



ACT
Government

Throsby School

Report of Review

Student-Centred Improvement Framework

ACT Education Directorate

Student-Centred Improvement Review Details

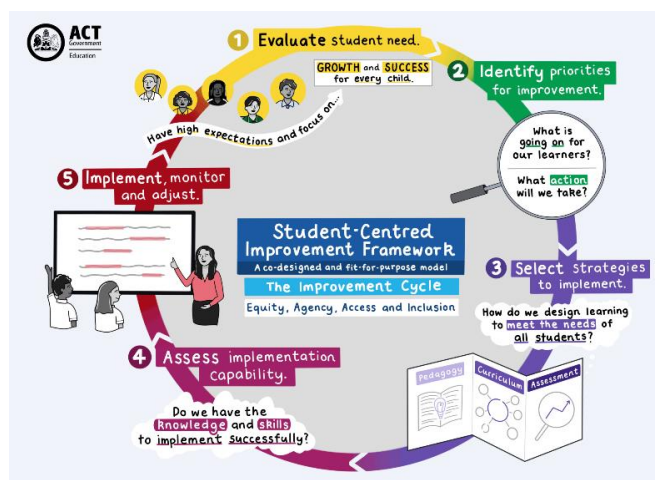
School Review Date:	5 – 7 November 2024
Principal of Review School:	Annamaria Zuffo
Current Improvement Priorities:	Explicit and intentional teaching and learning approaches, and a safe, respectful and restorative school culture
Report Date:	14 November 2024
Review Team Members:	
• Lead Reviewer:	Nicole Nicholson, Principal in Residence, Student-Centred Improvement and Leadership
• Executive Education Leader:	Steve Collins
• Co-Reviewer:	Paula Kinsman, Principal, Kingsford Smith School

Pre-Review Visit

On 23 August 2024, the review team conducted a pre-review visit at Throsby School. The length, format, and lines of inquiry of the external review were based upon evidence collected through school self-evaluation, learning walkthroughs across the school, and discussions with students, staff, and the leadership team. The following Dimensions and Elements were selected as focus areas by the school following self-evaluation:

Dimension	Element
Leading	Effective teaching and learning
Learning	Pedagogy
Wellbeing	Relationships

Overview of the Student-Centred Improvement Framework



The new fit-for-purpose Student-Centred Improvement Framework (the Framework) places students at the centre of school improvement cycles, answering what works for whom, under what circumstances and why, through self-evaluative internal review led by effective and targeted use of data and spirals of inquiry, cross-system collaboration, strategic alignment, and external review. School self-evaluation and external review are complementary processes, both focused on improvement. The school self-evaluation process gives schools a means of identifying and addressing priorities, and of ensuring a whole-school focus on improving

specific aspects of teaching and learning. Schools undergo a standard external school review every three to five years, with most undertaking one every four years. The reviews are supplemented by annual student-centred improvement visits and a pre-review visit.

The external review team consists of:

- a principal within the Student-Centred Improvement and Leadership (SCI&L) team
- an ACT public school principal external to the school under review
- Executive Education Leader for the network of the school under review
- an additional external principal may be engaged for schools with over 700 students.

Through the lens of the Student-Centred Improvement Evaluation Tools, co-designed by ACT public education principals, the review team consider multiple sources of evidence provided by the school alongside the evidence gathered through conversations with staff, students, parents, and community members.

The Evaluation Tools are foundational to the improvement cycle, building the processes and practices for sustained positive impact. They are framed by three dimensions 'Learning', 'Leading' and 'Wellbeing' across which schools need to demonstrate improvement. All three are interlinked, with evidence sources and improvement actions likely to impact multiple dimensions over the course of an improvement cycle. Schools will identify elements within these dimensions to target their improvement actions.

Following the self-evaluation and external review, the school receives an internal planning report, outlining key findings against the Student-Centred Improvement Evaluation Tools, and *Recommended next steps* to support the development of their next School Improvement Plan.

Student-Centred Improvement and Leadership Team

Dimension: Leading

Leading for school improvement empowers inquiry, effective practices and collaboration via a strategic vision that centres the school's values and aspirations as well as perspectives of students, families, teachers, and the wider community. Leaders promote a vision for teaching and learning that is inclusive and values student participation and voice. School improvement is fostered in environments ready for change, in cultures of high expectation and mutual trust, and where staff and students are resourced appropriately to perform at their best.

Element: Effective teaching and learning

Lines of Inquiry

These were co-designed by the review team and school leadership team following the Pre-Review Visit.

1. What systems are in place to support monitoring impact of teaching practices across all learning areas?
2. What has been the professional learning that's having an impact on teaching practices and students, and how do you know?

Findings

- The review team saw and heard evidence of a culture of mutual trust with an emphasis on building an inclusive educational environment that facilitates equitable outcomes.
- Staff, students and parents spoke with the review team about the strong presence of the leadership team in overseeing and supporting the establishment of a values driven whole school culture.
- The review team heard from staff that the leadership team has set the vision to build the conditions to create a consistent approach to teaching and learning across the school from P-6. This is especially evident in their whole school literacy practices and restorative culture.
- The Throsby School values of Curious, Inclusive and Connection are embedded across the school in leadership and teaching and learning documents, learning spaces and wellbeing processes. These provide a common language for Throsby School staff, students and parents.
- The school utilises various forms of evidence, such as common checklists, and PM Benchmark reading data, SENA, rubrics, and writing samples to monitor student progress, particularly in literacy.

