

Freshwater 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 Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Freshwater State School** from **21 to 23 April 2021**.

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

1.1 Review team

Valerie Hadgelias	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Janet Tucker	Peer reviewer
Jo Diessel	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Corkill St, Freshwater	
Education region:	Far North Queensland Region	
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6	
Enrolment:	669	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	8.1 per cent	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	2.2 per cent
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	9.2 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1061	
Year principal appointed:	May 2018	



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, two deputy principals, Head of Department (HOD), Information Technology (IT) coordinator, Business Manager (BM), 32 teachers, two administration officers, seven teacher aides, 26 parents, 39 students, guidance officer, tuckshop convenor and Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) coordinator.

Community and business groups:

- Jamie Gosling Football Academy, Young Company Drama Group and Freshwater First Grammar Early Education Centre.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Redlynch State College principal.

Government and departmental representatives:

- State Member for Barron River and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2021	Strategic Plan 2018-2021
Investing for Success 2021	School Opinion Survey
OneSchool	School Data Profile (Semester 1 2020)
Assessment for Learning Schedule	School budget overview
School improvement targets	Curriculum planning documents
Student Code of Conduct	Student Data Snapshots
Headline Indicators (October 2020 release)	School newsletters and website



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

Staff, students, and parents describe a strong sense of belonging and pride in the school.

The tone of the school and classrooms is welcoming, ordered, calm and reflects a school-wide commitment to purposeful, successful learning. A happy, optimistic ambience is apparent. High levels of trust are spoken of consistently by teachers, parents, and community partners. Parents speak highly of the leadership team and members of staff. All members of staff display a high level of commitment to the wellbeing and academic achievement of all students. Consistent efforts are made to engage students in the daily life of the school and to provide them with a strong sense of belonging. A strong collegial culture amongst teachers and school leaders is apparent. Staff members describe the collegial support they receive from each other, and within their year level and school teams. Teachers speak positively of the directions being implemented and the joy of working within the school.

The school team is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is safe, respectful, tolerant, and inclusive.

A revised Student Code of Conduct for implementation in 2021-2024 has been developed. Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) underpins the multi-tiered system of support for behaviour management within the school. Staff speak positively of the rebranding and work of the PBL team. A comprehensive PBL staff handbook has been introduced to support the school's revised Student Code of Conduct and revamped behaviour expectations. PBL implementation is supported through a range of strategies such as training in Essential Skills for Classroom Management (ESCM), Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA), classroom profiling and ongoing monitoring and analysis of behaviour data across the school. Staff and parents speak positively of student behaviour.

The school team is committed to improving learning outcomes for all students.

Leaders describe their focus on school improvement and their work with staff members and the wider community to support every student to succeed. The strong commitment to driving change in a systematic framework is demonstrated by the school's consistent use of the inquiry cycle process to support investigation of current practice and preferred futures. The principal appreciates the importance of lines of sight and the need for rigorous practices to drive a strong performance agenda and guide implementation of all school priorities. The leadership team expresses a commitment to providing clarity in relation to the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) with a sharp focus on one or two prioritised initiatives. Leaders recognise the need to ensure a greater level of precision in planning the implementation of improvement priorities and regular monitoring by school leaders to promote high levels of consistent practice.



School leaders take personal and collective responsibility for improving student learning and understand the importance of developing staff into an expert teaching team.

The principal and other school leaders lead and model professional learning within the school. A clear expectation exists that all teachers will be highly committed to the continuous improvement of their own teaching and be focused on the development of knowledge and skills to improve student learning. Leaders have worked hard to develop a culture of collaboration and teamwork. In line with the leadership team's commitment to building a school-wide self-reflective culture focused on improvement, the principal recognises the importance of ensuring an effective and united executive leadership team exists. The principal supports the further strengthening of the executive leadership team's capability in setting the strategic direction of the school and driving improvement.

The school recognises that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning.

