

TEACHING AND LEARNING AUDIT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – WITHCOTT SS

DATE OF AUDIT: 08 OCTOBER 2012



Background:

Withcott SS is located in the Lockyer Valley, 10 kilometres east of Toowoomba. The school has a student population of 261, including 11 Indigenous students. The school Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is 995.

Commendations:

- Since the previous audit, the school has developed comprehensive data collection processes, in line with a whole school data plan, stored centrally and accessible to all teachers on the school network. Data collected is analysed by teachers to identify appropriate starting points for teaching and to personalise teaching and learning activities for students.
- The school curriculum framework has developed considerably as well, with a clear documented plan outlining curriculum expectations in all key learning areas in all year levels. This includes a school wide planning template used for key learning areas other than English, mathematics and science.
- The school has a process in place, with teacher agreement, for coaching and mentoring. This process is closely aligned with current school developmental priorities – reading and explicit teaching.
- Staff morale is generally high with good working relationships evident between staff members.

Affirmations:

- Students at the school express pride in their school. They comment strongly about the positive relationships between students and between students and staff members. This perspective is supported by members of the Parents and Citizens Association, who also commented on the positive relationship between parents and staff members at the school.
- The school vision is driven by three guiding principles: I am responsible; I take pride; I have goals. These principles are embedded within the culture of the school and inform school planning and activities.
- Classrooms are calm, but busy, with interruptions to teaching time kept to a minimum.

Recommendations:

- Continue the development of a whole school pedagogical framework to inform teaching and learning in all classrooms and in all key learning areas. Ensure the inclusion of appropriate strategies, pedagogies and processes to address higher order thinking skills.
- Refine current goal setting processes across the school to provide a consistency of expectations in terms of how and when goals are developed, when they are reviewed, how they are used to improve student outcomes and how they are communicated to parents.
- Clarify and sharpen the school improvement agenda, clearly identifying the linkages between the agenda and student performance targets and timelines.
- Implement a process that encourages the sharing of good teaching practice across the school so that consistent approaches to all elements of teaching and learning can be collegially developed. Ensure differentiation practices which currently exist in some classrooms across the school are included in this.

