

Sunshine Coast Environmental Education Centre

Executive Summary





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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Sunshine Coast Environmental Education Centre** from **8 to 10 June 2020**.

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

1.1 Review team

Sue Gibson	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Mark Cridland	Peer reviewer
Anthony Palmer	Internal reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Sports Road, Bli Bli	
Education region:	North Coast Region	
Year levels:	Prep to Year 12	
Enrolment:	40 per cent residential programs 60 per cent day programs	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	n/a	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	n/a
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	n/a
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	n/a	
Year principal appointed:	2009	



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, Head of Curriculum (HOC), four teachers, Unit Support Officer (USO), three Business Managers (BM), teacher aide, cleaner and cook.

Community and business groups:

- Buderim Historical Society Committee representative.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- North Arm State School deputy principal, Coolum State School principal, deputy principal, teacher and five students, Bli Bli State School principal and HOC, Redcliffe State High School teacher, two teachers Wavell State High School, Nambour State College teacher, Mountain Creek State High School Head of Department (HOD), Eight Miles Plains State School teacher and North Arm State School teacher.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Sunshine Coast Council Environmental Visitor Centre manager and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2020	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2017-2020
Investing for Success 2020	Strategic Plan 2017-2020
Headline Indicators (May 2020 release)	Centre budget overview
Professional learning plan 2020	Curriculum planning documents
Centre improvement targets	Centre Facebook
Centre pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
Centre data plan	Centre website
School Opinion Survey	Centre edStudio
Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students	Centre YouTube channel
Centre based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The centre has a strong collegial family culture based on high levels of trust, care and optimism.

The centre principal is driven by the belief that all people deserve to be respected, and models an authentic, calm, attentive and reflective leadership style. The whole team is united in the commitment to support every student to engage in and have success in learning by maintaining respectful relationships and providing safe, inclusive and challenging learning experiences. Individual differences are celebrated with high expectations on individuals to take responsibility for their own professional growth and work-life balance.

Visiting school leaders and teachers speak highly of the capacity of centre teachers and their level of professionalism.

Client school staff members identify the continual improvement in teacher practice and alignment of education programs to the Australian Curriculum (AC). Clients interviewed express that the centre teaching staff quickly build positive relationships with students, visiting teachers, school support staff members and parents. Client school teachers articulate appreciation for long-standing relationships with the centre, and value the willingness of the centre Head of Curriculum (HOC) and centre teachers to be flexible, adaptable and support the learning of students.

Staff members are united and committed to improving learning outcomes for all students.

Centre leaders hold high expectations regarding continuous improvement in teaching quality as key to every student learning successfully. The leadership team articulates the aspiration to have 'extraordinary' teachers developing the 'absolute best' teaching practices to deliver programs to client schools. An Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) and implementation plan that includes this aspiration are yet to be developed.

The leadership team and teaching staff members have worked steadfastly on strategies to collect authentic student learning data.

Professional Development (PD) in analysing and interpreting data has been provided by the centre leadership team. Centre leaders work with teaching staff members to view and analyse the data sets that have been collected, and are using data to build a culture of continuous self-evaluation and reflection in relation to teaching practice. Discussions regarding the right data sets to inform the aspiration to have extraordinary teachers developing the absolute best teaching practices are emerging.

Leaders and teaching staff members clearly and passionately articulate the centre's pedagogical approach and the focus on student-centred learning.

The centre leadership team maintains currency with research in pedagogical fields. Centre leaders describe the increased support for and focus on student-centred learning brought



about through the transition to the New Art and Science of Teaching (NASOT)¹. This transition is in the early stages of implementation. Staff members are committed to the implementation of the centre's pedagogical approach and discuss the benefits of its application across all programs offered. The relationship between the pedagogical framework and the pedagogical philosophy is frequently discussed. It is yet to be documented.

The principal clearly articulates a belief in the importance of developing and maintaining expert teaching staff members.

Teachers are highly committed to the centre and speak enthusiastically of contributing to a teaching community with a strong focus on student-centred learning. The principal expresses the commitment to continue to build the culture of continuous improvement to ultimately realise the aspiration of extraordinary teaching across the centre. The principal acknowledges the possible benefit of external relationships and networks to achieve this aspiration.

The key curriculum focus of the centre is delivering education through the ethos of care for self, others and the environment.

Student-centred learning is delivered across two main sites, the Bilai facility located in the Maroochy Wetlands Sanctuary and the Sunday Creek campsite located in the Conondale National Park. Programs are additionally delivered across a range of other settings throughout the local area. This provides the ability for the centre to deliver individualised, personalised and locally relevant curriculum.

Centre teachers are well recognised by client schools for their capacity to improve the wellbeing of students.

Centre staff members use Glasser's² Choice Theory philosophy to challenge and support students to take responsibility for their personal choices and actions. This philosophy and refined approach is credited for the highly successful Wilderness Trek program for students in state high schools and the Metropolitan Behaviour Support Services (MBSS) program for disengaged students from Year 3 to Year 5. Client school teachers and students articulate the powerful impact of the Wilderness Trek on student wellbeing.

¹ Marzano, R. J. (2017). *The new art and science of teaching*. Bloomington: Solution Tree Press.

² Glasser Institute. (2019). Glasser Institute for Choice Theory. Retrieved from <https://wglasser.com/>



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Develop a sharp and precise EIA to support the extraordinary teaching aspiration, including an implementation plan with clear targets and accompanying timelines.

Collaboratively investigate the relevance of existing and new data sets to inform the extraordinary teaching improvement agenda.

Deepen and strengthen teaching staff members' understanding of and relationship between the centre's pedagogical framework and pedagogical philosophy.

Explore possible relationships and networks to support staff and leadership development towards the aspiration of extraordinary teaching.