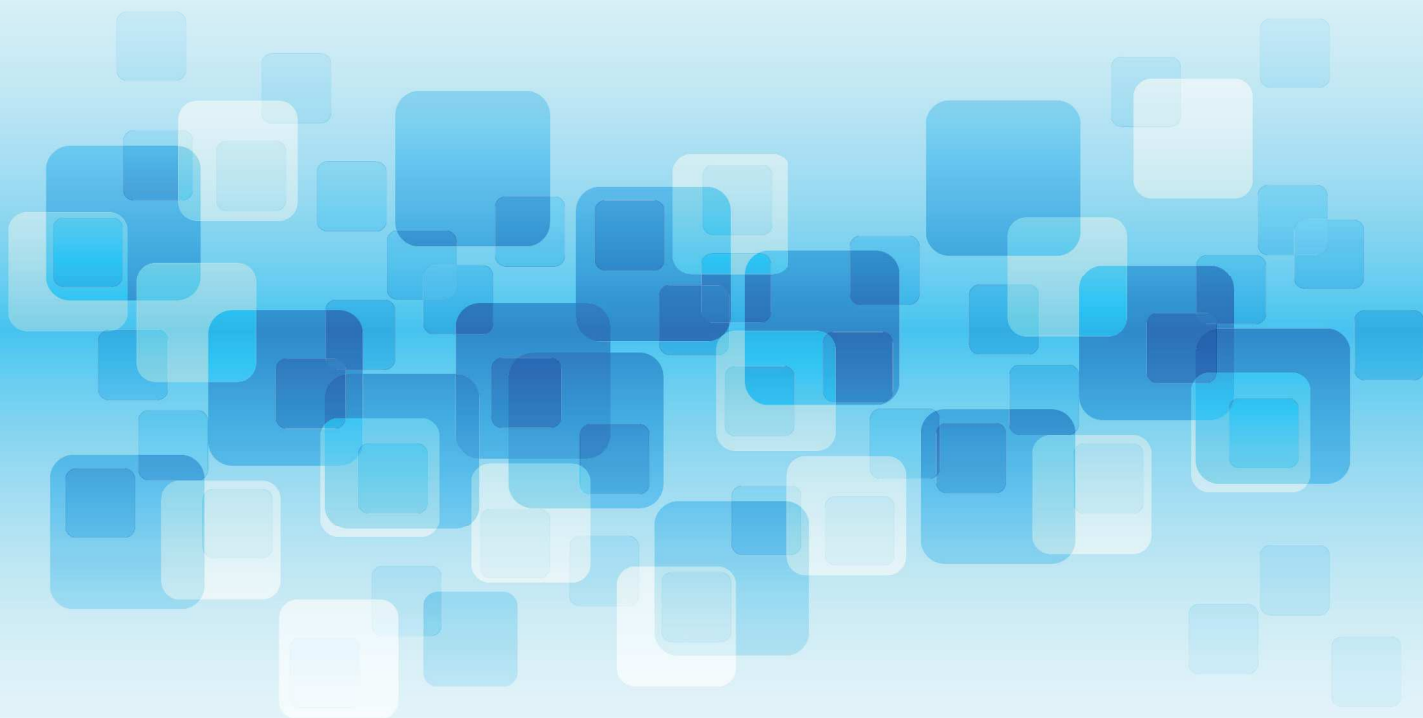




School Improvement Unit Report

Gatton State School Executive Summary





1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Gatton State School from 14 to 16 March 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:	26 William Street, Gatton
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region
The school opened in:	1876
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	461
Indigenous enrolments:	11.3 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	11.7 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	934
Year principal appointed:	2012
Number of teachers:	24 (full-time equivalent)
Nearby schools:	Lockyer District State High School, Grantham State School.
Significant community partnerships:	Lockyer Valley Early Childhood Network, Lockyer Valley Concerned Parents of the Disabled Group, Lockyer Valley Regional Council.
Unique school programs:	Lockyer Valley Early Childhood Network, <i>Seven Steps to Writing Success</i> , Numeracy Module 4 – Problem Solving and Critical Thinking.



