



Mansfield State High School

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Mansfield State High School from 3 to 4 September 2015. It provides an evaluation of the school's performance against one of the nine domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#). It also recommends improvement strategies for the school to consider in consultation with its school community.

The review and report were completed by a review team of DC Consultancy and a Senior Reviewer from the School Improvement Unit (SIU). For more information about the SIU and the new reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the Department of Education and Training (DET) [website](#).



1.2 School context

Location:	Mansfield SHS
Education region:	Metropolitan
The school opened in:	1974
Year levels:	7 - 12
Current school enrolment:	2053
Indigenous enrolments:	19
Students with disability enrolments:	53
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1103
Year principal appointed:	2015
Number of teachers:	145
Nearby schools:	Mansfield SS, Wishart SS, Mackenzie State College
Significant community partnerships:	Griffith University, Southside Sports Club, Upper Mt Gravatt Lions Club, Qld Pops Orchestra, Brisbane Concert Lighting, Broadwater Road Uniting Church, Wishart Rotary Club, Mt Gravatt Show Society, Lend Lease, RSL Holland Park Sub-Branch, Bunnings Mt Gravatt, Mt Gravatt Little Athletics Club, Carina Rugby League Football Club, Storm Touch, Mansfield Cricket Club
Unique school programs:	<u>Programs of Excellence</u> - French Immersion Program, Instrumental Music Program, Technologically Integrated Curriculum



1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of two reviewers.

The review consisted of:

- a pre-review audit of the school's performance data and other school information
- a school visit of two days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal and leadership team
 - 15 Heads of Department (HODs)
 - 47 classroom and specialist teachers
 - 19 non-teaching staff
 - 13 student leaders and +100 more in classrooms and school grounds
 - 10 parents
 - 4 Parent and Citizen's Association (P&C) President and secretariat members and School Liaison Officer
 - 2 Guidance Officers
 - School Chaplain
 - 2 community members

1.4 Review team

David Curran	Review Chair, DC Consultancy
Valerie Hadgelias	Internal Reviewer, SIU

1.5 Reading the report

The executive summary outlines key findings from the review. The key improvement strategies prioritise future direction for improvement. The executive summary should be read along with the findings and improvement strategies outlined in the nine domains which provide a strategic view for improvement.



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- Staff Morale is high and a sense of optimism is apparent.

At the time of the review, staff report optimism and have welcomed the appointment of the principal in 2015. Staff express satisfaction with the clarity of direction of the school and the modelling of caring and respect shown to students and staff. Staff appreciate the focus on staff wellbeing.

- School culture promotes positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents.

There is an embedded culture through the school ethos of *'Quality learning in a Caring environment'*. The school staff display understanding and commitment to the establishment of positive, caring, and mutually respectful relationships, to promote learning. Behavioural expectations, school and classroom rules are visible and known by all. Strategies to promote appropriate behaviour are established and implemented through the Responsible School Behaviour Plan. It has been reported that the explicit teaching of behavioural expectations have improved student behaviours. Student successes are celebrated on assemblies and a systematic reward system has been established and deeply embedded.

- Instructional leadership by school leaders in coaching, modelling, observation and feedback is developing.

There is evidence of a number of quality teaching practices that were observed throughout the school. These consistent practices align with the school improvement priorities. Teachers are developing consensus around a consistent set of pedagogical expectations. Lead teachers were trained as coaches and all Heads of Department (HODs) have undertaken the Queensland Education Leadership Institute coaching program to build the leadership capacity in the school.

- A strong collegial culture has been established in the school.

Significant work has been done in recent years to develop a professional learning culture. Staffroom talk of teachers is largely around pedagogy, sharing ideas of what works and assisting beginning and newly appointed staff. Teachers have an overt and shared commitment to the improvement of teaching and a growing openness to critique by colleagues.



- School enrolment growth has provided an opportunity to review and innovate resource allocation.

The school applies its resources in a targeted manner to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of its students. The school enrolment growth has impacted on human and physical resources. School leaders acknowledge that as an Independent Public School (IPS) there is the opportunity to re-align the workforce plans and resource allocations. A number of leadership roles have recently been created. These include HOD Learning and Performance, HOD Pedagogy and Student Engagement, HOD Differentiated Learning, Coordinator, Junior Secondary. These roles are designed to support the focus on quality teaching and learning and are aligned to the four school improvement priorities.

