



St Thomas the Apostle Primary School, KAMBAH

Annual Improvement Plan

2017

School Context:

St Thomas the Apostle is a Catholic Primary School located in Kambah catering for students from Kindergarten - Year 6. The school has an enrolment of 292 students placed in 12 classes: two classes per year level K-2, with three multi-age Year 3/4 classes and three multi-age Year 5/6 classes. Students attending the school come from a variety of backgrounds and nationalities which consist of 151 male and 141 female students; 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage students; and 27 students with a Language Background other than English (LBOTE).

The school currently employs 31 staff comprising 23 teachers and 8 non-teaching staff, the latter being employed in a variety of capacities including secretarial, janitorial, learning support who work diligently for the families of the school. St Thomas the Apostle School is an inclusive school and welcomes students with a variety of educational needs. Staff, students, parents and Catholic Education personnel work collaboratively ensuring, to the best of their ability, that the needs of all students are met. St Thomas the Apostle School uses a model of shared student leadership where all senior students have a leadership role across a number of areas including Fun and Fitness, Hospitality, Technology and Environment. The belief is that all students are potential leaders who, given the opportunity and support, will grow and develop in the knowledge, attitude and skills necessary for wider areas of influence.

The School Improvement Plan 2017 has a number of focus areas.

Student's engagement in their learning is seen as a key attribute to improving student outcomes and we will continue with this focus from 2016. Use of the learning from the whole system professional learning conference 'Yearn to Learn' is also envisaged as a springboard to guide future directions,

- Our COSA+ officer will be involved in providing professional development and supporting staff in pedagogical change.
- E.L.I (literacy and numeracy) teachers will provide targeted intervention based on 2016 data and lead professional learning opportunities for staff.
- The embedding of the inquiry process as a means of 'putting learners in the driving seat.'
- The continuation of our focus on student engagement and student voice in classrooms.

We will be adopting instructional leadership practices across the school to implement Early Learning Initiatives literacy and Numeracy with a focus on targeted intervention in the K-2 area.

The health and well-being of our community remains high on our agenda with the continued implementation of the KidsMatter program and the roll out of the recommendations of the SWPB committee. We have applied for the wellbeing grant to bolster this process and to establish a 'wellbeing' committee to create the School's Wellbeing Framework. This will include updating all policies, procedures and practices around staff, student and parent wellbeing, welfare and behaviour and implementing the NEW initiatives for 2017.

School Review Process

The School Improvement Framework seeks to integrate the statutory requirements for the Registration of Archdiocesan schools with a cyclical model for school development. The program operates within a cycle and has a focus on schools being engaged in a model of self-review, using the *National School Improvement Tool*.

Internal School Review (ISR) is an evaluative process for regular reflection and review of the school. The ISR process is coordinated by the School Leadership Team, with input from staff and members of the school community. It is underpinned by evidence and making judgments about the school's capacity in 10 inter-related domains.

The 10 domains are 1. An explicit improvement agenda 2. Analysis and discussion of data 3. A culture that promotes learning 4. Targeted use of school resources 5. An expert teaching team 6. Systematic curriculum delivery 7. Differentiated teaching and learning 8. Effective pedagogical practices 9. School-community partnerships 10. Catholic identity and faith formation

Verification of the self-review will be provided by personnel from the Catholic Education Office.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan is a national plan that commits all schools to a unified approach to close the gap in education outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The plan contains six principles and from, these principles the following outcomes are most significant for our school. The outcomes are achieved by implementing a school improvement plan that is based around *the National School Improvement Tool*.

- All compulsory school-aged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are enrolled in school and progressing through schooling at the same rate as non-Indigenous students.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are engaged in and benefiting from schooling.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and communities are empowered through the promotion of their identity, culture and leadership in community partnerships with providers of early childhood and school education.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are meeting basic literacy and numeracy standards and overall levels of literacy and numeracy achievement are improving.
- High performing principals and teachers are effective in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students benefit from school leaders who have a strong understanding of their students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

National Safe Schools Framework

The *National Safe Schools Framework* provides Australian schools with a vision and a set of guiding principles that assist school communities to develop positive and practical student safety and wellbeing policies.

