

# Helensvale 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 **Helensvale State High School** from **1 to 4 November 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

Shona McKinlay	Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)
Chris Pocock	Peer reviewer
David Munn	Peer reviewer
Jo Soothill	Peer reviewer
Trevor Gordon	External reviewer



## 1.2 School context

<b>Location:</b>	Discovery Drive, Helensvale	
<b>Education region:</b>	South East Region	
<b>Year levels:</b>	Year 7 to Year 12	
<b>Enrolment:</b>	2242	
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	2.3 per cent	
<b>Students with disability:</b>	<b>Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:</b>	6.3 per cent
	<b>Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:</b>	19.2 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	1025	
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2017	



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal; head of school; five deputy principals; Head of Special Education Services (HOSES); 14 Heads of Department (HOD); five student deans; three academy directors; three learning support teachers; key teachers – literacy, pedagogy, beginning year teacher and guaranteed and viable curriculum (GVC); teacher librarian; Business Manager (BM); English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) coordinator; industry liaison officer; three science technicians; 18 teacher aides; tuckshop convenor; three tuckshop staff; uniform shop convenor; six office, attendance and finance staff; chaplain; two guidance officers; School Based Youth Health Nurse (SBYHN); office manager; facilities manager; Human Resources (HR) manager; finance manager; executive services officer; Information Technology (IT) manager; three IT team members; three grounds staff; 82 teachers; 17 parents; 99 students; Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president and school council president.

Community and business groups:

- Past student, business alliance member from Klearnet Solutions Pty Ltd and business alliance member from Big4 Gold Coast Holiday Park.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal of Oxenford State School, principal of Helensvale State School, principal of Coombabah State High School, chair of the Northern Collegiate and Principal's Alliance, University of Queensland Critical Thinking Project (UQCTP) and director of the IMPACT centre.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Director State School Improvement and ARD.



## 1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2021	2021 Spotlight
Investing for Success 2021	Strategic Plan 2018–2021
SORD	School Data Profile (Semester 1 2021)
OneSchool	School budget overview
Student Code of Conduct	Curriculum planning documents
School Data Plan – 2021	School newsletters, Facebook and website
School Opinion Survey – 2019 and 2021	VALE IMPACT Teaching and Learning framework
School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework	Professional learning plan Semester 1 and Semester 2
Headline Indicators (October 2020 release)	





## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

**The school has developed an extensive curriculum program that is closely aligned to the interests and needs of students.**

School leaders and teachers have invested significant time in developing a high quality, detailed whole-school curriculum and assessment plan that outlines how curriculum, assessment and pedagogy are implemented. The plan tracks the progression and sequence of learning from Year 7 to Year 12. The plan is regularly audited to ensure horizontal and vertical alignment. An extensive academic and vocational program is enhanced by the academy programs. The academies are highly valued by students and the school community and play an important role in enhancing the reputation of the school. The school has established a Curriculum and Assessment Review Board (CARB) with the purpose of leading the strategic teaching and learning agenda and ensuring alignment and Quality Assurance (QA) in curriculum and assessment.

**Many parents, teachers and students express that the greatest strength of the school is its sense of community.**

The school's statement of purpose is embedded in the school culture. Students and staff know and understand the vision, purpose and values. The '*One Student, One Community, Many Futures*' mantra is a strong catchphrase used to reinforce the purpose of supporting every student individually. Parents indicate that staff demonstrate deep care and concern for the wellbeing of students. Students express that they value the hard work and dedication of teachers. Teachers comment that they understand the importance of developing caring relationships with students to instil positive attitudes and encourage engagement in learning. Teachers appreciate the support they receive both professionally and personally from their colleagues. The school has an active student council that organises student activities, recognises the achievements of their teachers and brings ideas for school improvement to the attention of school leaders.

**The school is an accredited Professional Learning Community (PLC) and is committed to a relentless focus on learning for all students.**

Professional Learning Teams (PLT) facilitate a collaborative culture and a collective effort to foster high expectations for driving improvement in student outcomes. School leaders articulate that the core business of the school centres around 'Our Big 5' critical questions. Our Big 5 are based on research-driven practices. Teachers identify that Our Big 5 are essential components of school improvement. The 2021 Spotlight document identifies the three school improvement priorities that are found in the 2021 Annual Implementation Plan (AIP). The spotlight priorities are Vale IMPACT, student engagement and building capability. Teacher ability to identify the three spotlight improvement priorities varies. Teachers are able to describe some actions associated with the priorities. Leaders reflect on the need to further clarify and focus on priority implementation.



