

# Merrimac 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 School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Merrimac State School** from **27 to 29 August 2018**.

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 consider 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

Rob Van den Heuvel	Internal reviewer SIU (review chair)
Ann Campbell	Peer reviewer
Brad Francis	External reviewer



## 1.2 School context

<b>Location:</b>	Boowaggan Road, Merrimac
<b>Education region:</b>	South East Region
<b>Year opened:</b>	1917
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 6
<b>Enrolment:</b>	792
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	4.3 per cent
<b>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</b>	4.9 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	1022
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	1994
<b>Full-time equivalent staff:</b>	53 - teaching 20.1 - non-teaching
<b>Significant partner schools:</b>	Merrimac State High School, Mid-Coast Community of Schools – Broadbeach State School, Burleigh Heads State School, Caningeraba State School, Merrimac State High School, Miami State School, Miami State High School, Merrimac State School Katsuragi Elementary School
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	Hillview House Aged Care Facility – Special Education Program (SEP) involvement, Kobe Rotary Club, Scripture Union - chaplaincy program, Gold Coast Reality (Tina Nenadic) - parent/fitness program and school support, Robina Lions Club - school council and school support, Worongary Coles - breakfast/fitness program support, Mudgeeraba Light Horse Museum (ANZAC Day), Griffith University
<b>Significant school programs:</b>	Independent Public School (IPS), Accredited International School Program (ISP), Prep to Year 6 Languages Program, QTech School, Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow School, Sister School Program - since 2001, KidsMatter, Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), chaplaincy program.



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, three deputy principals, Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Head of Curriculum (HOC), Business Manager (BM), guidance officer, school engagement officer, master teacher, 29 classroom teachers, Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) coach, student support officer, music teacher, Japanese language teacher, Health and Physical Education (HPE) teacher, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) team representative, two administration officers, ancillary staff representative, facilities officer, ICT teacher, Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), three special education teachers, 15 teacher aides, 35 parents, 34 student leaders including student council, extracurricular and whole school student leaders and seven student class captains.

Community and business groups:

- School council chair, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and operations manager, Hillview House Aged Care representative, Nenadic business representative and Robina Lions Club representative.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of Merrimac State High School and South East Education Region Languages Champion.

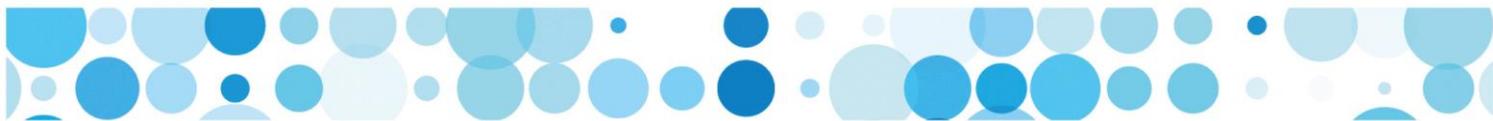
Government and departmental representatives:

- Councillor for City of Gold Coast Division 8, State Member for Mudgeeraba and ARD.



## 1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2018	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2018
Investing for Success 2018	Strategic Plan 2015-2018
Headline Indicators (Term 1, 2018)	School Data Profile (Semester 1, 2018)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Professional learning plan 2018	Curriculum planning documents
School improvement targets	School differentiation documents
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
School data plan	School newsletters and website
Responsible Behaviour Plan	School Opinion Survey
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	Sister School documentation



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

**The school places a high priority on wellbeing and positive relationships for students, staff and parents.**

The school projects a positive culture with a caring, orderly learning environment and respectful relationships between staff members, students and community members. All stakeholders comment upon the calm and friendly environment and express great pride in the school, its efforts and achievements. Staff members and students display a positive approach to all facets of the school and staff members address the diverse developmental and learning needs of students. The school views parents, families and community members as important partners in the life of the school. Parents play a role in the school and are directly involved in their child's education.

**The school has a culture of continuous professional improvement through personalised learning and highly effective training practices.**

The school is committed to developing a culture of professional improvement through provision of systemic training, school Professional Development (PD) and personalised learning. All staff have a performance plan and teachers participate in the Annual Teacher Review (ATR) process each term with their supervisor. These plans outline the learning needs, strategies, outcomes and review processes for teacher learning and development. Innovative use of release time allows teachers to participate in this process through additional Non-Contact Time (NCT).

