

Burrowes State School

Action Plan Final Report





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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a 12-month check-in review at **Burrowes State School** on **25 June 2020**. It provides an evaluation of the school's performance against the 12-month action plan developed by the school in consultation with the Assistant Regional Director (ARD).

The 12-month check-in was completed by staff from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB). For more information regarding the EIB and school reviews please visit the [website](#).

1.1 School context

Location:	Third Avenue, Marsden
Education region:	South East Region
Year opened:	1987
Year levels:	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment:	751
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	6.8 per cent
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	12.4 per cent – Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD)
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	938
Year principal appointed:	2019
Full-time equivalent teachers:	60
Significant partner schools:	Crestmead State School, Berrinba East State School, Marsden State High School – Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), Woodridge State High School, Kingston College
Significant community partnerships:	Playgroup – school funded, Logan Together – through Early Years Network, Chaplaincy including work with many community organisations, Burrowes State School Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C)
Significant school programs:	Positive Behaviour For Learning (PBL), Respectful Relationships, Prep Start & Early Start, Strong Foundations, AVID – emerging, Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI), English as an Additional or Dialect (EAL/D), Art Therapy, Rhythm to Recovery, Solid Pathways



1.2 Review team

The review was conducted by:

Stephen Bobby	Senior reviewer, EIB (case manager)
Ray Johnston	Senior reviewer
Darren Marsh	Reviewer

1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following contributed to the 12-month review:

- a desktop review of the school's performance data and other school information
- consultation with the school's ARD
- a school visit of up to one day, and
- interviews with relevant staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
 - Principal
 - Four deputy principals
 - Two Heads of Curriculum (HOC)
 - Guidance officer
 - Head of Special Education Services (HOSES)
 - 34 classroom and specialist teachers
 - 17 teacher aides
 - 35 students



2. EIB monitoring

2.1 Action plan improvement strategies

The 12-month review looked at how the school implemented the improvement strategies from the action plan with the support of the region.

- Collaboratively develop whole-school approaches for managing student behaviour to enable consistent implementation of agreed strategies that promote high expectations of a safe, supportive and disciplined learning environment.
- Refine the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) to have a narrow and sharp focus and support teachers to implement agreed strategies that are regularly monitored by school leaders to promote high levels of consistent practice. Focus area – reading.

2.2 Action plan check-ins

The 12-month review was preceded by the following visits:

Three month	August 2019
Six month	November 2019
Nine month	February 2020



3. Findings

3.1 School performance data

School enrolment at the time of the final action plan report as indicated by the school is 751. This represents a slight decline in the enrolment number for 2019 of 775, as indicated by the 2020 Semester 1 School Data Profile.

OneSchool indicates the attendance rate for 2020, year-to-date, is 88.2 per cent with 30.3 per cent of students attending less than 85.0 per cent of school days.

2019 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data indicates that the Year 3 participation rates range from 81.5 per cent to 84.8 per cent compared with the 2008 participation rates that ranged from 98.9 per cent to 100.0 per cent. Year 5 participation rates in 2019 range from 91.7 per cent to 93.3 per cent. This compares with the Year 5 2008 participation rate that ranged from 97.8 per cent to 98.9 per cent.

2019 NAPLAN data indicates Mean Scale Score (MSS) achievement is similar to Similar Queensland State Schools (SQSS) in writing and spelling, and below SQSS in reading, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. Year 5 MSS achievement is similar to SQSS in all strands.

2019 Year 3 Upper Two Bands (U2B) achievement is above SQSS in spelling and below in the other strands. Year 5 U2B achievement is similar to SQSS across all strands except grammar and punctuation which is below SQSS.

Year 3 performance at or above the National Minimum Standards (NMS) is equal to Queensland State Schools (QSS) achievement in reading, similar in writing with a variance of 0.7 per cent, and below QSS in the other strands. Year 5 NMS achievement is above QSS in writing, below in grammar and punctuation, and similar to QSS in reading, spelling and numeracy with a variance of 0.9 per cent, 0.4 per cent and 0.6 per cent respectively.

