

# Conondale State School

## Executive Summary



School  
Improvement  
Unit



Queensland  
Government



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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 **Conondale State School** from **1 to 3 August 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 that prioritise future directions for improvement.

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.

An action plan will be developed and submitted to SIU and region within six weeks of the school receiving the report.

For more information regarding the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

### 1.1 Review team

Garry Lacey	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Kylie Todhunter	Peer reviewer
Pam Hall	External reviewer



## 1.2 School context

<b>Location:</b>	Maleny-Kenilworth Road, Conondale
<b>Education region:</b>	North Coast Region
<b>Year opened:</b>	1912
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 6
<b>Enrolment:</b>	93
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	23 per cent
<b>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</b>	12 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	973
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	April 2017 (acting)
<b>Full-time equivalent staff:</b>	5.6
<b>Significant partner schools:</b>	Maleny State School, Kenilworth State Community College
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	Sunshine Coast Motorcycle Club, Conondale Rural Fire Brigade, Conondale Sport and Rec Club Inc
<b>Significant school programs:</b>	Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden (SAKG), Instrumental Music Program, 5 Nations Sporting Program, Student Leadership Program



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, four classroom teachers, Support Teacher – Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN)/Special Education Program (SEP) teacher, support teacher – student engagement and wellbeing, guidance officer, five teacher aides, school chaplain, Business Manager (BM), Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association vice president and treasurer, 15 parents, and 48 students.

Community and business groups:

- Coordinator of C&K (Crèche and Kindergarten) Maleny Community Kindergarten and local convenience store owner.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of local feeder high school.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.

### 1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2017	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2017
Investing for Success 2017	Strategic Plan 2015 - 2018
Headline Indicators (2016 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2017)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Responsible Behaviour Plan	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	School Opinion Survey
School data plan	Professional development plans
School website	



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

**A strong sense of community is apparent across the school with students, parents and staff members commenting on the positive and caring relationships that are established.**

Parents comment that the size of the school impacts positively on the relationship between staff members and families. Classrooms are welcoming and students express appreciation of their teachers and the supportive learning environment across the school. A concerted effort is being made to develop a culture that promotes learning and reflects high expectations that all students will learn successfully.

**School staff members show dedication to contributing positively to the range of activities and events that is offered to students and involves parents and community members.**

These include the Book Character Ball, Father's Day sleepover, discos and movie nights. The end of year graduation and community dinner is a highlight on the school calendar. The school has a recognised student leadership program that conducts a rigorous selection process through two rounds of application. Many of these events have become strong traditions at the school and are mutually valued by students, staff members, parents and the wider community.

**Classroom teachers are able to identify the teaching of writing and spelling as priorities for implementation in their classrooms.**

Expectations for the teaching of writing include the use of the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model. Teachers describe the use of strategies from Seven Steps to Writing Success, Cameron and Dempsey's<sup>1</sup> *The Writing Book*, vocabulary development and identifying good pieces of writing as key strategies they utilise to engage students in writing. For spelling, there is an expectation that teachers will implement the *Words their Way* program. Some teachers describe the teaching of Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) words and No Excuse words in their spelling programs. Conversations with the principal and staff members indicate that further work is required to be undertaken to identify and collaboratively agree on the non-negotiable teaching strategies that will be consistently utilised in all classrooms across the school for areas identified in the school's Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA).

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<sup>1</sup> Cameron, S., & Dempsey, L. (2013). *The writing book: A practical guide for teachers*. S & L Publishing.





**The principal is supportive of the learning of staff members and has begun leading professional learning in the school for teachers, teacher aides and parents.**

Opportunities for continuous improvement of professional practice focused on the development of contemporary, research-based knowledge and skills are currently a challenge in the school. This is reflected in the fact that the school is yet to develop a professional learning plan that details opportunities for professional capacity development in areas aligned to the identified school priorities. School staff members are yet to develop their Annual Performance Development Plans (APDP). Opportunities for regular formal or informal coaching, mentoring or professional feedback to staff regarding their practice are yet to be developed.

**The principal views the use of data as essential for effective delivery of the school's curriculum, teaching and learning processes, and school improvement.**

The building of staff data literacy skills is identified in school planning documentation as a focus for development. The ability of teachers to understand class data and respond to the implications for differentiation is an emerging practice across the school. The principal indicates the need for teams of teachers to meet regularly to analyse and discuss individual student and class data. It is envisaged that this will develop into a process whereby teaching teams engage in critical reflection of individual student data and collaboratively develop student learning goals and strategies for improvement.

**The principal expresses a commitment to implementing curriculum units and assessment tasks aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC).**

Teachers currently plan curriculum units in a range of ways. Some classroom teachers describe beginning the curriculum planning process by considering the achievement standard and content descriptions relating to the AC. Other classroom teachers describe how they predominantly draw on C2C units as a key resource for the planning of their curriculum units. The level to which these teachers refer to the AC varies. The principal expresses a desire to work with classroom teachers to ensure greater rigour and consistency in the planning process for curriculum units at the school.

**The principal recognises that high quality teaching practice is the key to improving student learning outcomes.**

There is a range of teaching practices implemented across the school to engage students in learning. Lesson design and delivery are predominantly at the discretion of individual teachers. Time for teachers to collaborate in their planning and to share high-yield strategies in their teaching is yet to occur on a regular basis. The development of greater consistency of teacher practice in the implementation of high-yield teaching strategies within curriculum areas across the school is yet to occur. The principal recognises the development of a pedagogical framework that reflects agreed strategies to be implemented in all classrooms and used in curriculum planning processes will assist this process.



**The school chaplain is highly valued by the school community.**

The chaplain holds lunchtime games sessions for students and facilitates the SHINE Wellbeing program for Years 5 and 6 female students. A playgroup coordinated by the chaplain operates each Friday morning. The chaplain coordinates a breakfast club each Friday that is attended by most students and a number of families. Food for the breakfast club is donated by a wide range of local businesses and families.

**The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden (SAKG) provides a valuable outdoor and kitchen learning experience for students.**

Students experience learning with the SAKG whereby they alternate working in the school's established kitchen garden with cooking in the school kitchen. This program is supported by school-funded staff members who deliver, with the support of parent volunteers, a program that is valued by students, staff members and the community.





## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Develop an EIA that has a narrow and sharp focus and work with teachers to define the agreed non-negotiable practices relating to this agenda, and what this looks like in their class.

Develop and implement a Professional Development (PD) plan, including APDPs, leadership development, coaching and mentoring, and models of feedback, to enhance the professional capacity of school staff and support the implementation of identified school priorities.

Provide time for teams of teachers to interrogate school-based achievement data and generate strategies for continuous improvement of student outcomes.

Develop curriculum units aligned to the AC that suitably respond to the school's multi-age setting and are quality assured for consistency, balance and coverage against content descriptions and achievement standards of the AC.

Develop a pedagogical framework that reflects agreed pedagogical strategies, is considered in curriculum planning processes and is consistently implemented in all classrooms.