

# Warwick East State School

## Action Plan Final Report



School  
Improvement  
Unit



Queensland  
Government



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## 1. Introduction

This report is a product of a 12-month check-in review at **Warwick East State School** on **21 May 2018**. It provides an evaluation of the school's performance against the 12-month action plan developed by the school in consultation with the Assistant Regional Director (ARD).

The 12-month check-in was completed by staff from the School Improvement Unit (SIU). For more information regarding the SIU and school reviews please visit the [website](#).

### 1.1 School context

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Location:</b>   | Fitzroy Street, Warwick   |
| <b>Education region:</b>   | Darling Downs South West Region   |
| <b>Year opened:</b>  | 1850  |
| <b>Year levels:</b>  | Prep to Year 6  |
| <b>Enrolment:</b>  | 231   |
| <b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>                              | 23 per cent   |
| <b>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</b>                | 19 per cent   |
| <b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b> | 930   |
| <b>Year principal appointed:</b>                                     | 2016  |
| <b>Full-time equivalent teachers:</b>                                | 17  |
| <b>Significant partner schools:</b>                                  | Special Education Program (SEP) Cluster Schools - Yangan State School, Freestone State School, Maryvale State School. Warwick State High School, Warwick West State School - Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP)   |
| <b>Significant community partnerships:</b>                           | DOCS, Mercy Community Services, Granite Belt Support Services, BUSHkids Warwick, Warwick Riding for the Disabled Australia (RDA), Warwick Indoor Recreation and Aquatic Centre (WIRAC), Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) – After School Care, Bunnings & Rogers Sports Coaching. |



|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Significant school programs:</b> | Reading Program, Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), Seven Steps to Writing, Lead 21, Speech Sound Pics (SSP)/STRIVE, playgroup, Warwick RDA, Reason to Thrive Inc, Supported Play |
|-------------------------------------|---|

## 1.2 Review team

The review was conducted by:

|                |                                     |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Alan Whitfield | Senior reviewer, SIU (case manager) |
| Andrew Helton  | Senior reviewer                     |

## 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following contributed to the 12-month review:

- a desktop review of the school's performance data and other school information
- consultation with the school's ARD
- a school visit of up to one day, and
- interviews with relevant staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Principal
  - Deputy principal/master teacher
  - Head of Special Education Services (HOSES)
  - 12 teachers
  - Two teacher aides
  - 16 students



## 2. SIU monitoring

### 2.1 Action plan improvement strategies

The 12-month review looked at how the school implemented the improvement strategies from the action plan with the support of the region.

**Action Area 1:** Develop an Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) that defines the actions and timelines for the implementation of the identified school strategies, initiatives and programs in the teaching of reading.

**Action Area 2:** Strengthen the data literacy of teachers to use student achievement to identify and plan the next steps for student learning.

### 2.2 Action plan check-ins

The 12-month review was preceded by the following visits:

|             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| Three month | August 2017   |
| Six month   | November 2017 |
| Nine month  | February 2018 |



### 3. Findings

#### 3.1 School performance data

The school's 2018 February enrolment is 232. This is an increase on the 2017 February enrolment of 217 students. The current enrolment is similar to the 2014 enrolment of 236 students and the 2015 enrolment of 234.

Daily student attendance is being targeted by school leaders and teachers. Student daily attendance, year-to-date, in Semester 1 2018 is 92.3 per cent, slightly above the 2017 attendance rate of 91.8 per cent and above the 2016 attendance rate of 90.3 per cent.

The current percentage of students with an attendance rate less than 85 per cent of the school year during 2018 is 12.2 per cent. This reflects an improvement on 15.0 per cent and 17.8 per cent for 2017 and 2016 respectively.

Overall attendance patterns have remained relatively constant since 2013, ranging from 91.2 per cent in 2013 to the current level of 92.3 per cent. An attendance rate between 95 per cent and 100 per cent in Semester 1 2018 is currently being achieved by 51.2 per cent of students. The percentage of students attending less than 85 per cent of the school year has decreased from 20.7 per cent in 2014 to 12.2 per cent in 2018.

The number of short-term School Disciplinary Absences (SDAs) increased in the period 2015 to 2017 from 15 incidents in 2015 to 27 in 2017. The school's short-term SDA rate per term per 1000 students was 31.4 in 2017. This compares to a rate of 18.0 for the State.

The 2017 National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) provides an outline of student improvement relative to state and national performance for students in Years 3 and 5. Caution must be exercised when reviewing NAPLAN data due to the small number of students assessed in each cohort.