In the 2019 School Opinion Survey (SOS), 63 staff responded with 100.0 per cent of participants agreeing to the survey statement 'This school looks for ways to improve'. 100.0 per cent of teaching staff participants agree with the statements 'I feel confident applying evidence-based teaching and learning practices' and 'I feel confident in my knowledge of evidence-based teaching and learning practices'.

Student responses in the 2019 SOS indicate agreement with the statement 'Student behaviour is well managed at my school' increased from 72.5 per cent to 86.8 per cent from the previous year. This is positive change of 14.3 per cent.

2019 SOS parent responses indicate a 96.0 per cent agreement with the statement: 'Teachers at this school are interested in my child's wellbeing'. 88.2 per cent agree with the statement 'This school keeps me well informed'. This is a positive change of 30.3 per cent from the 2018 SOS results.



3.2 Regional support

ARD support:

The school's ARD has provided ongoing support to the school and the principal. This support has focused on the key improvement actions as identified in the school's action plan and included:

- regular contact including visits to the school, phone conversations and emails
- discussion regarding the implementation of the four-year strategic plan and action plan
- establishment and monitoring of targets
- provision of support in data analysis including analysis of headline indicators and the data profile
- provision of observation and feedback for the leadership team and staff members
- leadership coaching and mentoring of the school's leadership team regarding feedback using the learning walks and talks process

Regional support:

- ARD, Principal Advisor Education Services (PA-ES), Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) coach, Inclusion Coach and Principal Advisor – Teaching and Learning (PATaL) provided case management support through Intentional Collaboration for School Improvement process to refine improvement goals and map out the 12-month action plan
- Principal Education Advisor – Australian Curriculum (PEA-AC) provided support that included:
 - capability building regarding the AC, three levels of planning and the P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework (P-12 CARF)
 - facilitation of a cycle of inquiry on reading
 - Professional Development (PD) for staff on the AC and three levels of planning
 - PD in data literacy, learning walks and talks and the literacy continuum
 - PD regarding the implementation of Early Start tool
- PBL coach provided support including:
 - PD for staff members
 - support for facilitating PBL teams
 - assistance in reviewing the school framework and code of behaviour



3.3 Observations and general findings

The principal has taken personal accountability to improve the teaching and learning outcomes for all students in the school. The principal was appointed to the school just prior to the EIB conducting the school 'in-cycle' review. The principal used the key improvement strategies outlined in the review to create a sense of urgency within the staff for change. Staff articulate that the principal has been clear about the desire to realise changed practices and processes aligned to the key improvement strategies.

The principal has moved the school to focus on the consistent implementation of PBL and building teachers' ability to make discerning pedagogical choices in the teaching of reading. All school leaders articulate high expectations within these focus areas. These expectations are reflected in the practice of the majority of teachers.


The principal used instructional leadership skills to work with all middle leaders to develop actions plans for each of the improvement focus areas. During the case management period middle leaders have led the implementation of these action plans, with the principal providing guiding oversight and support. Teachers articulate that the principal's leadership style is well received. Teaching staff members comment that they feel the principal is invested in the school and its students and displays a genuine intent and support for everyone to improve. Teachers express that during the case management process the principal and other school leaders have demonstrated the intentional desire to foster a strong sense of collegiality with all staff.

The school has embarked on a strategic, deliberate and staged approach to its implementation of a whole-school reading strategy. This includes the mapping of future steps into 2022 in a scoping document. A feature of this approach has been a focus on support for teachers that takes into account their current knowledge and skills, their learning styles and their self-identified goals for learning.

Conversations with teachers reveal strong support for the reading improvement agenda. They appreciate that the work has been broken down into staged steps, firstly modelled reading and, more recently, guided reading. Teachers are able to articulate examples of how this narrow and targeted approach has resulted in changes to their classroom practice. In particular, many teachers speak about a much clearer understanding of the purpose of guided reading and the variety of associated strategies they are able to use.

