



School Improvement Unit Report

Kolan South State School Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Kolan South State School on 31 August and 1 September 2015. It provides 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 review and report were completed by a review team 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:	Gin Gin Road, South Kolan
Education region:	North Coast Region
The school opened in:	1878
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Current school enrolment:	126
Indigenous enrolments:	8 per cent
Students with disability enrolments:	5 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	947
Year principal appointed:	1995
Number of teachers:	6
Nearby schools:	Sharon State School, Bundaberg North State High School, Bullyard State School, Givelda State School, Oakwood State School
Significant community partnerships:	Bundaberg Regional Council, Saint George Community Hall, Bundaberg Returned and Services League
Unique school programs:	Corps of Drums



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
- consultation with the school's Assistant Regional Director
- a school visit of two days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal
 - Eight teachers, including specialists and support teachers
 - 20 students including student leaders
 - Ten parents including Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) executive
 - Two administration staff, cleaners, grounds staff
 - Three community representatives including feeder school principal and kindergarten director
 - State Member for Burnett, Hon Steve Bennett, MP

1.4 Review team

Chris McMillan

Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Jay Mills

Peer reviewer



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school principal and staff recognise that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning throughout the school.

Teachers use the gradual release model and explicit teaching approaches, particularly when developing new knowledge in lessons. Artefacts to support these approaches, including the use of '*I Do, We Do, You Do*' are displayed prominently in all classrooms. Students can describe the way these support their learning.

- The leadership team and school community are committed to finding ways to improve on current school outcomes.

The school has made sustained gains in student performance and attendance. The school has an explicit improvement agenda which contains twenty-one improvement strategies. Most school staff and some members of the school community articulate a focus upon literacy and numeracy including the development of a balanced reading program. There is broad understanding that the school is working on improving in literacy and numeracy.

- The school places a high priority on student and staff wellbeing and is seen as an 'inclusive and welcoming' community.

There is a strong sense of belonging and pride in the school. A number of key cultural events are celebrated at the school. The school works to create an attractive and stimulating physical environment that supports and encourages learning. The school grounds provide opportunities for students to be active and develop their interests and successes in sport.

- High levels of trust are apparent across the school community.

Interactions are focused on the learning and wellbeing of students and on continually improving the school's ability to meet the needs of all students.

- The school clearly articulates their belief that reliable student achievement data is critical to the school's improvement agenda.

The principal pays close attention to a range of school data about the performance of the school and clearly articulates a desire to progress the school to even higher levels of student achievement and performance. Building teacher capacity in the analysis and use of student data is a future priority.



- The stated improvement strategy, known as the Literacy Priority, details a goal of continuing to embed a balanced reading program.

This priority focuses upon five reading procedures. There is some evidence that this is being implemented in differing ways across the school. Many teachers have articulated that the recent strategies of 'literacy circles' and Sheena Cameron's Reading Program¹ as being significant new learnings to improve reading at the school.

- Many teachers at the school possess considerable experience and range of expertise in teaching.

There is evidence that key aspects of school improvement have originated through the practice of existing teachers' expertise. The sharing of practice within reading known as 'literacy circles', Sheena Cameron's Reading Program and maths mental computations are described as making a real difference to improving teaching practice.

- There is evidence that the school places a priority on catering for the diverse needs of students within the school community.

The school has established a before school reading program where students can complete practice reading with a teacher aide, teacher or volunteer. This practice is seen to be improving reading outcomes for students.

¹ Cameron, S. (2009), *Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies: A Practical Classroom Guide*, Pearson, New Zealand.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Design and implement a consistent school-wide approach to all elements of the schools pedagogical framework to ensure the intended curriculum is enacted for all students at Kolan South State School.
- Ensure the whole-school improvement agenda is refined as an explicit, narrow and sharp focus upon the achievement of a small set of clearly articulated outcomes, accompanied by appropriate targets, timelines, resources and professional development for all school personnel.
- Build teacher capability to enable teachers to take responsibility for changes in practice required to achieve school targets and use data on a regular basis to monitor the effectiveness of their own efforts to meet these targets.
- Embed the school's balanced reading program ensuring that agreed and consistent practices are in place in every classroom.