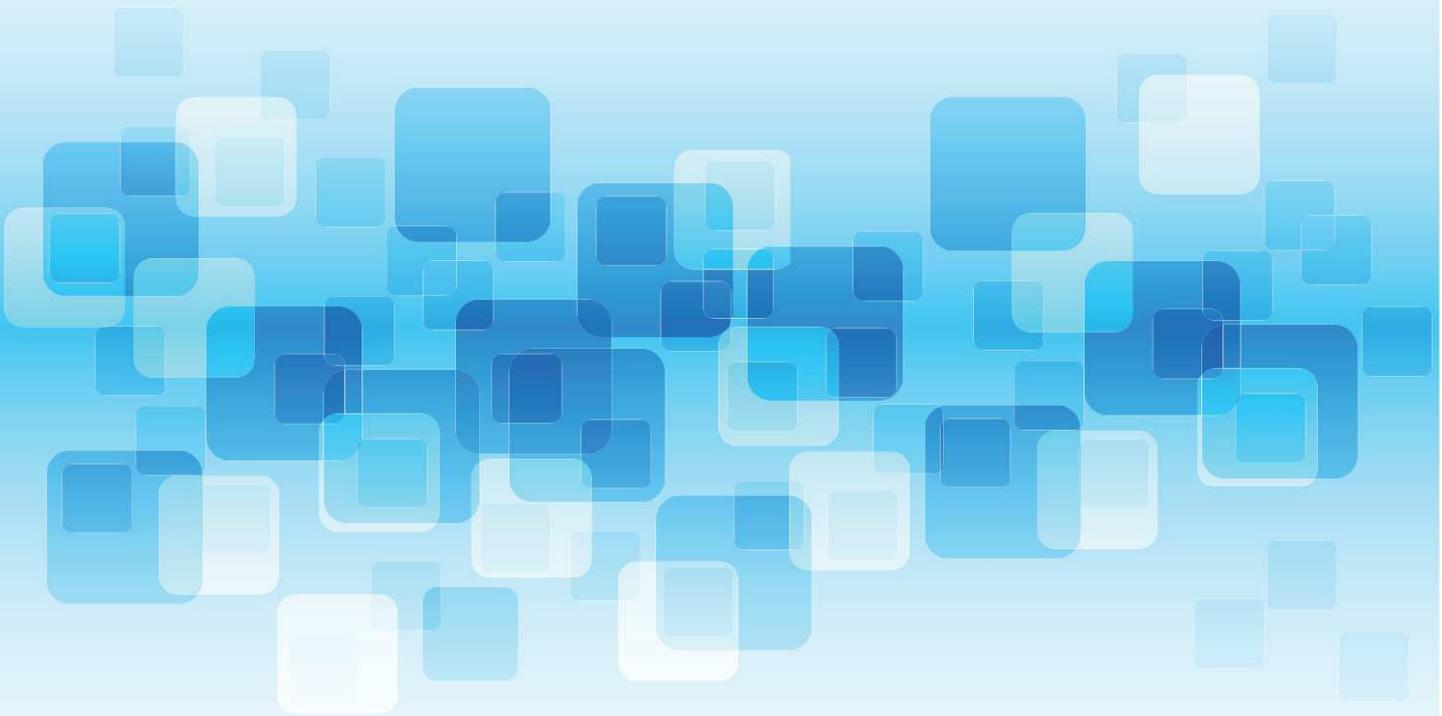




School Improvement Unit Report

Brassall State School Review Findings and Recommendations





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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Brassall State School from 3-6 November 2014. It provides an overview of the school's performance against nine domains and identifies improvement strategies.

The review and report were completed by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU). For more information about the SIU please visit the department's [website](#).

