



# School Improvement Unit Report

## Clifton State High School Executive Summary



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at **Clifton State High School** from **12 to 14 September 2016** 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

<b>Location:</b>	East St, Clifton
<b>Education region:</b>	Darling Downs South West Region
<b>The school opened in:</b>	1964
<b>Year levels:</b>	Years 7–12
<b>Current school enrolment:</b>	232
<b>Indigenous enrolments:</b>	9 per cent
<b>Students with disability enrolments:</b>	10.8 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	959
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2010
<b>Number of teachers:</b>	25.9 (full-time equivalent)
<b>Nearby schools:</b>	Clifton State School, Nobby State School, Greenmount State School, Back Plains State School, Pilton State School, Emu Creek State School, Leyburn State School, St Francis De Sales School
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	History Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, Equine Partnerships, Equine Vocational Education and Training (VET) Farrier, Free Farm, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Wattle Brae, Bruce Gilbert & Staff
<b>Unique school programs:</b>	Equine Program



### 1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of three 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 (ARD)
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff members, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Principal and one deputy principal
  - Three Heads of Department (HOD), Head of Special Education (HOSE), Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN) and master teacher
  - 23 teachers and four teacher aides
  - 116 students
  - Business Services Manager (BSM), three administration officers and four ancillary staff
  - Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) representative, tuckshop convenor, seven parents and five community partner representatives
  - Principal of partner primary schools
  - Councillor, Toowoomba Regional Council

### 1.4 Review team

Karyn Hart	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Alan Smith	Peer reviewer
John Wessel	External reviewer



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

- The school team is committed to the implementation of school practices that improve on the current levels of student performance.

Staff members, students and parents state that strong relational leadership, clear direction, collaborative processes and data-based decision making are the key drivers in the improvement agenda. There is general awareness amongst staff members of some of the explicit improvement measures, particularly as they pertain to their classes.

- *'Everyone Moves up One'* is a key whole-school document that enables teachers to track and monitor individual student progress against various class and school assessment tools.

Students can articulate the importance of attendance and *'Everyone Moves up One'* to achievement. Teachers indicate they use this document as a recording tool to determine the starting point to inform future teacher planning and pedagogy.

- The school is currently enacting a range of strategies to communicate the importance of and improve the rate of student attendance.

Official attendance rates in 2015 and 2014 were 88.5 per cent and 88.9 per cent respectively. The school is currently enacting a range of strategies to communicate the importance of, and improve the rate of, student attendance. A distinct improvement in attendance data is not yet established.

- Teachers are experts in their field and demonstrate confidence in their teaching, with a desire to improve teaching practice.

Personal development plans are developed for all teachers. These form the basis of ongoing professional dialogue. A Professional Development Plan (PDP) is developed. How this aligns to the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) is as yet unclear.

- A highly, individualised curriculum is implemented to support Special Education Program (SEP) students.

Teachers plan individual curriculum plans (ICP) collaboratively with the relevant case manager through leadership processes coordinated by the Head of Special Education (HOSES). The introduction of a teacher planning template to differentiate and adjust the assessment tasks to enable SEP students to engage in tasks more readily is exemplary of the quality, inclusive approaches to teaching and learning at the school.



- The school has identified writing as a whole-school improvement priority.

A range of initiatives are implemented to drive improvement in student performance in writing. Processes for monitoring of this initiative are as yet unclear and demonstration of growth and development in student learning is yet to be enacted.

- Teachers report they use a range of differentiation strategies to cater for the diversity.

The school pedagogical framework makes reference to intellectual rigour and student engagement as key drivers in catering for students requiring support in their learning, and those students requiring enrichment and extension. Teachers report favourable responses to the initiative on higher order thinking to raise student engagement in their learning.

- Teachers regularly provide detailed feedback to students as part of the drafting process.

Goals are set for students as part of the '*Everyone Moves Up One*' process. In most instances, students are unable to articulate what actions they can take to make further learning progress to achieve their goals.

- A strong community focus with reciprocal support is evident.

The school's partnerships are sustainable and have become an accepted part of the culture of the school community and partner organisations. The range of community partnerships and examples of community support, large and small, is extensive.

## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Revisit the EIA and determine the priorities and timelines based on a thorough and collaborative investigation of the school data, including student engagement.
- Consolidate and embed the work undertaken with '*Everyone Moves Up One*' and the junior secondary data summary sheets.
- Review and refine the strategies presently being used to monitor student attendance for the purpose of providing more support and interventions where needed.
- Strengthen the school-wide professional learning plan with clear links to the school's EIA.
- Develop a strategic school-wide approach to improving writing outcomes across the school.



- Embed higher order thinking teaching strategies to ensure they are highly engaging and challenging experiences for all students including the high achieving students.
- Develop a whole-school approach for providing student feedback, setting goals and actions for improvement.