The vision is supported by guiding principles for safe, supportive and respectful school communities. These guiding principles emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing for effective learning in all school settings.

Australian schools:

- commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence-based approach
- affirm the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe at school
- acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning
- accept responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfill the school's child protection responsibilities
- encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued
- actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe

These guiding principles are achieved by implementing a school improvement plan that is based around the *National School Improvement Tool*.

Improvement Area 1		Principles of Pedagogy	National Reform Directions	
6. Systematic curriculum delivery		2. A deep understanding of curriculum provides content and context for learning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality Teaching <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Empowered School Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Student Needs <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency and Accountability
Key Improvement Goal 1 <i>What do you want to achieve?</i> <i>What change do you want to see?</i>	To develop teacher and student understanding and use of higher order thinking skills and the guided inquiry process.			

Success Measures/Targets	Evidence	Strategies
<i>What is the specific, measurable target you want to meet?</i>	<i>What types of data will be collected as evidence? (student learning; demographic; perceptual/observational; school process)</i>	<i>What specific strategies will be used to achieve Improvement Goal 1? Who are the key personnel?</i>
Teachers and students use a common language to describe how they inquire, think and learn in the classroom.	Evaluation of programs highlighting various strategies. Assessment tasks with rubrics. Classroom displays outlining the 'guided inquiry' process and Habits of Mind.' Student surveys and interviews focussed on describing how they think and learn best. A common language to discuss thinking and learning evident in classroom observations and staff meetings.	Using the MAPPEN guided inquiry program as a basis teachers undertake professional development in: the guided inquiry process, Habits of Mind, Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, Blooms Taxonomy, Thinking Tools, Reflective Practice, Cooperative Learning Strategies and Assessment Rubrics. Teachers undertake professional development on other models of inquiry, e.g. Kath Murdoch model Students are taught how to identify their own preferred learning styles from a variety of learning styles. Teachers use Blooms Taxonomy and De Bono's Thinking Hats as a way to develop higher order thinking in students. By the end of a two-year cycle students will have been explicitly taught the 16 Habits of Mind. Students regularly reflect on learning tasks as part of their learning. Collaborative learning skills are explicitly modelled in classrooms. A focus on a viable scope and sequence of the Australian Curriculum learning areas of HASS, Science, the Health Strand, Cross Curriculum Priorities and The General Capabilities is implemented and evaluated.
Review <i>What processes will be used to review the results?</i>	It is intended that staff undertake a vigorous evaluation of the MAPPEN program, especially the Professional Learning components, at the end of each term with a decision as to whether to proceed for another 12 month's dependent on the level of satisfaction and results achieved with the program. Student survey and perception data will be compared at the beginning and end of the year.	

Focus Area:

Improvement Area 2		Principles of Pedagogy	National Reform Directions	
3. A culture that promotes learning		4. Positive relationships are at the heart of effective teaching	<input type="checkbox"/> Quality Teaching <input type="checkbox"/> Quality Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Empowered School Leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting Student Needs <input type="checkbox"/> Transparency and Accountability X Wellbeing Project
Key Improvement Goal 2 <i>What do you want to achieve?</i> <i>What change do you want to see?</i>	The implementation of a comprehensive and cohesive school wellbeing program that provides practical strategies and support for all in our community who face mental health and behavioural issues.			

