School Review
Summary
2020

EDUCATION NT
ENGAGE GROW ACHIEVE

ACACIA HILL SCHOOL

Acacia Hill School

Review Dates:	11 – 13 February 2020
Principal:	Julie Permezel
Reviewers:	

Dianne Pekin, ACER School Review Consultant (Lead Reviewer)

Bert Barbe, ACER School Review Consultant (Co-reviewer)

Suzi Burgess, Principal Ross Park Primary School (Mentee reviewer)

SCHOOL CONTEXT

School sector:	Government
School type:	Specialist
Year range:	Preschool – Year 12
Geolocation:	Remote
Region:	Alice Springs

Staff	A. Number within School	B. Number interviewed	C. Percentage (B/A) x 100
School Leaders	7	7	100%
Permanent teachers*	17	16	94%
Teaching support staff	24	23	95%
Parents	-	4	-
Students	68	17	25%
Others	-	6	-

*A minimum of 85% of staff interviewed is recommended

ACRONYMS

ABLES	Abilities Based Learning and Education Support
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
ASIP	Annual School Improvement Plan
DOE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
EAP	Educational Adjustment Plan
EYLF	Early Years Learning Framework
ITP	Individual Transition Plan(s)
LBOTE	Language background other than English
MOU	Memorandum/Memoranda Of Understanding
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NT	Northern Territory
PAT – M/R	Progressive Achievement Test – Mathematics / Reading
PBS	Positive Behaviour Support
PECS	Picture Exchange Communication System
PLC	Professional Learning Communities
QILT	Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SESOs	Special Education and Support Officers
SNP	Student Needs Profile
SSIU	School and System Improvement Unit
ST&L	Structured Teaching and Learning
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics
VET	Vocational Education and Training

COMMENDATIONS

- The strong relationships between students, staff, and parents/caregivers to create a "family-like" community at Acacia Hill School, where care and wellbeing are a shared responsibility.

- The dedication of all staff and leaders to supportively meet the learning and wellbeing needs of their students and their families.

- The school's established and well-documented holistic process for the collaborative development of student EAPs, with a clear focus on personal and social capabilities.

- The partnership with universities where Acacia Hill School hosts undergraduate student placements in the field of disability and inclusion.

- The formal partnerships with the DoE RTO and DoH for provision of health and wellbeing support across the school.

- The high quality, purpose-built facilities and structure of classrooms, information technology, therapeutic and hygiene facilities, and play areas of the school. The environment is bright, welcoming and accessible by all.

- The past and current leaders and staff who have dedicated significant time and effort over 10 years to create a contemporary school learning environment where physical spaces and technology are used effectively. Parents express pride in how the school has been developed.

AFFIRMATIONS

- The review of semester data collection schedules to include Reading Benchmarks, PAT-R and PAT-M, and the ongoing training provided to staff in the use of ABLES.

- The establishment of PLCs in the implementation of the 2020 ASIP.

- The ST&L PLC which provides teachers with opportunities to watch and learn with, and from, each other.

- The leadership teams' commitment to the implementation of three Engage signature strategies.

- The identification and allocation of staff based on individual interests and expertise for specific school roles.

- The collegial support between staff members and between teachers and leaders during a time of change and challenge due to increasing enrolments, staff turnover, and construction projects.

- The school's growing focus on providing transitional satellite settings to meet a diverse range of needs across the catchment area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collaboratively develop and document a four-year explicit school strategic improvement plan, which outlines the school's vision and values and has a narrow and sharp focus. Share the plan widely in the school community to build a united commitment to improvement. Ensure that this agenda articulates the well-defined and measurable improvement outcomes in learning and wellbeing, and includes explicit targets that are well understood and accompanied by timelines.

- Clearly define the roles of all leaders in driving the initiatives and programs they will be responsible for, to ensure that the strategies identified in the teaching and learning improvement plan are enacted. Establish processes and procedures for monitoring the implementation and success of the teaching and learning improvement plan.

- Develop a shared school vision for curriculum and assessment ensuring:

    o curriculum planning documents are centrally stored and easily accessible;

    o strong vertical alignment of curriculum through regular audits;

    o curriculum is developmental and expanded upon for each student across different pathways;

    o strong alignment between the annual curriculum overviews, term scope and sequence, and weekly program plans for every learning area;

    o curriculum is contextualised for different groups of students, reflecting the student voice and interests;

    o the planned and enacted curriculum is the reference point for assessment, moderation, and ongoing feedback to, and between, every teacher.

- Identify agreed school evidence-based effective teaching strategies and methods for literacy and numeracy, to be evident in every teacher's classroom to ensure every student is engaged and challenged and learning successfully. Ensure that the principal and leaders provide teachers with regular opportunities to learn with and from each other by observing, sharing practice, and through feedback. Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of these systems and structures.

- Develop an annual school professional learning plan, reflective of the explicit improvement agenda, linked to the professional and personal goals of all staff and informed by evidence-based practices to build staff capability.

- Build an evidence-based data-informed culture in the school that reflects an understanding that the use of data is essential to effective leadership and to teaching and learning.

    Whole-of-school performance:

    o Identify the data sets that will be systematically collected and used to monitor whole-of-school performance in student academic, attendance, behaviour, and wellbeing outcomes.

    o Conduct and analyse existing performance data, and collect and analyse new baseline data to accurately set targets for improvement.

o Develop a whole-of-school data plan that makes clear what data will be centrally stored, timelines for collection, who is responsible for collection and analysis, the purpose of the data, and how data will be used and communicated.

o Evaluate internal and external community partnership programs/experience for effectiveness and ensure individuals and cohorts of student are optimally engaged, challenged and extended.

Evidence to inform teaching:

o Support teachers to identify and include academic learning outcomes goals within each student's EAP.

o Support leaders working with teams of teachers to build their own data literacy skills so that they can regularly engage teachers in discussions about how individual students are progressing.

o Support teachers in using regular formative assessment; adjusting their planning to respond to where students are in their learning.

o Ensure that staff are trained to use available software to analyse and interpret data to inform differentiated teaching and meet the needs of all students, including those in priority groups and satellite settings.