

Charters Towers 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 **Charters Towers State High School** from **7 to 9 June 2022**.

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.

An action plan will be developed and submitted to the EIB and region within six weeks of the school receiving the report.

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

1.1 Review team

Julie Warwick	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Cameron Wayman	Internal reviewer, EIB
Wayne Troyahn	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Indigenous land name:	Gudjala
Location:	Towers Street, Charters Towers
Education region:	North Queensland Region
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12
Enrolment:	413
Indigenous enrolment per centage:	34.8 per cent
Students with disability per centage:	22.5 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	893
Year Principal appointed:	July 2021 – acting



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, three deputy principals, six Heads of Department (HOD), Business Manager (BM), guidance officer, Community Education Counsellor (CEC), School Based Police Officer (SBPO), 21 teachers, five cleaners, four teacher aides, two administrative officers, two facilities officers, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and vice president, two P&C members, 14 parents and 80 students.

Community and business groups:

- Police-Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) manager and Indigenous art business owner.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Charters Towers Central State School principal, Charters Towers School of Distance Education (SDE) principal, Millchester State School principal and Dalrymple Trade Training Centre (DTTC) manager.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Deputy Mayor of Charters Towers Regional Council and ARD.



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The principal and school leaders are united in their commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.

Many parents, staff and students speak of the principal's strong, student-focused leadership, their priority of capturing community voice, and their personal investment in supporting student achievement. There is a strong and optimistic commitment from staff and parents towards the current school improvement strategy and an acknowledgement of the need to 'stay the course'. Staff comment on the observable school improvement achieved recently and express a desire for further stability and continued trajectory to support student outcomes. Many acknowledge the strong leadership required for sustained long-term improvement.

The school is engaging the visible learning approach to support student success in learning.


The leadership team keeps abreast of research regarding effective teaching practices. The school has engaged a Head of Department (HOD) – pedagogy to lead the agenda. Targeted work to support visible learning includes every lesson commencing with learning intentions and success criteria, and teachers implementing exit passes. Processes to support engaging learning environments include learning walls and the use of Essential Skills for Classroom Management (ESCM) to proactively support student engagement. Staff express support for the visible learning priority.

Members of the school community comment that they have observed positive changes in student behaviour over the last 12 months.

The school community references recent improvements in school culture and express a desire for ongoing work to build a learning environment that is safe, respectful, inclusive and promotes intellectual rigour. The school expectations of *'Be safe, be a learner, be respectful'* are supported by signage and are well-known across the community. Recently the school has developed a detailed school-wide behaviour flowchart, a pre-conditions for learning approach, and a revised Student Code of Conduct (SCOC). Some teachers express a belief that greater consistency of practice in relation to expectations would support student engagement. They express that behavioural problems and disengagement are continuous challenges for a proportion of students.

The school strives to deliver a student-responsive curriculum that aligns to the Australian Curriculum (AC) and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) syllabus guidelines.

HODs and teachers express a strong belief in developing engaging, challenging work for students. A school-wide curriculum alignment template supports year planning. Many staff members indicate that this process generally occurs during Professional Learning Communities (PLC). Documented planning aligned with P-12 curriculum, assessment and



reporting framework (P-12 CARF) expectations, including a whole-school curriculum plan that maps assessable elements, cognitive verbs, cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities is yet to emerge. Many staff and leaders articulate that a comprehensive mapping process, along with embedded Quality Assurance (QA) processes, would support full alignment with the AC.

The principal acknowledges that school turnaround requires high levels of sustained strategic leadership and visioning.

The school experiences significant staff turnover due to its location and a range of contextual factors. Currently of the 10 members of the leadership team, five are serving in an acting capacity. The principal identifies a need to support school leaders in their roles through an ongoing focus on instructional leadership including mentoring, Professional Development (PD), and coaching training. They indicate that this continues to be driven through line management structures and ongoing work in supporting consistency within the HOD role in terms of expectations and communication. Many staff and community members articulate a desire for consistency in key leadership positions to support visioning for the school's next strategic cycle.

Differentiated teaching and learning has been identified as a continuous improvement emphasis within the school.

Dedicated leadership is established to support this priority, reinforced with the appointment of a deputy principal – inclusion and HOD – inclusion. The leadership team has identified the priority of upskilling staff in their awareness of Individual Curriculum Plan (ICP) processes. Staff express a desire for greater understanding to cater to, and provide support for, all students in their classrooms. Targeted differentiation strategies for all students are yet to be employed by some teachers. A whole-school approach to differentiation for all students that aligns to the P-12 CARF is yet to be fully embedded.

Leaders recognise the importance of regularly reviewing processes and school programs to support successful student transition into senior schooling.

The principal notes that a review of the current suite of vocational options for students is a priority along with QA of Vocational Education and Training (VET) tracking. Many students in Years 10 to 12 express a desire for further understanding of the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) process, and for timely information regarding the school's subject suite, pathways information and options to support their aspirations towards a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) or Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA). Many students express a desire for heightened employment transition support and advice. Some students seeking university pathways comment that an academic mentoring program would be beneficial.



The leadership team affirms their fundamental belief that collecting, analysing, and communicating student outcome data is critical to their ongoing development.

A whole-school data plan is linked to the three school strategic priorities. Collection, discussion and analysis of data occurs at several junctures throughout the year. Data sets include attendance, behaviour, Level of Achievement (LOA), wellbeing, literacy and numeracy, classroom performance, and engagement. The leadership team articulates that student achievement data is used as evidence of successful teaching and is routinely discussed across the school. Each faculty presents their own data to the leadership team and their own faculties. Data walls have been constructed for students across year levels.

A high priority is placed on building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents.

Many students speak of friendships and key staff members who support their engagement at school. Members of the school community reference recent improvements in school culture and speak of the work of leaders and teachers in engaging families and valuing parents as partners. Staff acknowledge increased communication processes with parents to support mutually respectful relationships and purposefully develop relationships with students to support their engagement.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Prioritise building purposeful learning environments through a focus on high expectations, consistency of practice and student engagement.

Implement the AC across Years 7 to 10 with fidelity, in alignment with the P-12 CARF.

Build the instructional leadership capacity and expectations of all school leaders to support organisational change and school success.

Review the whole-school approach to differentiated teaching and learning, including the approach to ICPs, and ensure alignment with the P-12 CARF.

Review systems and structures to support successful transition into senior schooling.