

# Gracemere State School

## Executive Summary





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## 1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Gracemere State School** from **4 to 6 November 2020**.

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.

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

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

### 1.1 Review team

Christine Dolley	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Cameron Hodges	Internal reviewer
Peter Doyle	External reviewer



## 1.2 School context

<b>Location:</b>	O'Shanesy Street, Gracemere	
<b>Education region:</b>	Central Queensland Region	
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 6	
<b>Enrolment:</b>	310	
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	23 per cent	
<b>Students with disability:</b>	<b>Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:</b>	8 per cent
	<b>Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:</b>	18 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	914	
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	September 2017	



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, deputy principal, Head of Curriculum (HOC), Business Manager (BM), administration officer, three curriculum coaches, two inclusion teachers, 12 classroom teachers, guidance officer, Family Support Officer (FSO), chaplain, schools facilities officer, nine teacher aides, 16 parents and 44 students.

Community and business groups:

- Four Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) members, religious instruction teacher, Adopt-a-Cop, Darumbal representative, Write2Spell2Read program author, 'The Place' Neuroleadership Academy principal consultant, Connect 4 Children representative, Playgroup Queensland and Camp Australia Outside School Hours Care (OSHC).

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Mount Morgan State High School and Rockhampton State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Councillor for Division 4 Rockhampton Regional Council, State Member for Rockhampton and ARD.

### 1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2020	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2020
Investing for Success 2020	Strategic Plan 2017-2020
Headline Indicators (May 2020 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 1 2020)
OneSchool	School budget overview
School newsletters and website	Berry Street Education Model Staff Diary
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
Support Team Policy	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
School Opinion Survey 2019	Student Wellbeing Support Team Handbook
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	Action Plan: Every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Succeeding



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

#### **A strong culture of care for student wellbeing is apparent.**

Students express their gratitude for the positive relationships they have with their teachers. The school's Family Support Officer (FSO) plays a vital role in supporting students and their families. A comprehensive student learning and wellbeing framework is published, outlining key support staff, key school beliefs, and strategies and the role of the student support team. Extensive Professional Development (PD) has been provided to staff members focused on the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM)<sup>1</sup>. Many teachers express that this training has provided a number of strategies to assist in supporting students. The positive impact of daily check-ins and 'morning circles' has been praised by students and teachers.

#### **The leadership team expresses enthusiastic anticipation regarding the implementation of Darumbal language into the school.**

An agreement has been developed between the Darumbal people and the school regarding the implementation of teaching and learning of Darumbal culture and language. Representatives of the Darumbal people agree to teach Darumbal culture and language on Darumbal country. The school recognises and understands the Darumbal people's settlement statement, community inquiry model and community engagement advice as the 'Community's Models of Knowing'. The school's Darumbal Language Action Group articulates that it aims to establish a comprehensive plan to strengthen Indigenous language throughout the school as a means of connection to culture and to promote inclusiveness and diversity amongst staff, students and the wider community.

#### **The school principal and staff members have a strong focus on providing a safe and supportive environment.**

Clear expectations to support all students in achieving success in their learning are apparent. School staff members express that positive teacher student relationships are highly important to their role and 'knowing their students' is an essential component of the school culture and key component of the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). Staff members and students describe a strong sense of belonging to the school. The school identifies as a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) school. Four school-wide expectations are established – '*Always Present, Always Safe, Always Respectful and Always Learning*', and these are known locally as the '4 As'. Many staff members articulate that the implementation of PBL is becoming more consistent across the school.

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<sup>1</sup> Berry Street Childhood Institute. (2018). Berry Street Educational Model. Retrieved from <https://www.childhoodinstitute.org.au/focus-areas/berry-street-education-model>



**School leaders are united in the belief that the systematic use of data is a key driver for student improvement.**

School leaders regularly collect and analyse student outcomes data including academic, attendance, behaviour and student wellbeing. The principal articulates a belief that reliable and timely data regarding student outcomes is crucial to identifying areas for improvement and for the development of the EIA. A range of data is collected on regular cycles by school leaders and teachers. A comprehensive data plan outlining the specific roles of all staff members in the collection, analysis and use of student achievement and wellbeing data and its application to improve student wellbeing and teaching is yet to be developed.

**School leaders view the development of teacher capability as an essential component to improved student outcomes.**

A culture of embracing new evidence-based initiatives is present amongst school leaders. School leaders support and resource a range of PD experiences to enhance capability development of teaching staff. An established process of learning walks and talks has been showcased to regional networks. During the regular learning walks and talks, curriculum coordinators and school leaders provide feedback to teachers in relation to the use of key agreed practices aligned to the school's EIA, including the use of learning walls to support student understanding of assessment. Teachers express that these learning walks provide valuable feedback and suggestions regarding possible considerations for future learning walls. Teachers express a willingness to receive individual feedback.

**School leaders and staff members express a commitment to improvement in learning outcomes for the full range of students.**

School staff articulate the belief that all students are able to be successful learners. Staff members indicate that they genuinely care about the learning, social and emotional outcomes for all students. The 2020 EIA is expressed as 'Know your students', 'Feedback for improvement' and 'Consistent teaching of English literacies' (KFC). Staff knowledge of the EIA varies. The principal articulates the intent to narrow and sharpen the EIA to ensure that full implementation is achieved within specific timelines.

**The leadership team is committed to continuous improvement of teaching practice across the school.**

School leaders recognise that effective teaching practices, in conjunction with engaged and challenged students, are the key to maximising student learning. The leadership team recognises that formal observation of classroom practices to monitor the implementation of key initiatives provides an opportunity to quality assure the effective implementation of the school's signature pedagogical practices. Teachers indicate that they would value feedback from the leadership team on a regular basis. Members of the leadership team identify the need to develop and implement a regular school-wide practice of individual formal observations of teaching staff and the provision of verbal and written feedback focused on their use of agreed pedagogical strategies.



**Curriculum coaches intentionally collaborate with their curriculum teams in classes and in regular planning meetings.**

Coaches support delivery of the documented curriculum and visit classes regularly to model the use of agreed whole-school practices including the use of learning walls. Teachers appreciate the support received from curriculum coaches in supporting development of curriculum and pedagogical knowledge. Teaching team meetings are led by the curriculum coaches that are cohort teachers released one day each week to lead these teams. Meetings focus on the use of the High Performing Teams (HPT) format, case management strategies, curriculum discussions, moderation and Quality Assurance (QA) of PM Benchmarking processes aligned to reading data analysis. Curriculum coaches' roles include curriculum planning, team teaching, in-class support and teacher release time.

**The school seeks ways in which to engage members of the school community in all aspects of the school.**

The leadership team acknowledges the importance of developing and maintaining effective community partnerships and the vital role the FSO plays in supporting students and their families. The school community is preparing to celebrate its sesquicentenary, as the oldest state school in Rockhampton in 2021. The school recognises this event provides an opportunity to re-engage with alumni and the wider Rockhampton community, in addition to gaining extensive publicity for the school through the media.





## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Embed PBL with fidelity, with ongoing differentiated PD and QA processes.

Collaboratively develop and implement a school data plan, documenting the full range of data to be collected, and responsibilities for all staff in the collection, analysis and application of the data to inform teaching and improve student learning outcomes.

Collaboratively revise and implement collegial engagement processes to enable ongoing individual observation, feedback, mentoring and coaching processes for all teachers.

Collaboratively develop a narrow and sharp EIA, clearly communicated to all stakeholders, including aspirational targets, with specific timelines for implementation.

Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy enabling the school's leadership team to visit classrooms to observe teaching and to provide individual detailed feedback to teachers regarding key signature pedagogies on a regular basis.