

Lowood State High 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 **Lowood State High School** from **28 to 30 March 2022**.

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

Alan Smith	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Cameron Wayman	Internal reviewer
Valerie Hadgelias	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Indigenous land name:	Jagera, Yuggera and Yuragupul people
Location:	Prospect Street, Lowood
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12
Enrolment:	785
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	13.5 per cent
Students with disability percentage:	Adjustment Information Management System (AIMS) records – 12.7 per cent Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) – 51 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	927
Year principal appointed:	2018



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, three deputy principals, nine Heads of Department (HOD), four deans of students, two guidance officers, Business Manager (BM), 27 teachers, five administration officers, 10 teacher aides, eight cleaners, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) technician, Youth Support Coordinator (YSC), two schools officers – grounds and facilities, science technician, Community Education Counsellor (CEC), school chaplain, Brisbane Broncos student support officer, canteen convenor, canteen assistant, 109 students and nine parents and caregivers.

Community and business groups:

- Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and treasurer, crossing supervisor, branch manager of Community Bank Lowood-Fernvale, representative of Tyson Foods, manager of Ipswich Community Youth Service (ICYS) and state manager of Hands on Learning (HoL).

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of Fernvale State School, principal of Lowood State School and an educational consultant.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Mayor of Somerset Regional Council and ARD.



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Staff members work collaboratively towards attaining the school vision of delivering ‘high quality educational opportunities and outcomes that enable all students to experience success’.

The four key values of ‘*Respect, Integrity, Self-reliance, and Engagement*’ (RISE) are well-known to students and are displayed prominently throughout the campus. The principal indicates that these values guide behaviour, decisions, and directions for the future.

Leaders describe their focus on nurturing cultural change through building the instructional leadership capability of all members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

Leaders speak of being an interdependent team that supports and works with each other and takes definite, visible leadership action. Through line management meetings, members of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) work to support Heads of Department (HOD) and other leaders to strengthen their skills as proactive, responsive leaders driving Skills of Achievement (SOA). A strong commitment to ongoing collegial engagement exists.

A strong focus on Skills of Wellbeing (SOW) is apparent.

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) is an established program at the school. The use of Personal Wellbeing Practices (PWP) and the language of Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment, Health (PERMAH) is consistently referenced across the school. PBL lessons and PERMAH messages are shared with students through the pastoral care program and rallies. House deans and an extensive Student Support Team (SST) identify the importance of the social and emotional wellbeing of all students.

Teachers display knowledge of SOA.

Most speak of ‘the green footprint’, many speak of Explicit Instruction (EI)¹, and some describe the use of student learning profiles with fidelity. Varying levels of understanding and commitment to the student feedback cycle are apparent. Many leaders and teachers identify the need to drive a culture of engagement in learning in order to improve student achievement. They emphasise the importance of effective and focused teaching for all students, and making learning in the classroom a priority.

¹ Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: effective and efficient teaching*. Guilford Press.



Leaders are committed to providing a high quality education that encourages students to achieve to the best of their ability.

This commitment aligns with the school motto of *'Creating the Future'*. A diverse range of curriculum opportunities, including academic and vocational pathways, is offered. Staff members describe a variety of opportunities provided throughout the school year to enrich learning. In junior secondary, leaders have developed a whole-school curriculum plan that specifically references the Australian Curriculum (AC). Teachers indicate that significant energy and attention are being focused on a systematic and consistent approach to curriculum delivery. They speak of 'Lowood by Design', a backward-mapping curriculum design model for developing year level, band, and unit plans, and aligning assessment.

School leaders understand the importance of effective teaching of the agreed curriculum.

Quality teaching practice is recognised as the key to improved student learning outcomes. Leaders promote the use of agreed school-wide pedagogical practices to be implemented in every classroom. They take a strong leadership role in fostering a consistent and shared approach to teaching across the school. Many leaders and teachers convey a sense of urgency in addressing the issue of student engagement in learning. They identify the importance of precise and highly engaging pedagogical practices. This is widely recognised as a crucial next step in the school's improvement journey.

The principal indicates that together, SOW and SOA form the school's Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA).

The importance of a culture of high expectations is identified. A visual representation of the EIA is displayed prominently throughout the campus and is well known by staff members. Expressed in terms of a student focus, SOW is described as 'growing my personal resilience to engage in learning and enjoy school through positive, self-directed behaviour.' Similarly, SOA is expressed as '[building] my personal success by engaging in effective feedback to achieve my goals for improvement'. Targets associated with improving students' academic achievement are yet to be specifically or consistently referenced by leaders.

Executive leaders identify the importance of 'discerning use of data'.

They emphasise the need for systematic collection and analysis of data in determining next steps for learning. The principal articulates that members of the SLT have 'an active role in skilling teachers in the meaning of data and how it may be used towards improving learning'. Teachers indicate that discussions regarding achievement data are frequently informal in manner and are yet to occur consistently across the school.

School leaders express a strong commitment to success for all students.

There is an explicit whole-school expectation that differentiated teaching and learning is used across the school to support the learning of every student. Leaders recognise the importance of classroom teachers understanding and addressing the needs of individual students in their day-to-day teaching. Intensive classes are available for a small number of students who are withdrawn from a subject, to receive levelled literacy support. A number of



teachers identify a need to provide more extensive targeted intervention in literacy and numeracy to address the learning needs and engagement in learning of a significant number of students.

Leaders acknowledge the positive impact that a meaningful relationship between teachers and students may have on students' academic and social outcomes.

Staff members articulate that learning and behaviour are inextricably linked – that students learn best when their wellbeing is optimised and they develop a strong sense of wellbeing when they experience success in learning. Students and staff members are arranged into four house groups: Oxley Crocks, Lockyer Lions, Logan Sharks and Cunningham Hornets. They speak passionately of the range of sporting, cultural, and school events that contribute to the awarding of the House Spirit trophy. Students articulate a sense of belonging.

The school participates in a range of partnerships.

These partnerships are valued by stakeholders, bringing school staff together with external partners to improve student outcomes. Partners express a strong commitment to the current collaboration, with some looking for ways to deepen their relationship in order to further enhance outcomes for students.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Build increased precision in instructional design and purposeful planning of applied learning experiences to motivate active participation and deep learning by all students.

Support all school leaders to have a strong grounding in the school's instructional framework and a shared understanding of the rigour required in quality assuring effective practice at the classroom level.

Devise and communicate specific targets to guide and measure improved learning outcomes for all students.

Support teachers to access and understand student learning data, and collaboratively devise strategies to address identified learning needs at the classroom level.

Provide additional targeted intervention support in the areas of literacy and numeracy.