

# Fitzgerald 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 School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Fitzgerald State School** from **1 to 3 August, 2018**.

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 consider 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 SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

### 1.1 Review team

Garry Lacey	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Brad Roberts	Peer reviewer
Jenny Nayler	External reviewer

## 1.2 School context

<b>Location:</b>	Norris Road, North Mackay
<b>Education region:</b>	Central Queensland Region
<b>Year opened:</b>	1979
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 6
<b>Enrolment:</b>	664
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	14.3 per cent
<b>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</b>	3.2 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	971
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2018 (acting)
<b>Full-time equivalent staff:</b>	36.4
<b>Significant partner schools:</b>	Mackay North State High School, Beaconsfield State School, Mackay North State School, Northview State School, Andergrove State School, Whitsunday Anglican School, Carlisle Adventist Christian College, Mackay Christian College
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (ATSICHS) Mackay, The Smith Family, Family and Child Connect, Mackay Children and Family Centre, Australian Literacy Educators' Association (ALEA), Queensland Association of Mathematics Teachers (QAMT), Central Queensland (CQ) University, Mackay Early Years Language and Literacy Network (MEYLLN), Playgroup Queensland, Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC), Kodály Music Education Institute of Australia (KMEIA), Young ICT Explorers (YICTE), Headspace, Whitsunday Voices Youth Literature Festival
<b>Significant school programs:</b>	Fitz Blitz Reading, Age-appropriate pedagogies (AAP), Reading Buddies, YICTE, Early Start, Oral Language Early Years (OLEY), Prep Metalinguistic Awareness Program (PMAP), Early Years Intervention, Writing Atelier, Year 1 Writing Intervention, extension writing and mathematics, Kids Matters, Parent & Community Workshops – Support-a-Reader, Support-a-Writer, Support your Child with Maths



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, two deputy principals, master teacher, three Support Teachers – Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), teacher in charge-special needs, mathematics coach, Business Manager (BM), guidance officer, dance and drama teacher, 29 classroom teachers, digital technology co-ordinator and teacher/librarian, music teacher, two special needs teachers, Japanese language teacher, 12 teacher aides, two teacher aides supporting Indigenous students, three administration officers, Indigenous parent representative, eight student leaders, 75 students and 18 parents.

Community and business groups:

- Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and secretary, PCYC Indigenous sport and recreation officer, local high school head of junior secondary and The Smith Family representative.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Early years coach and partner school principal.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.

### 1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2018	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2018
Investing for Success 2018	Strategic Plan 2015-2018
Headline Indicators (Term 1, 2018)	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2018)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning logs 2015-2018	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	School differentiation planner
School pedagogical framework	School Opinion Survey
School data plan	School newsletters and website
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	Responsible Behaviour Plan





## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

**The positive tone of the school reflects a school-wide commitment to successful learning for all students.**

Staff members demonstrate an understanding of, and commitment to, the importance of positive and caring relationships to successful learning. They consciously work to build mutually respectful relationships across the school community. Interactions amongst staff members, students and families are caring, polite and inclusive. The staff and community are committed to the development of a learning environment where students can be happy and where optimal learning can take place.

**Staff members are dedicated to improving literacy outcomes for all students.**

The principal has identified one key priority area for collective focus in 2018 relating to maximising learning outcomes in writing. There are four 'musts' developed to guide the teaching of writing at the school. These include planning and assessing using the Australian Curriculum (AC), engaging students in the five-step writing process, writing opportunities provided every day, and developing writing goals and providing associated feedback. Teachers are genuinely engaging with this agenda.

**Teachers are allocated a half day each term for collaborative planning with their year level colleagues and the master teacher.**

The planning of curriculum units in English is the first order of business for these meetings. Teachers begin the planning process by considering the assessment task and Guide to Making Judgements (GTMJ). The achievement standard and content descriptions of the AC are discussed to ensure teachers understand the scope of work for the teaching and learning process. The lesson sequence for implementation of the unit is considered as part of this planning process. Teachers report they value the release time provided to plan their curriculum units and appreciate the support and guidance of school leaders.

**The school has developed a comprehensive writing framework that details expected practices to be implemented in all classrooms across the school.**

There is strong commitment from the teaching team to implementing the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) in their classrooms with teachers dedicated to improving the teaching and learning process in relation to this priority area. Teachers are at different stages in their ability to implement a balanced writing program in their classrooms. The leadership team is committed to supporting teachers to embed agreed strategies relating to the EIA and to continue monitoring its implementation to enable appropriate levels of support for identified teachers.