1.2 Context

ICSEA value:	927
Location:	The school is located in Ipswich, 30km west of Brisbane.
The school opened in:	1894
Year levels:	Prep to Year 7 (Prep to Year 6 in 2015)
Current school enrolment:	858 students
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolment:	16.3 per cent
Students with a disability enrolments:	5.5 per cent
Principal appointed:	2012
Teachers:	32 classroom teachers
Local schools:	Ipswich State High School, St Joseph's Primary, Ipswich Adventist School
Significant partnerships:	Local State Member – Shaun Coat; Local Councillor – Cheryl Bromage; L4L – Rose Callaghan; Role M – Eva deVries ; Explicit Instruction – Anita Archer and Charles Hughes
Unique programs:	Role M Explicit Instruction School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Recorder and Drum Bands



1.3 Review methodology

The methodology employed by the SIU was a Priority School Review.

The review consisted of:

- A thorough and rigorous desktop audit utilising agreed headline indicators, the school's nine-page data profile and school context.
- A discussion with the assistant regional director
- A school visit of four days
- Interviews with key members of school staff and community, including:
 - Principal, deputy principals, HOC and HOSES
 - Literacy Coach and Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN)
 - Guidance officer
 - 36 classroom teachers
 - Chaplain
 - Business services manager (BSM)
 - Teacher librarian
 - P&C president and treasurer
 - Several parent representatives
 - State Member of Parliament and Local Councillor.

1.4 Review team

External Reviewer – Tony McGruther

Internal Reviewer – Jeff Geise

Internal Reviewer (Chair) – Racquel O'Connor

School Improvement Unit executive director, Liam Smith, also took part in the review.



2. Summary of improvement strategies

- Refine the current school improvement agenda to a small number of key deliverables that can be clearly evident in all classrooms.
- Design and implement an explicit school data plan that can track and monitor student progress throughout the year and across year levels. Build staff capacity to use this data to inform their daily teaching.
- Develop a school reading framework that clearly defines “The Brassall Way” for the teaching of reading. Apply this consistently across all classrooms through regular observations and feedback. Ensure significant resources are targeted to support this agenda.
- Develop a school-wide approach to managing student attendance.
- School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) has been clearly embedded across the school; the next step is to ensure that all decisions (staff up-skilling, areas for improvement, rewards etc.) are made based on the regular use and sharing of behaviour data.
- Develop a rich culture of observation and feedback through the continual coaching of staff by the entire leadership team in specific pedagogical practices.
- The school should consider utilising the significant unallocated budget available to alternative resourcing strategies for the embedding of school priorities.

3. Findings, supporting data and improvement strategies

3.1 An explicit improvement agenda

Findings

The leadership team and the teaching staff are able to articulate the school's improvement agenda, which was couched in terms of explicit instruction, Literacy for Learners (L4L) and Representations, Oral Language and Engagement in Mathematics (Role M). This improvement agenda is in its infancy and staff were committed to consolidating its implementation.

There is evidence of a school wide commitment to the implementation of L4L and Role M (in the lower school) and staff reported anecdotally individual stories of success.

Across the school, there are initial discussions about the need to improve student attendance. The staff and leadership team have begun to implement some initial strategies.

Teachers articulated a desire to ensure that reading is a high priority for 2015.

There has been work undertaken to define responsibilities for the administration team that includes roles, project leadership and line management supervision.

There is significant staff commitment to SWPBS and obvious evidence of whole school implementation including anecdotes of success.

The school's focus on data is driven by external requirements and seasons of internal standardised testing.

Targets for improvements are not specific for students and cohorts of students for the school's current improvement agenda.

