

Brisbane School of Distance Education

# Executive summary

## 1. Introduction

This report is a product of a school review carried out by the School and Region Reviews (SRR) branch at **Brisbane School of Distance Education** from **17 to 21 July 2023**.

The report presents an evaluation of the school's performance against the 9 domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#). From this, the school identified affirmations – the achievements, successes and celebrations over the previous 4 years – and improvement strategies: the next steps for improvement, to inform the school's next 4-year strategic planning cycle. For more information regarding the SRR and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SRR [website](#).

### 1.1 Timelines and next steps

School reviews play an important role in each school's planning and improvement cycle. They inform and complement the work of the school in leading continuous improvement and ensuring quality learning outcomes for children and young people in Queensland.

Findings from the school review can be used to inform school planning processes. The [School Performance](#) policy and resources provide further information regarding the development of strategic and annual implementation plans.

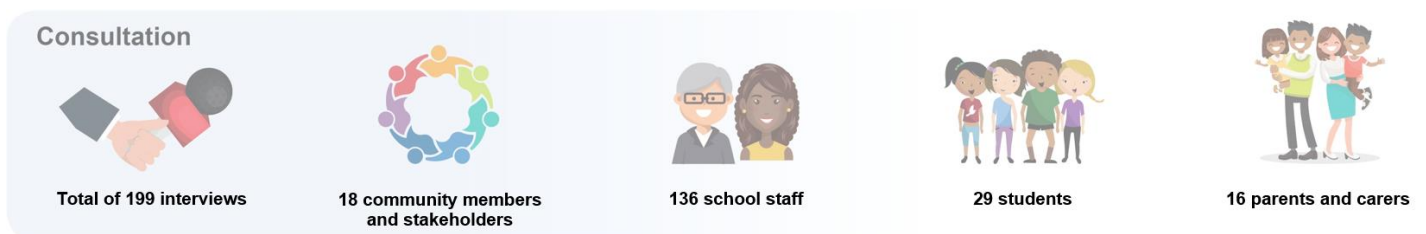
Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within 2 weeks of the school receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their School Supervisor to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies, and discuss next steps in planning for continuous improvement.

### 1.2 Review team

Alan Smith	Internal Reviewer, SRR (review chair)
Trevor Buchanan	Internal Reviewer, SRR
David Cramb	Internal Reviewer, SRR
Tim Moes	External Reviewer
Wayne Troyahn	External Reviewer

### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders



## 1.4 School context

<b>Indigenous land name:</b>	Yuggera and Turrbal We acknowledge the Yuggera and Turrbal people, the Aboriginal Owners of the land where we gather and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise their connection to Country and role in caring for and maintaining Country over thousands of years. May their strength and wisdom be with us today.
<b>Education region:</b>	Metropolitan South Region
<b>Year levels:</b>	Kindergarten to Year 12
<b>Enrolment:</b>	3512
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	5.85%
<b>Students with disability percentage:</b>	27.81%
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	1035

## 1.5 Snapshot of previous school review

The last review carried out at the school was conducted from **16 to 20 September 2019**. The school's Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) at the time of the 2019 review was identified as 1035 and the school enrolment was 3430 with an Indigenous enrolment of 5.7% and a student with disability enrolment of 23.6%.

The key improvement strategies recommended in the review are listed below.

- Reflect the school's commitment to 'Innovation, Inspiration and Inclusion' in development of agreed signature school-wide pedagogical practices to inform 21st Century learning within the context of the 'School of the Future'. (Domain 8)
- Further refine and clarify the scope of the identified Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) and its measurement in terms of improved student outcomes, to enhance school-wide understanding of, commitment to, and communication of identified priorities. (Domain 1)
- Quality assure a systematic approach to school-wide observation and feedback, coaching and mentoring, as a key driver for implementation of the agreed 'School of the Future' pedagogies. (Domain 5)
- Further enhance the capability of teachers and teacher aides to understand the implications of the specific medical, psychological, and learning needs of students, to design appropriate adjustments and to utilise the most effective online learning tools in their delivery. (Domain 7)

## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key affirmations

#### **Many staff members express affinity with the school's imperative of 'each student succeeding'.**

Staff recognise that students have a diverse range of cultural, social, emotional and academic backgrounds. They speak of being responsive to the needs of each student in order to support success in learning. The importance of a positive learning culture is emphasised by executive leaders, with staff members speaking of forging positive relationships with students and families. Longer-serving members of staff speak with pride of the school's extensive history of providing a unique learning environment.

#### **Positive and caring relationships are promoted by staff through a school priority of engagement.**

Teachers articulate a focus on providing a safe, and inclusive learning environment that promotes intellectual rigour. Leaders and teachers articulate that a high degree of professionalism and collegiality is displayed by staff. Teachers comment that students give positive feedback and encouragement to their peers through online chat forums during lessons. 2022 School Opinion Survey (SOS) data shows that 94.5% of parents, 95% of students, and 94.4% of staff agree with the statement, 'This is a good school'.