The school's reading framework provides a clear guide for the work, both presently and into the future, and serves as a useful, research-informed roadmap for the school. Using the framework, leaders and some teachers point to 'The Big Six of Reading' as an example of potential next steps in the school's reading improvement journey.

Teachers articulate that their confidence and competence in the teaching of reading have strengthened and continue to do so. They refer to modelling Ways of Working (WOW) by teachers and leaders as particularly helpful in this journey, as is observation and the feedback they receive. There is a growing culture of teachers feeling safe to be vulnerable and to ask for assistance. Teachers state they feel supported by colleagues.



Improvements in modelled reading have been assisted by professional learning, sharing during professional learning team meetings, coaching, production of videos, templates that scaffold observation and feedback, one-page guides for teachers, and the production of exemplars. Similar support is being rolled out for guided reading.

Teachers comment they now see modelled and guided reading as manifestations of the 'I do' and 'We do' aspects of the school's pedagogical approach. They particularly refer to the front-ending for students of the goals of modelled or guided reading sessions as a part of their recent learning.

During the modelled reading phase of the reading improvement action plan, three teachers volunteered to become WOW teachers. As the reading improvement action plan agenda moved to guided reading, 11 teachers volunteered to become WOW teachers, citing the success and value of the program as a determining factor. This is a highly valued strategy that has additionally strengthened and accelerated capability across the school.

Teachers highly value the professional learning teams that meet weekly. Data is informing teacher discussion in these teams. Teachers refer to the use of data walls as a means of identifying selected students for targeted teaching, deciding on a problem of practice in the area of reading, and collegially discussing how to address improvement for targeted students. Many teachers relate this has 'spill over' effects in their teaching of the rest of the class.

The school's intention is that students will be able to articulate their present reading level and their next steps for improvement. This is an emerging practice.

A school-purchased speech pathologist has provided additional expertise that has led to the production of a scope and sequence chart that focuses on phonological awareness, phonics, spelling and word study. This document incorporates links to achievement standards in the AC and has provided greater clarity for the teaching of literacy in the early years.

The PBL team has enacted the school's PBL action plan across the school that focuses on 'Pride at Burrowes'. The plan includes clear actions, outcomes – success criteria, strategies, resources, evidence of impact and artefacts. The PBL team regularly reviews the plan to maintain progress and make necessary adjustments as determined by the PBL team and school staff.

Teachers report that there is consistent use of PBL language that is part of normal daily conversations throughout classrooms and the playground. Teachers articulate that there is a clear understanding and implementation of the whole-school developed MINOR and MAJORS behaviour matrix. They recognise that this has helped to support the implementation of the whole-school behaviour expectations and school rules of '*Safe, Responsible, Respectful and Learner*'.

Students clearly articulate their understanding of the school's PBL expectations and school superheroes of Mr Responsible and Ms Safe that are clearly signposted throughout the school. They refer to the introduction of rewards day at the end of each term whereby



students earn reward points for following the school rules. Rewards day is based on students achieving a behaviour level that aligns to a levelled reward at the end of the term. Teacher aides report a desire to provide PBL points in line with teachers in order to encourage and reinforce appropriate student behaviour.

With regional support, School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) data has recently been collected with marked improvements in each of the identified areas. The school had set a target of being a PBL Tier 1 school and has successfully achieved this goal. The PBL team acknowledges that PBL is an ongoing focus at the school with some teachers reporting that their full understanding of the suite of PBL policies and procedures is developing. This is particularly apparent for staff members new to the school.

A 2020 PBL Handbook folder is developed by the PBL team and is used by teachers to reinforce the whole-school agreed PBL processes and protocols. Teachers refer to the folders that are kept in their classroom for quick reference and clarification of expected practices.