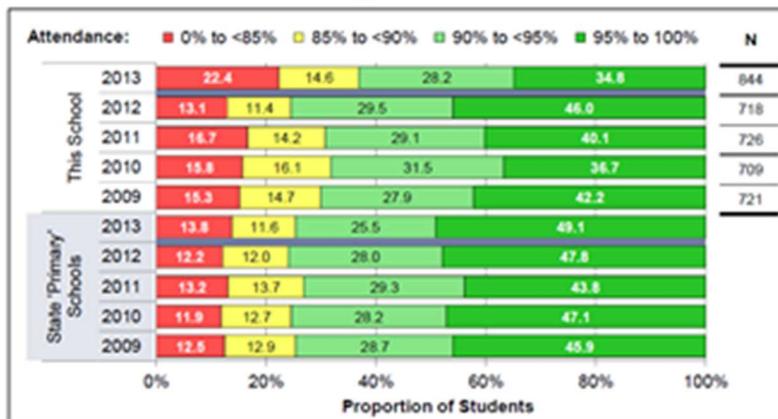
Supporting data

School data profile, annual implementation plan, Great Results Guarantee, NAPLAN strategy, budget, assessment framework, strategic plan, headline indicators, pedagogical framework, classified officer responsibilities, school website, staff, student and community interviews.

School Disciplinary Absences (SDAs)

Incident Type	Count of SDA Incidents					Rate per Term per 1000		
	School					School	State*	
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009 - 2013	2013	2013
Short	143	161	148	126	214	47.7 	67.1	14.7
Long	7	5	8	12	10	2.3 	3.1	1.1
Excl	0	0	2	0	0	0.0 	0.0	0.1
Cancel	0	0	0	0	0	0.0 	0.0	0.0

Attendance Rate Range



Improvement strategies

As a school, it is critical that Brassall continue with this improvement agenda but add rigour to its implementation.

To minimise the current fragmentation of the improvement agenda, develop clarity as to how the agendas overlay.

The improvement agenda needs to be expressed in terms of specific outcomes for students in target areas. These outcomes need to be scaffolded by project plans to provide clear direction and understanding for the entire school team.

The school needs to develop a school attendance strategy that includes regular data tracking and follow up.

Develop measures and targets around behaviour improvements and use these to develop processes to reflect on what is working in classrooms and support decisions on future directions.

3.2 Analysis and discussion of data

Findings

The school has developed a clear plan for the regular collection of data.

Collected data is used by some teachers to inform and shape their teaching and learning program. Student performance data is maintained centrally (One School).

School staff articulated the importance of student data to illustrate the movement of students, and an awareness of its potential use.

Student data does drive the intervention program and class placement for students.

There is a process of quality assurance in relation to the collection of data and the use of particular tools/methodologies.

There is an emerging critique of existing data tools and the associated utility of these tools in informing the teaching and learning process.

Systematic in-depth analysis of school data, which has the power to shape the teaching and learning for every student, is currently lacking.

Supporting data

NAPLAN strategy, assessment framework, school data profile, staff, student and community interviews.

