

TEACHING AND LEARNING AUDIT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – GOWRIE SS

DATE OF AUDIT: 29 APRIL 2014



Background:

Gowrie SS is located in a quiet rural setting on the Darling Downs, approximately 15 kilometres from Toowoomba. The school has a current enrolment of 190 students in Years Prep - 7. The Principal, Mr David Kirk, was appointed in January 2009.

Commendations:

- Since the previous Teaching and Learning Audit there has been significant progress made in the domains; An Explicit Improvement Agenda, Analysis and Discussion of Data, Targeted Use of School Resources, An Expert Teaching Team, Systematic Curriculum Delivery, Differentiated Classroom Learning and Effective Teaching Practice.
- The explicit improvement agenda, with a focus on writing, numeracy and the consolidation of Explicit Instruction, has been communicated to staff members and parents and is articulated in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP). Staff Performance and Professional Development Plans also highlight this improvement agenda as focus areas for professional learning.
- A whole school reading plan has been developed using the *Seven Habits of Reading* and this has been effectively implemented across all year levels. The explicit teaching of writing is currently being progressed throughout the school. Teachers, teacher aides and parent helpers support students in guided reading and the explicit teaching of comprehension strategies. Reading, spelling and numeracy data has shown that students are making progress towards school targets.
- The school's *Special Needs Committee* cater for the individual learning and social needs of all students. This team coordinates and assists teachers to effectively use data, organise student groupings, differentiate extension and support programs, maximise the resources available and continue to realign class programs to meet student needs.
- Teachers are differentiating spelling lists, reading, writing tasks and mathematics for the range of students in their classes.
- The introduction of 50 day data gathering, as well as targeted reading groups, have supported the explicit teaching of numeracy and literacy and improved student outcomes are evident.
- The creation of senior classes and the creative use of groupings and specialist lessons are preparing Years 6 and 7 students for the transition to Junior Secondary.

Affirmations:

- Teachers have implemented Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units in English, mathematics, science, history and geography and have reflected on how best to address the curriculum requirements of multi-age and ability classes.
- The pedagogical framework which has been collaboratively developed provides a clear direction for the school around the *Four Frames of; Prior Learning, Interconnected, Think about Thinking and Learning in Community*.
- The school's Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS) has recently been reviewed and approved by the school community. Teachers and parents actively participated in the review and development of the new plan.
- A snapshot of NAPLAN results has been summarised by the Principal and shared with teachers. Class targets have been set and aligned to the region's targets in Reading, writing, spelling and numeracy.

Recommendations:

- Continue to refine the whole school's curriculum plan and pedagogical framework. Ensure clarity about what students are expected to learn and be able to do, high expectations of every student's learning, explicit teaching of skills and content, individualised attention as required, and timely feedback to guide student actions, are key elements of the school's push for improved teaching and learning.
- Provide professional development aimed at revising staff members' data literacy skills. Use literacy and numeracy data to identify gaps in student learning, to monitor improvement over time and to realign teaching and learning practices.
- Support and encourage teachers to cater for individual differences by offering multiple means of representation, engagement and expression. Include this in planning documents.
- Ensure that the enacted curriculum remains a focus for discussion among, and collaboration between teachers.
- Continue to develop a strong collegial and self-reflective culture in which teachers invite the Principal and colleagues to observe their teaching, discuss their work with them and provide feedback and progress this to include coaching and modelling to enhance teaching practice.