



School Improvement Unit Report

Harristown State School Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Harristown State School from 25 to 27 August 2015. 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:	332 South Street, Toowoomba
Education region:	Darling Downs South West
The school opened in:	1911
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	318
Indigenous enrolments:	24 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	4 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	874
Year principal appointed:	2015
Number of teachers:	17.5 full-time equivalent
Nearby schools:	Darling Heights State School, Harristown State High School, Newtown State School, Glenvale State School
Significant community partnerships:	New Hope Church, Manor House, Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC)
Unique school programs:	Restart Club (PCYC), Beginning Teacher Mentor Program



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
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal and deputy principal
 - Business Services Manager (BSM)
 - 18 teachers
 - Guidance officer
 - Administration staff and seven teacher aides
 - 30 students
 - Schools officer
 - School chaplain
 - Eight parents
 - Tuckshop convenor and community volunteers
 - Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president
 - Principal, Harristown State High School
 - Principal, Newtown State School
 - Director, Goodstart Early Learning Harristown

1.4 Review team

Peter Doyle	Internal Reviewer, SIU (Review chair)
Evan Willis	Internal Reviewer, SIU
Neil Pryor	External Reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school leadership team is developing improved relationships within the school.

Staff, students and parents report that strong positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents have been established. The school is developing a strong sense of community that supports learning.

- There is a need to embed consistency of pedagogical practice across the school.

The pedagogical framework based on the Dimensions of Teaching and Learning. It is acknowledged by the principal and deputy principal that the framework is in need of review to align with current school practice. Elements of explicit instruction are evident within the classroom and displayed via artefacts including posters and relevant signage.

- There is evidence of significant change to the behaviour standards within the school.

The school has adopted Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) as the foundation for its behaviour management strategy. Presently the school is working to build and embed whole-school positive behaviour systems. School staff are implementing the school procedures in an effective manner.

- The data literacy skills of staff is seen as an area requiring further development.

Data in a range of areas, including behaviour and reading, is shared with the staff. There is a need for further data analysis of student learning to inform the strategic direction of the school. Members of the school leadership team lead data conversations with all teachers both individually and as a school team.

- The principal and teaching staff are raising expectations for learning and achievement.

Teachers report that many children are not likely to take risks and are yet to develop high expectations of their ability to succeed. School staff are creating a sense that school is a place where all students can achieve and have the opportunity to reach their potential.

- Embedding a consistent approach to curriculum delivery is a focus for the school.

The school has a whole-school curriculum framework which is based on the Australian Curriculum and delivered through Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units. These units are used as a basis for instruction with modifications made to suit the needs of students. New structures and programs have been introduced in 2015 in line with the school's improvement agenda. At this stage, a cohesive approach to the teaching of reading is yet to be agreed upon at the school.



- The school current attendance rate is 88 per cent which is significantly below the state average.

The school's leadership team have identified attendance as a key focus for 2015 and have implemented a number of strategies for improvement including setting class targets, rewarding good attendance and contacting parents of students with high absenteeism.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Further develop and embed school-wide processes for Positive Behaviours for Learning (PB4L) processes.
- Review the existing pedagogical framework to ensure alignment with preferred practice and school priority needs. Establish clear expectations regarding the model for explicit instruction that is to be enacted across the school.
- Establish clear and challenging targets for student achievement for literacy and numeracy.
- Support the implementation of the school's reading program through a process of observations and feedback from leadership and peers to develop a consistent school-wide approach.
- Provide professional learning opportunities for teachers in the use of data to monitor student learning gains and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.
- Persist with the focus on improving the attendance of students through engagement with parents and community support agencies.