		% At or Above National Minimum Standard (NMS) - Achievement										NMS - Improvement Relative to Nation					
		This School						2008-14	Nation			QSS	This School		Qld State Schools		
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014		2008	2013	2014	2014	2013-14	2008-14	2013-14	2008-14
Year 3	R	87.5	86.1	93.8	88.3	87.5	93.3	90.4		92.1	95.3	93.6	90.6	-1.2	1.4	-0.8	3.8
	W*	82.0	82.7	84.6	89.0	80.0	80.4	88.2		95.4	95.0	93.8	92.3	9.0	7.7	0.1	4.6
	S	83.1	66.7	76.9	87.8	71.9	73.3	84.0		92.5	93.8	92.8	92.1	11.7	0.6	4.6	4.8
	GP	80.9	66.7	79.5	91.9	71.9	84.8	84.0		91.7	95.3	93.5	92.5	1.1	1.3	1.4	4.5
	N	93.3	76.7	95.0	93.3	73.2	83.5	89.4		95.0	95.7	94.7	93.2	6.9	-3.6	0.9	4.7
Year 5	R	80.9	81.2	65.7	74.3	74.3	96.7	76.4		91.0	96.1	92.9	89.7	-17.1	-6.4	-1.7	5.9
	W*	87.6	80.8	73.3	65.2	74.3	77.5	60.6		92.6	91.7	90.3	82.9	-15.6	-24.8	-1.7	-1.0
	S	80.9	80.6	73.5	76.1	88.6	80.2	69.7		91.7	93.1	92.8	89.7	-10.2	-12.3	2.0	3.8
	GP	84.3	75.7	70.6	71.6	77.1	87.9	74.3		91.9	94.8	92.9	89.3	-11.7	-11.0	1.0	2.6
	N	82.0	90.1	79.0	79.7	88.4	78.0	67.0		92.7	93.4	93.3	90.0	-10.9	-15.6	-0.4	1.8
Year 7	R	93.7	90.2	84.5	92.0	89.1	90.9	87.7		94.2	94.2	94.8	92.2	-3.8	-6.6	0.6	0.3
	W*	79.6	82.9	87.0	82.5	79.0	74.0	66.2		91.8	89.3	88.5	83.2	-7.0	-10.1	-2.8	-1.0
	S	84.4	88.3	84.0	85.6	79.0	84.4	82.4		92.5	93.7	92.5	88.5	-0.8	-1.9	0.4	0.2
	GP	82.3	84.7	74.0	84.6	88.0	75.3	83.8		91.6	90.8	92.7	88.0	6.6	0.4	1.7	0.3
	N	88.9	94.5	90.0	97.0	82.0	90.9	93.2		95.4	95.0	95.2	93.7	2.0	4.5	-1.2	-0.4
Year 9	R									92.9	93.4	91.8	86.3			-2.1	-0.5
	W*									87.2	82.6	81.7	71.7			-2.1	-4.0
	S									89.8	92.2	89.8	86.3			0.1	3.0
	GP									89.9	87.9	89.7	82.4			-1.0	1.4
	N									93.6	90.6	94.2	93.0			2.9	2.3



		ENGLISH															
Yr Lvl	2010 S1 to 2014 S1		2013 Sem 2					2014 Sem 1									
	%C or Higher		%A	%B	%C	%D	%E	NR	%A	%B	%C	%D	%E	NR	N		
ACHIEVEMENT	01	62.6		53.4	6	28	20	28	17	1	26	28	21	26	0	133	
	02	73.2		55.7	3	21	33	18	25	1	6	21	29	8	37	0	106
	03	56.3		65.3	7	9	41	27	15	0	21	42	23	12	2	95	
	04	62.1		58.2	14	32	31	24	2	5	13	40	34	8	0	98	
	05	58.6		50.5	8	43	34	13	0	4	13	34	31	19	1	101	
	06	69.1		26.4	18	51	19	10	1	4	22	58	15	2	91		
	07	74.5		64.8	4	17	33	36	9	1	14	23	28	27	8	4	71
	08																
	09																
	10																

Improvement strategies

Development of a cyclical process of data analysis, on-going tracking and use of data to inform teaching and learning.

Build staff skills in the analysis, interpretation and use of formative classroom data, and the diagnostic use of standardised assessment data.

Review the school data plan to ensure that the identified tools enable the school and individual teachers to track and monitor student progress. Enable teachers to use the data to make regular adjustments to their daily teaching plans.

3.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

There is strong support for the leadership team from staff, parents, students and community members. Staff report that they feel incredibly supported to perform their roles at Brassall State School.

The entire school community reports that the school tone has experienced significant improvement through the introduction of “Buzz” (SWPBS). It has provided consistency in the management of student behaviour that has had a positive impact on student engagement levels in the classroom.

There is clear evidence that the behaviour of a number of students is taking up a considerable amount of both classroom teacher and administration time. This clearly affects the administration's ability to support teachers in the implementation of targeted priorities.

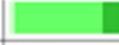
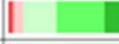
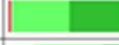
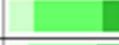
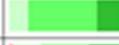
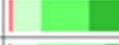
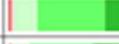
The school identifies that attendance is an issue for a significant number of students. There is belief from some staff that there is a need to develop a whole school strategy for non-attendance.

