Highfields State Secondary College

Executive Summary

Education Improvement Branch

Queensland Government

Contents

1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Highfields State Secondary College** from **25** to **28 October 2021**.

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 implement 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.

For more information regarding the EIB and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the EIB website.

1.1 Review team

Shona McKinlay	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Jeffrey Barnett	Peer reviewer
Julie-Ann McCullough	Peer reviewer
Ken Rogers	External reviewer

1.2 School context

Location:	O'Brien Road, Highfields	
Education region:	Darling Downs South West Region	
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12	
Enrolment:	976	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	7.1 per cent	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	5 per cent
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	19.8 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1012	
Year principal appointed:	2019	

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, five deputy principals, Business Manager (BM), eight Heads of Department (HOD), head of student support, 10 Year Level Coordinators (YLC), director of sport, two diverse curriculum coordinators, guidance officer, Youth Support Coordinator (YSC), School Based Youth Health Nurse (SBYHN), chaplain, First Nations People's student coordinator, District Relief Teacher (DRT), preservice teacher, 67 staff, 70 students, 10 parents and Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president.

Community and business groups:

- Officer-in-charge Highfields Police Station, coordinator Tursa Employment & Training Disability Employment Services and researcher University of Southern Queensland (USQ) Future Students Program.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal Amaroo Environmental Education Centre (EEC), principal Crow's Nest State School, principal Geham State School, principal Gowrie State School, principal Highfields State School and principal Meringandan State School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2021	School Online Reporting Dashboard (SORD)
Investing for Success 2021	NAPLAN Performance Data
School Curriculum Plan	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2021)
OneSchool	School budget overview and bank statement
Professional learning plan 2021	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	Headline Indicators (October 2020 release)
School pedagogical framework	School Opinion Survey – 2021
School data plan – 2021 and 2022	School newsletters, Facebook and website

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Staff members articulate valuing the high level of staff collaboration and collegial support within their teams.

Staff express a commitment to the college and their students. They articulate the importance of the continuous improvement of their teaching practice. Staff comment they like working at the college with collegiality consistently identified as a collective strength of the college that has led to high levels of trust amongst teaching and non-teaching staff. Staff members comment that the college is a friendly and supportive place to work. Teacher aides express a high degree of satisfaction with teacher collegiality and communication that supports them with classroom preparation and student learning.

The college uses a range of data sources to track attendance, behaviour and academic outcomes.

Leaders comment that they use data to ascertain where students are at and to facilitate proactive strategies across the college. Student academic progress is monitored by individual teachers, faculty Heads of Department (HOD) and administrators. Classroom teachers utilise a range of data sources to identify the starting points of learning and provide ongoing information throughout the unit of work. 'TwoSchool' is a college-created emerging data analysis tool that has been well received by those trialling the platform and its functions. Data walls for all year levels are established and used to identify at risk students and the need for intervention. Tracking of Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) progress is based on unit outcomes and internal assessment. Monitoring of Indigenous student performance is conducted through the use of a data wall and by identifying students who require support. The literacy intervention program managed by the Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN) utilises data to select students requiring intervention, it monitors their progress, celebrates achievements and identifies next steps.

College staff express the belief that it is essential to have clear roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

'Learners Today. Leaders Tomorrow' is the mantra for the college. This motto and the college values are found on artefacts throughout the college. The college goals are based around all students engaging in learning and every staff member succeeding in their role. Leaders outline that the success of staff is crucial to student success and therefore succeeding in their role is essential. Staff outline a belief that college leaders are committed to the college. Staff indicate that further clarity in the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of college leaders and staff would assist in the development of consistent, aligned practice and staff satisfaction. Many staff identify a link between clarity and accountability of responsibilities, and effective operations and success in their roles.

Staff identify the importance of a culture of high expectations and a disciplined learning environment for all students.

The college has developed a series of rules, expectations and procedures to support classroom management and behaviours in the playground. Staff members comment that there is a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) matrix with major and minor behaviours defined and referral processes documented. Staff members articulate that the learning environment may be disrupted by challenging behaviours. Staff express that processes for inappropriate behaviour, as outlined in the PBL matrix, are yet to be consistently enacted and followed up. Staff comment that improved communication regarding outcomes of the referral process would assist confidence in behaviour management across the college. Leaders and teachers identify the need for consistent application of rules, expectations and consequences to further develop a safe and supportive learning environment.