NAPLAN Mean Scale Score (MSS) achievement for students in Year 3 is similar to Similar Queensland State Schools (SQSS) in each NAPLAN strand. The MSS score achievement of Year 5 students is above SQSS in the action plan improvement area of reading and similar to SQSS in writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy.

In 2017 student performance in the Upper Two Bands (U2B) in Year 3 is above SQSS performance in reading and grammar and punctuation, similar in writing and numeracy, and below SQSS in spelling.

Year 5 U2B performance is above SQSS in reading and similar in writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy.

The percentage of students at or above the National Minimum Standard (NMS) in Year 3 is above Queensland State Schools (QSS) in writing and spelling and below QSS in reading, grammar and punctuation and numeracy. Year 5 NMS is equal to QSS in reading, similar in writing with a variance of 0.7 per cent and above QSS in spelling, grammar and punctuation and numeracy.



2015-2017 relative gain Year 3 to Year 5 is similar to SQSS in all strands with the exception of the school improvement area of reading which is above SQSS.

Student participation rates in 2017 NAPLAN for Years 3 and 5 range from 74.2 per cent to 90.3 per cent. This compares to the 2008 participation rate for Years 3 and 5 that ranged from 94.1 per cent to 100.0 per cent. School leaders indicate that students are encouraged to participate in the annual NAPLAN assessment. Participation rates are impacted by the small cohort sizes that are assessable.

The 2017 School Opinion Survey (SOS) indicates that parents, students and staff members express a range of views regarding the school and school programs. 95.7 per cent of parents, 77.3 per cent of staff and 91.7 per cent of students agree with the statement 'This is a good school'.

68.2 per cent of staff members, 87.0 per cent of parents and 80.5 per cent of students agree that 'Student behaviour is well managed at this/my school'.

Twenty-three parents responded to the 2017 SOS. There is 95.7 per cent parent agreement with the survey items 'I would recommend this school to others' and 'Teachers at this school are interested in my child's wellbeing'. There is 95.7 per cent parent agreement with the statement 'This school provides me with useful feedback about my child's progress'. This is above the Like Schools Group (LSG) and State Primary Schools' agreement rates.

Student agreement with the survey items 'My English skills are being developed at my school' and 'My Maths skills are being developed at my school' is 95.1 per cent and 91.5 per cent respectively. Students surveyed indicate 91.6 per cent agreement with the survey item 'My teachers provide me with useful feedback about my school work'. 96.3 per cent of students indicate that they are receiving a good education at this school. This is similar to the LSG and State Primary schools' rates of 95.6 per cent and 95.7 per cent respectively.

Staff agreement with the survey item 'I feel that staff morale is positive at this/my school' is 77.3 per cent, improving from 33.3 per cent in 2016 and 57.9 per cent in 2015. This rate of satisfaction compares to 76.8 per cent for the LSG. Twenty-two staff members responded to the 2017 SOS.

### **3.2 Regional support**

#### **ARD support:**

The school's ARD has provided ongoing support to the school and the principal. This support has focused on the key improvement actions as identified in the school's action plan and included:

- regular contact including school visits, phone conversations and emails, recorded on the Record of Supervision Regional document, with written and verbal feedback provided to the principal
- discussion and support in writing the four-year strategic and action plan
- discussion and observation regarding the implementation of the action plan



- meeting with the principal to discuss the four-year strategic plan and Quadrennial School Review (QSR) process with endorsement of the regional document and strategic plan on OneSchool
- establishment of targets within the action plan and monitoring of these at each school visit
- discussion and analysis of school data including headline indicators, data profile, regional benchmarks, SOS data, and school data including PAT-R and PM Benchmark
- provision of coaching and mentoring for the principal
- principal capability development through the Maximising Achievement Program (MAP) meetings Regional Development Days in 2017 focusing on data on OneSchool, and teaching reading, and in 2018 on leadership development, health and wellbeing, and teaching reading
- connection of principal with other principals in the region to discuss effective strategies including whole-school curriculum plan, the teaching of reading, coaching and feedback, and collegial engagement
- visitation of all classrooms within the school during school visits
- discussion with teachers regarding progress towards achievement of the key improvement strategies
- participation in staff meetings with teaching and non-teaching staff members, unpacking the school improvement hierarchy with all staff