- The school has a sharp and narrow explicit improvement agenda that provides clarity of direction and is widely known and understood by the school community.

The school leaders are committed in the pursuit of improved learning outcomes for all students. The principal has documented, articulated and implemented the strategies for student improvement. The school improvement agenda has four stated priorities: Teaching and Learning, Literacy and Numeracy, Student Development and Performance.

- High levels of student engagement in learning are apparent.

The school promotes and maintains an environment reflective of its high expectations that all students will learn successfully. The majority of students are highly motivated to succeed and they commit fully to their learning. Very few students are minimally engaged in productive learning. Even when disengaged, students generally remain well behaved and respectful within the classroom environment.



3.2 Key improvement strategies

- Formalise instructional leadership by school leaders in coaching, modelling, observation and feedback to drive full implementation and consistency of effective pedagogical practices.
- Continue to foster a professional learning community among staff. Formalise the approach through action research projects focused on student learning outcomes including the excellent practices evident to promote learning and engagement for those students with disabilities and difference.
- Foster student ownership of their learning through the establishment of a school wide approach to the development of clearly defined and targeted personal learning goals. Provide focused professional development on quality feedback to improve learning.
- Strengthen and embed a feedback culture – teachers to students, students to teachers, teacher to teacher and student to student. Further develop and provide relevant professional development to staff to ensure consistency of practice across faculties.
- Develop evidence-based strategies to improve classroom teachers' capability to adjust the learning program to provide challenge and engagement for high performing students in line with the school's stated targets.
- Maintain a strong focus on the engagement of all students in challenging and meaningful learning. Ensure that teachers consistently focus on monitoring the engagement of every student so that none are able to "fly under the radar".

2.3 School Context for Self determined Review

After the 2014 School Opinion Survey there were concerns with some of the data:

School Opinion Survey – Students

- I can talk to my teachers about my concerns – 74.3% agreed
- My school takes Students' opinions seriously – 73.5%
- Teachers at my school treat Students fairly – 82.4%

School Opinion Survey – Staff

- I feel that morale is positive at this school – 50%



Findings and improvement strategies against the domain

3.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

Mansfield State High School has 4 explicit improvement priorities: Teaching and Learning, Literacy and Numeracy, Student Development and Performance. All of these priorities contribute to the school ethos, *Quality Learning in a Caring Environment*. This ethos is built around high expectations and a commitment to excellence.

The school administration aligns each of these priorities to a particular Deputy Principal position. There is an extremely high participation in a range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. An example of the high participation rates is the Music Program which provides opportunities for over 700 students out of a total number of 2070.

The Volunteers at Mansfield initiative (V@M) provides another avenue to recognise student participation and service.

There is a strong focus on the holistic development of every student. This was evident through staff interviews and the widely expressed commitment from staff to do whatever it takes for every student to experience success. Staff voluntarily engage in a wide range of activities from tutorials, extra classes, personal interventions and whole faculty approaches to meeting the needs for the full range of students.

There is an expectation that every student will learn and achieve positive outcomes. Classrooms are calm and interruptions to classroom time are well managed through coordination between the administration and Heads of Department (HODs). There are very high rates of attendance and engagement, no obvious behavioural problems and a strong sense of school pride and belonging.

The majority of students are highly motivated to succeed and they commit fully to their learning. Very few students are minimally engaged in productive learning. Even when disengaged, students generally remain well behaved and respectful within the classroom environment and hence their disengagement may not be readily apparent to the class teacher.

There is an embedded culture through the school ethos of students being '*confident, informed and well-balanced*' that promotes positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents. The school has a tone of calmness, order and mutual care between staff and students. The school staff display understanding and commitment to the establishment of positive, caring, and mutually respectful relationships, to promote learning. Students report on the clarity and consistency of expectations around student management and well-being.

The 2015 SOS data for Students shows that there has been an increase in these items.



