

Geebung Special School

Executive Summary





Acknowledgment of Country

The Department of Education acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands from across Queensland. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia's cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.





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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 **Geebung Special School** from **25 to 30 July 2019**.

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

1.1 Review team

Laurelle Allen	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Susan Christensen	Peer reviewer
Judith Hanke	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Beau Vista Street, Geebung
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
Year opened:	1979 as R.H. Kirkley Education Centre School, renamed R.H. Kirkley Special School and then became Geebung Special School in 1986
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	107 plus Early Childhood Development Program (ECDP)
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	7 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	100 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1031
Year principal appointed:	2017
Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):	26.6 plus 1.4 – ECDP
Significant partner schools:	Aspley Special School, Geebung State School, Kedron State School, Walker Schools Coalition
Significant community partnerships:	University of Queensland (UQ), Teacher Education Centre of Excellence: Special Education (TECESE) program, Occupational therapist In Sync Kids Therapy – Zones for Learning, Geebung Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL), Balanced Literacy, Process Based Learning – Southport Special School
Significant school programs:	Walker Learning/Geebung Investigations, Reading Dog, St Joseph's Nudgee College

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, two deputy principals, four coaches, 29 teachers including two ECDP teachers, Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Head of Curriculum (HOC), guidance officer, two school registered nurses, four therapists, six teacher aides, parent liaison, 26 parents and 33 students.

Community and business groups:

- Reading Dog volunteer and private therapist.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Acting principal of Aspley Special School and executive coach.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Member for Aspley and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2019	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2019
Investing for Success 2019	Strategic Plan 2016-2019
Headline Indicators (April 2019 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2019)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning plan 2019	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	School differentiation plan or flowchart
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
School data plan	School newsletters and website
School Opinion Survey	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
School Annual Report 2018	Investing for Success agreement 2019
Geebung Capability Suite 2019	Roles and Responsibilities 2019
School-based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	Geebung Special School Teaching & Learning Handbook 2019

2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

A school-wide commitment to successful learning is apparent through the tone, artefacts and appearance of the school.

The school works to create and sustain an attractive and stimulating physical environment that is responsive to the needs of the student population. The expansive grounds and gardens are well maintained and contribute to the overall aesthetic and welcoming nature of the school.

The school is strategically strengthening the capability of the educational team.

The leadership team is united in their commitment to improving outcomes for all students through researched and data-informed systems and pedagogies that support maximum student engagement in learning. High quality teachers with diverse skills and knowledge have been attracted and recruited. Teacher interest and skill have been utilised to best support an engaging and highly differentiated teaching program. High achieving graduate teachers have been recruited through a partnership with Teacher Education Centre of Excellence: Special Education (TECESE).

The school has a strong focus on planning to promote student engagement.

The school provides a range of learning experiences that are accessible, engaging and challenging for students including Geebung Investigations, Gymzoonasium, swimming, hydrotherapy, music, bike education and curriculum-based excursions. School curriculum expectations are communicated to teachers through the school's teaching and learning handbook for 2019. This document identifies the curriculum areas taught, assessed and reported upon as communication, English including the literacy extended general capabilities, mathematics including the numeracy extended general capabilities, Health and Physical Education (HPE), and science. In Semester 2, 2019 science is replaced by Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) in the area of geography. A plan to introduce the remaining learning areas of the Australian Curriculum (AC) is yet to be developed.

The school has a clear expectation for continuous improvement in teaching with a focus on agreed pedagogies.

School documents place priority on developing the capability of school leaders and the teaching team through intentional collaboration, an effective and differentiated coaching program, and the teacher Annual Performance Review (APR) process. Teachers and teacher aides have a mutual appreciation of the roles and expertise within their teams. Teacher aides are yet to participate in an APR process to build their capability to support teachers in the teaching and learning sequence. Teachers have high levels of confidence in the teaching of chosen research-based pedagogies and demonstrate a desire to expand their knowledge in the area of curriculum planning, delivery, assessment and reporting using the AC.



A range of diagnostic literacy assessments is detailed for students who are emergent, transitional or conventional literacy learners.

Teachers express satisfaction regarding having a staggered data collection schedule that provides them with sufficient time to gather the required pieces of evidence. In consultation with the Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) the school has developed and implemented a communication data profile for each student. This baseline data is collected to inform selection of every student's Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and to monitor progress towards communicative competence. Teacher capability to utilise this data to inform the next steps for student learning varies across the school.

Teachers identify core business as school-wide student-centred approaches that require them to know and engage their students through highly differentiated pedagogies.

Leaders acknowledge that changes in membership of the leadership team create opportunities to review the structures, roles and responsibilities to support the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). The school has developed a capability suite that includes an emerging coaching and mentoring model that supports distributive leadership, valuing and utilising high levels of teacher pedagogical expertise within the school. Professional Learning Communities (PLC) and external school networks facilitate the development of an expert teaching team that supports the EIA. Teachers are appreciative of the leaders' focus on the school priorities of student engagement and capability development.

Staff members are supportive of the communication process initiated at the school.

They express a desire for this to continue as a focus for school operations. Conversations with staff members indicate an appreciation for the improved communication practices, transparent decision-making processes and consistency in interactions with each other implemented in 2019.

The school has a number of flexible curriculum delivery arrangements including access to specialised pedagogical approaches and strategic use of indoor and outdoor learning spaces.

Facilities are well maintained and the school presents as an attractive, inviting and colourful learning environment with expansive outdoor learning areas, an indoor heated pool, sensory garden, purpose-built bike riding track, library and multiple playground spaces. The school has a fully equipped gymnasium that has been designed to support students' sensory and self-regulation needs.

The school's partnerships are successfully implemented, strategically resourced, and sustainable.

Anecdotal evidence indicates that the range of partnerships with local businesses and organisations are having their intended impact of improving learning outcomes for students at the school and nearby schools including Aspley Special School.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Develop, implement and monitor the whole-school curriculum, assessment and reporting plan, with three levels of planning as described by the P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework (P-12 CARF).

Build teacher capability and knowledge in planning, delivery, assessment and reporting of the AC as it pertains to the wide range of student needs.

Build teacher data literacy skills and embed processes for teachers to regularly communicate with each other regarding student achievement data, relating to the effectiveness of teaching practice and the collective responsibility for student improvement.

Review and adjust roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of leaders to reflect the changing skill sets of the team to support achievement of school priorities.

Collaboratively develop, implement and monitor strategies to enhance communication practices, improve staff morale and promote wellbeing.