff and students. The cultural diversity is a distinct strength of the school community and its value is evident.

- The school has clear vision and direction for improvement.

The school leadership team is committed in their pursuit of improved learning outcomes for all students. The school improvement agenda has four stated priorities: reading, writing, numeracy and teacher development. Action in relation to the numeracy agenda is yet to occur.

Significant change has been undertaken in the past six months. The school leaders bring a high level of energy, commitment and expertise to ensure these changes deliver sustained success.

- A range of professional structures and systems are in place to develop and sustain expert teaching teams.

A clearly defined school leadership structure has been developed in 2015. This structure has enabled clarity of roles and responsibilities for staff within the school. Key structures that have been established within the school to support staff professional learning include the Professional Learning Teams (PLT) and the Professional Learning Communities (PLC).

- Developing classroom pedagogy is a priority for 2015.

The school is working towards the full implementation of its pedagogical framework which is research based and aligned with explicit instruction principles and practices. Some aspects of Marzano's Art and Science of Teaching¹ (ASoT) combined with the Gradual Release of Responsibility guide the explicit teaching agenda in some classrooms.

Formal processes for teacher observations, coaching and feedback are scheduled for the second semester of the year.

¹ Marzano, Robert J. 2007, *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction*. ASCD, Alexandria, Virginia.



- Guided reading structures are being implemented across the school.

Guided reading is identified as a high priority and is resourced substantially across all year levels. Flexible timetabling structures enable all classes to have three thirty minute guided reading lessons with provision for at least four adults, including class teacher, Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN) and trained teacher-aides.

- A variety of commercial literacy-based programs are being used across the school.

There is evidence of a wide range of commercial programs to support the teaching of reading; Springboards, PM, Dragonflies, Question-Answer Relationship (QAR), Words Their Way, Comprehensive assessment of reading strategies (Cars) and Strategies to achieve reading success (Stars) being used across the school, creating some inconsistency of practice. Teachers reported the need for a school-wide program to enable a common language and focus.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Establish a formal process for observing and providing feedback to teachers through a coaching program.
- Collaboratively review the progress of the improvement agenda to date, with considerations given to timelines of the improvement agenda, the school context and the needs of the staff.
- Collaboratively refine school-wide programs to be used for the delivery of the literacy instruction with particular attention given to a consistent phonics program.
- Ensure the plan for embedding quality classroom pedagogical practices that build on the work started using ASoT is focused.
- Develop a comprehensive numeracy program aligning the Australian Curriculum (AC) to the modified Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units and the needs of the students.