#### **Regional support:**

- Regional Project Officers (RPO) – Curriculum Pedagogy and Learning (CPL) provided support that included:
  - Professional Development (PD) for staff members regarding Explicit Instruction (EI), modelled reading, vocabulary and sentence structure
  - mentoring and coaching of staff members
  - mentoring and supporting the principal regarding EI, coaching and feedback, and use of data
  - support with resources including Ready Reader, Skim and Scan, Connect and Question, Organise Your Thinking, Read and Reflect, be the Expert (SCORE)/questioning card
- Regional Improvement team provided PD for staff members regarding modelled reading, and data tools to support the regional benchmark document
- Provision of support in developing staff capacity to implement reading 'The Warwick East Way' – supporting key staff with the development of an action plan for the teaching of reading



- Regional Student Services team including Autism Coach and Regional Support Officer provided support regarding assistance with verified students
- Principal participation in Regional Interportfolio meeting, discussing with regional portfolio managers the needs of the school in relation to the two key improvement goals
- Specific leadership conversations, short research and readings provided through the ARD newsletter

**Other support:**

- Principal Professional Development Plan (PPDP) aligned to principal leadership in the action plan areas

### **3.3 Observations and general findings**

School leaders articulate a focus on reading and the effective use of data as key areas for continued improvements in student learning outcomes. School leaders detail a range of processes to engage students in learning and a managed behaviour process in line with Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) principles that support all students to remain connected with learning.

Teachers indicate increased levels of classroom accountability for student reading outcomes and acknowledge the need to continue to implement a consistent whole-school approach to reading instruction.

School documentation, *Explicit Teaching of Reading*, outlines expectations for delivering the teaching of reading in every classroom, every day. School leaders articulate this document is regularly reviewed with staff members to update the document based on new knowledge and to continue to build consistency of reading practice. There is a continuing need to revisit the school's reading framework to ensure classroom practices align with the intent of the framework.

Digital resources to support the *Explicit Teaching of Reading* document are available through a school-based edStudio.

School leaders are implementing a professional learning program to support the effective teaching of reading, data collection and student goals and oral language skills for early learners. Teachers identify a focus on the Big 6 of Reading, STRIVE and Speech Sound Pics (SSP) and attention to achieving regional reading benchmarks.

Teaching teams engage in reading data conversations focused on tracking student progress twice each term. School leaders engage in these team meetings to confirm the rate of student progression and to gauge developments in staff members' utilisation of data to identify the next steps in student learning.



There is a stated commitment for all students to experience success in reading. Teachers report that they are actively engaged in the development of school-wide student performance targets regarding reading.

Teachers describe the use of the literacy continuum as a tool to track student progress and to identify the next steps in learning. Implementation of the literacy continuum varies in line with teacher expertise and experience.

School leaders indicate all students have a reading goal to support learning. Goal development varies across classrooms and the need to develop goals focusing on the next steps in a student's learning is emerging.

Teachers outline the use of systemic reading data, PM Benchmark and PROBE assessment data and classroom-based assessment to inform classroom reading groupings, and skills to be taught. Teaching staff members indicate they are appreciative of the support in collecting, discussing and analysing data provided by school leaders and of the opportunity to work in teams with colleagues.

Case management of selected students is emerging as a whole-school practice. Further development of the case management approach is planned as school leaders refine the implementation of the current process.

Teacher aides and specialist teachers have key roles in supporting teachers and students during and in the planning of reading lessons. Teachers report a whole-school approach to the allocation of personnel, resources and timetabled support to target effective reading instruction. School leaders indicate teacher aides are regularly provided with opportunities to update knowledge and skills aligned with the school's reading program.

School leaders conduct daily informal walkthroughs. Structured formal observation with feedback is scheduled for each term. Teaching staff indicate they appreciate the efforts of leaders to affirm agreed practices and to support the implementation of new learning aligned with the reading and data agenda.

RPOs are supporting school leaders to refresh effective pedagogical practices. Teachers report individualised support from RPOs in the development of reading practices, and indicate that these interactions are developing a common professional language to discuss effective reading strategies.

The school has used the focus on improvement in the teaching of reading to build the capacity of members of the teaching team to collect, analyse and utilise data in the day-to-day teaching of students. Opportunities to engage and support teachers are provided on school professional development days and during regular staff meetings throughout the year. The development of data literacy skills is viewed as vital to measure student growth and progress in the reading approaches of the Big 6 of Reading, STRIVE and SSP. Teachers acknowledge the more focused direction of the school in these areas.

Year level teachers are divided into three teams of lower, middle and upper years. Teachers are appreciative of the opportunity to work in teams with colleagues as they collect and analyse data to sharpen their practice in these areas. These teams are supported and



directed by an assigned member of the leadership team. The school leaders attend each staff meeting, case management meeting and data discussion meeting to assist in driving the EIA of the school.

