



School Improvement Unit Report

Narbethong State Special School Executive Summary



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Narbethong State Special School from 4 to 8 August 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:	Salisbury Street, Buranda
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
The school opened in:	1963
Year levels:	Prep to Year 12 and ECDP
Current school enrolment:	57 students additional 28 attending ECDP
Indigenous enrolments:	1.7 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	100 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	n/a
Year principal appointed:	2011
Number of teachers:	16.2 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Buranda State School, St Laurence College, Anglican Church Grammar School, Villanova College, Loreto College
Significant community partnerships:	TAFE students, pre-service teachers, Occupational Therapy (OT), Teacher Education Centre of Excellence Special Education (TECESE) – Community sponsors, Vision Australia.
Significant school programs:	Pre-braille and braille instruction, Orientation and Mobility, Visual Impairment (VI) specific technology, Queensland Deafblind, Expanded Core Curriculum for VI, Active Learning methodology, Flexible Individual Enriched and Level Appropriate FIELA curriculum, YOGA 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 (ARD)
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal, deputy principal
 - Master teacher
 - Head of Curriculum (HOC)
 - Head of Special Education Services (HOSES)
 - 17 teachers and 13 teacher aides
 - Two students
 - Music teacher, OT, two physiotherapists, Speech Language Pathologist, Advisory Visiting Teacher-Hearing Impairment (AVT-HI)
 - Teacher from Buranda State School
 - Business Services Manager (BSM) and two administration officers
 - Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) president, two P&C members and two parents

1.4 Review team

Ray Hack	SIU (review chair)
Richard Day	Internal reviewer, SIU
Rob Gilbert	External reviewer



1.5 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2016

Investing for Success 2016

OneSchool

Professional plan (2016)

School Opinion Survey

Pedagogical Framework

Responsible Behaviour Plan

Strategic Plan 2012-2015

School Data Profile (Semester 1e, 2016)

School budget overview

Student Report Cards and Individual Plans

Professional development plan

Quarterly contact newsletters

School website



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school is unique in its function within Queensland. It provides a highly specialised program to students with vision, intellectual and multiple impairments.

The learning culture of the school is highly influenced by the school's history as a centre of expertise in the area of vision impairment. The school is active in developing resources and intervention programs which will enhance student learning. These are willingly shared with staff in other schools.

- Differentiated teaching and learning are deeply embedded in the practices of the school.

Staff knowledge of individual students is high, and close attention is paid to each student to the extent that the school in effect works on an individual case approach to teaching. Teaching staff routinely and consistently monitor the progress of individual students, identify learning needs and tailor classroom activities to levels of readiness and need.

- The school leaders are united and committed to the school's core objectives to provide quality educational programs to this cohort of learners. This commitment is shared by all staff throughout the school.

The leadership team work together in a cooperative and positive manner. There is a need for clarity within the team in regards to their individual contributions to the school's improvement agenda. The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) does not as yet specify in detail explicit targets, timelines or ways of monitoring progress.

- The school has a multi-faceted curriculum which addresses the range of needs of students with vision, intellectual and other impairments.

Three key inputs are combined as the basis for planning are the Flexible Individual Enriched and Level Appropriate (FIELA), the Australian Curriculum (AC) and the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for Students with Vision Impairment. An overall coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery is needed to combine the three inputs to ensure consistent teaching and learning expectations, and a clear reference for monitoring learning across the year levels.

- Teachers and other professionals regularly collect data using a range of tools.

Teachers engage in the analysis of data through moderation meetings using video, photographic and other forms of evidence. A whole-school data plan that clearly identifies the appropriate range of, and timetable for, the collection of data for each sector of the school is yet to be developed. There is some evidence that teachers participate in in-depth data discussions and use data to evaluate and self-reflect on practice.



- The school recognises that an intensive and individualised approach to teaching is the most appropriate and effective way of improving student learning throughout the school.

Active Learning is a valued approach to teaching and learning for many students across important aspects of the curriculum. Other relevant pedagogies and alternative approaches are not explicitly included in the school's documentation. The school is concerned regarding its capacity to maintain expertise in Active Learning due to staff with this knowledge retiring and the absence of relevant external Professional Development (PD).

- Parents and community members report that they find the school leaders and staff respectful, caring and committed to their students' learning and wellbeing.

Parents speak highly of the way all staff members are willing to support them with all dimensions of their student's learning including personal care, and appreciate the problem solving approach taken by staff.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Engage the school community to clarify links between the school values and priorities for all aspects of curriculum, teaching and learning.
- Develop the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) with all staff to define and implement a coherent and narrow set of core priorities including clear targets, roles and responsibilities and timelines to monitor student learning.
- Develop a coherent, comprehensive and sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that combines the various dimensions of the school curriculum to ensure consistent teaching and learning expectations and monitors learning across year levels.
- Document and enact an integrated whole-school data plan for the collection, storage and analysis of student achievement, attendance and wellbeing data across core learning areas.
- Apply an evidence-based approach to incorporate in the school's pedagogical framework a range of approaches to create a flexible repertoire of teaching strategies relevant to all aspects of the curriculum.