

Murray River Upper State School

Executive Summary





Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Review team.....	3
1.2 School context.....	4
1.3 Contributing stakeholders	5
1.4 Supporting documentary evidence.....	5
2. Executive summary.....	6
2.1 Key findings.....	6
2.2 Key improvement strategies	8



1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Murray River Upper State School** from **6 to 7, and 16 September 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

Sandra Perrett

Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)

Daniel Smith

Peer reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Middle Murray Road, Murray Upper	
Education region:	Far North Queensland Region	
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6	
Enrolment:	30 students	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	64.7 per cent	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	3.33 per cent
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	28.6 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	826	
Year principal appointed:	2019	



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, cluster Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), two guidance officers, three teachers, Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Business Manager (BM), three teacher aides, cleaner, 23 students and six parents.

Community and business groups:

- Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, secretary and treasurer, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Jumbun Limited, community representative from the Cardwell Sub Branch of the Returned Services League of Australia (RSL).

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Feluga State School principal, El Arish State School principal and Tully State High School principal.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2021	Cluster Explicit Improvement Agenda 2021
Investing for Success 2021	Strategic Plan 2017–2020
Headline Indicators (April 2021 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 1 2021)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional development plan 2021	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	School differentiation plan or flowchart
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
Assessment schedule	School newsletters and website
School Opinion Survey	Minutes and notes from staff meetings
Student Code of Conduct	School Online Reporting Dashboard (SORD)
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Teachers and teacher aides speak positively of the collaborative work to modify units to make them locally relevant.

Staff are working together to reflect the local Indigenous culture in the units of work. Local Indigenous perspectives in curriculum learning, and student wellbeing and cultural identity are nurtured. Examples of this include the study of the local witchetty grub or Jumbun in the science curriculum and the propagation of butterfly-attracting plants including the red lacewing vine and the Cairns birdwing vine. Aspects of the local languages are shared with students to add further depth to the units. Students articulate appreciating the efforts of teachers and teacher aides in providing interesting and engaging learning opportunities.

Staff express the importance of working collaboratively and consistently to encourage appropriate student behaviour.

The school has maintained a focus on improving student behaviour over recent years, utilising the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) approach. The school behaviour expectations are *'I am respectful, I am safe, and I am a learner'*. Inappropriate student behaviour is followed up, working with families to encourage appropriate behaviour. Staff and community members identify that parents express appreciation for this level of support and that they believe students are being held accountable for their behaviours.

The whole-school curriculum plan is valued as a working document that supports teachers and teacher aides to work together to teach the Australian Curriculum (AC).

Teachers identify the importance of planning together when they are unpacking the units of work. They speak positively of the time provided for collaborative planning, identifying that it provides them with an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the key information to be taught and assessed. The principal and teachers articulate the importance of the four phases of moderation, with a recent focus on the 'before' and first 'after' phases. Some staff members identify that clear alignment between Level of Achievement (LOA) data and other data sets, including National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is yet to be apparent.

The principal articulates the importance of all teachers utilising effective teaching practices.

The school is reviewing and redefining pedagogical approaches and high impact teaching strategies. The principal recognises that highly effective teaching is the key to enhancing student learning, and encourages the use of research-based teaching practices in classrooms. Instructional coaching cycles are being investigated requiring teachers and leaders to build collective knowledge in relation to effective instruction. The principal identifies the importance of working with the teaching team to establish agreed protocols and areas to focus on, including the pedagogical approaches and high impact teaching strategies.



High priority is placed on the analysis and discussion of systematically collected student achievement data.

To support the teaching staff to further develop their knowledge and understanding of students, the principal is working with the teaching team to analyse the LOA data for English, science and mathematics, comparing it to other student data sets. The principal identifies that these data sets are yet to align, and articulates a need to continue to build their data literacy and the effective allocation of LOA data aligned to marking, connecting data analysis, curriculum and pedagogy.

The principal and staff members are united and committed to supporting every student to experience success in their learning.

There is a range of annual plans, including the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), a cluster Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) and a 'chain of evidence' document. Within these documents there is a range of strategies, including 21 listed in the AIP. Alignment between the AIP and the Strategic Plan 2017-2020 is yet to be clearly articulated. Processes to monitor the gradual implementation of annual plans are yet to be developed. How school leaders and teachers are monitoring the effectiveness of the school's programs and initiatives to improve student achievement levels is yet to be articulated.

A collective focus on ensuring that all students are provided with the necessary support is apparent.

The principal and staff articulate the importance of engaging with parents to ensure that all reasonable adjustments are made and that the learning and wellbeing needs of all students are catered for. The Head of Special Education Services (HOSSES) speaks highly positively of a range of initiatives that have been implemented over many years to support students to manage intermittent hearing loss concerns. The school continues to implement the Blow Breathe Cough program, providing regular refreshers to staff. Sound systems are utilised in both classrooms to support students with hearing difficulties.

Local community members support and speak highly positively of the school and the positive tone in the school.

Community members articulate that 'collectively everyone is on the same page and heading in the right direction'. The principal and staff are held in high regard. There is a positive relationship with the local Jumbun Indigenous community and strong links are being developed to engage Elders in the school community. Elders from the local community engage with staff members and students, encouraging everyone to work together.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Further develop teacher capability in planning, teaching and assessing the AC, engaging with the four phases of moderation and enhancing the rigour when allocating student achievement levels.

Enhance the capability of the teaching team to utilise an agreed range of high impact teaching strategies, through coaching, observation and feedback, and Watching Others Work (WOW) processes.

Further develop the data literacy of the teaching team, enhancing the connection between data, curriculum and pedagogy.

Monitor the effectiveness of programs and initiatives, measuring impact on the improvements in student achievement levels, including gradually throughout the year.