Success Measures/Targets	Evidence	Strategies
<i>What is the specific, measurable target you want to meet?</i>	<i>What types of data will be collected as evidence? (student learning; demographic; perceptual/observational; school process)</i>	<i>What specific strategies will be used to achieve Improvement Goal 1? Who are the key personnel?</i>
<p>Our school community feels supported and connected by the school in developing and maintaining positive relationships.</p> <p>All students are supported to achieve the best possible educational outcomes with learning plans in place for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with disabilities • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students 	<p>Publication of the school's Wellbeing program including the review of key policies such as the SWPB, Student Welfare and Management and Pastoral Care policies.</p> <p>Staff, student and parent School Surveys evidencing higher levels of personal wellbeing and greater level of support being provided.</p> <p>Completion of Component 3 and 4 of the KidsMatter Framework.</p> <p>Staff and Parent attendance at wellbeing presentations.</p> <p>Staff attendance at professional learning targeting student behaviour management and their own wellbeing.</p> <p>Implementation of Circle Time and S.E.L. in the classroom.</p> <p>Refurbishment of outdoor learning space and use by students.</p> <p>Anecdotal and perceptual data around wellbeing</p>	<p>Establish a 'wellbeing' committee to create the School's Wellbeing Framework. This will include updating all policies, procedures and practices around staff, student and parent wellbeing, welfare and behaviour and implementing the NEW initiatives for 2017,</p> <p>Investigate and implement practical ways to impact positively on staff mental health and wellbeing including the provision of 'Wellbeing Packages' to teachers,</p> <p>Support teacher wellbeing by building their capacity through professional development to assist students with high behavioural needs,</p> <p>Implement the committee recommendations from the 2016 School Wide Positive Behaviour Program review,</p> <p>Continue to implement KidsMatter Component 3 and 4,</p> <p>Implement Circle Time in classrooms as a means to highlight student voice and concerns,</p> <p>Continue to implement the 'Second Step' Social and Emotional Learning program across all grades,</p> <p>Refurbish our outdoor enclosed learning space to cater for students with complex needs,</p> <p>Provide additional support to parents and families by providing a guest speaker on Wellbeing and embedding School TV (multimedia guidance and support for dealing with issues relating to children) as part of our website with a focus on mental health and wellbeing,</p> <p>Continue with weekly newsletter articles from the 'Parentingideas' website run by Michael Grose.</p>
<p>Review <i>What processes will be used to review the results?</i></p>	Evaluation and review of the project will occur based on pre and post data gathered and on achievement and implementation of the strategies outlined. The Wellbeing Committee, which will have at least two members of the leadership team involved, will be responsible for undertaking this review and will report back to the staff and the community.	

Focus Area: Wellbeing Project School Improvement Project

Literacy/Numeracy Improvement		Principles of Pedagogy	Key Focus	
8. Effective pedagogical practices		1. Everyone can learn	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COSA+ <input type="checkbox"/> Learning & Teaching Facilitator <input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Project	<input type="checkbox"/> NSW State Literacy & Numeracy
Inquiry Focus <i>What do you want to achieve?</i> <i>What change do you want to see?</i>		In what ways can we shift our classroom practice to focus on 'student centred learning'?		

Success Measures/Targets	Evidence	Strategies
<i>What is the specific, measurable target you want to meet?</i>	<i>What types of data will be collected as evidence? (student learning; demographic; perceptual/observational; school process)</i>	<i>What specific strategies will be used to achieve Improvement Goal 1? Who are the key personnel?</i>
Evidence demonstrates that students have a greater say in deciding what they learn and how they learn in their classroom.	Observation of classrooms by teacher peers and self-evaluation using 'SWIVL' recording technology. Student survey data on attitudes towards and satisfaction with learning. Survey data on student engagement compared to surveys undertaken in 2016. Evaluation of programs reflecting change in practice. Perceptual data gathered through observation and anecdotal records.	Our COSA+ project will focus on teacher professional development and classroom practices that support 'student centred learning' and builds the capacity to address the needs of every child including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the learning from the whole system professional learning conference 'Yearn to Learn' as a guide to future directions, • Our COSA+ officer will be involved in providing professional development and supporting staff in pedagogical change. • E.L.I (literacy and numeracy) teachers will provide targeted intervention based on 2016 data and lead professional learning opportunities for staff. • The embedding of the inquiry process as a means of 'putting learners in the driving seat.' • The continuation of our focus on student engagement and student voice in classrooms.

Review <i>What processes will be used to review the results?</i>	Results will be reviewed as part of the evaluation process undertaken for the COSA showcase and school community reporting processes in 2017 and will include data analysis and Action Research conclusions.
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Focus Area: COSA