The school introduced Explicit Instruction (EI) as its pedagogical framework several years ago. School leaders indicate that they are in a process of shifting the school's pedagogical focus away from an EI model and the Freshwater State School Lesson Design. Leaders articulate that the development of a school-wide approach to pedagogy is a priority to establish and communicate clear expectations for the use of effective teaching strategies throughout the school. Some teachers identify that their teaching colleagues and members of the leadership team provide support and guidance for their teaching. Some school leaders are regularly engaged in working with teachers to model, coach, observe and provide feedback in key areas regarding differentiation and implementation of priorities such as Teaching Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Skills (THRASS), and Early Start. A systematic process for Quality Assurance (QA) of signature school pedagogical practices is yet to be established.

The collection, analysis, and review of reliable data is viewed as essential in implementing the school improvement agenda.

An Assessment for Learning Schedule was developed in 2019 to outline for teachers the school-wide expectations for the collection, analysis, and utilisation of data. Understanding and knowledge of the expectations outlined in the schedule vary amongst teachers. A more detailed data plan that outlines a systemic approach to the collection, analysis, monitoring and use of data to inform teaching and learning is yet to be developed. Conversations within the teaching team are emerging to use data to inform the next steps in the teaching and learning process. Teachers articulate that some time is provided for data conversations regarding individual students within fortnightly year level and term curriculum meetings. Staff indicate they would welcome more formalised opportunities, in varying configurations, to discuss student achievement. A school-wide process for the in-depth and rigorous discussion of achievement data and strategies for continuous improvement to deepen teachers' data literacy skills is yet to be developed.



The school has prioritised the collaborative development of a coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery.

Priority has been given to developing the three levels of planning and implementation of a whole-school moderation process. Considerable professional learning was provided for teachers to build their understanding of the Australian Curriculum (AC) with the initial focus on English. Each year level now works in a team approach to ensure there is a shared understanding of the curriculum demands and that there is alignment within the curriculum delivery. A pre-moderation process across all year levels, with input from key stakeholders, has been adopted. Staff indicate that they appreciate the opportunities to engage in meaningful collaboration with colleagues. Some teachers articulate that they would appreciate further opportunities to extend curriculum collaboration across year levels to ensure greater continuity and vertical alignment. Teachers express that this work on curriculum planning has given them increased confidence in their delivery of the curriculum.

The leadership team and staff members are committed to an inclusive culture to maximise the engagement, learning and outcomes for the full range of students.

Since 2018 school leaders have collaboratively developed with staff, a model of inclusive education that is underpinned by an ethos of valuing diversity. The current model embraces class teachers and support teachers planning and teaching with each other by using a co-plan, co-design, co-teach and co-reflect approach. Support service delivery for students with diverse learning needs, and those with disability, incorporates a team approach with Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN) and Special Education Program (SEP) teachers coordinating within the student support services team. This model champions students' access, participation, and engagement in the curriculum alongside their peers, and aims to build an inclusive culture of shared values amongst staff that removes barriers and supports inclusion.

Parents speak highly of staff members and the educational experiences they provide for their child.

Parents view the school as a pivotal part of the community and they welcome opportunities to engage with the school either through sporting and cultural events or in opportunities to volunteer. They express that the relationship with their child's teacher is positive and open, and there is good communication between them and the school. Parents are made to feel welcome, and express the belief that they have a voice in the school. A strong relationship exists between the school and the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C). The school is held in high regard by the local community for its high level of commitment to the education and wellbeing of students. Positive and productive community partnerships are established with local schools, early education centres and other organisations to extend opportunities for student learning and outcomes. Strengthening transitions from Kindergarten to Prep is a priority for the leadership team. In 2020 the school engaged in a regional Kindergarten to Year 2 Community of Practice (CoP) project. Leaders articulate that the school was nominated as a regional beacon school for their work in this area.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Ensure that rigour and precision underpin the implementation of each improvement agenda through the development of detailed action plans that include targets, timelines, accountabilities, monitoring and QA processes.

Explore and engage with opportunities external to the school to support mentoring and coaching arrangements for executive leaders.

Collaboratively explore current evidence-based high-yield pedagogical practices and develop an agreed pedagogical approach that includes processes for observation and feedback, and QA.

Develop and formalise whole-school systematic data processes and protocols; and provide opportunities for teams of teachers to have regular and rigorous data discussions to inform practice.

Explore opportunities to extend curriculum collaboration across year levels to ensure greater continuity and vertical alignment.