Data meetings are conducted every three weeks. During these meetings, teachers meet in their year level grouping teams and discuss the current data sets being collected for student progress in reading in each classroom. Opportunities are provided to discuss how data is tracked and measured against school and regional targets. The data discussions focus on the work of the year level cohort. Teaching staff articulate the need for more whole-school data discussions linked to a common framework for tracking data across the school.

Early Start data processes are administered in the younger levels of the school. This data is complemented by early years screening data collected by the Speech Language Pathologist (SLP). Teacher knowledge and use of the literacy continuum is a developing practice. Many teachers are able to demonstrate how they use diagnostic and classroom data to plot student progress against the clusters. It is envisaged that this data will continue to develop during the year to identify the next steps in learning.

The leadership team has undertaken PD as part of regional workshops conducted based on the research and presentations of Lyn Sharratt<sup>1</sup>. School leaders have modelled the use of data displays in their own meetings by tracking the progress of students in Out-of-Home Care (OOHC).

The information regarding methods by which data displays can be utilised to drive student improvement has been provided to staff members and school teams have created a range of data displays for each year level group. The content of the data displays varies across the school depending on the data testing processes used by each cohort. Most classrooms are using diagnostic tests including PM Benchmark and PROBE to measure student progress in reading.

Teaching staff articulate their satisfaction regarding how this utilisation of displays has guided their professional conversations with colleagues and enabled them to better identify student learning needs. Teachers identify the need to evolve the formats of the displays into an agreed method to be used across the school to better understand the whole-school data set.

The utilisation of case management as a process to target and support individual students is emerging. Teaching staff work together in their year level teams in a structured and timely approach to the presentation of student data. Time for brainstorming a range of potential teaching strategies is provided before a short-term goal is assigned for each of the students whose data is presented. Teachers are positive regarding this approach and describe improvements in the outcomes for individual students. Teaching staff articulate the need for greater clarity regarding the criteria for the selection of students for each case management session.

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<sup>1</sup> Sharratt, L., & Fullan, M. (2012). *Putting faces on the data: What great leaders do!*. Corwin Press.



Student diaries are used in Years 3 to 6 to document and track student reading goals. These goals are expressed in terms of levels for PM Benchmark or PROBE. Teachers and students work together to identify the appropriate increments of measured success. Interviewed students are able to identify their current and intended levels. The ability of students to know and discuss the reading strategies they need to practice and demonstrate to meet their intended goals is yet to be established.

The school utilises internal and external moderation to assist in increasing teacher capacity to provide consistent judgments regarding student achievement levels. School leaders indicate that the triangulation between the moderation, diagnostic and classroom data sets is improving. It is understood that further development in this area is required.



## 4. Outcomes

The SIU recognises the emerging school improvements that have been initiated over the past twelve months.

Teaching staff describe significant change in the whole-school approach to the teaching of reading. They indicate increased levels of accountability and support provided by school leaders to enhance competence and to build confidence in expected school practices.

School leaders and teachers report the growth of strong professional partnerships promoted through opportunities for targeted collegial engagement. An emphasis has been placed on the growth of professional teams to support staff development and sharing of effective practice. Data meetings are regularly held to discuss student progress in reading. Teaching staff describe working with school leaders in teams to review and moderate student achievement.

Teachers indicate satisfaction with the introduction of data displays and the guidance this has provided to identify student learning needs. Teaching staff report the need to evolve the structure of the displays into an agreed format to be utilised across the school to better understand whole-school data sets.

The utilisation of case management as a process to target and support individual students is emerging. Teams work together in a structured and timely approach to the presentation and discussion of student data. Teachers are positive towards this approach and describe improvement in the outcomes for individual students. There is acknowledgement of the need for greater clarity regarding the criteria for the selection of students for each case management session.

The school has established a documented approach to the explicit teaching of reading. There is a need to ensure that this document will be regularly reviewed to embed consistency of reading instruction approaches across all classes.

Teacher knowledge and use of the literacy continuum are developing. School leaders indicate further development is required to link student progress data to the next steps in learning.

Observation and feedback processes have been introduced. Teaching staff members identify a clear focus on the elements of explicit teaching. They identify the potential benefits in further modelled lessons being provided by school leaders in effective reading instruction.

The Regional Director and ARD are committed to continuing their close support and guidance for the leadership team at the school.



## 5. Conclusion

Based on the findings from the 12-month review, and information gathered at the previous three-month check-ins, the SIU concludes:

There is sufficient implementation of the key improvement strategies for the SIU to finalise its support and monitoring of **Warwick East State School**.