I can talk to my teachers about my concerns. (2014 – 74.4 per cent; 2015 – 75.2 per cent)

My school takes student opinions seriously. (2014 – 73.5 per cent; 2015 – 78.5 per cent)

Teachers at my school treat students fairly. (2014 - 82.4 per cent; 2015 - 81.8 per cent)

The lower rates for these questions tended to be lower as a result of the less agreement responses of Year 11 as opposed to Year 8 students.

Expectations about school uniform are clear and supported by staff, parents and students. This is evident in the quality of the students' presentation.

There are strong processes for monitoring attendance. At the time of the review the attendance rate is 94.6 per cent. 8.1 percent of students have an attendance rate of less than 85 per cent.

Behavioural expectations, school and classroom rules are visible and known by all. Strategies to promote appropriate behaviour are established and implemented through the Student Development program (SDP) program. Student successes are celebrated on assemblies and systematic recognition and celebration processes have been established.

Year level co-ordinators largely focus on overseeing the implementation of the Student Development Program. School leaders acknowledge plans to further develop these roles and further embed the House system as a strategy to promote student well-being.

A strong student leadership culture exists within the school. Student Council at each year level has two student representatives per class and meets monthly. The Year 12 Prefects take forward proposals at each year level and Captains and Vice captains take relevant proposals forward in their meeting with the Principal.

The 2015 Student Development Program (SDP) (Years 7 to Year 12) has been implemented enthusiastically by staff. This highly structured program provides comprehensive material for the once weekly lesson presented by the SD teacher, who is always a curriculum teacher of that class. Resources are constantly updated through consistent teacher feedback.

There are well established practices such as The Induction Program (TIP) whereby year 12 students are assigned to work with Years 7, 8 and 9 classes. This allows seniors to interact with junior secondary students as strong role models and to promote connectedness between junior and senior areas of the school. School leaders acknowledge issues apparent through school enrolment growth and the lack of available facilities for activities such as common school assemblies.

The physical environment is conducive to promoting learning and wellbeing. The class garden areas are a source of pride to both students and staff. This is a new initiative for this year for Years 7 and 8. Many staff commented on the need for purpose built facilities



while acknowledging the good work happening within the existing facilities. The need for an assembly hall that would accommodate the whole student cohort was often mentioned.

Students and staff have an obvious sense of belonging and parents, staff and students speak highly of the school. Mansfield State High School is proud of its cultural diversity and values this appreciation of difference which is evident in student and staff positive interactions and the celebration of difference.

Staff and parents spoke highly of the work of the Chaplain and the School Liaison Officer in dealing with sensitive and traumatic incidents and doing whatever it takes.

Parents are welcomed as partners in learning. Communication between home and school is a vital component in building the relationship between parents and school staff. Parents reported high levels of satisfaction with the two way communication between home and school, particularly with issues involving student learning. Parents are encouraged to take part in programs such as the reading group, Music support group, French Immersion Program and many other areas of the school.

Many commented favourably about communication within the school with the weekly news sheet, assemblies and staff meetings. However, communication generally was seen as an area to focus on for improvement. The HOD, Business/Improvement has been tasked to review processes within the school including communication.

Satisfaction levels as seen in the school opinion survey (SOS) data are high. In 2014, 95 per cent of parents (down from 100 per cent of parents in 2013) indicated that this is a good school. 95 per cent of students indicated in 2014 that they like being at their school compared to 84 per cent of staff who indicated they enjoy working at this school.

In the 2014 staff survey only 50 per cent indicated that they believed staff morale was positive. In addition, 63 per cent of staff indicated the school takes staff opinions seriously. Many staff explain low morale as a consequence of decision-making processes around the proposal to become an Independent Public School and fears around the identification of staff for possible transfer.

At the time of the review, staff report optimism and have welcomed the appointment of the principal in 2015. Staff express satisfaction with the clarity of direction of the school and the modelling of caring and respect shown to students and staff. Staff appreciate the focus on staff wellbeing.

The 2015 SOS data was released the day after the review and this data showed a dramatic turn around in staff morale with 95.6 per cent of teaching staff and 81.8 per cent of non-teaching staff provides a total of 93.7 per cent of staff believing that morale is positive at this school.