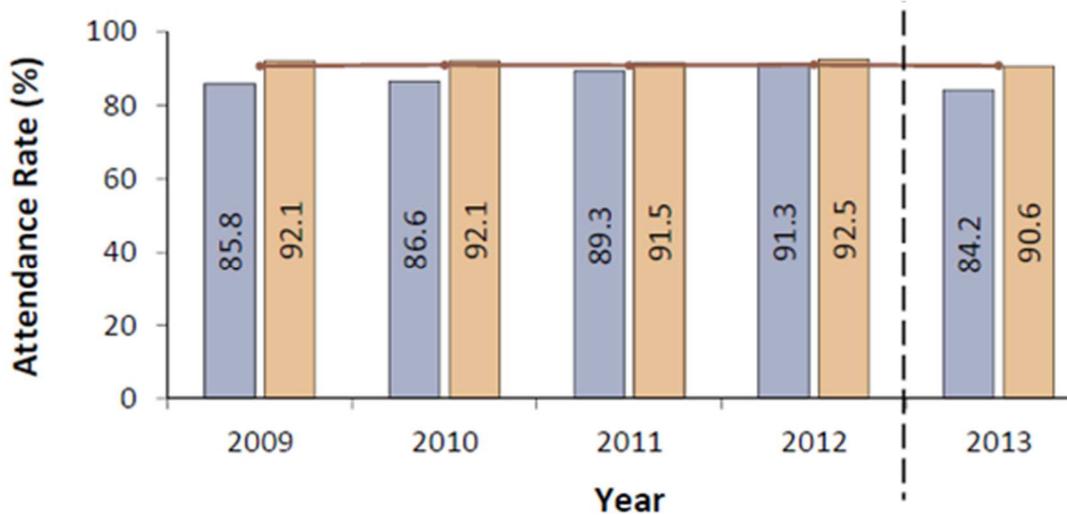
Supporting data

School Data Profile, One School, staff, student and community interviews.

School Disciplinary Absences (SDAs)

Incident Type	Count of SDA Incidents					Rate per Term per 1000			
	School					School		State*	
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Long	7	5	8	12	10	2.3		3.1	1.1
Excl	0	0	2	0	0	0.0		0.0	0.1
Cancel	0	0	0	0	0	0.0		0.0	0.0

Staff	Item Description	This School				LSG: P-XIV		State: Primary	
		% Agreement		Distribution	N	% Agreement		% Agreement	
		2012	2013	2013	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
	S2108 This is a good school		96.9		65		93.7		96.3
	S2107 I would recommend this school to others		93.7		63		90.7		94.7
	S2122 I feel that students receive a good education at this school		100.0		42		97.0		98.4
	S2074 Student behaviour is well managed at this school		87.3		63		86.6		91.4
	S2072 Students are encouraged to do their best at this school		98.4		63		98.0		98.9
	S2118 I feel confident engaging all of my students in learning at this school		100.0		42		94.5		96.5
	S2116 I feel confident using student assessment data to improve student achievement at this school		100.0		42		97.7		98.0
	S2086 I have access to quality professional development.	87.3	95.1		61	86.2	88.3	88.1	89.4
	S2084 I feel that staff morale is positive at this school		95.4		65		81.8		85.4
	Overall rating for all survey items	91.5	96.3		40	89.8	91.6	92.4	93.4



Improvement strategies

Consider a set of metrics that will allow the tracking, celebration and future direction of Buzz.

Develop and implement a consistent approach to the case management of identified (behaviour, well-being, attendance) students who are not part of the Special Education Program.

Develop and implement a school wide approach to attendance (include parents and staff / high expectations).

3.4 Targeted use of school resources

Findings

There are school wide programs of intervention for students who require additional support.

There is a strategy regarding the flexible delivery of curriculum to students in addressing the needs of learners, for example, L4L and academic classes.