College leaders identify the importance of meaningful and timely feedback and providing all staff members with opportunities to share, discuss and observe effective practice to enhance teaching and learning knowledge.

The 'Collegial support and development proposed coaching and feedback processes – 2021' documents a formal process aligned to teaching and learning priorities and collegial engagement. College leaders express a willingness to collaboratively develop processes designed to build instructional leadership capability of all members of the leadership team and enhance pedagogical practice across the college. Many staff indicate they would appreciate feedback opportunities by participating in modelling, mentoring, coaching and Watching Others Work (WOW) experiences. College leaders and staff identify that there is variability across classrooms regarding the use of pedagogical strategies implemented by teachers. The process of providing feedback is yet to be consistent, with many staff articulating they value detailed and individualised feedback. Most teachers indicate that greater visibility within classrooms by leaders and further feedback based on observations through regular classroom visits would assist in supporting curriculum delivery and consistency in the application of agreed school policies.

A range of college documentation outlines plans, priorities and expected practices across the college.

The four pillars, outlined in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), have been developed to guide improvement in the college. These pillars are high quality inclusive curriculum and teaching, the purposeful use of data, collegial support and development and a safe and disciplined learning environment. Senior leaders comment that the pillars frame the areas for the college to spend time on. Senior leaders outline their use of data and data trends to recognise priorities and generate strategies and targets. The AIP and Faculty Implementation Plans (FIP) provide documented consistency in school direction. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) reflects on the need to monitor the implementation of these plans and associated targets through senior leadership and leadership meetings, and line management processes. Leaders outline varying practices associated with line management. Some leaders reflect on the need for consistent and enacted line management processes that address school priorities, data and targets. Senior leaders

contemplate the need to have a consistent agenda aligned to the school's strategic priorities with feedback loops across all levels.

College leaders support a culture of inclusion across the school.

The principal, leaders and staff members are committed to supporting students at different stages of learning. There is an expectation that teaching staff use a variety of approaches to provide differentiated learning opportunities for all students. Staff members are committed to developing differentiation strategies and identify this as an area of focus. Teachers indicate they are responsible for planning differentiation strategies to support student learning and to adjust the delivery and content of the curriculum and the assessment tasks, including scaffolding the assessment tasks. Many teaching staff comment that they determine their own differentiation strategies with some seeking support from the student support team. Staff comment there are variable inclusion processes and some comment on the need for clarity regarding roles and responsibilities of the classroom teacher and case managers. A whole-of-college differentiated approach to learning is yet to emerge.

The curriculum is utilised as a basis for ongoing staff discussions regarding the best ways to maximise student achievement and wellbeing.

The whole-school curriculum plan comprises an overview of the intended curriculum. The college has three levels of curriculum planning including a whole-college plan, year level/band plans and individual unit plans. The associated assessment, moderation and reporting expectations, year level and term overviews are apparent. Staff ensure attention is being focused on planning to maintain alignment of the curriculum so that there is continuity and progression across all years of schooling. Teaching in each year level builds on and extends learning from previous years. Subject plan outlines for all curriculum offerings are shared with the community through the college website.

College leaders make deliberate and strategic use of partnerships with families, local businesses, community organisations and local primary and secondary schools.

The principal and members of the college leadership team recognise the importance of developing and maintaining quality partnerships with organisations, locally, within the state and nationally. The college has strong partnerships with local primary schools, and principals from these schools meet regularly with a key focus on enhancing seamless transitions from primary to secondary campuses for students and parents. Primary principals speak highly of the opportunities facilitated by the college to enable their students to be involved in a range of activities. The University of Southern Queensland (USQ) has developed strong partnerships with the college to assist students transitioning from Year 12 to university through the Head Start program, weather station and other research projects. Parents express great pride in the college and acknowledge the commitment of many teachers who give of their time to provide a wide range of co-curricular opportunities in sport, performing arts and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). The college has a proactive and supportive Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) that partners with the college.

2.2 Key improvement strategies

Collaboratively develop, share and monitor documented roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for college leaders and staff.

Collaboratively develop quality assured processes to enact an agreed and consistent behaviour management approach at all levels across the college.

Strengthen the capability of all college leaders and emerging leaders in instructional leadership to engage in regular and comprehensive observation and feedback processes.

Develop a consistent and enacted college-wide line management process that quality assures the implementation of priorities and monitors targets at all levels of leadership.

Collaboratively develop and quality assure an inclusion policy that includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities to provide clarity and consistency of practice.