In addition, the 2015 SOS identified that 94.9 percent of staff identified that this school takes staff opinions seriously. 100 percent of staff believe that this school is a good school.

A strong collegial culture has been established in the school. Significant work has been done in recent years to develop a professional learning culture. Staffroom talk of teachers is largely around pedagogy, sharing ideas of what works and assisting beginning and newly appointed staff. Teachers have an overt and shared commitment to the improvement of teaching and a growing openness to critique by colleagues.

A number of leadership roles have recently been created. These include HOD Learning and Performance, HOD Pedagogy and Student Engagement, HOD Differentiated Learning, Coordinator, Junior Secondary. These roles are designed to support the focus on quality teaching and learning and are aligned to the four school improvement priorities.

The Art and Science of Teaching (ASoT) has provided a real catalyst for developing a learning culture with consensus around a consistent set of pedagogical expectations. There is evidence of a number of quality teaching practices that were observed throughout the school. These consistent practices include the use of learning goals, data placemats, and differentiated practices such as assessment support and structured learning goals.

A number of Lead Teachers were trained as coaches to lead the implementation of ASoT. Significant resources have been expended to expand the number of trained staff in order to create the critical mass needed to sustain and embed ASoT as the preferred pedagogical framework.

Considerable work has been undertaken in developing the capacity of school leaders and teachers in peer coaching. All HODs have undertaken the Queensland Education Leadership Institute (QELI) coaching program to build the leadership capacity in the school. There is a growing trend of peer coaching in some faculties and across some faculties.

School leaders and staff report satisfaction with two significant professional development activities in recent years with the QELI coaching program and in-service around the Art and Science of Teaching (ASoT). There is evidence of adoption of ASoT and high impact of this in classroom practices.

Supporting data

Strategic Plan 2012-2015, Annual Implementation Plan 2015, Mansfield State High School (MSHS) – School Improvement Agenda 2015, Great Results Guarantee 2015, School Data Profile, Headline Indicators, Responsible Behaviour Plan 2015, MSHS Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students 2016-2017 DRAFT, MSHS School Annual Report 2014, School Opinion Survey – School Report 2014, Discipline Audit 17 June



2014, Mansfield High – Whole School Literacy Strategies, Mansfield High – Whole School Numeracy Strategies, Mansfield High – supportive School Environment, RAMP (corrective reading program), higher-order thinking strategy, professional development plan 2015, school website, school newsletters, budget overview, pedagogical framework, assessment and reporting framework, differentiation placemat, staff, student and leadership team interviews, Mansfield SHS News Sheet (issued weekly), minutes of meetings – admin, HODs, staff, data plan 2105, staff presentations

Improvement strategies

Formalise instructional leadership by school leaders in coaching, modelling, observation and feedback to drive full implementation and consistency of effective pedagogical practices.

Continue to foster a professional learning community among staff. Formalise the approach through action research projects focused on student learning outcomes including the excellent practices evident to promote learning and engagement for those students with disabilities and difference.

Foster student ownership of their learning through the establishment of a school wide approach to the development of clearly defined and targeted personal learning goals. Provide focused professional development on quality feedback to improve learning.

Strengthen and embed a feedback culture – teachers to students, students to teachers, teacher to teacher and student to student. Further develop and provide relevant professional development to staff to ensure consistency of practice across faculties.

Develop evidence-based strategies to improve classroom teachers' capability to adjust the learning program to provide challenge and engagement for high performing students in line with the school's stated targets.

Maintain a strong focus on the engagement of all students in challenging and meaningful learning. Ensure that teachers consistently focus on monitoring the engagement of every student so that none are able to "fly under the radar".

Develop a workforce plan to sustain signature programs and to maximise personnel allocated and funded by the school to deliver on the improvement agenda.

Review and refine school-wide achievement and progress against targets in the improvement agenda to track improvement over time to consolidate and embed practices.

Further develop local accountability measures to ensure that the school is achieving effective return on investment in the way in which it targets key resources. Use a range of data sources and monitoring tools to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of prime school improvement strategies and programs. Communicate the progress and outcomes with the school community.