The school has developed processes for identifying student learning needs through the differentiation and Student Support committees. Individual students are channelled into supports that best meet their learning needs.

The school has a significant unallocated budget available to consider alternative resourcing strategies for the embedding of school priorities.

There is a general belief that the academic classes have the capacity to improve student learning outcomes.

Teachers articulated that they feel supported by the level of resourcing made available to implement programs of teaching/learning.

There is evidence of targeted use of STLaNs and teacher aides to support specific year level reading programs.

Supporting data

School data profile, budget, NAPLAN strategy, staff, and student and community interviews.

Bank Balances

Grants, Allowances and Payments System (GAPS) Bank Balances												
Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2014	\$1,073,740	\$1,090,428	\$1,165,233	\$1,146,461	\$1,081,713	\$991,665	\$1,153,430					
2013	\$1,000,178	\$1,025,835	\$1,026,624	\$1,033,440	\$1,009,660	\$1,062,624	\$1,110,358	\$1,115,492	\$1,059,220	\$1,149,797	\$1,117,340	\$1,051,503
2012	\$28,286	\$227,664	\$188,877	\$230,425	\$212,610	\$286,107	\$402,646	\$352,433	\$293,294	\$303,321	\$1,055,196	\$1,014,975
2011	\$113,305	\$443,490	\$263,596	\$327,095	\$276,199	\$59,302	\$247,671	\$265,823	\$180,232	\$149,569	\$83,522	\$3,192
2010	\$61,128	\$108,552	\$144,840	\$164,725	\$121,181	\$82,136	\$185,300	\$186,472	\$106,302	\$171,506	\$134,547	\$126,695

Improvement strategies

The leadership team to examine the resource requirements for the 2015 – 2017 priorities. Adequately resource the administration team to ensure support for the implementation of these priorities (reading, behaviour and attendance).

Clearly articulate to staff the whole school intervention strategy which is linked to the interrogation and analysis of data.

Consider the most effective deployment of teacher aides in the teaching of reading.



3.5 An expert teaching team

Findings

The staff express support for and value in the current Developing Performance Plan process. They are supported and encouraged to meet their goals, which are linked to the school priorities. They report positive engagement in the process.

The school's professional learning agenda is explicit in the areas of L4L, Role M and explicit instruction. These agendas have been supported through significant investment in specialised expertise. The staff have greatly valued the in-class support, modelling and extensive resourcing.

Teachers at Brassall State School are open to constructive feedback to and from colleagues. Some arrangements for coaching and observation are in place; however, barriers to non-threatening engagement in this process include timetabling provisions, protocols and a purposeful systematic approach.

The documented management structure of the school and the feedback from staff demonstrate that there is a growing leadership density at the school that includes year level coordinators, event organisers, special activities and peer coaches.

Supporting data

Professional learning agenda, student free day agendas, staff interviews, budget, classified officer responsibilities, pedagogical framework.

Improvement strategies

Grow the current coaching and feedback practices to be sequential and focused on key priorities.

Focus the coaching feedback around the specific pedagogical practices required to enhance the student learning priorities.

Develop a plan for how the entire leadership team can be integral in this culture of continual observation and feedback.



3.6 Systematic curriculum delivery

Findings

The school has begun a consistent approach to curriculum delivery through the implementation of L4L (school wide) and Role M (lower school). Staff report that these programs provide clear scaffolds for teaching, it reflects the needs of students at Brassall and it de-clutters their curriculum. These programs have provided a shared language for teachers to talk about the effectiveness of teaching and the outcomes of students.

The current school curriculum is drawn from a variety of sources including ACARA, C2C, Essential Learnings, Role M and L4L.

Staff report that the acquisition of core reading skills should represent the highest priority for students at Brassall State School. Evidence shows that there is currently no articulated consistent approach to the teaching of reading through P-7.