#### **Leaders articulate the importance of establishing an expert teaching team to develop and implement the most suitable programs to meet student needs.**

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members describe a range of innovative practices to attract staff. Most members of staff praise the collegial environment and the support they receive each day in the workplace. They suggest this is one of the best aspects of working in the school. A shared understanding of workplace culture for teachers, teacher aides, and public servants is apparent, centred around pillars of collaboration, respect, communication, trust and integrity.

#### **Staff and parents comment that the school caters effectively for a diverse range of students to provide quality educational opportunities.**

Many staff members concur with the sentiments that the school 'offers a very unique choice for students who need it'. Leaders articulate that significant processes have been implemented to support students, particularly those considered vulnerable, in both social and academic areas. Teachers suggest that building confidence and self-efficacy of students, and providing educational pathways for students exhibiting specific needs such as anxiety and trauma, has led to improved student performance in learning.

## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

### **Domain 1:** An explicit improvement agenda

Communicate higher levels of specificity, including precise actions and milestones, to support staff members to fully understand and commit to the school's vision of '*Excellence in virtual learning*'.

### **Domain 8:** Effective pedagogical practices

Consolidate teachers' understanding of the Teaching and Learning Model through further capability development together with a systematic approach to observation and feedback, to foster the consistent use of high-quality pedagogical practices aligned to excellence in virtual learning.

### **Domain 6:** Systematic curriculum delivery

Align units to the Australian Curriculum (AC) across faculties and cohorts, using agreed tools and the participation of leaders, to ensure students access their full entitlement to the curriculum.

### **Domain 1:** An explicit improvement agenda

Sharpen and communicate explicit improvement targets for student learning and engagement, and determine school-wide mechanisms to focus attention on, and progress towards, improving Levels of Achievement (LOA).

### **Domain 2:** Analysis and discussion of data

Systematically enact agreed processes for the consistent and rigorous analysis of relevant data sets at sector and faculty levels, to inform strategies that target improvement in LOAs.

## 2.3 Improvement strategies summary

<p><i>Domain 1: An explicit improvement agenda</i></p> <p><b>Communicate higher levels of specificity, including precise actions and milestones, to support staff members to fully understand and commit to the school's vision of 'Excellence in virtual learning'.</b></p> <p><b>Sharpen and communicate explicit improvement targets for student learning and engagement, and determine school-wide mechanisms to focus attention on, and progress towards, improving LOAs.</b></p> <p>Collaboratively develop a school-wide understanding of engagement, and determine research-informed approaches to improve student engagement and attendance to further support active involvement and participation in lessons.</p>
<p><i>Domain 2: Analysis and discussion of data</i></p> <p><b>Systematically enact agreed processes for the consistent and rigorous analysis of relevant data sets at sector and faculty levels, to inform strategies that target improvement in LOAs.</b></p> <p>Collaboratively develop data practices that support teachers to readily 'know their students' and create responsive teaching and learning practices for the large number of students enrolling after the start of the school year.</p>
<p><i>Domain 3: A culture that promotes learning</i></p> <p>Refine communication processes across the school to promote clarity of messaging and decisions for staff, with a focus on enhancing consultative practices.</p>
<p><i>Domain 4: Targeted use of school resources</i></p> <p>Review facility use in the context of emerging challenges, maximising efficiencies to strengthen teacher pedagogy and outcomes for students.</p> <p>Investigate asynchronous learning options, complementing the school's model of synchronous learning, to meet the diverse needs of enrolled students and their skill sets.</p>
<p><i>Domain 5: An expert teaching team</i></p> <p>Collaboratively review roles and responsibilities across the school to meet emerging challenges and promote clarity and consistency of work roles.</p> <p>Investigate strategic, mutually beneficial relationships with the tertiary sector to enhance preservice teacher education, with a focus on excellence in virtual learning.</p>
<p><i>Domain 6: Systematic curriculum delivery</i></p> <p><b>Align units to the AC across faculties and cohorts, using agreed tools and the participation of leaders, to ensure students access their full entitlement to the curriculum.</b></p> <p>Strengthen moderation practices across the school, with specific attention given to greater collaboration at the Before juncture, to deepen teachers' understanding of what is to be taught and assessed.</p> <p>Strengthen moderation processes by externally moderating student work and folios to support consistency of teacher judgments across schools.</p>
<p><i>Domain 7: Differentiated teaching and learning</i></p> <p>Formalise opportunities for robust collaboration between differentiation teachers and class teachers to devise responsive teaching and learning strategies that allow all students to access, participate, and progress in their learning.</p> <p>Sharpen staff members' understanding of inclusive practices to foster shared ownership and accountability of outcomes for all learners.</p>
<p><i>Domain 8: Effective pedagogical practices</i></p> <p><b>Consolidate teachers' understanding of the Teaching and Learning Model through further capability development together with a systematic approach to observation and feedback, to foster the consistent use of high-quality pedagogical practices aligned to excellence in virtual learning.</b></p>
<p><i>Domain 9: School-community partnerships</i></p> <p>Investigate avenues to enhance the active involvement of home supervisors in the learning process, to maximise support for student engagement and progress.</p>