

TEACHING AND LEARNING AUDIT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – DENISON SS

DATE OF AUDIT: 9-10 JULY 2013



Background:

Denison SS is located in the regional centre of Emerald. The school provides an educational program for approximately 490 students from Prep - Year 7. The school's focus on reading is being well supported through resources provided by the Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association.

Commendations:

- There has been significant progress made since the previous Teaching and Learning Audit in the domains of Systematic Curriculum Delivery, Differentiated Classroom Learning and Effective Teaching Practices
- The explicit improvement agenda, with a focus on reading, numeracy and explicit instruction, has been communicated to staff members and parents. This is articulated in the Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) and strongly supported by the Building Performance Strategy plans. Teachers and teacher aides reflected positively on the support being provided by the pedagogy coach.
- The school's improvement agenda has been effective in focusing the whole schools' attention on the core learning priorities. Five week data cycles have indicated that student performance in these areas is showing good improvements.
- The Principal and Deputy Principal regularly visit classrooms. Teachers have participated in a classroom observation by the Principal which included written feedback. A collegial coaching framework is being implemented to facilitate peer feedback, around an agreed framework.
- A positive school ethos has been built around high expectations and strong commitment from both teachers and teacher aides to academic excellence. There is a strong collegial culture of mutual trust and support amongst all staff members and school leaders.

Affirmations:

- Teachers have implemented Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units in English, mathematics, history and science and have reflected on how best to address the curriculum requirements of multi-age classes.
- The class teachers have started to set English, mathematics and general learning goals, with students, in a self-improvement contract and were monitoring progress towards these goals.
- Student assessment folios have assisted parents to better understand the requirements of the academic program.
- The Australian Research Council Linkage Project has assisted teachers in Years 4 - 7 to analyse reading data and develop teaching focuses.

Recommendations:

- Continue to develop school wide instructional models that will specifically support the explicit improvement agenda. Ensure clarity about: what students are expected to learn and be able to do; high expectations of every student's learning; explicit teaching of skills and content, individualised attention as required; and timely feedback to guide student actions.
- Continue to provide professional development aimed at building staff members' data literacy skills. Use literacy and numeracy data to identify gaps in student learning, to monitor improvement over time and to monitor growth across the years of school.
- Continue to support and encourage teachers to cater for individual differences by offering multiple means of representation, engagement and expression. Provide opportunities to share best practice. Ensure that planning documents reflect the daily adjustments necessary to achieve this.
- Continue to build team networks within the school with the aim to develop teachers' expert knowledge and skills and facilitate the sharing of highly effective evidence based teaching strategies.
- Build stronger linkages between the Developing Performance Framework and the associated processes with the whole school Professional Learning Plan and the explicit improvement agenda.