- Common planning and transition documents are starting to be developed to help create cohesion across the school. The intent is this will provide data that leadership can use to assess teaching consistency and impact.
- The Throsby School Professional Learning Model describes the emerging structures to build collective capability of staff across the school.
- The distributive leadership model developed through the Values Teams has buy in from all staff and these teams facilitate professional learning opportunities directly related to the school's vision and values.
- Staff at Throsby School reported feeling a high level of trust and autonomy in their work. Staff agency in identifying areas for professional learning was highly valued.
- Some teachers, including new educators, have mentors and there is an emerging culture of sharing practice through lesson observations. The review team heard of staff openness to formalised observations, mentoring and coaching practices across the school.
- There is a staff commitment to school improvement and collaborative planning time. There is staff appetite for greater structures and processes for collaboration and development of consistent teaching and learning practices.

Dimension: Learning

Learning is deeper than the simple acquisition of new understandings, information, knowledge and skills. Learning is fostered in environments of high motivation, engagement and authenticity, enculturating high expectations and reflection, embracing diversity to meet student need. Curriculum and assessment must adhere to obligated standards yet be flexible and targeted enough to uphold the moral imperative of optimising outcomes for all.

Element: Pedagogy

Lines of Inquiry

These were co-designed by the review team and school leadership team following the Pre-Review Visit.

1. What is the planning cycle for curriculum, pedagogy and assessment practices for all students at Throsby School to meet students at point of need?
2. What are Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) that respond to all learners?
3. What are the consistent pedagogical practices across all learning areas at Throsby School?

Findings

- The review team observed calm, supportive and inclusive learning environments where everyone is valued.
- Teachers spoke to the review team of the student-centred approach they took to teaching and learning. Teachers and students spoke of flexible groupings within classes used to help differentiate learning.
- Teams work together through PLCs to discuss effective teaching environments and strategies to build shared pedagogy.
- The review team saw a deliberate culture of inclusion being fostered across the school. Staff, students and families spoke of the well-established culture of inclusion and student-centred practice at Throsby School.
- There are classroom learning routines that support student engagement, especially in the junior years, and an appetite for strengthening school wide consistent application.
- The review team was provided evidence of how the school wide focus on restorative practice creates a universal approach to engaging all learners.

- Learning support staff are valued, knowledgeable and feel a part of the educational landscape at the school. They are strategically included in professional learning and whole school and team meetings.
- Leaders, teachers and learning support staff spoke to the review team about a collaborative approach to developing and implementing individual learning plans to respond effectively to diverse student needs.
- The review team was provided evidence of the Throsby School Inclusion Team structures and referral process.
- The review team saw and heard evidence of individual teachers employing a range of differentiation strategies to support learning alongside same age peers.
- Staff, students and families appreciated and supported the intentional resourcing of the specialist programs and the library.
- The review team was provided evidence of the co-designed vision, belief and intended pedagogical practices for all students at Throsby School.
- Literacy practices have been established and supported across the school. The Ten Essential Literacy Practices are used to ground their literacy pedagogy. This knowledge is being intentionally shared across the school through the Inclusive Values Team.
- The review team observed classroom environments and emerging routines that reflect a student-centred approach to supporting learning for all.
- The Curious Values Team is leading the work of designing common inquiry planning documents to build shared practices across the school.

Dimension: Wellbeing

Wellbeing for learning encompasses a student's physical, mental, emotional and social health at school. Wellbeing is fostered within effective learning cultures where students encounter powerful relevant learning, in safe and accessible environments that cultivate belonging, and where there are positive connections between the purpose of students, their educators, their school and the school community.

Element: Relationships

Lines of Inquiry

These were co-designed by the review team and school leadership team following the Pre-Review Visit.

1. What are the feedback mechanisms for families and opportunities for families to engage with the school and their child's learning?
2. What impact is the 'Real Schools' partnership and restorative culture having in communicating and connecting with community?

Findings

- Students and families spoke highly of visible, accessible and supportive staff at Throsby School.
- Parents told the review team they appreciated the use of SeeSaw, although noted their experience of this differed across year groups.
- Some families expressed a desire for increased communication on how their child is progressing and supports they can provide at home.
- The review team heard staff, students and families speak highly of the key role the Administration team plays in contributing to the positive and inclusive school culture.
- There is a strong restorative culture at Throsby School led by the Connected Values Team, underpinned by the highly visible school values.
- Students use the language of restorative practice in their everyday conversations. Students told the review team they love being at Throsby School and feel their voice is valued.
- The review team saw and heard evidence of how the 'Real Schools' partnership guided the establishment of the Throsby School restorative culture. Staff and students were able to articulate the practices and processes this partnership supported. Students articulated the positive impact on their learning and wellbeing.
- Staff feel connected and valued in their roles and described a positive school wide culture.

- The review team heard of how the cultural induction for staff reinforces the restorative practices within the school and builds their sense of collective identity.

Recommended next steps

- Continue to identify agreed pedagogical practices which are responsive to the needs of all students and applied consistently across the school.
- Establish assessment and data practices with consideration for the purpose, monitoring and use of multiple sources of evidence to track growth and target student need.
- Redefine PLC structures and practices to focus on recurring cycles of collective inquiry informed by evidence to track student growth.
- Strengthen structures and processes to support individual and collective staff capability as the school grows.