



# School Improvement Unit Report

## Upper Coomera State College Executive Summary





## 1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Upper Coomera State College** from **24 to 27 October 2016**.

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 consider in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies which prioritise future directions for improvement.

The 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.

An action plan will be developed and submitted to SIU and region within six weeks of the school receiving the report.

For more information about the SIU and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SIU [website](#).

### 1.1 Review team

Liam Smith	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Garry Lacey	Internal reviewer, SIU
Peter Kelly	Peer reviewer
Raylene Fysh	External reviewer

## 1.2 School context

<b>Location:</b>	Reserve Road, Upper Coomera
<b>Education region:</b>	South East Region
<b>Year opened:</b>	2002
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 12
<b>Enrolment:</b>	2113
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	5 per cent
<b>Students with disability enrolment percentage:</b>	12 per cent
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	971
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2016 (acting)
<b>Full-time equivalent staff:</b>	151
<b>Significant partner schools:</b>	Highland Reserve State School, Coomera State School, Coomera Springs State School, Helensvale State High School, Pacific Pines State High School, Pimpama State Secondary College, Saint Stephen's College (Prep-Year 12), Assisi Catholic College (Prep-Year 12), Coomera Anglican College (Prep-Year 12)
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	Gold Coast City Council Community Centre, LJ Hooker Coomera, Gold Coast Academy of Sport, Ray White Upper Coomera, Stratco, Wesley Mission, North Gold Coast Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL), Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Gold Coast, Aurora Training Institute, Yamaha
<b>Significant school programs:</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), Athlete and Sport Development Programs - Emerging Stars Sports Excellence Program and Future Stars Program, IGNITE/Shine (social and emotional wellbeing), RISE (Results from Individualised Support for Excellence) Program



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Executive principal, two Heads of School, associate principal, five deputy principals, two Heads of Special Education Services (HOSES), Head of Curriculum (HOC) - junior school, 12 Heads of Departments (HOD), secondary campus deans, STEM HOD, specialist science and music teachers, secondary sport coordinator, 24 junior school classroom teachers, 18 secondary teachers, five Special Education Program (SEP) teachers, 12 teacher aides, two guidance officers, Prep to Year 12 literacy team, behaviour support teacher, Support Teachers Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN) - junior and secondary, youth support coordinator, Business Services Manager (BSM), administration staff members, information technology manager, members of the school's facilities team, volunteer coordinator, home reading/school banking volunteers, parent council members, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president community relations officer, community education counsellor, industry liaison officer, junior school captains, senior school captains and prefects, 27 parents and 126 students

Community and business groups:

- School-based police officer and Upper Coomera Neighbourhood Watch president

Partner colleges and other educational providers:

- Coomera Springs State School, Highland Reserve State School and Community Kids Coomera - early childhood provider

Government and departmental representatives:

- State Member for Albert, Federal Member for Forde and ARD



## 1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2016	Explicit Improvement Agenda 2016
Investing for Success 2016	Strategic Plan 2014-2017
OneSchool	School Data Profile (2016 Semester 2)
Comprehensive Reading Framework 2016	School budget overview
School improvement targets	Responsible Behaviour Plan
School pedagogical framework	School Opinion Survey
School newsletters, website and principal blog	Junior School Reading Intervention process
Junior school data collection and analysis plan 2016	Headline Indicators (2016 interim release)



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

**In classrooms across the college teaching practices reflect the belief that, although students are at different stages of their learning and may be progressing at different rates, all students are capable of learning successfully.**

Teachers are encouraging their students and regularly articulate a strong desire to see students succeed. Teachers strive to adapt their practices to the cultural needs of their students and are aware of the differing requirements of their students.

**The leadership team and staff members identify that a significant opportunity exists to strengthen a Prep to Year 12 culture, united through a cohesive vision.**

Staff and college leaders express a willingness and a desire to strengthen and enact an authentic Prep to Year 12 college vision and are optimistic about the possible future for the college.

**The leadership team has established an improvement agenda in reading, implementing Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L), engaging teachers in Professional Learning Teams (PLT) and improving attendance.**

Conversations with staff members across the college demonstrate their commitment to continual improvement in teaching and learning practices and the improvement agenda. Teachers speak positively regarding their college and the students. All stakeholders express a desire to maintain a consistent focus on the same agenda for a prolonged period of time.

**The college uses its financial and flexible staffing resources to create a number of key positions across the college to support and promote the improvement agenda.**

Staff members articulate a belief that the roles and responsibilities of these positions are not always clear. Staff members express a desire for greater clarity and consistency in these roles.

**PB4L is identified as a key improvement strategy to improve behaviour.**

Aspects of the program have been implemented including a behaviour focus of the week and the associated explicit teaching of the focus. A matrix explaining major and minor behaviours has been developed. A consistent approach by staff members regarding its use is not apparent. The college PB4L committee has been disbanded, whilst its future governance structure is under consideration. The primary campus PB4L committee is still in operation.



**The executive principal expresses a commitment to implementing curriculum relating to learning areas aligned to the Australian Curriculum (AC) and syllabus developed by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA).**

A coherent and sequenced whole-college curriculum, assessment and reporting plan aligned to the AC and QCAA which makes clear agreed expectations for teaching and learning across all learning areas and the years of schooling is yet to be developed. It is apparent that Quality Assurance (QA) and review processes to track, monitor and audit the enacted curriculum and its alignment to the AC content descriptions and achievement standards are yet to be fully established.

**A pedagogical framework has been developed which is based on the Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (DoTL).**

The principal and staff members indicate this document is not widely referred to during curriculum planning processes or teaching and learning experiences. Teachers express frustration regarding the frequent changes to the 'preferred pedagogies' with particular reference to the teaching of reading.

## **2.2 Key improvement strategies**

Engage the college community in developing a cohesive Prep to Year 12 vision for the college underpinned by collaboratively agreed processes and practices which are consistently implemented.

Ensure the improvement agenda is narrow and sharp and remains the constant focus of the college and the associated strategies are maintained over an extended period of time.

Define a clear governance structure for the college with associated roles, responsibilities, and key deliverables for all college leaders in driving the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA).

Reconvene the Prep to Year 12 campus PB4L committee, inclusive of key stakeholder representation, with a view to establishing clear and consistent processes and procedures which are implemented with fidelity by all staff members.

Develop a whole-college curriculum plan aligned to the AC and QCAA which makes clear what teachers should teach and students should learn, including general capabilities, cross-curriculum priorities and Common Curriculum Elements (CCE) across all learning areas and the years of schooling.

Review the school's pedagogical framework to strengthen staff member understanding and consistent implementation of agreed high-yield strategies.