The school community recognises the need to make the curriculum locally relevant and accessible. Evidence from interviews suggests that, in order to achieve the school's aspiration for the attainment of numeracy and literacy levels, consideration needs to be given to balance within the curriculum between key learning areas.

Supporting data

School pedagogical framework, Role M units, L4L English units, One School, staff, student and community interviews.

Improvement strategies

Develop a curriculum plan for Brassall State School that clearly identifies student learning needs and focuses teachers on what they need to teach and when, and clarify the required student learnings (rubrics, standards and benchmarks progression).

This should begin with a focus on reading, clearly articulating what reading looks like at Brassall State School. This needs to include developing the professional knowledge, practice and engagement of teachers and students.



3.7 Differentiated teaching and learning

Findings

There is evidence of developed structures to support the differentiation of students, for example, academic classes.

Teachers articulated an understanding of the learning needs and cultural context of many of the students.

Parents articulated that the school took an interest in the individual and supported students in both within and outside school activities.

The school's data plan enables teachers to track and monitor students, however these tend to be summative in nature rather than a focus on the student's learning program and the necessary adjustments.

There was little evidence that significant differentiated practice varied from academic classes to other cohort classes that extended student learning.

Individual student goals are visible in some classes.

Supporting data

Extension classes, pedagogical framework, intervention timetables, staff, student and community interviews.

Improvement strategies

Explore the capacity for extension of students in the academic classes.

Use existing individual student learning goals to inform learning conversations (teacher to student, teacher to teacher, teacher to administration).

3.8 Effective pedagogical practices

Findings

School leaders are committed to continuous improvement in teaching practices throughout the school. These teaching practices are described through the explicit instruction pedagogical framework.

There are explicitly scaffolded approaches within the L4L English units and the Role M Maths units in the lower school. L4L, Role M and explicit instruction are seen by staff as three distinct classroom practices.

There is evidence that teachers recognise the need to have school wide curriculum and pedagogy practices through L4L and Role M. There is an emerging dialogue between staff as evidenced through the current development of the reading framework.

From interviews with staff and students it is evident that student behavioural incidents minimise the capacity of the administration time to spend in classrooms supporting teaching and pedagogy practices.

There is school wide evidence of the use of Guide to Making Judgements (GTMJs) which summarise each unit's intended learnings and are designed to provide feedback to students.

Supporting data

Pedagogical framework, Role M units, L4L units, staff, students and community interviews. For example, a student in an interview stated – “At the moment it's all about the Bee, it needs to focus more on education.”

Improvement strategies

All members of the administration team spend time working with teachers, providing feedback on teaching, where appropriate modelling effective teaching practices.

Continue the development of the year level reading frameworks and support the implementation through adequate resourcing.

Continue revisiting Brassall's existing pedagogical framework to ensure clear alignment between explicit instruction, L4L and Role M and the emerging reading frameworks.



3.9 School and community partnerships

Findings

The school has established a number of strong partnerships with parents and community groups with a focus on student welfare and engagement.

The school has partnered with a local church organisation and the YMCA in the provision of a school breakfast program. The school chaplain is integral to this program.

There is evidence of the staff linking with other schools to learn from and develop programs to address similar challenges.

The School Plan identifies the need for a community partnership agreement with Indigenous families as a priority.

There is significant staff and community support for the recently launched (Jan 2015) SWPBS strategy- Buzz the Bee.

There is currently little data captured by the school of the improvements in student outcomes resulting from community partnership activities.

There is a transition program and limited partnering with the local state high schools. Students and parents expressed a desire to explore possibilities further.

Supporting data

School data profile, L4L units, Role M units, pedagogical framework, student, staff and community interviews.

Improvement strategies

Investigate how school community partnerships between Brassall State School, early years providers and Ipswich State High School can enhance the priority school areas of behaviour, attendance, reading, Role M and L4L.



4. Follow up timelines

- School to publish this report to website within two weeks
- School to meet with assistant regional director to discuss plan for improvement strategy
- Work with assistant regional director to develop Action Plan.