

# Acacia Ridge 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 School and Region Reviews (SRR) at **Acacia Ridge State School** from **5 to 7 October 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 SRR and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SRR [website](#).

### 1.1 Review team

Cameron Wayman	Internal reviewer, SRR (review chair)
Thomas Frankling	Peer reviewer
Garry Lacey	External reviewer



## 1.2 School context

<b>Indigenous land name:</b>	Turrbal and Yuggera
<b>Location:</b>	Nyngam Street, Acacia Ridge
<b>Education region:</b>	Metropolitan Region
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 6
<b>Enrolment:</b>	322
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	15 per cent
<b>Students with disability percentage:</b>	29 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	939
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2021 – acting



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, deputy principal, Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Head of Department – Curriculum (HOD-C), two administration officers, 18 teachers, two school nurses, three inclusion teachers, Business Manager (BM), guidance officer, two Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP) teachers, 11 teacher aides, schools officer, five cleaners, school chaplain, 138 students and 27 parents.

Community and business groups:

- Crossing supervisor, Footsteps Community Services chief executive officer and clinical director, Acacia Ridge Early Years Centre and Kindergarten director, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, treasurer and secretary.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Head of Department (HOD) – junior secondary of Yeronga State High School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Councillor for Moorooka Ward, Brisbane City Council and ARD.



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

**The school is characterised by multicultural diversity amongst the student body.**

Staff articulate appreciation for and value of the varying cultural backgrounds of students. The leadership team, in particular, discusses that this presents an opportunity to celebrate the diverse knowledge and cultural understanding that students and families bring to the school. The school promotes school and community celebrations with Harmony Day, a day of particular significance.

**The leadership team provides opportunities for teachers to engage in processes of intentional collaboration with colleagues.**

Each term, classroom teachers, inclusion teachers and the Head of Department – Curriculum (HOD-C) meet for a day for collaborative curriculum planning. Fortnightly opportunities are provided for year level teams to meet with the HOD-C to engage in collaborations relating to curriculum and data cycles. Teachers speak positively of these opportunities for collaboration, to work with colleagues and leaders, and of the ‘gift of time’ provided to enable these meetings to occur.

**The leadership team has identified and established an improvement agenda supported by evidence-based practices.**

A roles and responsibilities document lists a number of tasks for leaders. Clear roles and responsibilities for all members of the leadership team are yet to be apparent to some staff. The principal expresses a desire to review roles and responsibilities to encompass clear accountabilities for leaders. Leaders express the belief that this will drive improvement and achievement in learning outcomes. The knowledge and understanding of roles, responsibilities and accountabilities by members of the leadership team and how they individually and collectively drive school improvement is variable.

**Leaders and teaching staff members express a commitment to implementing curriculum units aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC).**

Collaborative curriculum planning is promoted across the school. Each term, year level teams are released for a day of planning with the HOD-C, with a specific focus on developing plans in English. Members of the leadership team understand the importance of using the model for planning curriculum units in English to develop units in other learning areas aligned to the AC, that are locally contextualised and quality assured for balance and coverage against content descriptions and achievement standards.

**Highly effective teaching is recognised by leaders as the key to improving student learning outcomes.**

The principal and other leaders accept responsibility for driving improvement in pedagogical practice to support improved learning outcomes and effective implementation of the school’s Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). The school has a pedagogical framework developed



previously, which the principal acknowledges currently requires review to articulate and reflect current expected ways of teaching at the school. The principal recognises the need to collaboratively develop and document a whole-school approach to pedagogy and to develop teacher capability in identifying and implementing the most effective pedagogical practices to meet the needs of the curriculum and learners.

**The leadership team acknowledges the development of staff into an expert teaching team as being central to improving learning and social outcomes for students.**

A professional learning overview is established which details a range of capability development processes planned for implementation in identified priority areas. Opportunities for teachers to engage in processes of intentional collaboration with colleagues for curriculum planning and data analysis exist. This year, the principal has engaged John Fleming<sup>1</sup> to work alongside teachers in the development of their pedagogical practices in relation to elements of Explicit Instruction (EI). The current focus for this work is on developing warm ups. The collaborative development of a collegial engagement framework which provides a strategic overview of capability development processes, including opportunities for leadership learning, coaching and mentoring, models of feedback and work in collegial teams is yet to be developed.

**Leaders express the belief that agreed practices will drive improvement and achievement in student learning outcomes.**

The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) 2022 outlines three improvement priorities. The levels of knowledge and understanding of the leadership team's role in supporting staff to deliver the improvement priorities are variable. Members of the leadership team understand the importance of clarifying their roles and responsibilities and closely monitoring the enactment of school priorities to measure the impact of teaching practice on student learning. Some staff members express that high expectations for all staff to engage in school priority areas is yet to be fully apparent. They share that Quality Assurance (QA) processes to ensure agreed practices are being consistently enacted across all classrooms are yet to be fully embedded.

**The school has collaboratively developed a school-wide, shared vision and understanding of inclusive practices with staff and the community.**

Inclusion teachers are strategically sectioned across the school via year level cohorts and provide support for classroom teachers for students with disability, English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) students, and students who require targeted literacy intervention. Teachers speak proudly of the journey of inclusion that the school has undertaken and acknowledge the work that has been instigated by many staff.

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<sup>1</sup> Fleming, J. (2020). *John Fleming – Explicit Instruction*. <https://john-fleming-explicit.blogspot.com/>



**Teachers are working hard to continually grow their knowledge and understanding of the AC.**

The current focus for planning sessions is developing curriculum units in English. Teachers describe the initial part of the planning process includes forefronting the assessment task and Guide to Making Judgement (GTMJ) from the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units. Commonly, unpacking of the achievement standard and content descriptions which will be the focus for teaching and learning, occurs in conjunction with this process. At the end of this planning session, teachers have a detailed and agreed plan for implementation during the next term. This process aligns to best practice in collegially developing units of work aligned with the AC.





## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Develop instructional leadership capability in which leaders understand and have clarity of their roles, responsibilities and accountabilities in supporting teachers to effectively implement school priorities.

Use the model for planning curriculum units in English, to develop curriculum units in other learning areas aligned to the AC that are locally contextualised and quality assured for balance and coverage against content descriptions and achievement standards.

Collaboratively develop and document a whole-school approach to pedagogy, and develop teacher capability in identifying and implementing the most effective pedagogical practices to meet the needs of learners and the curriculum.

Strategically plan and enact a collegial engagement framework that details the school's practices for building capability through modelling, coaching, Watching Others Work (WOW), team collaborations and observation and feedback cycles.

Develop QA processes to ensure the priorities are being implemented consistently in all classrooms and the impact is measured in terms of student progress relating to established targets.