**School leaders' presence, support and engagement in developing highly effective teaching practices are valued by staff members.**

School leaders commit to highly effective teaching practices. This commitment is reflected by the additional resources and implementation of inquiry cycles to analyse effectiveness. Teachers work with a range of school leaders, targeting the development of highly effective teaching practices. Teachers identify school leaders as being highly visible and involved in teaching and learning practices occurring within the school. Parents report that school leaders work diligently with families as partners in student learning.

**Teachers are highly confident using OneSchool class dashboard.**

Teachers create intervention groups for English and mathematics each term using their collected data. Highly effective practice is apparent across all year levels in the use of class dashboard for differentiation tracking. Teachers identify groups with goals and key teaching strategies. Adjustments are made to class dashboard when further data is available. School leaders and teachers articulate that the use of OneSchool and class dashboard is a major driver in tracking and monitoring intervention for agreed targeted areas.



**The school's improvement agenda is actioned with high levels of organisation, extensive documentation, multiple strategies and well-established routines.**

Improvement agenda expectations, roles and tasks are widely published with roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and key tasks readily available. Staff identify the current improvement agenda of reading as a core teaching and learning priority. Staff understand personal accountabilities for key practices linked to the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA). School leaders articulate further instructional leadership actions across sectors and programs will strengthen alignment of work linked to the improvement agenda.

**The school's pedagogical framework identifies quality teaching, student engagement, personalised learning pathways, evidence of learning and curriculum intent as the dimensions supporting improved learning outcomes.**

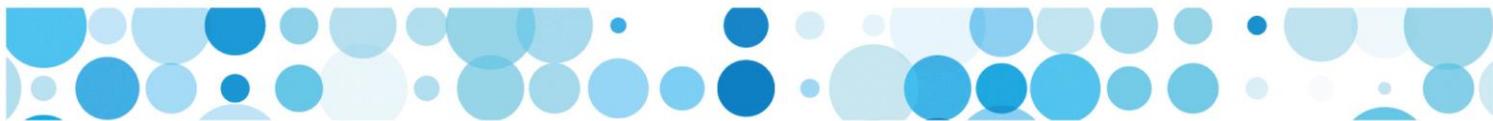
Teachers are aware of the pedagogical framework through key documents and prior PD. Teachers provide a range of responses regarding how the framework influences daily classroom practices. Some teachers articulate impacts by addressing the five Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (DoTL). Other teachers describe the agreed school-wide pedagogies including reciprocal reading, reading fluency, Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI) and explicit teaching. School leaders acknowledge the value of revisiting the pedagogical framework with staff to enhance clarity and common understanding.

**The school utilises a clearly documented school-wide assessment and internal monitoring schedule.**

The plan identifies assessments, timelines, accountable officers and numerical benchmarks for an array of diagnostic assessment tools and screeners. These include a range of tools such as Early Start, PM Benchmark, sight word tests, PROBE and National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). Teachers articulate a range of ways that this data is utilised to adjust teaching programs and groupings in class. Teachers report reviewing NAPLAN results each year and working with NAPLAN pre-tests in targeted year levels. Some staff identify NAPLAN writing data as requiring attention and being a potential improvement agenda in the future.

**There is a high level of commitment and enthusiasm from all staff members to improve student learning outcomes through developing staff capability.**

The coaching cycle, observation and feedback processes are established across the school and form an important part of the instructional leadership team's current work. Instructional leadership processes are supported by staff and have been developed slowly and purposefully to promote trust and collegial support as the foundation of this model. The leadership team articulates a commitment to build on these processes further to support teacher capability that is directly linked to improved student learning outcomes.



**The school's highly valued teaching program for languages and partnership with Katsuragi School in Japan provide global learning outcomes for students.**

The school has developed an exchange program with a Japanese sister school on the main Japanese island of Honshu. The partnership commenced in 2001 and includes highly successful homestay programs for students from the two schools. Quality curriculum and highly effective pedagogical practices for the teaching of the Japanese language are apparent across Prep to Year 6. The school is recognised as a leader in the effective teaching and learning practices for languages with schools from the region and other parts of the state visiting the school. The success of the program continues with strong administrative support, widespread staff commitment, ongoing partnerships, highly effective language teachers and ongoing support from the two school communities.



## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Refine the implementation of the improvement agenda through the alignment of explicit instructional leadership actions across each sector of the school.

Revisit the pedagogical framework to ensure all staff have a consistent interpretation for agreed practices and their relationship to teaching and learning.

Continue to collaboratively review school-wide and systemic data to inform and adjust the EIA.

Maintain the coaching cycle to embed continuous improvement of teacher capability with a focus upon student learning outcomes.