

El Arish 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 **El Arish State School** from **14 to 15 November 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

Stephen Bobby

Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)

Shaun Kanowski

Peer reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Chauvel St, El Arish
Education region:	Far North Queensland
Year opened:	1922
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	41
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	31 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	10 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	935
Year principal appointed:	Semester 2, 2018
Day 8 Staffing Teacher Full-time equivalent numbers:	3.51
Significant partner schools:	Tully State High School
Significant community partnerships:	Tully Sugar Refinery, El Arish Butchers, El Arish Tavern, El Arish Community Sport and Recreational Association, Cassowary Coast Regional Council, local historical society
Significant school programs:	Kitchen Garden Project



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, three classroom teachers, Cluster Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Principal Education Advisor – Australian Curriculum (PEA-AC), Special Education Program (SEP) teacher, guidance officer, Small Schools Business Manager (BM), three teacher aides, schools officer, nine parents and 27 students.

Community and business groups:

- Two Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) executive representatives.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of Tully State High School

Government and departmental representatives:

- Deputy Mayor Cassowary Coast Regional Council, ARD and Principal Coach.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2018	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2018 – The Big 3
Investing for Success 2018	Strategic Plan 2015-2018
Headline Indicators (2018 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2018)
OneSchool	School budget overview
School pedagogical framework	School planning template
School assessment schedule	School newsletters and website
School Opinion Survey	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
Report Card and NAPLAN Update Semester 1 2018	



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The principal and staff members promote a positive school culture.

This is a welcoming school community with a belief that every student is capable of successful learning. Staff, parents and students appreciate the strong sense of belonging in the school. Many community members and staff articulate that they welcome the new principal's way of working to build a collaborative school environment and are keen to see the long term success of the school. The principal recently led the staff through a collaborative process to redevelop the school vision statement to ensure all staff have an investment in being part of the 'school family'. This process was predominantly well received by staff and clarified the school's expectations for all staff members.

Staff members articulate that the best characteristic of the school is the students that attend the school.

Conversations with students reveal that they view their school as a place of learning that is 'small but fun' and 'a place where they feel accepted and welcome'. Community members speak positively of their relationships with members of the staff. Parents comment that they always feel welcomed into the school and that their child's teacher is approachable and friendly.

The principal and staff members are committed to improving learning and wellbeing outcomes for all students.

The principal has refined the information in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) to an Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) of numeracy, writing and systematic curriculum delivery. This EIA is locally known as 'The Big 3'. The Big 3 EIA is communicated to staff members, students and the community through newsletters, P&C meetings, highly visible posters displayed across the school, and in staff meetings. The Big 3 are known by staff and some parents and students. The principal recognises that further time is required to embed a deep understanding of the EIA focus areas and of the agreed strategies required to advance the improvement agenda.

The principal and teaching team are united in their focus on The Big 3 to improve outcomes for students.

The AIP has associated timelines, strategies and responsible officers. The measures, targets and strategies are broad in nature and most staff members articulate limited knowledge regarding their content. Strategies to measure progress towards targets, staff confidence and capability in delivering expected pedagogies, and measures for determining the effectiveness of programs and initiatives are developing.



The principal articulates the importance of reliable student data as essential to improvement in student learning.

The principal has analysed school performance data over a period of time and is aware of school trends in some diagnostic, National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and school-based assessments. The use of data has informed school-level decisions, support provisions and school priorities. Formal discussion regarding student learning and assessment data is commencing amongst teaching staff through weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. This process has recently commenced as a model where an individual student's data and the implications for differentiation are discussed. In-depth discussions regarding teaching practices, trend data or tracking data over time are acknowledged as areas for future development.

The principal views the development of staff members into an expert and coherent teaching team as crucial to improving student learning outcomes.

There is a commitment and enthusiasm from all staff members to improve student learning outcomes. The principal, utilising the support of the Principal Education Advisor – Australian Curriculum (PEA-AC), has worked alongside teachers during scheduled planning days, to develop a common approach to planning and teaching. Teachers articulate that a process of backward mapping, using Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units and accompanying Guides to Making Judgement (GTMJ) and assessment tasks, is conducted to determine critical content and high-yield pedagogical practices. Further formal opportunities for teachers to engage in cooperative curriculum planning and data analysis are yet to be fully developed.

Members of the teaching team are open to sharing best practice and provide informal feedback to colleagues.

Some teaching staff members articulate instances of informal modelling and coaching. Daily walkthroughs of classrooms are conducted by the principal. The principal and classroom teachers demonstrate a desire to continuously focus on improvement in teaching practices across the school. A formalised schedule of classroom observations is yet to be established. Coaching, mentoring, modelling lessons and professional conversations to enhance pedagogical practices are in the beginning stages of development and are highly valued by teaching staff members.

All students from Prep to Year 6 identify their ability to engage with the school's Kitchen Garden Project as a highlight and exhibit an overt sense of pride.

They are invested and speak enthusiastically regarding being able to grow, harvest, prepare and share the produce they grow. Parents and a teacher aide with agricultural expertise assist with the Kitchen Garden Project. An alliance with the Tully Sugar Refinery assists with donations of mulch and fertiliser for the project.



The school is supported by an active and interested Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

The P&C raise funds to support school programs and initiatives. Money raised through events including the Book Fair, raffles, a tuckshop service that operates one day per week and the 'Big Night Out' school fair are donated to the school to enhance student learning opportunities.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Maintain the focus on a narrow and sharp EIA through the allocation of time for staff to build their skills in the expected school strategies.

Develop strategies to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of school programs and initiatives in producing the desired improvements in student learning outcomes, including establishing short and long-term targets and timelines for improvement.

Maintain the practice of data interrogation through PLCs to assist all staff in understanding how systemic and school-based achievement data generates starting points for learning and supports the continuous improvement of individual student outcomes.

Enhance regular curriculum planning meetings for the teaching team to consider consistent practices for curriculum development, data analysis and classroom pedagogical strategies.

Formalise current observation and feedback processes to ensure opportunities are available to every staff member with a planned schedule to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of teaching practice on student learning and to use these findings to make adjustments.