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, Mr Peter Baker
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff members, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal and deputy principal
 - Head of Special Education Services (HOSSES), Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), two master teachers
 - Curriculum and Behaviour Support Teacher (CBST)
 - 24 teachers, English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher
 - 10 teacher aides
 - Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and 20 parents
 - Guidance officer, Family liaison officer, school chaplain
 - 40 students
 - Business Services Manager (BSM), two administrative staff, tuckshop convenor
 - High School Principal
 - Early Learning Centre Coordinator
 - State Member of Parliament
 - Acting Mayor, Lockyer Valley Regional Council settlement officer

1.4 Review team

Alison Rose	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
John Enright	Internal reviewer, SIU
Allan Morgan	External reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The principal, school leaders and staff members are united in demonstrating a commitment to success for students and to school improvement.

A broad school-wide approach to improving learning outcomes for students is documented in the school's 2016 improvement priorities. The school's priorities are communicated in staff forums and school newsletters. Targets and timelines for improvement are set for many of the areas identified. Strategies for monitoring and tracking progress towards set targets are yet to be developed.

- Leadership in the school is shared amongst a number of key personnel.

A number of key personnel comprise the leadership team, including two master teachers, Head of Special Education Services (HOSSES), Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN) and Curriculum and Behaviour Support Teacher (CBST). Specific roles and responsibilities for driving and monitoring the improvement priorities require further refinement and clarity.

- The tone of the school is welcoming with classrooms presenting as organised and well managed, reflecting a commitment to inclusivity.

The school has undergone significant re-culturing over recent years and a culture and ethic of inclusion is present throughout the school. A range of support strategies to respond to student needs and programs to address diversity is evident. Teachers employ and document some differentiation strategies. These practices are not yet evident in all classrooms.

- Staff members are hardworking, collegial and committed to achieving improved learning for students and most teachers are able to articulate how their classroom practice links to the school's improvement priorities.

Teachers state that they are well supported by the leadership team in terms of managing student behaviour. Planned and purposeful visits to classrooms by members of the leadership team with a focus on improving teaching practice in key priority areas are yet to develop. A systematic classroom observation and feedback process led by the principal and leadership team is yet to be developed.



- The school has published an evidence-based pedagogical framework which was developed in 2013 by the local cluster of schools. The framework highlights the Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (DOTL), an explicit teaching model¹ (Explicit Instruction – Effective and Efficient Teaching) and a range of pedagogical practices.

Teachers have been trained in explicit teaching, based on the Anita Archer model. This is included in the school's pedagogical approach and involves ongoing professional development and sharing of practice. There is a particular focus on improving teaching methods in writing by using *Seven Steps to Writing Success* and problem solving in mathematics by participating in a project entitled *Turning Evidence Based Practices into Action*. Both of these initiatives are yet to be embedded in all classrooms.

- The school has established a number of beneficial partnerships with local organisations and individuals to improve opportunities and learning outcomes for students.

Partners including the Lockyer Valley (LV) Regional Council Migrant Settlement Officer, Gatton out of School Care (Camp Australia), Lockyer Valley Concerned Parents of the Disabled Group (LVCPDG), University of Queensland Gatton Campus, and the Lockyer Valley Early Childhood Education Centre (LVECEC) contribute to the school's programs. Productive partnerships have been developed to support transition of students into Prep and also students transitioning to the local high school.

¹ Archer, A.L. and Hughes, C.A. (2011), *Explicit Instruction: Effective and Efficient Teaching*, Guilford Press, New York, USA.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Refine the current improvement agenda to ensure a sharp, narrow and deep focus with achievable, measurable targets, timelines and resourcing.
- Clarify the leadership roles and responsibilities of key personnel in driving the improvement agenda, including monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of key school programs and initiatives.
- Continue to build upon and enhance inclusive practices across the school by ensuring planned and documented differentiation is being implemented at the classroom level and student progress is monitored.
- Clarify the instructional leadership role of coaches and all members of the leadership team so they have an effective, enhanced and purposeful presence in classrooms.
- Continue to embed evidence-based teaching strategies to ensure consistent school-wide pedagogical practices are enacted.
- Develop a formal and systematic program of classroom observation and feedback to teachers by coaches and the leadership team.