

The Willows State School

Executive Summary



School
Improvement
Unit





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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **The Willows State School** from **13 to 16 March 2017**.

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 consider in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies which prioritise future directions for improvement.

The 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 about the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Alison Welch	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Majella Frith	Peer reviewer
Graeme Hall	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Bilberry Street, Kirwan 4817
Education region:	North Queensland Region
Year opened:	1997
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	1007
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	13 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	2 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	996
Year principal appointed:	2017
Full-time equivalent staff:	89
Significant partner schools:	Kirwan State School, Kirwan State High School, Thuringia State High School, Weir State School
Significant community partnerships:	Local High Schools, Regional Office
Significant school programs:	School Music Program – Rock Band and Choirs



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, three deputy principals, head of curriculum (HOC), master teacher, six STLaN's, guidance officer, head of special education services, behaviour support teacher, Business Services Manager (BSM), 48 teachers, four administrative officers, chaplain, 17 teacher aides, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) vice president and treasurer, 33 parents, 28 students, Tuckshop convenor, Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) coordinator.

Community and business groups:

- Fiona Quinn Stories Galore

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal, Kirwan State High School and Deputy Principal, Thuringowa State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Councillor for Townsville and Assistant Regional Director (ARD)



1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2017	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016
Investing for Success 2017	Strategic Plan 2014-2017
Headline Indicators (October 2016)	School Data Profile (October 2016)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Meeting Schedule for teachers 2017	The Willows School Curriculum Plan 2017
School improvement targets	School curriculum placemat
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
Leadership Structure	School newsletters and website
Responsible Behaviour Plan	School Opinion Survey 2016
Curriculum planning documents	Community and Partnerships PLC
Master Teacher projects	Year 1 LOA/PM data
Data Walls	Reading Data Term 4 2016
Learning Walls	Student Report cards
Targeting Literacy and Numeracy – Tlan 2015, 2016	The Willows Way: Create a safe, respectful culture of learning
Roles, responsibilities and key task statements: school leadership group	School Improvement Hierarchy Reflection Tool



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The tone of the school reflects an expectation that all students can achieve success.

The school has a team of enthusiastic and dedicated teachers and teacher aides who share responsibility for student learning. A team approach to the delivery of teaching is evident in the school. Teachers are supported by key personnel in establishing shared year-level learning goals and teaching strategies to achieve them. All staff members contribute to the development of a culture of student improvement and success.

A strong collegial spirit exists in the school.

Staff members have a high level of professional expertise. Teachers speak highly of the teaching skill of their colleagues, and this is supported by the school's leadership team and regional personnel. Teachers are highly committed to the learning success of students, and they invest pride and effort in their work.

The school has a newly developed Prep to Year 6 curriculum plan.

The school has an explicit, coherent and sequenced whole-school plan for curriculum delivery. The school curriculum plan gives priority to constructing learning experiences that are engaging for all students. The contents of the document are yet to be communicated and implemented across the school. Implementation will include monitoring and evaluation of the enacted curriculum.

A data culture exists across the school and there is evidence that the principal and other school leaders view reliable and timely student data as essential to school improvement.

Class data is used across the school to guide most teacher practice. The links between the use of data and appropriate curriculum and pedagogy are evident in most classrooms. The school is yet to review the effectiveness of the school and class data plans to ensure all elements are focussed on enhancing student and school performance and lead to adjustment of pedagogy and the curriculum.

The principal places a high priority on developing processes to identify and respond to student needs through the allocation of its human and financial resources.

The leadership team makes operational and budgetary decisions throughout the year relating to curriculum, teaching and learning, human resource management and facilities improvements. STLaN teachers have been allocated to all year levels to provide instructional coaching and intensive support, co-planning, co-teaching and co-reflecting in the school priority area of reading. Systematic processes for monitoring the effectiveness of targeted resources on student outcomes are yet to be fully evaluated.



The school has developed and reviewed the Responsible Behaviour Plan (RBP) and 'The Willows Way' for students and there is clear ownership from all stakeholders in the community.

There has been a strong school-wide focus on developing clearer expectations about how students interact towards one another according to 'The Willows Way'. Students and staff are clear in their articulation of both the expectations and the processes. There are three school values '*Be Safe; Be Respectful and Be a Learner*'. There is clear visual documentation of values and expectations on display throughout the school. Processes for the ongoing review of the plan are yet to be developed.

Interactions between staff, students, parents and families are positive, caring and professional.

Parents report teachers are approachable to discuss issues related to students. Most staff members can clearly identify the improvement agenda focus areas and are cognisant of the importance of incorporating this within their programs to improve student learning and performance. Students were able to identify some aspects of the EIA. Parents' understanding of the school priorities was limited. The P&C have established a Facebook page to support communication among the parent body. A working party has been established to manage the school website.

The school has a small yet active P&C which contributes additional resources to the school.

The P&C works with the school community to provide financial support for the school and has allocated \$43 000 for fans in the hall, \$60 000 to the wireless upgrade, \$32 000 for the electronic sign and has purchased computers to support student learning. The P&C's ongoing support of the school is highly valued by staff members.

The current student attendance rate is 95.2 per cent which exceeds the school target.

Teachers and parents referenced student behaviour and attendance as being a whole of school focus. The school implements a range of strategies to support students and families to ensure that strong attendance rates are a continued priority.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Engage teachers in professional discussions in the ongoing development of the school curriculum plan.

Provide time for in-depth staff discussions of National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), systemic and school-based achievement data and of strategies for continuous improvement of student outcomes.

Strengthen school-wide monitoring processes to measure the effectiveness of targeted resources to ensure the delivery of intended student outcomes.

Review and embed whole-school processes to ensure 'The Willows Way' behaviour plan is meeting its objectives to effectively manage student behaviour.

Strengthen communication with parents and the wider community including the use of technological opportunities.