



ACT
Government
Education

Calwell High School

Review Report Summary, 2018

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Overview of the school review process

Approximately a quarter of all ACT public schools are reviewed each year. The reviews are an important part of how the Directorate supports and monitors school improvement. Reviews provide schools with quality and independent feedback, tailored to the school's context. Each school is reviewed at least every five years, providing valuable opportunities for self-reflection, planning and improvement.

Reviews are undertaken by experienced educators trained in the use of the *National School Improvement Tool* (NSIT), a nationally recognised framework for reviewing teaching and learning practices. Each review team generally consists of two to three reviewers, however, the number of reviewers and length of review depends upon a range of factors, including the size and context of the school.

Reviewers closely consider each school's performance data and speak with a wide range of staff, students, parents and community members to get an accurate picture of the school. Following the review, the school receives a comprehensive report. The report outlines the key findings and recommended improvement strategies to maximise student outcomes. The report concludes with a set of commendations, affirmations and recommendations to assist in future planning and to support school-wide improvement planning.

The following summary contains the commendations, affirmations and recommendations from the review report.

Commendations

The commendations highlight positive actions the school has taken over its last improvement cycle. Typically these actions are either complete, or embedded in school practice.

Affirmations

The affirmations verify specific actions being undertaken by the school that are impacting positively on school improvement. These actions are typically either not yet complete and/or not yet embedded.

Recommendations

The recommendations provide the school with evidence-based advice regarding high-value areas for future school improvement efforts. Drawn from the NSIT, recommendations are key to the school developing a sharp and narrow improvement plan.

Commendations

Calwell High School is commended for the following.

- Developing a culture where parents believe the school is welcoming, caring and the teachers are approachable. Students made consistent comments about teachers caring for them.
- A clear commitment of staff to enhance literacy levels across all learning areas of the school.
- Developing the LIFT girls' leadership program to provide and explore leadership opportunities and improve engagement and attendance in schooling.
- Actively seeking partnerships with community organisations to support student learning.
- Using PAT achievement and wellbeing data to develop school-wide assessment processes to identify individual student needs.
- The leadership team having a strong commitment to building an expert teaching team.
- Teachers implementing rubrics linked to the Australian Curriculum achievement standards.
- Staff demonstrating that they know their students and make every attempt to meet their learning needs.
- Developing the ACCESS program to re-engage students in education.
- Providing extensive opportunities for student access to vocational pathways.

Affirmations

The Review Team offers the following affirmations for Calwell High School.

- Undertaking comprehensive reviews of school performance to monitor progress on the strategic plan.
- Developing 'spotlight' cards for students with identified needs who are transitioning to the school, to support teachers in developing strategies to support these students in each class.
- Building a parent/carer and school partnership in the school in general, and in the education of their child(ren). Parents said that they welcomed the increased connection to their child's progress through the introduction of Google Classrooms.
- Implementing a PBL framework developing a set of behaviour expectations that will be instrumental in strengthening the positive school culture.
- Ongoing work to upgrade internal and external learning areas providing innovative spaces such as a flexible learning environment, ACCESS classroom, LIFT teaching space, library, and learning support classroom.
- Beginning to build teacher capacity through developing a framework for observation, coaching and mentoring.
- A concerted effort by teachers to write quality curriculum to support student learning.
- A clear focus demonstrated across faculties on the achievement standards as a driver of curriculum.
- Demonstrating a strong approach to ensuring that professional learning aligns with improving teacher practice.
- Teachers demonstrating a commitment to engaging students by making learning intentions and success criteria visible in classrooms.
- An ongoing commitment to raising student voice on the school and its direction.

Recommendations

The Review Team recommends Calwell High School pays attention to the following opportunities for school improvement during the next planning cycle.

- Collaboratively develop a Calwell High School Strategic Plan 2019-2023 that is consistent with the school's vision for teaching and learning, and provides a narrow and sharp agenda focussed on student outcomes, by incorporating explicit targets for student achievement that are well communicated to the school community. The plan should clearly articulate the measures and strategies for improvement in a timeline that acknowledges capacity for change. Progress towards targets should be monitored and initiatives and programs systematically evaluated for their effectiveness in producing the desired improvements in student learning and performance.
- Develop a pedagogical framework that establishes and communicates clear expectations and shared beliefs to drive consistent implementation of effective evidence-based teaching strategies throughout the school.
- Build upon the school's draft data plan developing processes to efficiently and effectively identify starting points for school improvement and to monitor progress over time. Develop consistent processes across the school for staff to engage with data to inform teaching and to measure growth in student and cohort achievement over time. Continue to build leadership and staff data literacy skills.
- Strengthen the whole-school approach to engaging students in learning through managing disruptive behaviour with high expectations and consistency. This could include agreed responses and consequences for inappropriate student behaviour and further strategies to enhance student attendance.
- Implement further school-wide programs and approaches for students requiring additional learning support that make best use of available staff expertise and resources.
- Document a professional learning plan that includes aligned processes for observation, mentoring and coaching across the school that provides opportunities to share expertise and embed essential teaching practices.
- Continue to develop the school's approach to curriculum delivery that is explicit, coherent, sequenced and identifies teaching and learning priorities. Move towards incorporating general capabilities and cross curriculum priorities.
- Develop processes across the school that enable teachers to closely monitor the progress of individual students and continually adjust their teaching in response to the progress that students are making over time.
- Investigate the use of Google Classrooms to enhance the partnership with parents in their child's schooling.