**School leaders articulate the effectiveness of the school’s evidence-based research pedagogical approach as essential to improving student learning.**

The school leadership team actively pursues and shares research regarding effective teaching practices. School leaders have taken personal responsibility for developing the customised Vale IMPACT pedagogical approach that has been communicated extensively across the school. The leadership team communicates clear expectations regarding teachers’ use of this framework through professional learning sessions. Leaders articulate that teacher autonomy is important in the implementation of Vale IMPACT in classrooms. Many teachers articulate appreciating this flexibility in the autonomy of curriculum delivery. Clarity in relation to the way in which the Vale IMPACT concepts are implemented is yet to emerge. Some leaders and teachers reflect on the strength of staff having a united and consistent understanding of the IMPACT intent and expectations.

**There is a whole-of-school commitment to providing a safe and respectful learning environment for all students.**

Staff have high expectations that all students will learn. The Student Code of Conduct includes details of the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) system that is used to support behaviour management in the school. The PBL system is implemented through a committee of staff and students. The committee analyses behaviour data, discusses strategies to address behavioural challenges and establishes the PBL focus for the coming weeks. The expectations of PBL are communicated to students through several strategies including the explicit teaching of behaviour during ‘Futures’ lessons, reinforcement at year level and whole-school parades, and acknowledgement through the positive behaviour rewards system. Some teachers comment that they have a degree of concern regarding the management of student behaviour. The AIP 2021 identifies ‘review school processes and policies of PBL’ as an improvement strategy and teachers acknowledge the need for a review and enhancement of PBL implementation with the aim of ensuring a whole-of-school commitment to the system.

**The development of instructional leadership skills is identified by school leaders as a foundation to support the implementation of key priorities and provide oversight of ‘tight’ expectations.**

Line management flowcharts outline the governance, leadership teams, teaching and non-teaching organisational structures. Leaders outline that line management processes are flexible and priorities are differentiated according to the needs of staff and programs or faculties. Deputy principals work with Heads of Department (HOD) in two ways, firstly as the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) working together to facilitate professional conversations and shared problem solving, and secondly in a deputy/HOD faculty line management structure. Some teachers and leaders outline inconsistency in alignment from whole-school priorities to faculty level priorities and actions. Leaders and staff speak of ‘tight’ and ‘loose’ aspects of the school improvement agenda and the need to clarify what is ‘tight’. Some leaders and staff reflect on the need to develop, enact and monitor QA processes as part of line management at all levels across the school.





**The principal and other school leaders view the development of staff into an expert teaching and learning team as critical to improving outcomes for all students.**

Parents and community members articulate a belief that the school has a body of expert teachers that are committed to student learning. School leaders are promoting awareness and interest amongst teachers to build their own capacity in effective use of the Vale IMPACT pedagogical approach. Opportunities are provided for teachers to access professional learning opportunities and practice some Vale IMPACT elements. School leaders focus on the provision of detailed feedback to beginning teachers. Learning walks are undertaken by school leaders and focus on student learning. Some teachers express a desire to receive feedback on their teaching practices. A whole-school approach to modelling, evaluating and providing feedback to teachers to develop their teaching practices is yet to be implemented.

**A collaborative culture and collective effort, with a results orientation, drive continuous improvement.**

Staff members indicate that professional collaboration meetings support them to build their capability to identify strategies and address the diverse range of student learning needs. The school community has undertaken a workplace reform to provide weekly collaboration time for teachers with additional tutorial support and intervention opportunities for students. Most teachers articulate valuing the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues through PLT time. Many opportunities for teachers to learn from each other occur through sharing and discussion during collaboration time or informally in staffrooms. Deputy principals work with HODs in collaborative teams to investigate a cycle of inquiry over problems of practice and share ideas to support growth.

**The school builds effective partnerships to improve opportunities and outcomes for students and is cognisant of maintaining its reputation and strong partnerships in an increasingly competitive environment.**

The school has built relationships with community partners that provide students with an opportunity to extend learning beyond the classroom. These partnerships extend across a range of curriculum and non-curriculum areas. School partners value their partnership for the exposure it brings them and for the access to the next group of potential employees. Key leaders in the partner organisations speak highly of the productive relationships they have with the school and the benefits that working together have on positive educational outcomes. Parents speak highly of the school and the range of programs that students are able to access, including Academy, EXCITE Academy and Honours programs and the support for students requiring additional assistance. Parents comment positively on the range of subject and career pathways, extracurricular and co-curricular activities on offer at the school.



## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Further narrow and refine school improvement priorities to develop deeper staff understanding; sharpen implementation processes and provide expectations for key actions.

Refresh and clarify teacher knowledge, expectations and the implementation intent of the Vale IMPACT pedagogical approach across the school.

Collaboratively develop quality assured processes to enact agreed and consistent PBL processes and practices, supported by school leaders, teachers and students.

Develop, enact and monitor QA processes and instructional leadership as a 'tight' component of line management practices at all levels.

Formalise and implement a process where school leaders work with teachers to further develop their teaching practices, including modelling, evaluating and providing feedback on classroom teaching.