Weekly PBL lessons are developed by teachers and recorded by the school chaplain. Focus areas are determined through the analysis of whole-school behaviour data. They are taught every Monday at the same time throughout the school. School leaders conduct walkthroughs at this time to support lesson implementation and to provide Quality Assurance (QA).

Behaviour support is provided to teachers by school leaders in addition to PBL support staff. A referral process known as request for behaviour management support is enacted at the school. Teachers are able to seek behaviour support for students, and themselves, to further develop their capability. A Tier 3 referral process is available for high 'at-risk' students identified by teachers or school leaders.

A significant reduction in student minor and major behaviours, and School Disciplinary Absences (SDAs) for Semester 1 2020 – 126 in comparison to 2019 – 180, has been achieved. Teachers and school leaders attribute this to the consistent implementation of school expectations.

Teachers interviewed report increased student happiness and engagement whilst at school. This improved engagement is supported by an increase in the allocation of student reward points. Students articulate their continued desire to collect rewards points for appropriate behaviours.

Staff report an improved confidence in understanding the whole-school PBL model and how the processes and policies impact on student relationships and engagement. They articulate a desire to further deepen their capability to implement the expected practice through coaching, observation and feedback.



4. Outcomes

The EIB recognises the emerging school improvements that have been initiated over the past 12 months.

The principal and other school leaders have led a sincere learning journey process aligned to the agreed action plans. The principal, as an instructional leader, has led and built the capability of middle leaders in this work. High expectations and levels of trust have been built in the school during the case management period. Teachers feel valued and supported by school leaders in improving their capability and in supporting their classroom practice. Staff believe that leaders are concerned with their wellbeing and comment that individual support and assistance are available. A strong sense of optimism for the future is apparent in the school.

Teachers are able to articulate common school-wide expectations for the implementation of PBL and are consciously aware of the enhanced skills in the delivery of modelled and guided reading lessons and express the desire to build upon these skills. School leaders are implementing processes to gain a line of sight into classroom and out-of-classroom practice. There is a genuine commitment demonstrated by all staff to improve the learning outcomes of students. Staff comment that there is now a greater focus on teaching and learning in the school.

School leaders and teachers are aware that there is further work to be done to build their skills in the teaching of reading and are looking forward to participating in further professional learning offered by the school reading improvement team. They are aware of the need to continue the focus on reading to fully embed consistent expected practice in the school.

The school has achieved its goal of being a Tier 1 PBL school. The behaviour improvement team is continuing to develop and refine the processes to support and manage student behaviour. Staff and students are able to discuss current ways of working to support and encourage appropriate behaviour as well as approaches implemented for responses to inappropriate behaviour. Staff and students are able to detail the school reward processes and value its outcomes. Some students indicate that whilst all teachers are using the rewards process of merit points, they articulate that consistency between teachers for points allocation is yet to be fully realised. Staff discuss that there are clearer and more consistent responses to behaviour. School leaders, teachers and students comment on the improved behaviour of students. They describe a greater sense of calm and orderliness, both in class and out of class.

The Regional Director and ARD are committed to continuing their close support and guidance for the leadership team at the school.



5. Next steps

- Maintain the focus on the teaching of reading to build an embedded approach across the school and ensure that the teaching of reading is planned alongside curriculum implementation.
- Consider differentiated professional learning opportunities and expanding professional learning to teacher aides.
- Consider at an appropriate point in the future benchmarking your work in reading against other similar school practices and/or accessing external expertise.
- Extend communication strategies to ensure all non-teaching staff have a sense of full engagement with school improvement agendas.
- Deepen modelling, observation and feedback processes in the school over time to provide rigorous constructive feedback to teachers aligned to priority areas of improvement.
- Continue to work with regional PBL advisors to implement the SET tool observations to provide data that will guide your next steps in the implementation of PBL in the school.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings from the 12-month review, and information gathered at the previous three-month check-ins, the EIB concludes:

There is sufficient implementation of the key improvement strategies for the EIB to finalise its support and monitoring of **Burrowes State School**.