

# Aspley 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 **Aspley Special School** from **3 to 5 September 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)
Darren Greenway	Peer reviewer
Jim Horton	External reviewer



## 1.2 School context

<b>Location:</b>	Zillmere Road, Aspley
<b>Education region:</b>	Metropolitan Region
<b>Year opened:</b>	1974
<b>Year levels:</b>	Year 7 to Year 12
<b>Enrolment:</b>	103
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	4 per cent
<b>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</b>	100 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	1034
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2018
<b>Day 8 staffing teacher full-time equivalent (FTE):</b>	45.05 – 26.35 teaching and 18.7 support staff, or 39.3 staffing units
<b>Significant partner schools:</b>	Geebung Special School, Aspley State High School, Aspley East State School and Craigslea State School
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	Geebung-Zillmere Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL), Aspley Orchid Society, Ridley Road Community Men's Shed, Bunnings Warehouse, Townsend Buses, Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) and vacation care, Technical and Further Education (TAFE), work experience providers, CPL (Choice, Passion, Life) including Screech Arts theatre school, Post-school providers, post-school employment agencies and Parent to Parent
<b>Significant school programs:</b>	LASER, Kingfisher Recycling Centre, manual arts, home economics, hospitality, Frothee Coffee Shoppee, horticulture, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden (SAKG), gym, pool, bike riding and work experience



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, deputy principal, two Heads of Curriculum (HOC), 20 teachers, four teacher aides, 29 students, four therapists, Business Manager (BM), administration officer, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, six parents, one past student and current grounds employee.

Community and business groups:

- Coordinator of Kingfisher Recycling Centre, Coordinator of YMCA OSHC and owner/manager of Townsend Buses

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of Geebung Special School and LASER Behaviour Program teacher.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.



## 1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2019	Strategic Plan 2016-2019
Investing for Success 2019	2019 Snapshot
Headline Indicators (April 2019 release)	EIA infographic posters
School data profile ( Semester 1, 2019)	Inquiry Planners
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning framework 2019	Parent and community engagement plan
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
School Opinion Survey	Wellbeing action plan 2019 – 2020
School newsletters and website	Student handover data 2019
Staff handbook	Roles and Responsibilities 2017
Staff and class timetables	Have a chat with me / Who am I placemat
Reporting Policies and Guidelines 2019	Instructional reading routines and practices
Volunteer handbook	Senior school framework
Senior school curriculum tracking tool	Path plan
Sample Curriculum unit plans	Parent handbook
Sample Individual Curriculum Plans	Work experience placement documents
Sample Senior Education & Training Plans	Curriculum, Assessment & Reporting Plan (CARP)
Transition Focused Education Action Plan 2017 – 2018	Communication & Literacy Action Plan 2017 – 2018
Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students	Mentoring beginning teachers – mentoring handbook
PBL framework	PBL action plan 2019



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

**The school has a strong student-centred focus that promotes strategies to enhance staff member knowledge of the learners and provision of differentiated teaching that best meets the needs of their diverse learners.**

Staff and leaders have a shared belief that all students can learn and be successful. This belief underpins all work within the school including capability development. The school tone reflects a commitment by all staff members to the motto *'Learning for Life'*. Staff members confidently articulate that all students are capable of learning and that when provided with appropriate learning opportunities and support students are motivated and successful.

**The school has a culture that values and promotes positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents.**

Leaders identify the positive relationship between staff and students as key to the successful teaching and learning process. Teachers and teacher aides acknowledge the reciprocal nature of their working relationship and value the essential professional collaboration in classrooms. Parents observe the support and care staff have for their child and for each other. Parents describe feeling valued as significant partners in their child's education and highly value the priority that the school places on regular communication.

**The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) lists communication and literacy, staff capacity and wellbeing and post-school pathways as focus areas for improvement.**

The ambitious AIP is broad in nature with actions, timelines and responsible officers identified. Leaders describe focused work and progress toward achievement of many of the intended actions, and agree that some of the planned strategies are large and complex in nature and are yet to be actioned.

**Leaders indicate that Quality Assurance (QA) and teacher support exists for curriculum planning, development of Individual Curriculum Plans (ICP) and end of semester reporting.**

Teachers praise the instructional leadership, support and clear expectations provided by two Heads of Curriculum (HOC) and appreciate that there is a HOC assigned specifically to support junior and senior secondary cohorts. Teachers describe a desire to deliver a curriculum that meets the diverse learning needs of their students within the context of the Australian Curriculum (AC) and Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA). School leaders acknowledge that processes to consistently monitor the implementation of the intended curriculum are yet to be established.





**Staff members recognise that student communication is a priority across the school and acknowledge that quality of life and full engagement in future post-school pathways is dependent on access to effective communication strategies.**

Leaders and Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) have collaboratively developed a 'Have a Chat with Me' placemat to articulate individual strategies for communication with all students. Parents are highly appreciative and comment that these documents demonstrate that staff know their students and are making the adjustments necessary to provide students with opportunities to engage in the varying uses of language.

**School leaders express the belief that the quality and consistency of teaching are the most significant factors in improving student outcomes.**

Staff members appreciate that their skills, talents and interests are acknowledged by leaders and that they are provided with opportunities to develop and utilise their skills to add value to teaching and learning. Teachers identify the benefits of informal collaboration to plan or cooperatively teach. Some express a desire for formalised and scheduled opportunities to collaborate with colleagues for planning, cooperative teaching, and peer observations to improve their own practice.

**A whole-school curriculum, assessment, reporting with data plan is published and used to inform teacher practice.**

Staff members identify an increasing use of data to develop an understanding of their learners. Leaders and teachers identify an emerging process of data conversations to inform planning and delivery of the curriculum. Leaders articulate the benefits of building teacher capability in data literacy. Teachers express varied levels of confidence and competence in collecting, analysing and utilising data to inform teaching practice.

**School leaders identify that successful implementation of the curriculum is dependent on effective and highly motivating strategies that are appropriate for individual students.**

School leaders are committed to supporting the capability of teachers to implement the identified signature pedagogical practices of the school. Teachers report a philosophy of self-improvement and express a desire for increased opportunities for professional feedback regarding their practice. Collaboratively developed processes for coaching, observation and feedback are yet to be developed and implemented consistently across the school.

**The school is held in very high regard by parents and the wider community.**

Leaders describe partnerships with parents, other schools, community organisations, local businesses and industries, and tertiary institutions, for the purpose of improving outcomes for students. These partnerships are established strategically to help address student needs and to extend the school's capability to deliver diverse educational opportunities and to enhance student wellbeing.



**The school is committed to providing opportunities that promote successful transition for all students to productive post-school options.**

Staff describe the wide range of senior schooling and work placement options developed to align with student Planning Alternate Tomorrows with Hope (PATH) plans post-school aspirational goals. Year 12 students articulate their own PATH plan goals and confidently speak of future plans supported by school transition programs. Parents identify feeling positive about their child's future due to the strong post-school pathways focus provided by the school. Past students articulate the contribution the school has made in building their confidence and skills to engage successfully in post-school life.



## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Refine and narrow the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) to embed identified priorities with regular monitoring and review for effectiveness and alignment to student need.

Collaboratively develop and implement effective processes to quality assure the enactment of the intended curriculum in all classrooms.

Build processes that provide regular opportunities for teachers to intentionally collaborate, observe, and share consistent approaches that drive effective teaching and learning in all classrooms.

Develop processes for scheduled individual and collaborative data conversations between leaders and teachers to identify improvement and monitoring of student progress.

Collaboratively develop a formalised observation and feedback process led by school leaders to assist teachers to develop their practice.