

Ferny Grove State High 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 Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Ferny Grove State High School** from **1 to 4 March 2021**.

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

Wayne Troyahn	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Leanne Jensen-Steele	Peer reviewer
John Thornberry	Peer reviewer
Raelene Fysh	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	McGinn Road, Ferny Grove	
Education region:	Metropolitan Region	
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12	
Enrolment:	1960	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	3 per cent	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	7 per cent
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	17 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	1062	
Year principal appointed:	2017 – substantive principal 2021 – acting principal	



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Executive principal, five deputy principals, 11 Heads of Department (HOD), Head of Special Education Services (HOSES), Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN), 61 teachers, independent study lesson teacher, international programs coordinator, two Learning Excellence @ Ferny (LEAF) teachers, Ferny Advanced Sporting Teams (FAST) teacher, two Activate Innovate Motivate (AIM) program teachers, PASCH (Schulen, Partner der Zukunft – Schools: Partners for the Future) coordinator, three guidance officers, international program teacher, Student Support Services (SSS) team, writing team, two Booster program teachers, two sports coordinators, five Year Level Coordinators (YLC), Business Manager (BM), four Special Education Program (SEP) teacher aides, four Investing for Success (I4S) teacher aides, five administration teacher aides, six office staff, three facilities officers, agricultural assistant, 16 cleaners, café convenor, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, P&C operations officer, tuckshop convenor, 17 parents, 59 students, 28 instrumental music program students, nine signature program students, four junior school student leaders and seven senior school student leaders.

Community and business groups:

- Binnacle Training – Registered Training Organisation (RTO), Arana Leagues Club and West Arana Hills Rugby League Football Club.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal Ferny Grove State School, principal Patricks Road State School, principal Samford State School and principal Ferny Hills State School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Member for Ferny Grove, councillor for The Gap Ward Brisbane City Council and ARD.



1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Data Walls	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2021
Investing for Success 2021	Strategic Plan 2017–2020
OneSchool	Signature programs brochures
Professional learning plan 2021	Data Health Checks
School Improvement targets	Literacy Booster Program
Teaching and Learning Handbook	Teaching and Learning Guide
School Inclusion Policy	Staff Induction Pack
School Opinion Survey – 2019	Student Code of Conduct
Curriculum Handbook	Growth and Development Framework
School Data Plan	Admin Duties Statement
Headline Indicators (October 2020 release)	School Data Profile (Semester 1 2020 and Semester 2 2020)
School newsletters, Facebook page and website	2021 Implementation Plan – Annual Improvement Plan
Whole School Curriculum Plan	



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

School leaders and staff members are committed to the success of all students.

The school motto '*Always Aim High*' encourages all students to achieve the best of which they are capable. Leaders and teachers emphasise that curriculum must be provided to all students in ways that are age-appropriate and responsive to diverse learning needs. A teacher comment that 'all staff walk into the room invested in students' reflects the commitment of staff members.

School leaders utilise a range of data sets to inform strategic priorities and to provide measures of success for student learning outcomes.

Leaders recognise that the systematic analysis, monitoring, tracking and sharing of student academic, attendance and engagement data are essential to inform success within strategic objectives. Teaching staff involved in signature programs and support initiatives utilise and manipulate data sets to inform application, participation and student success.

School buildings and grounds have been enhanced to meet the learning needs of all students.

The recent construction of the Sports and Cultural Centre and the Centre for Excellence, in addition to the refurbishment of kitchens, has been positively supported by the whole community. Teachers identify the classroom structures, furniture and general resources in the new buildings as being innovative and supportive of learning for the full range of students.

Executive Leadership Team (ELT) members articulate their belief in a united and focused approach to school improvement, resulting in improved student learning outcomes.

ELT members describe how they have led the development of a narrow and sharp Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) and Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) with priorities for the improvement agenda based on a thorough and collaborative investigation of school data. Members of the ELT articulate a focus on student engagement and writing linked to relative gain. Heads of Department (HOD) speak positively regarding the narrow and sharp focus. Some teachers express a desire to be more involved in setting school directions with increased collaborative practice. Consultation and transparency in decision making processes are sought by teachers to strengthen feelings of trust.

The school has developed a culture of high expectations that is supported by the whole community.

The executive principal leads communication regarding school focus areas, targets and progress to targets. Methods include statements in the newsletter, Facebook page, school publications, school council presentations and general meetings. Some teachers articulate satisfaction with the communication from HODs in faculty areas. Some staff members



express the view that communication practices regarding key school decisions could be further improved.

School leaders and staff are committed to high expectations of all learners as embodied in the motto and values of *'Respect, Learning, Community, Creativity'*.

These values are featured across the school and are supported by teachers and students. Some teachers and students express a degree of concern in relation to a perceived decline in student school spirit that they believe has occurred over recent times. They articulate a desire for the student school spirit to be enhanced through a concerted school effort.

Leaders of the school identify the collegial engagement of teachers in professional learning as a high priority.

The support of a culture of continuous professional learning and improvement is viewed as the key to developing an expert teaching team. Each year, there is an expectation requiring staff to engage in two types of classroom observations – classroom profiling and pedagogical observation. Most teachers articulate they have completed classroom profiling supported by 31 profilers. Teaching staff outline that observations are conducted by HODs and profilers. Some teachers indicate a willingness to be involved in collaborative and sustainable collegial engagement and dialogue with peers.

The school has structured curriculum delivery with *'foundation', 'booster', 'core' and 'accelerated'* classes.

Signature programs include Ferny Advanced Sporting Teams (FAST), German immersion program, instrumental and choral music, Learning Excellence @ Ferny (LEAF). A consistency regarding Quality Assurance (QA) processes of newer initiatives is yet to be developed. Some members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) express a level of concern regarding what is viewed as a lack of collaboration and consultation in relation to these new programs and the impact on other subject areas. Some SLT members identify they would value timely input and discussion regarding the introduction of school programs.

Students are allocated to core and foundation classes in English, mathematics, science and humanities if not involved in signature programs in the junior school.

Staff comment that students are able to move within these groupings. Parents are invited to the school for an information evening regarding the programs. Reporting on academic progress in foundation classes is assessed at different levels to core classes. Some teachers express a desire to see the valuing and resourcing of all programs as equivalent to the signature programs.

School leaders recognise that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning throughout the school.

Teachers express praise for the direction that the school has established in the work regarding student engagement, a key priority of the school's EIA. There is a clear understanding by staff members that the Essential Skills for Classroom Management (ESCM) is one of the vehicles used to enhance student engagement. Classroom profiling is



an embedded practice across the school and many teachers are accredited profilers. All teachers receive feedback on ESCM at least once per year.

Staff members have established a strong sense of community ownership and pride in the school.

Members of the community, parents, staff and students speak positively of the school. Parents and families value the communication from the school, particularly during the challenging periods of 2020. The school has many well-established partnerships across the local community to enhance the learning and wellbeing of students and to create post-school pathways for senior students. Partnerships are strategically established to address identified student needs, and operate by providing access to experiences, support and resources not available within the school.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Implement collaborative planning processes involving all members of the school community to establish transparency in strategic decision making and strengthen trusting relationships.

Establish and implement effective communication strategies to outline key school decisions for the school community.

Develop and implement new approaches to enhance students' school spirit.

Collaboratively review the collegial engagement framework leading to consistent, school-wide processes for systematic observation, modelling, coaching, mentoring and feedback for all staff, including the sharing of best practice.

Consult and engage the SLT in the design and development of new or signature programs to ensure clear and transparent decision making and communication.

Develop collaborative school resourcing decision making practices for all curriculum programs.