

# Highfields State School

## Executive Summary



School  
Improvement  
Unit



Queensland  
Government



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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 **Highfields State School** from **15 to 17 March 2017**.

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 which prioritise future directions for improvement.

The 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 SIU and region within six weeks of the school receiving the report.

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

### 1.1 Review team

Peter Doyle	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Liam Smith	Internal reviewer, SIU
Toni Robinson	Internal reviewer, SIU
Judi Hanke	External reviewer
Ian Hall	External reviewer



## 1.2 School context

<b>Location:</b>	New England Highway, Highfields
<b>Education region:</b>	Darling Downs South West Region
<b>Year opened:</b>	1870
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 6
<b>Enrolment:</b>	736
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	6 per cent
<b>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</b>	4 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	1042
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2009
<b>Full-time equivalent staff:</b>	44.0
<b>Significant partner schools:</b>	Highfields State Secondary College
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	Highfields Crèche and Kindergarten (C&K), Fresh Hope Family Support, Australian Defence Force (ADF) Pastoral Care Program
<b>Significant school programs:</b>	Speech and drama program, Strings, brass and woodwind instrumental music programs, chess club, Opti-minds, Cows Create Careers program



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, two deputy principals, Head of Curriculum (HOC), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Business Services Manager (BSM), 29 classroom teachers, 11 teacher aides, chaplain, physical education teacher, music teacher, Languages other than English (LOTE) teacher, three special education teachers, teacher librarian, guidance officer, Speech Language Pathologist (SLP), Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), administration officers 15 parents, 69 students, six student leaders and two tuckshop convenors.

Community and business groups:

- Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) members.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of Highfields State Secondary College.

Government and departmental representatives:

- State member for Toowoomba North, Councillor from Toowoomba Regional Council and ARD.

### 1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2017	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2017
Strategic Plan 2016-2019	DDSW Charter for Improvement 2017
Investing for Success 2017	School Data Profile (October 2016)
OneSchool	School budget overview
School Opinion Survey 2016	Curriculum planning documents
School Improvement Unit Report 2015	edStudios
School pedagogical framework	Leadership team roles and responsibilities
School assessment schedule	School newsletters, Facebook and website
Headline Indicators (October 2016 release)	Curriculum, assessment and reporting framework



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

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

The school's pedagogical approach of Explicit Instruction (EI) is based on the work of Archer and Hughes<sup>1</sup> and reflects the Regional Charter for Improvement. All teachers have received some Professional Development (PD) in this approach and identify this as a school-wide expectation.

**The school principal and staff members are united in their commitment to the goal of improving learning outcomes for all students.**

The school's improvement agenda outlined in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) includes spelling, writing, numeracy and higher order thinking. The understanding of the school's Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) varies across the community.

**The leadership team views the use of data as essential for their leadership of the school.**

Teaching staff members have developed skills of collecting and recording data. The process to analyse student data to identify gaps in learning and refine teaching to address these gaps is an emerging whole-school practice. The leadership team acknowledge the need to introduce data driven conversations.

**The school leadership team and staff members have developed a school culture that reflects a commitment to providing quality student learning .**

Staff members are proud of their school and are ardent about the wellbeing of the students. Close monitoring and tracking of students achieving below year level expectations is implemented by the Diverse Learning Team. Some students identify that they would like more challenging work.

**Funds from the Investing for Success (I4S) initiative are allocated to further develop the instructional leadership capacity and capability of school leaders.**

Formal planning of processes and opportunities to support the development of the leadership team as instructional and aspiring leaders is emerging. The school has expressed an interest with regional leadership to undertake instructional leadership training with Lyn Sharratt<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: Effective and efficient teaching*. Guilford Press

<sup>2</sup> Sharratt, L., & Fullan, M. (2012). *Putting faces on the data: What great leaders do!*. Corwin Press.



**School leaders place a priority on the ongoing professional learning of all staff members.**

The development of a school-wide self-reflective culture focused on improving classroom teaching is emerging. The principal and leadership team are viewed as supportive of the day-to-day practice and learning of teachers.

**The school has established partnerships with families, local business and community organisations with the purpose of improving outcomes for students.**

The school has a documented parent and community engagement framework. The framework outlines the areas of communication, partnerships, collaboration, decision making and participation that contributes to a positive difference in a student's education.



## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Collaboratively review the school's EIA to ensure there is a narrow and sharp focus on a key learning area.

Develop the leadership density of all staff members across the school to lead the school's EIA.

Refine the processes of data tracking for all students' progress to promote targeted teaching.

Implement practices that enable teachers to engage in conversations that promotes understanding of all students' learning needs and progress.

Reflect on teaching practices to promote a learning culture that engages and challenges all students particularly the more capable students.