**The school's leadership team articulates a belief that reliable and timely data regarding student outcomes is crucial to the school's improvement agenda.**

Teachers engage in one-on-one data conversations with a member of the leadership team relating to student outcomes in the priority area of writing. Data is additionally being used within year level teams in order to better know students and assist in the planning for differentiated teaching and learning experiences. Some teachers report they would appreciate more dedicated time to meet with their year level colleagues to interrogate school-based achievement data that promote conversations relating to further improvements sought in student outcomes.

**The principal and members of the teaching team express a commitment to implementing curriculum units relating to learning areas aligned to the AC.**

The school has commenced the move away from strict adherence to the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resource. Teachers undertake to ensure alignment of curriculum units to the AC and use a range of resources to guide unit implementation and lesson sequence development. Assessment tasks are predominantly drawn from the C2C resource and are sometimes modified for 'best-fit' purposes. The leadership team expresses a desire to continue to develop and adapt curriculum units aligned to the AC, that are increasingly locally contextualised, and quality assured for balance and coverage against content descriptions and achievement standards.

**The school is building a professional team of highly able teachers, including teachers who take active leadership roles beyond the classroom.**

Processes are established to encourage a culture of continuous professional improvement that includes classroom-based learning, some mentoring in addition to feedback to teachers from colleagues and school leaders. There is an expectation that all teachers will be committed to the continuous improvement of their own teaching and be focused on the development of knowledge and skills required to improve student learning. A timetabled, professional learning plan that details the opportunities for capability development for all school staff members, including Annual Performance Development Plans (APDP), coaching and mentoring and models of feedback, is yet to be developed.

**The Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS) articulates a positive approach to the management of student behaviour and wellbeing.**

Behaviour processes are known by most students and are applied throughout the school by most staff members. Some staff members, parents and students articulate a perception that standards of student behaviour have declined over time. Some staff members indicate it is timely to investigate a research-based, whole-school approach, to the management and support of classroom and playground behaviour.



**The school offers a range of co-curricular activities that provide students with opportunities to develop their skills in academic, sporting and cultural areas.**

Every year the school undertakes to produce a musical 'Spectacular' that involves all students. The Wakakirri story-dance competition is another highlight of the school's arts program that involves large numbers of students. The school is noted for its involvement in sporting events including interschool and representative sport. Students are provided with opportunities to extend their learning through digital technology and other academic competitions. Students express appreciation for the time teachers take to provide them with these learning experiences to develop their skills in areas of enthusiasm or interest. Parents speak highly of these opportunities for engagement in co-curricular learning.

**Members of the community, parents, staff members and students display enormous pride in the school.**

Parents indicate they are extremely happy with the education their child receives at the school and the opportunities that are provided. The school is held in high regard by members of the wider community and is viewed as a high performing, supportive school. Some parents indicate that they have moved their child from other schools to attend the school because of the comprehensive nature of the support and care provided and the broad range of learning opportunities available.

**There is a strong sense of collegiality amongst the staff members.**

Teaching and non-teaching staff indicate that they feel valued and are acknowledged for contributing to student progress. A willingness of staff members to engage in professional dialogue aligned to improved student learning and wellbeing is apparent. Staff members display high levels of professional energy in the work they do in the school and are highly student-focused in their actions. Most staff members interviewed report that morale is the best it has been in a number of years and are optimistic about the continued development of a cohesive team.





## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Work with teachers to embed the agreed non-negotiable practices relating to the EIA, determine what this looks like in classrooms, and monitor implementation to ensure consistency of practice.

Provide additional time for teams of teachers and school leaders to interrogate school-based achievement data to promote conversations relating to further improvements sought in student outcomes.

Continue to develop and adapt curriculum units aligned to the AC that are locally contextualised and quality assured for balance and coverage against content descriptions and achievement standards.

Develop a timetabled, professional learning plan that details a broad range of opportunities for capability development for all school staff including APDPs, coaching and mentoring and models of feedback.

Ensure the whole-school approaches for managing student behaviour enable consistent implementation of agreed strategies to support effective learning and positive behaviour for all students.